



THE SAVANNAH SIPPING SOCIETY

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PLAY SERVICE
INC.



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*This play is dedicated to the memory of Sloane Shelton,
consummate actress, dear friend.*

AUTHORS' NOTE

We suggest up-tempo music be played pre- and post-show and at intermission. In the stage directions, we suggest specific styles of music for scene transitions, just enough to establish the mood.

We urge that scene changes be made as quickly as possible to maintain a lively pace for the play. In each act, it is important that each scene flows directly into the next. To accomplish this, we have provided sufficient time for the actors to clear props and make rapid costume changes. Stagehands should only be on the set at intermission and during the transition from Act One, Scene 1 to Scene 2, to quickly remove the bistro table and chairs.

Each monologue should be delivered facing the audience but without any interaction whatsoever with the audience during any monologue.

No dialogue should be provided for the non-speaking character in Act One, Scene 4.

The pronunciation of the last name of the character Marlafaye Mosley is “Moze-lee.”

We write strong female characters that are to be played by females. Under no circumstances should any role in this comedy be played by a male.

Nothing in the licenses for *The Savannah Sipping Society* (or any of the plays written by Jones Hope Wooten) gives the right to film video or audio record a performance, a rehearsal, or any part thereof. Placing any excerpts on YouTube, Facebook, or social media of any kind is a violation of copyright laws.

All of the characters portrayed in *The Savannah Sipping Society* are fictional creations, and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

THE SAVANNAH SIPPING SOCIETY received its world premiere at Gypsy Theatre Company in the Sylvia Beard Theatre in Buford, Georgia, on February 11, 2016. It was directed by Mercury, who also was the technical director and sound and set designer. The stage manager was Alessa Walle; the production designer was Danielle Gustaveson, who was also the scenic, costume, and property designer; the lighting designer was Joel Coady; the lighting operator was Chelsea Martin; the sound engineer was John LaFontaine; the stagehands were Dustin C. Burrell and Rachael Endrizzi; and the original Jones Hope Wooten show logo was designed by Jason Jeffers. The cast was as follows:

RANDA COVINGTON Eileen Koteles
MARLAFAYE MOSLEY Judith Beasley
DOT HAIGLER Bobbie Elzey
JINX JENKINS Lory Cox

Danielle Gustaveson appeared in the cameo role at the beginning of Act One, Scene 4.

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

RANDA COVINGTON, 49

DOT HAIGLER, 69

MARLAFAYE MOSLEY, 57

JINX JENKINS, 53

And a non-speaking role at the beginning of Act One, Scene 4

PLACE

The second-story verandah of a Savannah home.

Other locations are suggested by lighting.

TIME

The present.

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Late morning, lobby/juice bar of a yoga studio.

Scene 2: A few days later, late afternoon, verandah of Randa's home.
Hours later, the verandah.

Scene 3: One month later, late night, the verandah.

Scene 4: One week later, late afternoon, the verandah.

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Weeks later, late afternoon, the verandah.

Scene 2: Valentine's Day, late afternoon, the verandah.
Later that night, the verandah.

Scene 3: Six weeks later, the verandah.

Scene 4: One month later, a hotel balcony.

THE SAVANNAH SIPPING SOCIETY

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Late morning. Up-tempo jazz plays as a pin spotlight comes up downstage right on Randa Covington, high-strung perfectionist, in trendy form-fitting yoga pants and off-one-shoulder top. Hair stylishly pulled back, a rolled mat under one arm, water bottle in hand, she faces the audience and speaks.

