BOOK REVIEW Brazen: Rebel Ladies Who Rocked the World By Penelope Bagieu

PARENTAL ADVISORY EXPLICIT CONTENT

SEXUALLY EXPLICIT CONTENT AVAILABLE AT TEXAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Sample content:

THIS IS WHERE SHE CREATES HER FAMOUS “DANSE SAUVAGE” (THE GREAT-GRANDMOTHER OF THE Twerk).
OF COURSE, HER ADOPTED COUNTRY HAS NEITHER RACIAL SEGREGATION (SHE CAN GO WHEREVER SHE PLEASES), NOR PURITANICAL MORALS.
(JOSEPHINE HAS SLIGHTLY MORE THAN "TWO LOVES."

BUT TOVE HAS A HARD TIME FINDING HER PLACE IN INSTITUTIONS, WHERE IT IS MADE CLEAR TO HER THAT WOMEN AREN'T WELCOME.

Art must come from the balls, you see?!
INITIALLY INTENDED AS A SIDE HOBBY, THESE ILLUSTRATED BOOKS ARE INSPIRED BY HER HAPPY CHILDHOOD.

The Moomins explore enchanting islands.

Moominmamma is free and encourages her kids to live life the same way (and to smoke).

Their friend, crazy Little My, represents Tove as a child.

FOR EXAMPLE, THESE ARE HER CHARACTERS THINGUMY AND BOB.

THEM A SUITCASE: A SECRET THEY CAN'T TELL ANYONE.

HOMOSEXUALITY IS ILLEGAL IN FINLAND AT THIS TIME, AND TOVE IS IN A SECRET RELATIONSHIP WITH A MARRIED WOMAN.
TOVE AND TUULIKKI DREAM OF ISOLATION AND LIFE IN THE WILD.

TOVE IS IN FULL DEPRESSION MODE WHEN, AT A PARTY ONE NIGHT, SHE MEETS FELLOW FINNISH ARTIST TUULIKKI PIETILÄ.

SHE INVITES HER TO DANCE. (SCANDALOUS!)

IT’S LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT, AND THEY BECOME LIFE PARTNERS.

Too-Ticky, a new character in Moomin’s adventures (who guides him through the winter)
DEVASTATED, SHE DECIDES TO PEN THE LAST MOOMINS BOOK.

After that, let's go away.
Far away. For a long time.

...AND SHE SPENDS THE REST OF HER DAYS WRITING,
PAINTING, SMOKING,
TRAVELING, AND ENJOYING TUULIKKI.
THE LEONARDO DA VINCI ART SCHOOL IN NEW YORK MAKES AN EXCEPTION FOR GIORGINA AND ALLOWS HER TO ENROLL DESPITE BEING ONLY FIFTEEN.
THE JORGENSENS LIVE IN THE BRONX, IN NEW YORK CITY. ON MAY 30, 1926, THEY WELCOME THEIR SECOND CHILD...

...WHO, BY ALL APPEARANCES, IS A BOY. BUT AS IT TURNS OUT, THIS ISN'T THE CASE.

THEY NAME THEIR BABY GEORGE JR.—BUT DEEP DOWN, GEORGE IS A GIRL.

GEORGE IS A VERY SLENDER CHILD WHO IS ALWAYS BEING PICKED ON.

HAVING TO WEAR BOYS’ CLOTHES IS TORTURE FOR HER, AND SHE SECURELY PUTS ON HER SISTER’S PRETTY DRESSES. SHE LONGS FOR A DOLL FOR CHRISTMAS ABOVE ALL ELSE.

AS A TEEN, SHE QUICKLY BECOMES VERY JEALOUS OF HER BEST FRIEND.

OR RATHER, JEALOUS OF HIS GIRLFRIENDS.
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BUT GEORGE HAS NOTHING TO LOSE, SO SHE BEGINS MIXING UP A HOMEMADE HORMONE THERAPY, ALL ALONE IN HER ROOM.

Okay. Let's give it a shot.

(SHE MAKES HERSELF VERY SICK IN THE PROCESS.)

A DOCTOR FRIEND OF HERS GROWS CONCERNED ABOUT HER HEALTH.

First: stop that nonsense. Second: go to where people care about this stuff...

