

# Full Steam Ahead!

Jay Kerr



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**ArtAge Publications**

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FULL STEAM AHEAD!

By

Jay Kerr and Al Budde

CAST

JOHN: At 64, John is the youngest senior, feeling the weight of his age more than the rest. He likes playing the field but has been on the sidelines lately until this final voyage on the Miss Mossy sets him on a new course.

RUDY: A faithful spouse, good father, fine provider, at 83 Rudy finds himself in the early stages of dementia and takes out his mounting frustration on PAT, his wife.

PAT: A fine wife, mother and teacher, Pat has always maintained control of every aspect of her life until she is unwillingly thrust into her new role as her unpredictable husband's caregiver.

FLO: At 82, she feels 30, apparently never having received the memo about growing older and acting your age. She is vibrant and exciting and loves life.

JIM: Jim responds to his wife's passing by making passes at most every single woman he meets, eventually convincing his new friend Doris to take a cruise with him. He resists commitment so he won't get hurt.

DORIS: Wants a new relationship but finds she can't shed the ghost of her dead husband of 42 years.

KATHLEEN: Beautiful, vivacious, elegant, Kathleen is a wildly successful entertainer and entrepreneur and a miserable failure at maintaining long-term relationships.

GRACE: Impossibly cheerful and annoyingly youthful, she wants to be in love but doesn't yet know what love is.

Place

*Aboard The Riverboat the 'Miss Mossy'.*

Time

*The present.*

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

MUSIC and LYRICS by JAY KERR

Additional Lyrics by  
FLORENCE HAYLE, ARTHUR KIRSON, ED KULKOSKY

The River of Life (Kerr).....	ENSEMBLE
Growing Old Together (Kerr).....	PAT, RUDY
Nothing But Time (Kulkosky).....	JOHN
If You Stay Young (Kirson).....	FLO, ENSEMBLE
Open Up to You (Kerr).....	DORIS, JIM
The Best Time of My Life (Kirson).....	RUDY
Do I Have the Strength? (Kerr).....	PAT
More of a Woman (Kerr).....	DORIS, FLO, GRACE, KATHLEEN, PAT
The Things I Really Need to See (Kulkosky).....	JIM, JOHN, RUDY
He Was Married (Kerr).....	KATHLEEN
Men All Want the Same Thing (Kerr).....	JIM, JOHN, RUDY
Only a Moment (Hayle/Kerr).....	JIM
Three People in the Room (Kerr).....	DORIS
Do I Have the Strength (Reprise) (Kerr).....	DORIS, PAT
I'm Gonna Get You (Kerr).....	FLO
I Don't Remember (Kulkosky).....	RUDY
Sing a Different Song (Kulkosky).....	ENSEMBLE
No Time Like the Present (Kerr).....	KATHLEEN
One More Tomorrow/Life Happens (Kerr).....	ENSEMBLE

FULL STEAM AHEAD!

Scene 1

Setting: *The dock leading to 'The Miss Mossy', a venerable century-old riverboat.*

At Rise: *JOHN stands on the dock and bellows the final boarding call.*

JOHN: All aboard! The Miss Mossy sets sail for its final river voyage in ten minutes. Cast off in ten minutes!

*(Frenetic music. The cast hurries up on stage, juggling bags and talking. As they board, JOHN greets them with GRACE, the ship's cheerful young Purser. Ad libbing chatter, the characters hang their bags comically on their hosts' shoulders, arms and necks. As others head to the bar, RUDY and PAT take Center. He is thoughtful. She is a bit manic.)*

RUDY:

*(Song: The River of Life)*

*Something is happening.*

*Happening.*

*Something new is happening.*

*Something new is happening to me.*

PAT: Of course something is happening, Rudy. We're taking a riverboat trip down the Mississippi. This is the trip you've always wanted. The trip *we've* always wanted.

RUDY: I know.

PAT:

*Something is happening.*

*Happening.*

*Something new is happening.*

*Something new is happening.*

RUDY:

*Something new is happening.*

*Happening to me.*

*Something good is happening.*

*Something I can't see.*

*And my head is ringing*

RUDY: (*con't*)

*With voices singing.*

*I can't make out what they say.*

PAT: Let's go get settled. We're in First Class you know!

RUDY: First Class? Can we afford that?

PAT: Don't worry. The kids chipped in.

RUDY: The kids? Wow. Something new IS happening!

PAT: There's a first time for everything!

*(They move along; JOHN shoos everyone in. JIM, DORIS, and FLO take Center and sing.)*

FLO:

*Everywhere it's happening,*

*Everywhere I go.*

JIM:

*Who I was, I am no more.*

*Who I'll be? Don't know.*

DORIS:

*It's a crazy feeling.*

*My soul is healing*

*With joy that won't go away.*

FLO, JIM, DORIS:

*Change is here,*

*And happening is happening to me.*

*(Flo spies JOHN passing through, looks at him, and follows him. JIM and DORIS stop.*

*JOHN tends the bar.)*

JIM: You know, Doris, I've done a lot of things in my day but I've never been on a riverboat cruise before. This is gonna be great! All-inclusive. Food. Drinks.

*(suggestively)* Everything.

DORIS: If you say so, Jim.

JIM: C'mon, Doris! A different view in every direction! A different state every day and a different show every night! What's not to love? I'm doing it. Finally doing it! Out, seeing the country!