RANDA. (*Exudes confidence, upbeat.*) It's my firm belief — and certainly any clear-thinking individual would agree — that one must approach life from a *logical* point of view. It's my mantra. For example, any time I'm asked to fill out a form that includes the phrase "in case of a medical emergency please contact — " I always write ... "*a doctor.*" Logic! It's how I built my successful career in architecture — working twenty-four-seven and accepting nothing less than perfection from myself. So, when a new partner was to be named at McCarthy & Fowler, it was *logical* my unflinching loyalty to the firm was about to be repaid. I was so proud as I walked into that conference room. (*Beat. Then, uncomfortable.*) You know, I don't actually *remember* screaming obscenities as the security guards pried my hands from the throat of the thirty-year-old *man* who *was* given the partnership. But when McCarthy & Fowler filed the restraining order against me, I completely understood because ... it was *logical*. (*Shakes it off, determinedly upbeat.*) Anyway, having an excess of time to fill, logic dictates that I do something other than sit

at home alone rearranging my sweaters according to cashmere content. And I may have stumbled on to a masterful way to heal body and spirit — yoga! (*Gets into it, indicates her costume.*) Obviously I have prepared and I am ready for the adventure. *This will be wonderful! (Her pin spotlight goes to black as another pin spotlight comes up downstage left on the lobby/juice bar in a yoga studio — bistro table, three chairs. “Spa”/new-age music plays softly in the background. Dot Haigler, daffy and endearing, in glasses, colorful exercise pants and top, is seated in a chair, fans herself vigorously. Randa, gasping, exhausted, joins her from stage right.) That was the most horrible thing I’ve ever been through! Forcing otherwise sane women to squat and contort themselves in a small room, then cranking the heat to a hundred fifty degrees?! Really?!* What homicidal maniac thought *that* up?! (*To Dot.*) Excuse me, mind if I collapse in this chair?

DOT. Please do! You certainly lasted longer than I did. I thought “hot yoga” meant it was fun and hip. Who knew we signed up for Lucifer’s little sweatshop?

RANDA. (*Laughs.*) I guess what counts is that we tried.

DOT. I agree. Honestly, I’m at the age where all I usually exercise is *caution*. (*Extends her hand.*) I’m Dot.

RANDA. I’m Randa. Good to know at least *two* of us were smart enough to get out of there alive. (*They shake as Marlafaye Mosley, earthy, boisterous, good ol’ Texas gal, in baggy sweatpants, sweatshirt with sleeves cut out, staggers in stage left, near collapse, drags a gym bag behind her.*)

MARLAFAYE. The pearly gates — they’re openin’ up! (*Croaks.*) Must ... have ... water! (*The others are alarmed. She sinks to her knees at the table.*)

RANDA. Oh! Okay, I’ll go get — (*Marlafaye grabs Randa’s bottle, chugs all of it, slams it back on the table.*) Or ... just ... help yourself to mine.

MARLAFAYE. Thank god I didn’t slather on the baby oil this morning. I would’ve come out of that hellhole chicken fried. (*Indicates Dot’s fan.*) Hey, could I get a little bit of that action?

DOT. Sure. At least this way I’ll burn a *few* calories. (*Fans Marlafaye, who basks in the breeze.*) So, I take it you don’t work out that much, either?

MARLAFAYE. Please. If it weren’t for mood swings, I’d get no exercise at all. But that’s okay, ’cause it just wouldn’t be fair to the women of Savannah if I was *this* gorgeous, smart, funny, *and* thin. It’s a public service, really.

DOT. How very thoughtful. (*Fans.*) Gee, what a waste of a perfectly good morning. I drove in all the way from Tybee Island to get here.

RANDA. That's the only positive part for me. I just had to walk from the end of the block. Mine's the house with the jasmine-covered verandah.

MARLAFAYE. Nice digs. (*Wipes her forehead.*) Boy howdy! I'm sweatin' like a hooker at altar call. I swear I've got a towel in here somewhere. (*Plops gym bag on table, rummages in it.*) By the way, I'm Marlafaye.

RANDA. I'm Randa. Randa Covington.

DOT. Dot Haigler. I was named for my great-aunt Rebecca. (*Off their looks.*) Oh, she had a huge mole in the middle of her forehead. We always called her Aunt Dot. (*Marlafaye pulls out various items from the bag, including a two-foot terrycloth rag doll. Dot picks it up.*) Oh, my. And who's *this* little fellow?

