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Acting Edition

Four Old Broads on the High Seas

by Leslie Kimbell

SAMUEL FRENCH

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FOUR OLD BROADS ON THE HIGH SEAS received its World Premiere Production at Winder Barrow Community Theatre in Winder, Georgia on March 1, 2019. It was directed by Léland Downs Karas and assistant director Samantha Webb. The scenic design was by Leslie Kimbell and Léland Downs Karas. The lighting and sound were done by Pamela Veader. Costume design was by Eddie Nadeau. Graphic design work by Larry Germain. The cast was as follows:

BEATRICE SHELTON. . . . . Billie Nye-Muller
EADDY MAE CLAYTON . . . . . Elinor Hasty
IMOGENE FLETCHER. . . . . Linda Keller
MAUDE JENKINS . . . . . Linda Moore Oulton
SAM SMITH. . . . . Thomas Manley
HERBERT. . . . . Scott Jones
CAPTAIN SHELDON STERLING . . . . . Ken Greene
STEVEN DUPREE/TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD . . . . . Tony Smithey
JIM ROCKSTONE/MELVIN TRICKLE . . . . . Klo Lopes
HORACE BUMPUS . . . . . Rick Jarvis
EDNA BUMPUS . . . . . Peggy Marx

The World Premiere Production was dedicated in loving memory of Patricia Ann Kimbell - mother-in-law, best friend and the wind beneath my wings

CHARACTERS

BEATRICE SHELTON – Senior, bawdy former burlesque dancer

EADDY MAE CLAYTON – Senior, desperately religious

SAM SMITH – Senior, former Elvis Impersonator and fiancée to Imogene

IMOGENE FLETCHER – Senior, sassy and bold fiancée of Sam

MAUDE JENKINS – Senior, dingbat wannabe beauty queen

HERBERT – Fifties/sixties, Slick and overly tan villain

CAPTAIN SHELDON STERLING – Fifties/sixties, ship's captain

STEVEN DUPREE/MISS TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD – Twenties/forties, luggage porter by day and drag queen entertainer by night

JIM ROCKSTONE/MELVIN TRICKLE – Thirties/forties, bumbling ship's detective

HORACE BUMPUS – Senior, rickety and browbeaten husband

EDNA BUMPUS – Senior, rickety and hard of hearing wife

SETTING

The Atlantic Queen Cruise Ship. The Main Set is the Starlight Lounge. Other scenes take place in front of the curtain or in a pool of light.

TIME

Spring 1992

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Imogene is: EYE-MO-JEAN

Eaddy is: Ee-dee

Beatrice is: Bee-uh-triss

These characters, while fun and sassy, should be portrayed as vital and real people, not caricatures in any way.

The author suggests that **HERBERT** come out for the curtain call wearing the life preserver around his neck and handcuffs.

STEVEN does not have to be a professional drag queen.

It is my desire to create roles for senior actors, who are often overlooked for theatrical roles. However, the senior roles can be portrayed by any actor with the magic of theatrical makeup.

For Léland
My True Friend. My Heart. My Boom.

ACT I

Scene One

(Tropical Steel Drum Music Intro and the sound of a cruise ship horn.)*

VOICE-OVER. Last and final call for boarding. *The Atlantic Queen* sets sail in one hour. Again…last and final call for boarding. All ashore that are going to shore. To all our valued passengers…we know you have a choice when you travel…and we thank you for choosing Regency Cruise Lines. We hope you all enjoy your Sassy Seniors Cruise. Again…this is last and final call for boarding… all ashore that are going to shore. *(Ship's horn as music fades.)*

*(***BEATRICE**, **EADDY**, **IMOGENE**, *and* **MAUDE** *enter wearing tropical travel wear. All the ladies wear floral leis.* **MAUDE** *is wearing a MISS MAGNOLIA SENIOR CITIZEN sash and a rhinestone crown. Behind them we see a sign with the name of the ship; THE ATLANTIC QUEEN.)*

BEATRICE. I cannot believe that we almost missed boarding. We left at six this morning.

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MAUDE. We must have stopped at every Stuckey's and dirty gas station between here and Petula…not that I'm complaining of course… I do love a good pee-can log. *(She takes a bite of a pecan log.)*

IMOGENE. If I've told you once…I've told you a million times…my bladder is the size of a pea.

BEATRICE. Well…*I* told *you* to wear bladder pants.

EADDY. Imogene…I don't want to get into your personal business…but have you seen a doctor about that? You may have a little problem…you know…down there…it that uh…general vicinity. I mean…you have to tinkle every five minutes.

IMOGENE. Yes…of course I did…he couldn't find anything wrong… I'm just old and I have to tinkle a lot.

