

Old Men

Linda LaRocque



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OLD MEN

By Linda LaRocque

CAST

BILL NELSON: Older male

LEONARD: Older male

POLLY: Older female

Place

Picnic area at a small mid-western marina.

Time

Summer.

OLD MEN

ACT ONE Scene 1

At Rise: Leonard is sitting in a chair drinking coffee from an old mug. He is dressed in dungarees, tee shirt, plaid flannel shirt, sneakers, and cap.

BILL: *(enters, dressed similarly, carrying a coffee mug, walks to edge of stage looking over edge and onto floor.)* So whatya up to?

LEONARD: Sittin' here. Why?

BILL: Apple's still in the trap.

LEONARD: Ya think I'm stupid? I know that. He's a sly old devil that one. He sneaks in here during the night when I ain't around, grabs that apple, slips the trap and skedaddles. You just wait.... he's gonna be in my stew pot one of these days.

BILL: How about a game of dominos?

LEONARD: Ain't in no mood for dominoes. Can I ask you somethin'?

BILL: Sure, what's on your mind?

LEONARD: You was awful late getting' back here from Florida this spring, weren't ya?

BILL: A little maybe? What's it to you?

LEONARD: Just heard a rumor or two is all. Stub Sperry says you found yourself a floozy down there in Florida.

BILL: Don't be worrying about me Nelson. Just worry about yourself...and that old muskrat you're always trying to trap and never can....and probably never will.

LEONARD: I ain't worried about you. I was just tryin' to be cordial and ask a question is all. Ya don't gotta go gettin' testy on me.

BILL: How many years you been trying to trap that old boy? Four or five maybe?

LEONARD: Dang close. But the old boy's days are numbered. Ya know he's chewed up everybody's boat lines around here.

BILL: Know what I think the problem is? You don't know how to trap muskrats. You use the wrong kind of apples.

LEONARD: Well, I'll be. First time I knew old lover boy here was an authority on live trappin' muskrats and what kind of apples they prefer. Why don't ya go bother somebody else?

BILL: We've known each other all our lives and I've been waiting a long time to tell you this. Fact is I probably should've done it fifty years ago. But I'm telling you now. You...you've always been a damn know it all! You're a blow hard. A big mouth blow hard. Always have been and always will be. And I've had it with that mouth of yours.

LEONARD: Oh yeah, well at least you don't find me hanging around Florida, pickin' up some floozy with my dear wife barely cold in her grave.

BILL: What the hell are you talking about, being barely cold in her grave? Dorothy's been dead seven years.

LEONARD: Don't matter. It still ain't right.

POLLY: (*enters, dressed casually, walks to edge of stage and looks onto floor at the imaginary muskrat trap*) I walked by here earlier and there was an apple in Leonard's trap. Of course it's gone now. Looks like his muskrat was here!

LEONARD: When did that happen? He must've slid in there, grabbed that apple and slipped the trap again, all the while we was talkin'. Never even saw a ripple on the water. (*jumps up and turns*) And it's all your fault too.

BILL: What are you talking about? You've been trying to catch that old boy now for years. Never could and never will. He's too smart for you.

LEONARD: That ain't it. If you hadn't been here running your mouth, I'd have seen him and I would've snuck over there and closed the trap on him. But no, I was paying attention to you and your nonsense.

POLLY: Hey Bill, I heard you got yourself a girlfriend down in Florida. Is that true? Everybody's talking about it. We ever going to met her?

BILL: Drop it Polly You're being a gossip.

LEONARD: She ain't no gossip.

POLLY: I'm not gossiping. I'm just telling you what I heard. Somebody said she's gotta be thirty years younger than you and pretty, too.

LEONARD: I knew it. I just knew it. And poor Dorothy, barely cold in her grave.

BILL: I told you Dorothy's been gone for seven years.

POLLY: Has she been gone seven years? It seems like only the other day when—

LEONARD: Don't go, sticking up for him. Ain't none of your affair. *(to Bill)* And besides, just what are your kids gonna say?

BILL: *(angry now)* You're right. It's none of your affair. *(points to Polly, then pointing to Leonard)* And it's none of your affair, either.

POLLY: Please Bill. Calm down. You're right, it's none of our business and I'm sorry for hurting your feelings. If anything, I'm a little jealous. I wish I had someone in my life. Being alone isn't fun.

BILL: Thanks Polly. This don't mean I think any less of Dorothy. I just don't like being alone. It's like something's been missing in my life and I've found it now.

LEONARD: It still ain't right.

POLLY: Why Bill, I think you're in love.

BILL: I think I am too. 80 years old, and crazy in love. As my granddaughter would say—it's awesome!

LEONARD: You ain't right in the head, boy.

POLLY: *(touching his hand)* I'm happy for you Bill.

LEONARD: Well, I ain't.

BILL: You just can't say anything nice, can you?

LEONARD: Well no. Not right off hand. But if I think of somethin'...

BILL: Never mind. That's just what I mean about you being a blowhard. Always gotta have the last word, don't you?

POLLY: All right you two. That's enough.

LEONARD: Your kids ain't gonna like this and I don't blame 'em either.

BILL: You might be right, but I've been a good dad, grandfather, and husband. Now it's my turn, as they say. I don't have forever. None of us do.

POLLY: We're both happy for you, aren't we Leonard?

LEONARD: No, Not really. *(pause)* I'd be happier if I caught the old boy today. *(walks to edge of stage, looks down at imaginary muskrat trap)*

BILL: You'll never catch him. Trouble is, he's smarter than you. *(stands next to Leonard and points to trap)* He's even got you trained. I see him every day. He slips in there, grabs your apple, takes a bite, and leaves. I love watching him.

LEONARD: I wonder what she really sees in you? Probably your money. You know, you and Dorothy's money.

BILL: You're pushing me Old Man.

LEONARD: What do you mean I'm pushing you? You're lucky I haven't knocked your block off, the way you've been acting. Chasing all over Florida with this...

BILL: You're getting into something you've no business getting into. Keep outta my life.

LEONARD: *(turns to Bill and is angry)* I could've had the old boy today. But no, you gotta run that mouth of yours and ya scared him off. Get outta here. And don't bother to come back. I don't care if I ever see you.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!