MARLAFAYE. (*Glances up, slightly embarrassed, takes it back.*) Don't think I always traipse around with a big ol' doll. I've been *encouraged* to keep it handy. It's what they call a mobile therapy device.

DOT. Oh. That's what my late husband used to call his whiskey flask.

MARLAFAYE. My ex's divorce lawyer forced me to take anger management classes. Turns out Mr. Happy Pants failed to see the humor in me cuttin' the crotch out of every one of his business suits.

RANDA. Going out on a limb here, I take it your husband cheated on you?

MARLAFAYE. (*Anger slowly rises.*) Yeah. With a twenty-three-year-old dental hygienist. Now every time I brush my teeth, I think of them sneakin' around, livin' the high life, while I was bustin' my hump on the job and wonderin' what was wrong with my marriage! (*Loses it, beats the doll against the table. Louder.*) I should've known Waylon was tomcattin' when he started flossin' between meals! That's just not normal! (*Stops. Pants. Smiles, relaxed.*) Whew! (*Offers it to Dot.*) Got any man problems you'd like to get over?

DOT. Me? (*Takes it.*) Oh, no. Ross and I had a wonderful marriage. He passed away suddenly eight months ago just after we moved here. We always planned for a golden retirement, to live near the water, make new friends. But Ross kept putting it off. We did finally get here, but — (*Determinedly upbeat.*) No. I don't have any man problems, but thanks. (*Puts the doll on the table.*)

MARLAFAYE. How about you, Randa? Want to take a shot? It's the least I can do to thank you for the water. (*Unseen by them, Dot studies the doll with increasing interest, picks it up, starts to shake and choke it. Her vigor builds.*)

RANDA. Oh, no. Men haven't been in the picture for years. I'm a dyed-in-the-wool career gal, devoted my whole life to it. No, I don't have a — (*They notice Dot.*)

DOT. (*Fierily.*) I told you we were waiting too long! You wasted the best years of our lives. Now you've left me all alone in a strange city with a drawer full of sexy underwear that's absolutely useless to me! A woman has needs! (*Slaps the doll repeatedly.*)

MARLAFAYE. (*Gently pulls doll away.*) Whoa. Kinda early in the day for that much information, Dottie. You okay?

DOT. (*Refreshed.*) You know, you're right. That little doll's a real winner. Oh, come on, Randa. Take a crack at it. Feels great!

RANDA. Oh, no, I haven't been involved in a relationship for years. I'm sure there's no *therapy device* for my particular situation. It's career-related. You see, I was recently the victim of a vicious corporate downsizing.

MARLAFAYE. I am so sorry. How many employees did they fire?

RANDA. (*Confident façade shatters. Sobs.*) One! (*Wails.*) They gave my job to a thirty-year-old twit. He wears bow ties! (*Grabs doll, screams as she smashes its head repeatedly against the table.*)

MARLAFAYE. Hey, now! Easy, girl! That doll's got to last me another couple months. (*Marlafaye pulls the doll away.*)

RANDA. (*Calms down.*) I ... don't know where that came from, but I feel much better now. I'm fine. (*Beat. Grabs the doll, gives it another whack, Marlafaye snatches it from her.*) Okay, now I'm fine.

MARLAFAYE. Wow! We may have bombed out of hot yoga but we sure let off some steam here today, right, girls? (*Shoves the doll into her bag.*)

DOT. I say good for us! And I don't think we bombed out here at all. Maybe we were meant to meet each other.

RANDA. Yes, maybe. It's ironic because I always avoid places like this. I'm starting to think the only way I'll ever expand my social horizon is to hire a life coach or find a miracle worker.

MARLAFAYE. Well, you won't catch *me* here again. I'm done with this exercise bull. I only joined this stupid class because my ex-husband bragged about how he and his trophy wife go to the gym and how he's lost fifty pounds since our divorce. He asked if I know what his ideal weight is and I said, "Sure. Four pounds *includin'* the urn." (*They laugh. She checks her watch.*) Gotta go. It was great to meet y'all.

