

Half Seas Over

A Ten-Minute Play

By Brenton Lengel

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Lights up on a derelict fishing boat, off the coast of Costa Rica. It is day, but it is impossible to tell exactly what time, as the entire boat is surrounded by a thick fog. BEVERLY SISTO sits on a lawn chair. She wears a one-piece bathing suit, sunglasses, and a large, floppy, hat. A CRUSTY SEAMAN enters, (If it's possible to leak filth, this man does.) He carries a dirty moleskin notebook and an even dirtier pen. He looks at BEVERLY and then opens the book and writes something. She rolls over onto her stomach. Then he snarls and scratches it out. Beverly rolls back onto her back. The SEAMAN puts the notebook away and begins to pull in the lobster traps from the side of the barge. The traps are old, dirty, and covered with barnacles. The crabs and lobsters inside are brown with dirt. He snarls and shakes the traps at BEVERLY. She ignores him. The SEAMAN snarls again and exits. VIOLET enters. She is a timid woman in her mid twenties who has been pushed too far. She is dressed conservatively, but for some reason is wearing a penis-balloon around her head. No one acknowledges this.

VIOLET:

I don't think you can tan with the fog like this.

BEVERLY:

Cloudy days are when you burn the worst. Fog is just a cloud on the ground.

VIOLET:

I don't think it works like that—

BEVERLY:

Sure it does. What are we having for dinner tonight?

VIOLET:

Really? You've really going to ask me that?

BEVERLY:

Why not? I want to know.

VIOLET:

You know, some people say the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result—

BEVERLY:

Those people are stupid.

(Pause. VIOLET stews.)

BEVERLY:

You know, I wonder when we'll reach port—

VIOLET:

CRAB! WE ARE HAVING CRAB!

VIOLET:

It's unlady-like to be trapped on a dingy off the coast of Costa-Rica, *for over a year!* It is unladylike to share a cabin with a bimbo from Connecticut and a seaman who seems to be composed entirely of barnacles! It is unladylike to eat lobster with a side of crab—

BEVERLY:

Crab with a side of lobster.

VIOLET:

FOR OVER A YEAR!

BEVERLY:

You think we could get him to serve us lobster with a side of crab? Just to change things up?

(Pause)

VIOLET:

I am in hell.

BEVERLY:

That's not possible darling.

VIOLET:

Why not?

BEVERLY:

Because I'm here with you.

VIOLET:

I think that bit of evidence supports my overall—

BEVERLY:

I am a Christian.

VIOLET:

So?

BEVERLY:

So I can't be in hell.

VIOLET starts to speak, but Beverly cuts her off.

BEVERLY:

Jesus saves.

VIOLET looks at her for a moment, and then buries her face in her palm.

VIOLET:

I know I am going to regret this—

BEVERLY:

Then why are you doing it?

Pause.

VIOLET:

Where do you think we are?

BEVERLY:

We're in a boat off the coast of Costa Rica.

VIOLET:

I know we're in a boat off the coast of Costa Rica.

BEVERLY:

Then we can't be in hell.

VIOLET:

Why not?

BEVERLY:

Because we're in a boat off the coast of Costa Rica...and Jesus saves.

VIOLET:

Why do I bother talking to you?

BEVERLY:

I don't know why do you?

VIOLET:

Because all the seaman ever does is snarl!

SEAMAN:

(Offstage, he snarls)

BEVERLY:

I don't see why you keep asking questions you know the answer to.

VIOLET:

I don't know why, I just...I just hope that one of these times you're going to give me an answer that makes sense.

Hmmm. Fancy that.

BEVERLY:

What?

VIOLET:

You know, someone once said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.

BEVERLY:

I SAID THAT!

VIOLET:

Really?

BEVERLY:

YES.

VIOLET.

Well.

BEVERLY:
(Offended)

Well what?

VIOLET:

Well I think it is a little presumptuous to go around quoting yourself that's all.

BEVERLY:

Half a Beat.

I...I am just—

VIOLET:

It just seems like a tacky thing to do.

BEVERLY:

The rest of the beat.

When do you think it will clear up?

BEVERLY:

It's never going to clear up.

VIOLET:

BEVERLY:

Don't be so negative.

VIOLET:

(Considers responding. She chooses not to)

Okay, let's go over this again. Why do you think we're here?

BEVERLY:

(Brightly)

Because we're on vacation!

VIOLET:

And you don't think it's odd, that you would take a vacation for over a year?

BEVERLY:

Well of course not. I work very hard.

VIOLET:

What do you work on?

BEVERLY:

Work.

