

Cruising

by

Mickey Bolmer

(3 acts, 10, comedy)

7 with tickets
for
the Presidents' Suite U.S.S. President
the long married couple
(their daughter chose spring break with her boyfriend and his family)
the best friend
the tech CEO
(long ago the best friend and the CEO lovers)
the young mistress
the wife
the man whose partner gave him the cruise before he died
who will cruise the eastern Caribbean?

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Characters

(in order of appearance)

Ruth Freedman (56)
Ike Freedman (57)
Ms. Hosta, vice-president guest relations (36)
Belinda Williams (40)
Hank Williams (54)
Beth Chase (24)
Louise Brooks (54)
Winston Salem (39)
Jane Freedman (18)
George Washington (18)

Sets

Act 1 and Act 2: The Presidents' Suite at the center of the back end of the U.S.S. President. Down stage center, a large balcony, flanked by balconies for the suite's two bedrooms, privacy screens separating the balconies. Sliding glass doors separate the balconies from the main room and the bedrooms. One balcony table has a fruit basket. Center stage, the suite's main room with living, dining, media, and bar areas. Upstage center, a small lobby and the door to the hallway. Stage right and left, doors to the suite's bedrooms. The bedrooms have their own doors to the hall that runs parallel to the back of the ship.

Act 3: On St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands, two tents. The beach and ocean are up stage, just over a small rise, so they are not visible but the large blue Caribbean sky is.

Note: For Ike, I have used "well" to mark his deference; this could be replaced by a deferential cough.

Act 1
scene 1

(enter Ruth and then Ike followed by bags. Ruth will go immediately to the bar and start in on the champagne and caviar.)

IKE

Oh, Ruth! Bigger than our living room! A piano. I always wanted to learn to play. It's a player piano. Here are some C.D.'s, "The Songs of Fred Astaire."

(In goes the C.D., hits play and "Cheek to Cheek," words and music by Irving Berlin starts. Ike improvises a Fred Astaire dance.)

Wow! How does it work? I was so sorry when Janey stopped. How did our little girl get so tall?

(onto the balcony)

"Heaven, I'm in heaven

And the care that hang around me thro' the week

Seem to vanish like a gambler's lucky streak"

Ruth! Come look. More beautiful than ever! Or do I forget? Charlotte Amalie, a jewel.

Come out, Ruth! Do you remember our first cruise, the Century, Charlotte Amalie our last stop, now just the beginning, Janey was four. I can still feel her, here in my arms, I'd carry her, facing forward so that she could see the world.

RUTH

(takes her travel bag to the coffee table center stage where she will unwrap objects from home. She had planned to put them around but decides to make a still life out of them on the coffee table.)

IKE

We took my sister that year, she was an intern. We were so lucky in Dr. Dana helping Jane and us through Jane's always being above the ninety-fifth percentile in height and weight. Do you remember how round she was in third grade? Well. Dr Dana, it was Janey's annual physical I think, when I mentioned that my sister was 40 and an intern, and she said, "When she gets her vacation, take her out of the country, and so we did. A 40 year old intern. My family, my birth family, we do, it seems, well, everything old. Janey had a great check-up. Ruthie, come out, the air is

(takes a Fred Astaire turn)

"Heaven, I'm in heaven

And my heart beats so that I can hardly speak"

40 when Janey was born, 44 on that first cruise, two tiny inside cabins. Now! Why?

He could have come?

RUTH

Fool

IKE

George, George Washington, what sort of name is that? We would have worked it out. Do remember our first visit to my parents? We tried to make love under the ping pong table! Well, actually just some kissing, and now, here we are, married thirty years and four months, today, well, Mother, come out! The Presidents' Suite, sweet, as Jane would say, "Heaven, I'm in Heaven and my heart beats so that I can hardly speak..."

MS. HOSTA

(rings door bell, comes right in, turns off the piano)

Mrs. and Mr. Freedman, welcome aboard the U.S.S. President, flagship of the great U.S.A. Lines and welcome to your home away from home, the Presidents' Suite. I hope your trip went well.

IKE

Yes, thank you, well, we were told on the way down that bomb threats had been closing the airport but we landed right on time, got our luggage, and then just as we got into a cab, the PA system started announcing, "Please leave the airport by the nearest exit."

MS. HOSTA

Your daughter

(Ruth exits to the bathroom)

did not register with you. You flew separately?

IKE

Our daughter,

RUTH

(Ruth enters with a trash basket and during the following puts it center stage, selects a glass goblet from the objects, wraps the goblet in the basket's liner, puts it back in the trash basket, and steps on it, smashing it.)

IKE

well, has gone to the mountains with her friend and his family. Every spring break for fourteen years, we've all taken our cruise. Well, things change. What's wrong with you? It's funny about his name

MS. HOSTA

(Ms. Hosta is equipped with a hands free cell phone and takes a call.)

Yes sir, right away sir! No sir, Miss Freedman will not be joining her parents.

IKE

Stop that! What are you doing? Why're you doing that?

MS. HOSTA

That, Mrs. and Mr. Freedman, was the Captain! He would very much like to meet you! Could you delay unpacking for a few minutes? His cabin is just down the hall. It is his pleasure to personally welcome all Presidents' Suite guests, though we think of you as family, when first they board.

RUTH

(breaks the goblet)

MS. HOSTA

Mosel tov!

IKE

Ruth? My grandmother gave us that goblet.

MS. HOSTA

Shall we, the Captain?

(ushering them out; Ruth going grudgingly)

IKE

Well, do you have children, Ms. Hosta?

MS. HOSTA

Four

IKE

And you're here, well, it must be very hard.

MS. HOSTA

My husband and my mother, at home

IKE

Good for you! I too was an at-home father. Now I
(exit, bags entering)

BELINDA

(enters between bags, with the box of three gardenias)

Now, that's the ticket. My Presidents' Suite! Belinda! Our Presidents' Suite. Poor gardenias, left forlorn in the vice-presidents' suite, I don't think so.

(arraying herself)

He is sweet....Belinda, Hank is Hank! Yes...yet remember good one why you're here.

(explores the suite with cell phone)

Hello Ms. Hosta, speak up, yes, Belinda Williams here, Ms. Hosta are you still there, yes...here, no I am not at the airport, yes...hours before my husband...we always fly separately, my...our room is completely inadequate. Mr. Williams...as you know...has a