

Old Folks Rock: Favorite Cousins

Allan Bates



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ArtAge Publications

Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President

PO Box 19955

Portland OR 97280

503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998

bonniev@seniortheatre.com

www.seniortheatre.com

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FAVORITE COUSINS
(Still Got It)

A One-Act Comedy

by

Allan Bates

CAST

CAROLYN: An elderly woman, preferably in her 80s, very alert and spunky. Carolyn is Kent's "mother" because she married Kent's father after Kent's biological mother died young. After the marriage, the family went on to have many years of loving relationships. Carolyn lives with John and his family.

JOHN: Carolyn's 'cousin,' two years younger than Carolyn. Also in very good mental health and equally spunky.

KENT: Carolyn's 'son.' Middle aged. Somewhat overly protective of Carolyn.

GLORIA: John's daughter. Middle aged. Concerned for John's well-being. Does not live with him.

Place

Varies. A bare stage. A rocking chair whenever appropriate. When entering, each character might be carrying a chair to use. Costumes will change in various scenes, from sensibly casual to mildly flamboyantly tourist.

Time

Now. The present.

Running time—about 22 minutes. Bits of popular songs, relevant to the key character in each scene, might be added as scenes change, slightly increasing the running time.

Each scene has a title. An actor/stage manager, probably dressed as an attendant on a cruise, posts placards of the titles.

Old Folks Rock is a series of three plays, *Thief!*, *Favorite Cousins*, and *Opus 88*. They can be done together or each play can also stand alone.

If you are continuing from *Thief!*, Henry in *Thief!* addresses the audience.

HENRY: I need to use the restroom more often than I used to, and I know some of us get sore in the tail end when we sit too long, so we're going to have an intermission here. Get up and stretch. Get some circulation back in your legs while we clear this furniture off the stage and get ready for *Favorite Cousins*. Oh yes, additional kisses are entirely up to you. I'm not going to tell you again.

Intermission

HENRY: A lot of this next play happens over the phone, so there's not much furniture here; you'll have to imagine all that. It's mostly about Carolyn and John. You probably know some old folks like them.

He blows the audience a kiss and exits.

FAVORITE COUSINS—WHAT'S UP?

Carolyn is in a rocking chair, barely onstage, fidgeting, perhaps trying to read a book, but not really able. John enters downstage, phone in hand, and telephones his daughter Gloria. Telephone rings and rings. Although Carolyn is onstage, she is not part of this scene.

JOHN: Damn. OK, daughter. If your machine isn't on, you must be home.

Gloria enters with wet hands, gingerly holding a phone.

GLORIA: Hi, Dad. I had my hands in dishwater. Everything OK?

JOHN: Sure. Everything's fine. How are the kids?

GLORIA: Fine. You sure?

JOHN: Sure what?

GLORIA: That everything's OK?

JOHN: Of course. Why do you ask?

GLORIA: You usually call me on Tuesday. And I usually call you on Fridays.

JOHN: Yeah. So?

GLORIA: Today's Thursday.

JOHN: Is there any reason I can't call you on Thursdays?

GLORIA: Of course not. You can always call any day you want. You sure you're fine?

JOHN: Yep. I'm fine. Feeling good.

GLORIA: That's good. And we're fine too. What's up?

JOHN: Nothing. (*Beat*) Have you had any contact recently with your cousins?

GLORIA: Which cousins?

JOHN: I was thinking mostly of Kent.

GLORIA: Kent's my second cousin. Or something like that.

JOHN: Any contact with Kent?

GLORIA: Uh...we got a Christmas card from him.

JOHN: When?

GLORIA: At Christmas. In December.

JOHN: That's when Christmas cards come. Just this last Christmas?

GLORIA: Sure. Last Christmas.

JOHN: Just from him?

GLORIA: From his wife and kids too. And Carolyn.

JOHN: Did they say how Carolyn is doing?

GLORIA: Lively as always. Always in somebody's hair. Fussing because she hadn't done anything interesting all year. That's about what they said.

JOHN: That's hard to believe. Carolyn was always up to something.

GLORIA: When's the last time you saw her?

JOHN: I don't know. Maybe at your wedding. To Tom.

GLORIA: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Fourteen years ago.

JOHN: That long?

GLORIA: That long. Always the smartass, aren't you? I'm sure Carolyn's changed by now.

JOHN: Do you happen to have her number?

GLORIA: Her phone number?

JOHN: Well...yeah. Or her social security number...so I can...Of course, her phone number.

GLORIA: You want to call Carolyn?

JOHN: Just thought I'd...

GLORIA: OK. Why not? She's living with Kent and Jenny now.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show.