BEATRICE. Well…I would have taken *my* kitty to a different vet.

EADDY. Beatrice! You are so vile!

*(***BEATRICE** *is waving and winking at all the "men" she sees in the distance as she talks.)*

BEATRICE. I'll show you vile…if I don't get my choice of all the eligible men on this ship because of your overactive bladder…there is going to be hell to pay.

IMOGENE. Sorry Beatty –

EADDY. Well…I guess we know what Beatrice will be doing the next nine days –

MAUDE. We may as well strap a mattress to her back.

EADDY. Can't you at least wait until we set sail to start acting like a common heathen?

BEATRICE. *(Sweetly.)* Eaddy…BITE ME!

MAUDE. When I grow up…I want to be just like Beatrice. Everywhere she goes…she picks up a man.

EADDY. Yeah…so do prostitutes.

*(***MAUDE** *pull out her camera and spins around in excitement. She takes a picture using the flash.)*

MAUDE. OOOOO this is so glamourous… I'll bet this is how they felt boarding…the *Titanic.*

IMOGENE. That is *not* a comforting cruise ship reference!

BEATRICE. Maude…when are you going to take that stupid crown and sash off…you look ridiculous.

EADDY. Oh, leave her alone Beatrice…she's proud she won the Miss Magnolia Senior Citizen pageant. Let her have her moment.

MAUDE. Don't be jealous Beatrice. Remember…we can't all be queen…I need someone to clap as I walk by…it may as well be you.

*(***SAM** *enters wearing a Hawaiian shirt, shorts, dark socks and white loafers. He is loaded down with luggage and is openly straining under the weight.)*

SAM. Ladies…I think my knees are breaking. What did you pack in here?

IMOGENE. Oh, here sweetie…let me help you.

*(***IMOGENE** *grabs* **BEATRICE***'s bag from* **SAM.***)*

BEATRICE. No no no wait…be careful…that's my bag and the zipper is –

(The bag falls open and several pieces of tacky lingerie, a tassel whip, paddle, handcuffs, feather duster and other funny and sexy items fall out. **EADDY** *holds up a comical large sized negligee with attached pasties and then looks at* **BEATRICE** *with disgust.* **MAUDE** *takes a picture using the flash.)*

SAM. *(Looking down.)* What the hell is that?

MAUDE. *(Pointing to the ground.)* Is that handcuffs?

BEATRICE. *(Indignant.)* WHAT? When are y'all gonna get used to me?

EADDY. This is a scrap of cheap chiffon and a piece of elastic. I mean…I don't want to get into your personal business…but why bother wearing anything at all?

BEATRICE. I don't wear it very long…trust me.

*(***SAM** *holds up a small box and squints at the words on the box.)*

SAM. Does this say *edible* underwear?

MAUDE, EADDY & IMOGENE. Edible underwear?

*(***SAM** *holds the box out for the others to see.* **EADDY** *gasps.* **MAUDE** *takes a picture using the flash.)*

EADDY. I think we need to pray… Dear Lord…please forgive this heathen Jezebel…and please forgive me for continuing to associate with her…as I am weak and easily misled. Please do not send down a bolt of lightning to destroy the ship…or a plague of boils or locusts…or hemorrhoids…AMEN.

BEATRICE. Thank you Eaddy. I hope that will conclude the fire and brimstone portion of our trip. Now give me that.

*(***BEATRICE** *snatches the negligee and box away.)*

EADDY. RUDE!

BEATRICE. PRUDE!

EADDY. WITCH!

BEATRICE. BITCH!

(They embrace.)

BEATRICE. I love ya…ya old Bible Thumper.

EADDY. I love you too…Mary Magdalene.

IMOGENE. Hey Beatrice…do you have anything in your little bag of tricks that I can borrow for our honeymoon?

*(***IMOGENE** *picks up a feather duster.)*

What in the world do you do with this?

BEATRICE. Use your imagination –

EADDY. Beatrice…you really are a pervert.

BEATRICE. I AM NOT! I'm just kinky. Kinky is when you use a feather duster…*perverted i*s when you use the whole chicken.

*(***SAM** *picks up the items and puts them back in the bag.* **IMOGENE** *takes a tassel whip and swats his bottom.)*

SAM. Hubba Hubba.

BEATRICE. HEY…get your own!

*(***BEATRICE** *snatches the whip. Unnoticed,* **IMOGENE** *sneaks a pair of handcuffs into her purse.)*

IMOGENE. Selfish!

(Enter **CAPTAIN SHELDON STERLING,** *a handsome man in his sixties. He wears a captain's shirt with nametag and navy shorts as well as his captain's hat. He has a two-way radio on his belt. All the ladies…especially* **BEATRICE** *are immediately mesmerized.)*

CAPTAIN. Welcome aboard ladies…oh *and* gentleman. I'm so glad you made it. Five more minutes and you would have missed boarding.

