**JAKE’S WOMEN**
Jake
By: Neil Simon
*Jake, imaginations his ex-wife and others in his head. They are figments of his imaginations.*    What you have just witnessed is a man at the end of his rope… with nothing to hold on to because his wife took the rope with her…. It’s been six months since Maggie left and I haven’t been dating, now, the truth, I miss Maggie but recently here in the privacy of my home, my mind and my thoughts, I was visited by a new and fresher hell than my warped imaginations could ever dream of… No longer did I summon up Karens and Ediths and Mollys of my life to help brighten up the endless sleepless nights… Now they came on their own. Uninvited. Unsummoned. Unstoppable.  Do you want to know how low I’ve sunk? I actually make up phone calls pretending to speak with Edith to scare the Edith and Karen in my head out of here. The thing about going crazy is that it makes you incredibly smart, in a stupid sort of way. But I do feel like I’m losing a grip on myself. As if I’m spiraling down in diminishing circles like water being drained from a bathtub, and suddenly my big toes is being sucked down into the hole and I’m screaming for my life… No. Not my life. My mother… Why, tell me why, it’s always your mother. It’s never you father or an uncle or a second cousin from Detroit … I was five years old in a third-floor apartment in the Bronx, waking up from a nap and there’s no one there. My mother is on the fourth floor visiting a neighbor. I’m terrified. Why doesn’t she hear me? Why doesn’t she come? And by the time she comes, it’s too late. Your basic Freudian mother abandonment trauma has set in like cement… I never trusted her again.  Anyways, I have a feeling I’m trying to put together a jigsaw puzzle that has no picture on it… I’m a blank, waiting to fill in who I am … How did I get to be this way?... That’s not a rhetorical question. I mean, if you know, please tell me… Okay, Jake. Go back to the beginning… Here’s another Mother Story … I’m six years old now, sitting in the kitchen with my mother, watching her shell peas… And on the floor I see a roach… My mother, faster than a speeding train, takes a newspaper and splats it against the baseboard… “ Where do roaches come from?” I ask my mother… “From the dirt,” she answers… “ You mean,” I say, “ the roaches like to live in dirt and eat it?” … “No,” says Mom. “The dirt turns into roaches” … And I go back inot my room, lay on the bed and say to myself, “ The dirt turns into roaches” … And the realization hits me… My mother is dumb… And I know instinctively that six years old is too soon to find out that your mother is dumb ... I love my mother, but I never asked her asked her anymore questions… The trouble is, here I am today without any answers!