

The Haunted Holiday Hotel

Betty Annand





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THE HAUNTED HOLIDAY HOTEL

by Betty Annand

CAST

FAMILY:

MARABELLE: Middle sibling and maitre'd, hard worker, loves her family.

HOWARD: Brother, quietly completes tasks assigned to him.

EUNICE: Oldest sibling, tired of her job, cranky.

FANNIE: Young at heart and the youngest sibling, fit, a yoga master.

GUESTS:

BERTHA: A little old lady from Pasadena. Does not want to go to a home, rides a motorbike, fun-loving.

CONSTANCE: Daughter of Bertha. Very serious, worried about her mother, but learning how to have fun.

COWS:

HARRIET: Spokesperson of the group, sees herself as being in charge.

STELLA: Out to prove that believing in ghosts is ridiculous. Sees everything in black and white.

ETHEL: Likes to be the peacemaker of the group.

MYNA: A chatterbox. Totally believes in ghosts, can be annoying.

TWINS:

JOY: Hears lyrics in her head often, believes in ghosts, loves Elvis.

GLADYS: Loves her sister but finds her annoying. Loves Elvis, does not believe in ghosts, is sometimes sarcastic.

PSYCHIC AND HER HUSBAND:

CRYSTAL BALL: Hit her head and now she thinks she has psychic abilities.

Loves her husband and tries to get him to believe in the hereafter.

BARNEY BALL: Her husband. He doesn't believe in her abilities at first but does love his wife.

DETECTIVES/UNDERTAKERS CLAIRE VOYANT and ANNA NIMMITY:

Undertakers coming to collect an outstanding bill, desperate for money and ready to be detectives until the real detectives show up, easily distracted by Clyde, not coming to any conclusions.

CLYDE DUMFARHT: Bartender. Stayed on at the hotel after the death of his father. Didn't believe in ghosts until Charlie, his father, comes to visit. Very nervous about the undertakers showing up because he doesn't have any money to pay them. The hotel has become a safe haven for him and he is secretly in love with Marabelle, the maitre'd. Misses his father.

CHARLIE DUMFARHT: The father of Clyde, a ghost that hangs around the hotel with Elvis. He likes to tap dance and comes in to talk to his son who can finally hear him. He was a gangster and tells Clyde about his 'inheritance' in the back forty. He also cares about the hotel and the family but he really wants the hotel to stay so that he and Elvis can continue to hang out.

BEATRICE: Aunt Bertie, who left the hotel to her family. She dated Elvis in the day and he still loves her. The family is determined to keep the hotel, and this was her dying wish.

ELVIS: Is Elvis!

Place

The Haunted Holiday Hotel.

SCENE 1

MARABELLE: *(on phone)* Hello! Yes, this is the Haunted Holiday Hotel. No, it's not REALLY haunted, just, mmm...occupied by passed visitors that refuse to leave...Well, there is a rumor that Elvis has NOT left our building and next week we have an Elvis convention. I'm sure there'll be lots of his impersonators here wanting to learn from the King himself...Yes, I do happen to have a room available for that week...Ahm, okay, I'll e-mail your confirmation number. Goodbye.

HOWARD: I've planted weeds in the flowerbeds and polished the tombstones in the back forty. Anything else you think I should do?

MARABELLE: Maybe you should spray the roses black and pick some blackberries for the scones tomorrow morning.

HOWARD: Oh, good idea. I'll get to it later today.

(EUNICE comes into the lobby to talk to MARABELLE)

EUNICE: (*crabby*) The rooms are ready and the dead flower arrangements are in each entrance. The fake cobwebs have been put in all the corners of the hallway. If I hadn't put them there myself, I'd swear they were the real thing. I think I'm ready for a coffee break!

MARABELLE: Oh, Eunice, you just started your shift. We've got to work hard to make everything look authentic. This haunted stuff is all a rage right now and we need a gimmick like that to get this hotel up and running. Everyone is booking haunted holidays. Our dear Aunt Gertrude, bless her soul, told us to keep this hotel in the family.