DORIS: Yes, and thanks for bringing Flo along. You didn't have to do that, but—

JIM: Aw, I know. You feel more comfortable with your ol' pal along for the ride. Flo's a good time. And anyway, (*suggestively again*) she's got her own room!

DORIS: You think she's cruising?

JIM: We're all cruising! Cruising down the river! She's your friend, what do you think?

DORIS: I think I'd better go check on her. (*DORIS finds FLO.*)

FLO: Doris! Why aren't you *getting settled* with Rudy?

DORIS: You know I'm uncomfortable about all of this. At our age? Sneaking off together. We're not even married—

FLO: Stop worrying, will ya? So you have some laughs.

DORIS: (*nodding toward JOHN*) You were flirting with him, weren't you?

FLO: Who me? Nah. I'm just waiting to get this show on the road.

DORIS: You mean the river.

FLO: Whatever. Road, river. It's all-inclusive. That's all that matters to me!

JIM, DORIS, FLO, JOHN, RUDY, PAT:

*The river of life is flowing through me.  
The tide is high and I'm becoming whole.  
The river of life has washed away the pain.*

RUDY:

*And I'll be new. I'll start again.*

DORIS:

*Lead from my heart again. And I'll sing.*



ALL:

*And I'll shout.*

*Don't for a second doubt*

*That I'm about to live*

*On the river of life.*

*(KATHLEEN enters singing. JOHN spies her and recognizes her; who doesn't? She is attractive, well put-together and has a take charge way about her. He hits on her, and she skillfully deflects advances. We can see she is in charge.)*

KATHLEEN:

*Something big is happening.*

*Bigger than just me.*

*Feel the whole world trembling.*

*Feel it set you free.*

JOHN:

*Feel the song repeating*

*That life is fleeting.*

*That all we have is today.*

*Right this moment,*

ALL: *(build in)*

*Happening*

*Happening. Happening.*

*Right this moment,*

*Happening is happening to me.*

*And the river of life is flowing through me.*

*The tide is high and I'm becoming whole.*

*The river of life has washed away the pain*

*And now I'm new. I'll start again.*

*Lead from my heart again.*

*And I'll sing.*

*And I'll shout.*

*Don't for a second doubt*

*That I'm about to live, live, live*

*On the river of life.*

*(RUDY and PAT have a table. JIM, DORIS and FLO are seated at the bar. KATHLEEN sits alone at her own table. JOHN moves in to refill her glass.)*

JOHN: So Kathleen is our celebrity. You all recognize her from that magazine cover last month, don't you? *People* I think it was?

FLO: *(unimpressed)* Time.

KATHLEEN: Well, thank you, but I think this boat is our celebrity. *(She toasts.)* To The Miss Mossy!

ALL: Hear! Hear! To the Miss Mossy! Skol!

RUDY: *(enters, a little late to the party)* I'll drink to that!

PAT: And to just about anything. *(They ad lib bickering.)*

JOHN: Our married couple...Pat and Rudy...long may you ...

JOHN/FLO: *(toasting)* Live!

PAT: *(laughs)* Thanks.

DORIS: And exactly how many years ...?

RUDY: Six kids, twenty-one grandchildren, two new hips, and a quadruple-bypass.

*(Song: Growing Old Together)*  
*When I said those magic words,*  
*Dear, come grow old with me.*  
*I thought it was romantic,*  
*And we'd both age gracefully.*

PAT:  
*It's pathetic how prophetic!*

RUDY:  
*I'm ironic'ly aghast.*

RUDY and PAT:  
*Growing old together is happening*  
*Much too fast!*

PAT:

*First of all, the vision goes,  
Though there's not a lot to view.  
The hearing, too, or lack thereof.  
Say what? Say what? Screw you.*

RUDY:

*And no question my digestion...*

PAT:

*It's enough to make me sick!*

RUDY and PAT:

*Growing old together is happening  
Much too quick.*

RUDY:

*The abdomen is flabdomen.  
My six pack's packed in fat.  
And I'd detect erectile dysfunction  
If I remember'd where my erectile's at!*

PAT:

*Don't get me wrong, the years have caught  
His better half as well.  
I sag. I bloat and burp alot.  
My ankles sometimes swell.*

RUDY:

*Still I'm grateful.  
She's a plateful  
But I think you catch my drift.*

RUDY and PAT:

*Growing old together is happening  
Much too swift.*

PAT:

*Once beautilous, his gluteous  
Is maximus in size.*

PAT: (con't)

*Though one suspects that's next to nothing  
When compar'd to my two  
New french fry thighs.*

RUDY:

*If it's all downhill from here,  
Problem is the hill's not high.*

PAT:

*When we're depending on depends,  
Will I secrete enough to cry?*

RUDY and PAT:

*But we'll rejoice here.  
We've a choice here.  
We'll climb uphill till we fall.*

PAT:

*Growing old together is happening,*

RUDY:

*And that's better than not happening at all.*

RUDY and PAT:

*We'll go on and love life  
And live however long we last.  
Only thing is: growing old together is happening  
Much too...One-two-three...Fast!*

DORIS: And exactly how many years ...?

RUDY: Twenty-five years.

PAT: Fifty-five.

**END OF FREEVIEW**

**You'll want to read and perform this show!**