VIOLET:

What kind of work?

BEVERLY:

I, am a pastry chef. I make erotic cakes in Connecticut.

VIOLET:

You make cakes in Connecticut?

BEVERLY:

Erotic cakes.

VIOLET:

And do you enjoy making erotic cakes in Connecticut?

BEVERLY:

I love it!

VIOLET:

Then why did you need a vacation?

BEVERLY:

Clearly you've never dealt with bachelorettes.

VIOLET:

(Darkly)

I'm a bachelorette.

BEVERLY:

(Genuinely)

I'm sorry.

VIOLET:

(Ignoring her)

My name is Violet, and I'm getting married tomorrow. I know I'm getting married tomorrow. I know I'm getting married to a brick layer, but I don't know his name, or who he is, or why he's a bricklayer. I don't know why I'm marrying him, or why the tomorrow with him never comes, or why I'm on a fishing boat with a Christian bimbo pastry chef from Connecticut and a barnacled seaman who only snarls, and I don't know why I eat crab with a side of lobster for dinner every single night!

VIOLET starts to cry.

BEVERLY:

There there.

VIOLET:

(Sobbing)

We are in hell.

BEVERLY:

This can't be hell.

VIOLET:

Why not?

BEVERLY:

Because dear, I am a Christian.

VIOLET:

(annoyed)

Why would a Christian make erotic cakes?

BEVERLY:

(momentarily stunned, then recovers)

Erotic cakes are Christian.

VIOLET:

How so?

BEVERLY:

(As if quoting her reverend)

Temptation is just as much a part of Christian life as anything else. Satan tempted Eve with the apple and so God tempts us so that we may rise above it.

VIOLET:

But Eve ate the apple.

BEVERLY:

And bachelorettes eat my erotic cakes. I don't see what's so hard about this.

SEAMAN enters holding his notebook and pen. He stares at the girls, and they stare at him, then he snarls and goes back inside the ship. The girls return to their conversation.

VIOLET:

Okay fruit-loop, we are in hell, and I'm going to prove it to you. What is your name?

BEVERLY:

Beverly Sisto.

VIOLET:

Right. And what's my name?

BEVERLY:

Violet.

VIOLET:

Violet what?

BEVERLY:

(Puzzled)

I don't know.

VIOLET:

Exactly! Neither do I. So...?

BEVERLY:

So that sounds like your problem.

VIOLET:

Don't you see? Don't you see? I have no last name! Violet is my only name! Does that seem right to you?

BEVERLY:

Well I don't know...

VIOLET:

Tell me! Tell me it's wrong!

BEVERLY:

It's not wrong...

VIOLET:

What do you mean it's not wrong?

BEVERLY:

Judge not lest ye be judged.

VIOLET:

I don't think that applies here.

BEVERLY:

The bible applies to all facets of life.

VIOLET:

Facets.

BEVERLY:

I'm sure it applies to those as well.

VIOLET:

(Rubs her temples and grits her teeth)

Why?

BEVERLY:

Because it's the word of God.

VIOLET:

Why does the word of God explain why I don't have a last name?!

BEVERLY:

(Quoting)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us—

VIOLET:

(Overcome with frustration, VIOLET grabs BEVERLY'S head)

Listen to me you crazed-up-Christian-bimbo-fruit-loop-pastry-chef-from-Connecticut, what, if anything, does the bible have to do with our current situation?!

SEAMAN runs onto the stage holding his pen and notebook, it is open.

SEAMAN:

(ecstatic)

I've got it! I've got it! I know what happens next!

The stage lights flare, temporarily blinding the audience and then go out, then come back up. VIOLET and BEVERLY SISTO stand on the boat, BEVERLY holds a box.

BEVERLY:

Here is the erotic cake that you ordered from my erotic cake shop.

She hands the box to VIOLET.

VIOLET:

Thank you. I am getting married tomorrow and thus will need this tonight because I am a bachelorette.

VIOLET opens the box, inside is a cake in the shape of the torso of a naked man, the penis is missing. She looks at BEVERLY.

BEVERLY:

(Shrugs guiltily)

I caught it in the fly?

VIOLET:

(Frowns)

This makes me angry.

VIOLET pulls a gun from her dress and points it at BEVERLY.

BEVERLY:

Oh no! A Gun!

VIOLET shoots her.

BEVERLY:

I have been shot, and am dying, but forgive you because I am a Christian.

VIOLET smiles and exits. SEAMAN enters swiftly, walking across the stage. He holds his notebook and is writing in it.

SEAMAN:

No. No. That's stupid.

He scratches something out. Lights go down. End of play.