(*Enter BERTHA, alias-Samantha Smith, the Little Old Lady from Pasadena*)

MARABELLE: Good eve-ning! Welcome to The Haunted Holiday Hotel! May I help you?

BERTHA: Yes, I have a...reservation. I know I have it somewhere. (looking through her bag) Oh, darn, I can't find it, but I DO have a reservation. My name is ah...Sam, that's short for Samantha..ah... Samantha Smith, or Jones, no Smith-that's right, Samantha Smith from Pasadena.

MARABELLE: Let me see. Ah, here you are. I do have you down here in our reservation book. We've given you the best room, overlooking the dead pond. You are on the 13th floor.

BERTHA: The 13th floor? But this hotel only has 3 floors!

MARABELLE: Yes, well, the 3rd floor is the 13th floor here at The Haunted Holiday Hotel. Remember, 13 is a lucky number!

BERTHA: Yes, well, 3 or 13, either one is sure to be luckier than where I was going. My kids have booked me into a Senior's Home and I AM NOT ready to go there!

MARABELLE: (*laughs*) Good for you! You've come to the right place! A home away from THE home!

BERTHA: Thank you! Well, it's been a long day, could someone show me to my room?

HOWARD: I'll take you up myself. Just follow me.

SCENE 2

(next morning, back in the lobby)

FANNIE: *(singsong-y cheerful voice)* Good morning, Marabelle! I'm all ready for my first class but I'm missing a Samantha Smith! Have you seen her?

MARABELLE: Did you check her room?

FANNIE: Yes, of course I did. I take my job as personal trainer very seriously. She put her name down on the board sometime yesterday. I wonder where she is.

MARABELLE: Perhaps she's at breakfast. If I see her, I'll send her to you. Enjoy your day sis!

FANNIE: Thanks. Well, I am off and dancing! I'll be in the gym if you need me!

(enter JOY and GLADYS, the twins)

MARABELLE: Good morning! Welcome to the Haunted Holiday Hotel!

JOY: Good morning. I am Joy Ryder and this is my twin sister Gladys. We're here for the Elvis convention. We LOVE Elvis!

MARABELLE: Oh dear, the Elvis convention is NEXT week.

GLADYS: Joy, I TOLD you that we had the wrong dates!

JOY: You always blame me for everything! Everything's my fault but it was YOU who made the reservation!

GLADYS: Well, we're here now so let's make the best of it! Is there anything going on special this week?

MARABELLE: Ah, mmm, *(thinking fast)*, we just had a missing person's report! It seems that Samantha Smith has disappeared and we are trying to find her. She just checked in yesterday!

GLADYS: Oh, that's fabulous. What an experience--a missing person! How exciting!

MARABELLE: Yes, we have everyone looking for Samantha Smith, the little old lady from Pasadena.

JOY: Isn't that a Beach Boy song? *(sings)* A Little Old Lady from Pasadena!

GLADYS: *(to MARABELLE, sarcastically)* She always has a song lyric for every occasion.

MARABELLE: If you see anything unusual, please report it to us at the front desk!

GLADYS: Yes, of course we will.

HOWARD: *(picks up ladies' suitcases and imitates ELVIS jokingly)* Come on ladies, and be careful not to step on my blue suede shoes.

(GLADYS gives him a little slap and laughs)

JOY: This is so exciting. What room was Samantha in before she went missing?

HOWARD: Room 310, right next door to your room.

JOY: I don't know... I like a good mystery but that's a bit TOO close for comfort. Still, we're both level-headed people. We'll be just fine, right Gladys?

GLADYS: Certainly and we don't believe in no ghosts or disappearing persons either for that matter. I'm sure this Samantha will show up soon. Haunted Holiday Hotel--PHEW!

(The COWS arrive in the lobby)

HARRIET: *(funny, sarcastic)* Well, here we are at THE Haunted Holiday Hotel.

