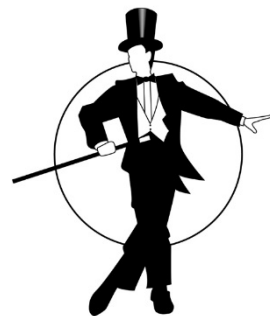


A Life Enriching Community

Philip Middleton Williams



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A LIFE ENRICHING COMMUNITY

By Philip Middleton Williams

CAST

ADAM: Late sixties, looks his age.

MICHELLE: Perky, well-dressed.

PAUL: Late sixties but looks younger.

Place

A living room in a condominium in a retirement community in South Florida.

Time

Present day.

A Life Enriching Community was first performed at the New Theatre Miami 1-Acts Festival Winter Session at the Main Street Theatre in Miami Lakes, Florida directed by Jerry Jensen. The cast was as follows:

Adam.....	Joel Kolker
Michelle.....	Francine Birns
Paul.....	Philip Middleton Williams

A LIFE ENRICHING COMMUNITY

The action takes place in a living room in a condominium in a retirement community in South Florida. Center stage are two identical easy chairs that face downstage at a forty-five-degree angle to the center line and ninety degrees to each other. There is a standing lamp between them. Stage Left is the exit to the rest of the condo: the kitchen and the bedroom. Stage Right is a sliding patio door that looks out into a small back yard. The back wall is plain. There are several boxes from a moving company on the floor, but other than those and the chairs and lamp, the stage is empty.

At rise Adam is sitting in his chair reading the Miami Herald. He holds the paper up so that we cannot see his face. From what we can see of him, he is dressed in casual attire for a man in his late sixties: slacks and comfortable shoes. He turns the page of the paper, his face still unseen, mutters a sound of disgust, and keeps reading.

Michelle enters followed by Paul. Michelle is well-dressed in a casual business outfit. She is carrying a clipboard and a binder. Paul is in his mid to late sixties with signs of age but still looking fit and active. As they enter, Michelle is checking things off the list.

MICHELLE: All right, then, we've seen the kitchen and the laundry area, and we've looked at the big storage closet out by the garage. And I've shown you where the emergency call box is in each room. All you have to do is hit the big red button and our team will be right over.

PAUL: Yes, you have.

MICHELLE: *(digging in her pocket, pulls out two small keypads on lanyards)* And here are the Life Alert buttons that you should carry with you at all times just in case.

PAUL: 'I've fallen, and I can't get up!' Yes, thank you.

MICHELLE: One for you, Mr. Henderson. *(Looking at Adam.)* And one for you, Mr. Connolly.

(No response from Adam.)

PAUL: I'll make sure he wears it.

MICHELLE: Great. Well, if I can get you to sign here, here, here, initial here and here, then we're all done.

(hands Paul the clipboard and with a little help from Michelle, signs and initials.)

PAUL: *(handing back the clipboard)* There! And that's it, right? We're all done? No more papers to read, sign, initial, notarize, swear to, or give over our entire life savings for?

MICHELLE: *(genially)* That's it. You're all done. *(Hands Paul the binder.)* Here's your reference manual. Everything you'll need to know is in it. And on behalf of myself and the entire staff here at Coral Gardens, welcome. I'm sure you know that we have lots of social events, activities, trips to the Everglades, down to the Keys, even overnight trips to Disney World and other places. The pool is open year-round. We have a bike path, a nature trail, and there's plenty of natural beauty around. *(Smiles brilliantly.)* We're so glad to have you with us and look forward to a long and happy time here in our life enriching community.

ADAM: *(derisively, to himself)* 'Life enriching.' Sheesh.

PAUL: Thanks. *(thumbs through the binder.)* A lot to get used to.

MICHELLE: Yes, it must be quite a change from *(looks at clipboard)* Pee...too...sky?

ADAM: *(sharply)* Petoskey. Puh-tahs-key.

MICHELLE: That's way up north in Michigan?

PAUL: Yep, the tip of the mitt.

MICHELLE: Beg pardon?

PAUL: Well, you know how the Lower Peninsula is shaped like a mitten? Like a hand? Petoskey is right up there on the very top. Just below the big bridge to the Upper Peninsula.

ADAM: So now we're down here at the tip of the dick. Doesn't Florida look like a limp dingus?

(Paul clears his throat and scowls. Adam subsides.)

MICHELLE: Oh, that's okay, I've heard it before. But I'm sure you'll fit in. Lots of people retire here, including from Michigan.

PAUL: Like they used to say on the Jackie Gleason show, "it's the sun and fun capital of the world."

ADAM: Great. Skin cancer and drug smuggling.

MICHELLE: Jackie Who?

PAUL: Oh, um, never mind. Before your time.

MICHELLE: Miami's a very diverse place. Lots of neighborhoods like Little Haiti, Little Havana...

ADAM: We don't speak Spanish.

MICHELLE: Not a problem. Or, as we say, "*no problemo.*"

ADAM: Oy veh.

MICHELLE: Oh, did I mention we also offer free shuttle service to the Publix supermarket down the street, to Dadeland Mall, and of course to any doctor's appointments —

PAUL: (*cutting her off*) Thank you very much...Michelle, is it?

MICHELLE: Yes, sir.

PAUL: Good. Will we be seeing a lot of you around?

MICHELLE: Well, they keep me pretty busy at the main office, but I'm sure we'll see each other around.

PAUL: Oh, great.

MICHELLE: Okay, so unless there's anything else, I'll let myself out. And again, welcome to Coral Gardens.

(*Michelle starts to exit Left, but Adam puts down the paper.*)

ADAM: Are we the first?

MICHELLE: Beg pardon?

ADAM: Are we the first?

MICHELLE: I'm not sure I understand.

PAUL: He means are we the first, um...

ADAM: What I mean is, are we the first gay couple here at this 'life enriching community.'

MICHELLE: Oh, I don't know. But then, we don't... We don't discriminate against anyone here. Very strict policy. Everyone's welcome.

ADAM: But there are no other couples like us here, are there?

MICHELLE: Well, no, not that I'm aware of. But I'm sure there are other people here who are... This is Miami, after all.

ADAM: I'm glad to hear you're so open-minded.

MICHELLE: Oh, yes, I'm... We're a very welcoming place. *(Beat.)* Okay, well, unless there's anything else...

PAUL: No, thanks, we're good. We'll be fine.

MICHELLE: *(beaming broadly)* Great! Let us know if you need anything. And don't forget... we're here for *you*.

(Michelle exits. Paul watches her go, drops the binder on his chair, then wanders around the room ending up by the sliding glass door. Adam puts down the paper.)

PAUL: She seems nice.

ADAM: Oh, she's just shitting rainbows.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!