*(***EADDY** *steps forward.* **MAUDE** *takes a picture using the flash.)*

EADDY. Well thank you Captain *(She squints to read his nametag.)* Sterling. It's so nice of you to come and greet us personally.

*(***BEATRICE** *pushes* **EADDY** *out of the way and drapes her arm across the* **CAPTAIN***'s shoulder.)*

BEATRICE. Well, hell-o handsome…I just love a man in uniform. My name is Beatrice…but you can call me… EASY.

(She is still holding the tassel whip and lightly fans herself with it. The **CAPTAIN** *shifts uncomfortably.)*

IMOGENE. That was subtle.

MAUDE. Like a sledgehammer to the neck.

SAM. *(Desperate.)* Excuse me Captain…but is there someone that can take our luggage?

CAPTAIN. Yes…certainly…I'll get you a porter. *(He speaks into his radio.)* This is Captain Sterling; I need a porter to the main gateway entrance…*right away*.

BEATRICE. Oooooo you are so commanding.

*(***MAUDE** *steps forward and extends her hand.)*

MAUDE. I'm not sure if you noticed my crown and sash… but I just won the Miss Magnolia *Beauty* Pageant yesterday. I'm a real beauty queen.

*(***MAUDE** *steps in and takes a "selfie" with the* **CAPTAIN**, *using the flash. He winces.)*

CAPTAIN. I see that...and don't you look lovely. Miss Magnolia?

BEATRICE. *(Big angry smile.)* It's just a little thing they do at our...uh...little community.

MAUDE. We live in an assisted living facility in Petula, Georgia. It's called Magnolia Place.

BEATRICE. *(Gritted smile.)* Maude sweetheart...unless you want to *eat* that crown for dinner... I suggest you back off.

IMOGENE. I'd listen to her Maude...if you value your teeth.

CAPTAIN. Yes...well ladies...oh *and* gentleman...as Regency Cruise line VIP guests...I would like to invite you to a private cocktail reception as we set sail...in the Captain's Lounge by the bridge.

BEATRICE. *(Sensuous.)* I don't know about you girls...but I could certainly use a nibble.

EADDY. Yes Beatrice...you should definitely go and have a...*Whore*-derv.

*(***EADDY** *and* **BEATRICE** *make faces at each other.)*

CAPTAIN. Now...I understand I will be marrying someone from this group...once we set sail.

SAM & IMOGENE. *(Gushing.)* THAT'S US!

CAPTAIN. Wonderful. Perhaps at the reception we can discuss the details of your ceremony. The bow of the ship is a nice place to have a wedding...or we can always use the ship's chapel if you like.

SAM. I don't care where we have the wedding... I'm just ready to get the honeymoon started.

*(***SAM** *and* **IMOGENE** *snuggle and peck kiss.)*

EADDY. I don't want to get into your personal business… but y'all practically had a honeymoon in the backseat of the Lincoln on the way here.

MAUDE. *(Giggling.)* In my lap most of the time…but I'm not complaining… I just love living vicariously through your romance.

CAPTAIN. Yes…well…once the ship sets sail, we will –

(Enter **STEVEN DUPREE**, *the overtly fabulous porter, pushing a luggage cart. A clipboard hangs from a hook on the cart.)*

STEVEN. Hellooo Ladies…oh…*and* gentleman…welcome aboard *The Atlantic Queen*…and when I say queen…I don't mean me!!!

*(***STEVEN** *giggles as he begins to take the luggage from* **SAM** *when* **EADDY** *suddenly recognizes him.)*

EADDY. Wait…Steven? Steven Dupree?

STEVEN. Why yes darlin' the one and only…have we met?

EADDY. Yes…yes…I'm Eaddy Mae Clayton. I am…well… we are all…friends with your Grandmother Mable and your Aunt Lurleen. We all live at Magnolia Place Assisted Living in Petula.

STEVEN. Shut up! Small world!

BEATRICE. Hello Steven…how are you?

STEVEN. Hello! Now I *definitely* remember you…*you're* Beatrice…the one that was a stripper back in the old days.

CAPTAIN. *(Wide-eyed.)* A stripper?

EADDY. She was *not* a stripper…she was *(Grandly.)* a Lady of Burlesque…she was Miss Bang Bang La-Dish "The

Best Guns in the West". She could do a striptease…twirl her lasso…*and* swing both of her bullet pasties in two different directions…all at the same time.