MYNA: *(annoying chatterbox)* You may not believe in hauntings, but I do! My family has many a story about ghosts and goblins. Well, I tell you...*(gets cut off by STELLA)*

STELLA: (*know-it-all*) Well, mine don't. My parents were scientists and I still say you have to prove it. Where's the proof?

ETHEL: That's why we came here to this haunted hotel--to find out. We've never been able to agree on the here and after, so here we are.

MARABELLE: May I welcome you to The Haunted Holiday Hotel, ladies! Did you all remember to bring your (*pause, then grins*) death certificate? (*the ladies give her a blank stare*) Just a little humor there. Now, let me check my book. Ah, four friends. You must be the COWS, right?

HARRIET: I'll have you know that we are the California Outstanding Women's Society.

MARABELLE: That's right--COWS for short!

MYNA: Anything unusual happening? Any hauntings, by any chance?

MARABELLE: A little old lady from Pasadena has gone missing.

MYNA: Oh, wonderful. Hear that, ladies? A little old lady from Pasadena. (*she takes a whistle or harmonica out of her purse and blows one note and the ladies start singing the "Little Old Lady from Pasadena" song*)

MARABELLE: Oh, Gosh, not that again.

ETHEL: That's enough, girls. Sorry about that. You see, the reason we are outstanding is because we sing so well. I'm sure the little old dear will turn up! Settle in now, girls, and let's enjoy our women's retreat like we planned!

MARABELLE: (*calls to HOWARD offstage*) Howard, there's four more bags. Please take them to Room 313.

HOWARD: Oh, just 3 doors down the hall from the missing old lady from Pasadena.

MYNA: Oh good. We're not only close to the little old lady from Pasadena's room, but our room number has a 13 in it! That's got to be good karma!

STELLA: Karma, shmarma. Don't be ridiculous!

HARRIET: Oh, for goodness sake! Relax, Stella! Enjoy! This is a girls' weekend. Let's go.

(They leave the lobby. CRYSTAL and BARNEY enter)

BARNEY: Howdy! We're here to be haunted! Bring it on!

CRYSTAL: Exactly, I am the psychic, Crystal Ball, and I can hardly wait to meet your ghosts! You see, I communicate with the dead, you know! *(closes her eyes and hums a yoga chant)* Hum! Hum!

BARNEY: Don't mind her--she's a little off, but we are both here to enjoy a holiday. After she had an accident and hit her head, she claims she's in touch with 'those who have passed over.' *(spooky voice)*

MARABELLE: Well, actually, we may need to use your wife's talents. You see, we have 'misplaced' a patron named Samantha Smith, a little old lady from Pasadena.

CRYSTAL: *(in psychic voice with eyes closed)* A little old lady from Pasadena. I see a motorbike--leather jacket--skull emblem. Driver speeding--on the boulevard--people running. *(MARABELLE interrupts her)*

MARABELLE: *(shakes her head)* I think it's time for my staff meeting. I'll set you up in Room 312. Follow me.

(Staff meeting in the lobby is taking place)

MARABELLE: Have any of you found any clues about the little old lady's whereabouts?

HOWARD: No, I've searched the grounds and no BODY.

EUNICE: Please don't say BODY. I've searched every stairwell and the basement. Not a sign of anyone and no ghosties down there either!

FANNIE: I've been running the fitness program all day and I checked the equipment room but there's no sign of her.

EUNICE: We may have an ACTUAL missing person here after all! As much as I hate to call the authorities in, we do have a moral obligation to call in the police.

MARABELLE: Let's wait awhile. We promised our dear late Aunt Gertrude that we would try to save the hotel. If we can't get enough customers, we're going to have to sell to that developer. The hotel has been in the family for too many years to lose it now. Why don't we call a private detective first and keep it hushed up? Our livelihoods and the future of this hotel depend on keeping up our haunted reputation.

EUNICE: (*grouchy*) We wouldn't have to worry about our livelihoods if you'd listen to me and sell this old place.