...Denmark.
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She makes up her mind. She throws a little farewell party for family and friends but remains evasive about the details of her trip.

To the George you know! Say good-bye to him, sis?

She tells him everything: her despair, the sexual "no man's land" between genders in which she feels like she is dying, and her conviction that what others see isn't her true self.

He doesn't judge her. He barely looks surprised.

But it does look like somewhere in there, you're a woman, that's all.

And the doc listens.
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**GEORGE THEN AGREES TO BECOME DR. HAMBURGER’S GUINEA PIG AND EMBARKS ON AN INTENSE THREE-YEAR HORMONE THERAPY.**

**UNDER CLOSE MONITORING FROM THE DOC AND A SHRINK, GEORGE WATCHES HER BODY AND FACE TRANSFORM. SHE LEARNS TO MODIFY HER VOICE.**

**THE DOC THEN SUGGESTS A SURGERY. THE RESULT: HER BODY WILL STOP PRODUCING MALE HORMONES. THIS REQUIRES THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE DANISH MINISTER OF JUSTICE.**
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STORIES ON THE BRAVE, GLAMOROUS WOMAN STOP SELLING, SO THE PRESS CHANGES ITS ANGLE, TURNING MEAN (AND DUMB): “TRANSVESTITE,” “DEGENERATE,” ETC. MAGAZINES START TO USE THE PRONOUN “HE” TO REFER TO CHRISTINE.

AS IT TURNS OUT, SOCIETY HAS A HARD TIME ACCEPTING THE SPECTRUM OF IDENTITIES BETWEEN “MAN” AND “WOMAN.”

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CHRISTINE MAKES PEOPLE UNCOMFORTABLE.

BUT THE PRESS STILL SPILLS A LOT OF INK OVER HER...

CHRISTINE FACES IT ALL WITH GREAT COURAGE. SHE RESPONDS WITH POISE AND PATIENCE, DESPITE THE FEAR AND HATRED SHE AROUSES. SHE GOES ON SERVING AS THE PUBLIC FACE OF ALL THOSE LIVING IN THE SHADOWS.

SHE ATTENDS FANCY CHARITY EVENTS, IS ELECTED “WOMAN OF THE YEAR” BY A SCANDINAVIAN FOUNDATION...

AND THIS IS HOW CHRISTINE ENDS UP AT FREDDY’S SUPPER CLUB IN MANHATTAN, BELTING OUT “I ENJOY BEING A GIRL” AT SOLD-OUT SHOWS.

IN LAS VEGAS, THE SAHARA HOTEL BOOKS HER FOR A SERIES OF CONCERTS, BUT LATER GETS COLD FEET. THEY ARGUE THAT HER CONTRACT IS VOID BECAUSE “SHE” IS REALLY A “HE.”

TO SUCH A POINT THAT ONE DAY AN AGENT SUGGESTS SHE TAKES TO THE STAGE.

THE GUILD OF VARIETY ARTISTS COMES TO HER RESCUE AND MAKES THE CASINO PAY CHRISTINE HER $12,000 WEEKLY FEE.
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Gaozong, who, in the meantime, has become the (married) emperor, keeps visiting Wu for three years...

Until he finally manages to get her back into the palace as his concubine (after being his father's concubine, which causes quite a scandal).

Especially with Empress Wang and the official concubine, Xiaoshu.

Things grow even tenser for Wu when she gives birth to Gaozong's first son—In other words, the future emperor.

Soon thereafter, Wu also gives birth to a daughter. Tragically, the baby suffocates to death. Perhaps due to a combination of coal furnaces and poor ventilation in the palace.

But she hasn't come this far just to let a bunch of jealous shrews stab her in the back.

(Towards the end of her life, she grows tired and humbly cedes power to her son, who promptly restores his father's dynasty, as if his mother's legacy had never happened.

Wu passes away at eighty-one. Tradition holds that one's successors must sum up the deceased's life on her tombstone.

Official historians have long depicted Wu Zetian as a sort of Chinese version of the Queen of Hearts in Alice in Wonderland. By focusing on her secret police and her fondness for bumping off enemies.

In the very end, she has lovers, namely two brothers, fifty years her junior.

To this day, no one has figured out what to write.