CAPTAIN. *(Uneasy.)* Oh…well…hmmm…how about that? *(Unsure.)* Good for you –

BEATRICE. *(She shimmies.)* You have no idea. *(Then to* **STEVEN**.*)* I haven't seen you since you performed at The Miss Magnolia Senior Citizen Pageant…what…a year ago?

MAUDE. *(Stepping forward.)* Which…in case you didn't notice… I won this year!

*(***MAUDE** *steps forward and takes a "selfie" using the flash.* **STEVEN** *squints and blinks.)*

BEATRICE. No one cares Maude…and GIVE ME THAT! *(She snatches the camera. Then.)* So how are you sugar?

STEVEN. Look at me…I'm fabulous. I mean…I do have my Porter duties during the day…but at night I perform in the Starlight Cabaret Lounge on The Promenade Deck…doing my *fabulous* drag act.

CAPTAIN. It's one of the more popular shows on the ship.

MAUDE. Oh, I just *loved* your drag queen act…especially when you did that Barbra Streisand impersonation. *(She begins to belt out an out of tune and not very identifiable song.) ALL THE… MEEEEEMORIES…of the rain on a parade…in my mind…and look at all the PEOPLEEEEE…at the puhhhh-raaadddeee –*

STEVEN. *(Touching* **MAUDE***'s shoulder.)* Oh honey…no…no no NOOOO…don't do that…ever…again…please.

BEATRICE. DEAR GOD MAKE IT STOP!

IMOGENE. Yes…okay…I remember y'all telling me about that drag show. I didn't live at Magnolia Place back then. *(To* **STEVEN**.*)* What's your lady name?

STEVEN. *(Fabulous pose.)* When I'm in drag…I'm…Miss Tequila Mockingbird…and I am too fabulous for words. Don't worry…I still do Barbra. I do Marilyn Monroe and Liza Minelli too… I love Liza.

BEATRICE. *(Aside to the others.)* The gays just love their Liza.

STEVEN. I can't wait to tell Nana Mable and Aunt Lurlene I saw you ladies. Now let me get this luggage to your rooms. Last names on the reservation?

BEATRICE. Fletcher and Shelton.

*(***STEVEN** *grabs the clipboard off the luggage cart and checks for their names.)*

STEVEN. Fletcher…Fletcher…OH…the honeymoon suite… Ooo la la. Who's getting married?

SAM & IMOGENE. *(Gushing.)* We are.

*(***BEATRICE** *makes the gagging motion with her finger down her throat.)*

STEVEN. Well follow me and I will show you to your suite. It's quite lovely…it has a spacious balcony…and ladies… I'll take your luggage to your room too…403 on The Plaza Deck.

*(***STEVEN** *loads the luggage.* **SAM** *and* **IMOGENE** *snuggle and giggle like teenagers as they exit…calling back.* **STEVEN** *follows.)*

IMOGENE. Don't call us…

SAM. We'll call you…maybe –

EADDY. Y'ALL STAY OFF THAT BALCONY! *(Then.)* I can see it now…those two are gonna fall buck naked into the ocean. *(Then.)* Dear Lord…please don't let my friends fall into the ocean during the fornication I know they will be doing on that balcony. And please help me

as I try to survive this floating Sodom and Gomorrah surrounded by sinners of Biblical proportion and all the – *(Her voice trails as she exits.)*

BEATRICE. Well…hmmmm…that just leaves you Maude.

MAUDE. Leaves me what?

BEATRICE. Leaves you…to…you know…how can I say this nicely…to…um *(Smiling.)* get the hell out of here.

MAUDE. *(Grabbing her camera.)* Nice Beatrice…real nice. So much for winning the Miss Magnolia Pageant. I mean…what does a beauty queen have to do to get a little attention around here. What am I? Chopped liver? I've got the crown and the sash…where's *my* Romeo…where's *my* Prince Charming –

*(***MAUDE***'s voice trails as she exits.* **BEATRICE** *strikes a sexy pose.)*

BEATRICE. Now…where were we?

*(***BEATRICE** *swats the* **CAPTAIN** *with the little whip which makes him uncomfortable.)*

CAPTAIN. Um…I believe I was going to escort you to the reception.

BEATRICE. Or maybe…you could show me your cabin –

(The **CAPTAIN** *is taken aback by* **BEATRICE** *boldness.)*

CAPTAIN. Oh…um…I am so sorry… I just remembered I have to…uh…make the departure and safety announcements. I'll uh…see you at the reception.

(The **CAPTAIN** *hurries off, leaving* **BEATRICE** *very angry.)*

BEATRICE. Dammitt!

(We hear a man's whistle and cat call. **BEATRICE** *peers into the distance and then smiles as she calls out.)*

BEATRICE. Well, hello handsome…would you like to buy a lonely girl a drink?

(Blackout.)