Here She Is

by Jack Swenson

The new social director was a sweet young thing. She was perky and friendly, and the old folks loved her. Old Albert said it made you smile just to look at her.

Gus Trosvig , her boss, didn't want to hire her at first because she was so young--just out of college--and she didn't have the right kind of degree. She had a BA in Psychology, not Social Work. But she begged him to give her a chance, She would work hard, she said. And she needed the job. Reluctantly he gave in.

At first it appeared that he had made an excellent choice. The girl was popular with the elderly residents of the home and in the community at large as well. The oldsters took to her like kids take to oatmeal. And her boss had to admit that she had some very good ideas.

The residents loved the new games she introduced to the recreation room: a trivia quiz and "Braino Scramble," word games that no one at the home had ever played before. Indeed, it was quite likely that no one in town had ever played either of these games. The townsfolk were not big fans of word games, though they did enjoy Whist and Canasta.

Betsy's little theater group was a success as well. What her thespians lacked in talent, they more that made up for with enthusiasm. They loved the spotlight. They loved to pose and emote. And they drank up applause like kids down Kool-Aid on a hot summer day.

She got into trouble, however, with the Senior Beauty Pageant. Even then, everything would have been fine if the bodice of Ardis Olson's dress hadn't come undone on stage, exposing more than a little of her ample bosom. Other than that, however, the pageant went okay. In addition to the evening gown competition, there was a talent show and an interview with each of the contestants. The winner of the title of Miss Senior Beauty was a tiny octogenarian

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named Ethyl Pugh who for the talent portion of the program sang "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

Not everyone in the audience agreed with the judges' decision, but it was a shrewd choice on Betsy and Gus's part because it helped mollify the townsfolk who were distressed by Ardis's unseemly display. Naturally, Goldie Trosvik's fans were disappointed, and understandably so, because Goldie's act was a sensation. For the talent portion of the program, she did a jazz dance in a red-feathered costume to a taped version of "In the Mood" that featured chickens clucking the tune.

Sadly, Betsy's brief foray into the field of social services ended abruptly not long after that when she became romantically involved with one of the town's several Lutheran ministers. The man of God, a married man with two children, renounced his calling and divorced his wife, and he and Betsy left town. It was rumored that Betsy went to work for the Farm Bureau in Fargo. No one seemed to know what happened to the minister.