RANDA. Yes, it *really* was. Another fifteen minutes and I would've invited you both over for drinks at my place. (*Laughs.*)

MARLAFAYE. Sounds great! Happy hour, six o'clock Friday night. DOT. I'm in! *(To Randa.)* You get the wine, we'll bring the nibbles. *(She and Marlafaye exit stage left.)*

RANDA. *(Completely blindsided.)* What?! But we don't really ...uh ... okay ... *(Tries to get into it. Calls.)* Great! The more the merrier! *(Light crossfades to black as downstage right pin spotlight comes up. Randa crosses into it, faces audience.)* Um ... when I was thinking about widening my horizons I didn't *exactly* see the process beginning with me chatting up two sweaty escapees from a New Age death trap. But ... maybe Dot's right. Maybe we *were* meant to meet each other. Of course Dot's a bit more mature and Marlafaye is ... well, she's *definitely* the person I'd want on my side if I were to find myself, say, in a *bar fight*. But I have to wonder if the three of us have anything in common. Now I'm questioning why I agreed to get together with them again. Frankly, I'm just not seeing the *logic* in it. But, maybe that's part of opening myself to new experiences, like ... *hot yoga*. *(Beat. Then, horrified.)* Oh god, what have I done? *(Blackout.)*

Scene 2

A few days later, late afternoon. Up-tempo country swing plays for only a few bars. Downstage left pin spotlight comes up on Marlafaye, now dressed in casual pants and shirt, carries an oversized purse.

MARLAFAYE. Know how you get that tingly feeling when you're fallin' in love? That sensation that washes over you and kinda gives you the shivers? Well, *that* is common sense leavin' your body. That's what happened to me on that black day I met Waylon Mosley. Waylon was the kind of guy you could count on to do the right thing ... once he'd tried everything else. And the man had no sense of humor. He'd turn to me in bed and say, "Marlafaye, I'm about to make you the happiest woman in the world." And I'd look at him and say, "I'm gonna miss you, Waylon." I mean, not even a *smile*. *(Sighs.)* Life in Tyler, Texas, was no bed of roses ... ironic since its claim to fame is being the *Rose Capital of the World*. I landed a job straight out of

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by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope, Jamie Wooten

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In this delightful, laugh-a-minute comedy, four unique Southern women, all needing to escape the sameness of their day-to-day routines, are drawn together by Fate — and an impromptu happy hour — and decide it's high time to reclaim the enthusiasm for life they've lost through the years. Randa, a perfectionist and workaholic, is struggling to cope with a surprise career derailment that, unfortunately, reveals that she has no life and no idea how to get one. Dot, still reeling from her husband's recent demise and the loss of their plans for an idyllic retirement, faces the unsettling prospect of starting a new life from scratch — and all alone. Earthy and boisterous Marlafaye, a good ol' Texas gal, has blasted into Savannah in the wake of losing her tomcattin' husband to a twenty-three-year-old dental hygienist. The strength of her desire to establish a new life is equaled only by her desire to wreak a righteous revenge on her ex. Also new to town, Jinx, a spunky ball of fire, offers her services as a much-needed life coach for these women. However, blinded by her determination and efforts to get their lives on track, she overlooks the fact that she's the one most in need of sage advice. Over the course of six months, filled with laughter, hilarious misadventures, and the occasional liquid refreshment, these middle-aged women successfully bond and find the confidence to jumpstart their new lives. Together, they discover lasting friendships and a renewed determination to live in the moment — and most importantly, realize it's never too late to make new old friends. So raise your glass to these strong Southern women and their fierce embrace of life and say "Cheers!" to this joyful and surprisingly touching Jones, Hope, Wooten comedy!

Also by Jones, Hope, Wooten
DOUBLEWIDE, TEXAS
FARCE OF NATURE
THE RED VELVET CAKE WAR
and others

DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC.

ISBN 978-0-8222-3467-8



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