Plus, she slept her way to the top!)
HER MOTHER REMARRIES WHEN SHE'S SEVEN. HER STEPFATHER IS NOT NICE AT ALL AND ACTS AS IF SHE DOESN'T EXIST. SHE BECOMES INVISIBLE.

BUT WHEN SHE HITS HER TEENS, HE SUDDENLY TAKES AN INTEREST IN CHERYL.

A LITTLE TOO MUCH.

WELL TOO MUCH.

SHE LIKED IT BETTER WHEN HE ACTED AS IF SHE DIDN'T EXIST.

SHE LIKED IT BETTER WHEN SHE WAS INVISIBLE.
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Thérèse considers this time of her life as the "golden years," and she shares it with her new lover.

If only in just the sexual sense! Finally! Passion without the pressure of performance!

Thérèse remains madly in love like a teenager until the very end, and is featured in the film Les Invisibles in 2012.

(Appearing nude for the occasion.)
BETTY TRIGGERS MILES’S ARTISTIC REVOLUTION. IN HIS VIEW, THE MUSIC SHE LISTENS TO IS THE NEW SOUND OF THE BLACK PEOPLE.

The blues have been sold to the whites!

HE IS STEEPED IN THE SOUNDS OF ELECTRIC ROCK AND COMPOSES THE ALBUM BITCHES BREW (A TITLE BETTY CAME UP WITH), WHICH SELLS A HALF MILLION COPIES.

BUT AFTER ONE YEAR OF MARRIED LIFE, MILES IS EXHAUSTED BY HIS WIFE, WHOM HE JUST CAN’T MANAGE TO DOMESTICATE.

You’re too young and too wild for these ol’ bones of mine.

HE ACCUSES HER OF SHENANIGANS WITH JIMI HENDRIX. SHE SAYS HE HAS ANGER ISSUES.
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...but then, upon listening to it, major shocker: she meows, she yowls, she roars, she screams.

It's like she's got one hand down my pants and the other one is slapping me!

She isn't exactly subtle on stage, either...

Buoyed by the success of her first album, Betty decides to do another. But this time, she takes the training wheels off and sets out to write, arrange, and produce it herself.

(And she's likely the only woman doing this at the time)

Fremont is a bleak little town that all major highways avoid and whose residents all sort of look alike.
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This produces the exact opposite effect: the girl leaves there filled with a strong aversion to authority and ignorance.

For Katia has faith in only one religion: science.

In her teens, she announces to her parents that she will either be a volcanologist or write crime novels.

Those... those are men's jobs... why??

They aren't altogether won over.

And then, at long last, she's offered the lead part in a Czech film titled Ecstasy. She is seventeen.

She loves how modern the screenplay is.

My character spots a handsome stranger, and it's love at first sight! So she sets out to seduce him, has a fling with him, and then leaves him because, as it turns out, she's married!

H. Kiesler
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HEDY Tries to warn HER parents: she makes a fully nude appearance in the film.

THE FILM IS A HIT RIGHT OUT OF THE GATE, WITH THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE RUSHING TO SEE IT OPENING WEEKEND.

FEMME FATALE.

This whole time, she plows through a succession of lovers (chaplin, Brando, capa), marries five more times, and has three children.

She always goes for the same type of man: intelligent, brooding, and older than her.

"Men under thirty: five have too much to learn. And I don't have time to teach them."

HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY, WHICH TALKS ABOUT HER LOVE AFFAIRS, WILL BE CONSIDERED ONE OF THE TEN MOST EROTIC MEMOIRS OF ALL TIME BY PLAYBOY MAGAZINE.

IT'S PREFACE IS EVEN PENNED BY A PSYCHIATRIST WARNING READERS ABOUT THE DEPRAVED DIVORCEE'S PATHOLOGICAL LIBIDO.
HER MOTHER PROTECTS HER KIDS LIKE A MAMA BEAR TO KEEP THEM ON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW.

You come near my boy again and I'll make myself a purge out of the skin on your ass.

Yes, Ma'am.
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PROFANITY COUNT approximate (and other sensitive words)
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*ss 1
Homosexual 1

RED FLAGS
Sexual Content
Glamorized lewd behavior
Drinking, Smoking

CONCLUSION
Not appropriate literary content for K-12 schools