The Widow in Mink

By Carl L. Williams

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Margaret Osgood, a sweet, quiet woman who is somewhat oblivious to details, is now shocked to find herself a recent widow and quite wealthy. She tries to adjust to her new life, first by buying herself a mink coat, a long-awaited extravagance, and joining the Wandering Widows' Club where she makes good friends and creates a new social life. She soon finds herself pursued by Charlie, her late husband's business partner, who questions her desire to donate much of her new-found money to charity. Is he just concerned about her financial future or is he more interested in his own?

Margaret's worried niece Julie, an investigative reporter, seeks to protect her aunt while playing an exasperating game of verbal volleyball with her boyfriend Roger. He's a rich and seemingly idle young man who keeps proposing to Julie but may have secrets of his own. Meanwhile, Margaret's new friends enjoy all the drama with a few tart quips and a bit of flirtation thrown in. Will false intentions and false assumptions eventually become clear to make way for true love?

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 m, 5 w.)

JULIE MAYFIELD: A serious-minded newspaper columnist in her late 20s or early 30s.

ROGER COLFAX: An idle and wealthy man in love with Julie. In his late 20s or early 30s.

MARGARET OSGOOD: Julie's aunt, recent widow, not a clear thinker, benign personality, oblivious and behind the times. In her 50s or 60s.

CHARLIE PRUETT: Business partner of Margaret's late husband George. In his 50s or 60s.

DIANE YATES: Attractive widow, assertive, romantically available, member of the Wandering Widows. In her 50s.

BETSY SHAEFFER: More reserved member of the Wandering Widows. In her 50s or 60s.

JANE HAZELMAN: Fellow member of the Wandering Widows. In her 50s or 60s.

SETTING

Living room, middle-class furnishings, including many framed photos of birds. Additionally, on one end table is a colorful photo of a carousel. At rise, a laptop sits open on a coffee table. One front door, one doorway to hall.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Place: Margaret Osgood's living room.

Time: Late summer, early fall.

Act I Scene 1 Late afternoon
Scene 2 That evening
Scene 3 Late afternoon, a month later
Act II Scene 1 Late afternoon, a month later
Scene 2 That evening
Scene 3 Afternoon, a week later

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: JULIE MAYFIELD paces while ROGER COLFAX, well-dressed in a sporty way, lounges in a chair reading a newspaper.)

JULIE: Where can she be? She knew I was coming over this afternoon.
ROGER: Nearly 300 people drowned when a ferryboat sank in Indonesia. I wonder how many lawyers they have in Indonesia.
JULIE: I'm really starting to worry about her.
ROGER: Where <u>is</u> Indonesia, anyway? It's one of those places you read about, but you're never sure where it is.
JULIE: Since Uncle George died she's had no one to take care of her.
ROGER: It sounds like some kind of condition. "I'm coming down with a bad case of Indonesia."
JULIE: Roger, are you listening to me?
ROGER: No more than usual.
JULIE: Anything might've happened to her. You know how she is.
ROGER: I <u>do</u> know how she is. I just don't know how she got that way.
JULIE: Aunt Margaret has always been a little…
ROGER: A little dim?
JULIE: Of course not. Merely oblivious to things. Befuddled, you might say.
ROGER: I never say befuddled.
JULIE: Childlike. It's probably just as well she and Uncle George never had any children of their own.
ROGER: She didn't say where she was going today?
JULIE: No, she told me she'd be here. I'm glad I have a key, or we'd still be outside and I'd be calling the police by now.
ROGER: Instead of going through all the rooms, searching for a body.
JULIE: Well? You never know.

ROGER: Didn't you give her a cell phone? Why not just call her?

JULIE: She stopped carrying it. She never learned how to use it.

ROGER: You could've showed her.

JULIE: I did show her! It just didn't get through to her. So many things never get through to her.

ROGER: Julie, sit down and relax. Or go back to writing whatever profound commentary you were composing for tomorrow's paper. *(Indicates the laptop.)*

JULIE: What did you think of the one today? Or did you read it?

ROGER: I read it not more than fifteen minutes ago. I just don't remember it.

JULIE: About the city council.

ROGER: They still have one of those?

JULIE: You're being deliberately irritating.

ROGER: Naturally. That's what I do.

JULIE: I wish Aunt Margaret had told me what her plans were. That is, if she knew.

ROGER: She'll turn up sooner or later, so don't get all hyper about it.

JULIE: It's no use telling me not to worry. Not only don't I know what's happened to her, I don't know what's going to happen to her. How is she going to get along financially? Uncle George owned one half of a little hardware store, and for over thirty years they've lived in this same little house, which he always said was good enough. He was a man of no ambition.

ROGER: My kind of guy.

JULIE: I don't know if he even had any savings.

ROGER: Seriously, Julie, you know I'm well able to help out if it comes to that. Assuming, of course, you ever agree to become Mrs. Roger Colfax.

JULIE: Please…one distressing subject at a time. But thank you. Besides, I'm not exactly destitute myself. I can do what needs doing.

ROGER: That's how I've always thought of you. Julie Mayfield…the girl who can do what needs doing.

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