FANNIE: Let's not give up that easily. We've all worked so hard to keep this place going! I'm going to call a private detective. (*gets out phone book*) Let's see-- detectives, oh, here is PR Detectives. Oh, that sounds right up our alley. We can use all the PR that we can get. I'll call them and we'll meet back here in the morning.

SCENE 3

(The night shenanigans begin. The stage shows two rooms side by side facing the audience, JOY and GLADYS' room and CRYSTAL and BARNEY's room. ELVIS sings in the background)

JOY: (*reading a book in a chair, surprised voice*) What's that?

GLADYS: (*in another chair, reading a magazine*) What? What are you jibber-jabbering about?

JOY: Can't you hear it? There's something weird going on. I swear I hear Elvis singing.

GLADYS: Next time get his autograph. Now, just shush up and let me go to bed. (*a noise, sisters sit up in terror*)

BARNEY: (*sitting in chair, reading a newspaper and drinking tea*) Crystal, did you hear that?

CRYSTAL: (*meditating with crossed legs*) Yeah, wasn't that something. Don't be scared, it's just a ghost coming to visit, that's all.

BARNEY: That's it. I am out of here! (*grabs coat*)

CRYSTAL: For heaven's sake Barney, calm down. (*BARNEY sits back down and CRYSTAL knocks on the wall*) Hello there. Do you have anything to say to us from beyond?

HARRIET: Yes, go to bed. You're keeping us up over here with all of your noise. (*can be said from offstage*)

SCENE 4

(Exercise room in the morning. Yoga music is playing)

FANNIE: Now ladies, time to do the downward dog!

MYNA: She's got to be kidding. (*FANNIE demonstrates the pose*)

ETHEL: Oh I am so tired. Did you hear those people next door? I thought they were too old for that kind of thing.

STELLA: Well, they can't be THAT old, I heard one of them singing Love Me Tender. I don't go for that sentimental nonsense.

MYNA: That wasn't them. It was Elvis. I used to listen to all of Elvis' hits on those little 45's. Do you remember those little 45's?

HARRIET: Stop chattering, Myna! How can it be Elvis?

STELLA: Of course it's not Elvis. Elvis is deceased. It must have been a recording!

MYNA: There is a rumor that Elvis has NOT left this building. Why, I have you know that...(*FANNIE cuts her off*)

FANNIE: Ladies, ladies, we are supposed to be doing these exercises, not talking. (*FANNIE makes a swivel of her hips in an Elvis-like move during yoga position without her control*)

FANNIE: What made me do that? That's not a yoga move!

MYNA: It was an Elvis move! Oh, my gosh, the swivel of his hips! (*she wiggles her hips*) Oh how I loved the way he moved!

(*ELVIS sings "Jailhouse Rock" in the background as the COWS re-enact a "Jailhouse Rock" choreography scene*)

FANNIE: Ladies, ladies! We must control ourselves! (*shaken by the experience*)

MYNA: Well, tell that to Elvis. I have his music in me!

STELLA: You've also got the malarkey in you!

HARRIET: Well, Stella, how DO you explain what happened? I felt like a marionette with Elvis pulling the strings!

(*JOY and GLADYS come in just in time to overhear this as they enter*)

JOY: Excuse me, but did you say Elvis, as in Elvis the Pelvis?

ETHEL: Yes, she did and you wouldn't believe what just happened.

JOY: Try me!

GLADYS: Now Joy, Elvis is long gone. Get with it, sister, and stop imagining Elvis is hanging around this hotel! Mom always said you had an overactive imagination!

MYNA: (*excitedly*) This is going to sound crazy, but we were just about to do the downward dog with our instructor here, when all of a sudden the music turned into "Jailhouse Rock." It was like we were caught up in a scene from an Elvis movie and our bodies weren't our own!

GLADYS: (*sarcastic*) You have one thing right---this does sound crazy!

JOY: Oh Gladys, can't you entertain the idea that just because you can't see something, doesn't mean it isn't there?

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!