

No Kidding!

A Play in Two Acts

By Scott Icenhower

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No Kidding!

-2-

DEDICATION

*To David A. Wright:
my friend and one of my mentors in the theatre.*

STORY OF THE PLAY

Calvin Rogers is a young husband who has created a fictional daughter so that he can enter various contests through the mail. When a phone call informs him that his daughter has won the grand prize in the Giggle Gardens Theme Park contest, he is overjoyed until he learns that the publicity department is coming to his house to photograph the lucky girl. So now, all he has to do is send his wife on a wild goose chase, enlist the aid of his macho brother-in-law, find someone to play his daughter, convince the suspicious contest promoters, and side-step a truancy officer – all before his wife returns. Children can change your life!

Originally entitled, “Just Kidding,” this play was the winner in the 2009 Playwright Project Competition sponsored by the Orpheus Theatre, Oneonta, NY.

The premiere performance was in August 2005 at the Paramount Theatre, Burlington, NC. Cast included:

*Calvin Rogers: Michael Carter
Sandra Rogers: Cheryl Roberts
Todd Maybrie: Jacob Marshall
Wayne Maybrie: Chris Taylor
Jeff Jones: Ralph Shaw
Monique Smith: Melissa Carroll
Jessica Finch: April Marshall
Jennifer Finch: Meredith Griffin
Chris Gentry: Carol Plew*

No Kidding!

-3-

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 3 w, 1 flexible, 1 boy, 1 girl)

CALVIN ROGERS: Father of "Claire." Middle class professional type. An everyman of sorts.

SANDRA ROGERS: Calvin's wife. The voice of reason, the mature one in the family.

TODD MAYBRIE: Calvin's nephew. *(10ish.)* Loud and obnoxious. Starts believing Claire is real after awhile.

WAYNE MAYBRIE: Todd's dad, Sandra's brother. Not the brightest brother-in-law. Has a macho complex.

JENNY FINCH: Child actor/model. *(12ish.)* The perfect child without talent.

JESSICA FINCH: Stage mom. Stage mom says it all.

MONIQUE SMITH: Theme park PR agent. Attractive and professional in her role of marketing exec.

JEFF JONES: Theme park photographer. Acts over the top foppish so he can be left alone as he wanders through the house.

CHRIS GENTRY: Truancy officer. Knows what's going on but playing along until the right time. *(Male or female.)*

No Kidding!

-4-

SETTING

Rogers' living room. One door, stage right leads outside. A door upstage left leads to the kitchen. A hallway opening stage left leads upstage to the kitchen and downstage to the rest of the house.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I: A Saturday afternoon.

ACT II: Later that same afternoon.

PROPS

ACT I

Bag of groceries

Four envelopes: one containing a savings bond

Four packages: A book, a girl's dress and shoes, an art booklet, and a box of chocolate snacks called Doo-Dahs.

Five-dollar bill

Phone book

Telephone that rings

At least two cameras, preferably with flash.

Same number of camera bags.

One or two duffle bags

Several sets of clothes for Jenny (*Carried in by Jessica.*)

One copy of a contract

Glass of water

Notepad and pencil.

ACT II

Wallet with picture of Todd

Ankle brace

Shopping bag with misc. merchandize

Two checkbooks with ink pens.

Business card for Chris Gentry

No Kidding!

-5-

ACT I

(AT RISE: The Rogers' living room. CALVIN enters from outside, dashes to phone and frantically dials a number.)

CALVIN: Am I caller seven? - I am? GREAT! - Yes, my daughter Claire is here and ready to sing her heart out. - She's going to be 10 next Saturday. - Claire Isabelle Rogers. - Yeah, her mom and I are very proud. *(Spoken away from phone.)* OK, honey. Are you ready? *(Changes his voice to sound like a 10-year-old girl and begins singing a current song.)*

(SANDRA enters from outside carrying mail, groceries and several packages.)

CALVIN: *(Cont'd his voice is back to normal.)* Hello ... Hello ... Ah, crap they hung up!

SANDRA: You know, your dream of being a 10-year-old girl would be more successful on the internet.

CALVIN: Uh no, it's just that I forgot the cell phone - then the contest started - silly me.

SANDRA: Calvin, you're making a fool of yourself. Just exactly what are you trying to prove?

CALVIN: Honey! Let me help you with those packages. Are you feeling better? Is that breakfast going to stay down? I never thought that nature intended the words breakfast and burrito to go together. *(Everything that Sandra was carrying is set on couch.)*

SANDRA: Don't change the subject. I want you to stop this nonsense. Taking advantage of others by misrepresentation is probably illegal, and impersonating a little girl on the phone is definitely weird.

CALVIN: I was just trying to win a couple of movie passes, that's all.

SANDRA: That's all? You might actually be breaking some sort of law here. And if you go to jail, it won't be juvenile detention.

CALVIN: Oh, you're funny.

SANDRA: You do remember going by the post office and signing for Claire's packages? Does the phrase "mail fraud" mean anything to you?

CALVIN: You mean female fraud?

SANDRA: Oh, now you're funny. Well, maybe this will help. Let's go through this stack of mail, shall we? Here's a letter addressed to Claire Isabelle Rogers from the Giggle Gardens Contest Department. Here's another one for free ice cream. This one is for a coupon to customize your own birthday cake. Oh, and look -- a book on how to handle your parents?

CALVIN: They still bother me a little.

SANDRA: Let's see what's in this box shall we? It's addressed to Claire Rogers from some company who thinks she really exists.

CALVIN: You shouldn't open other people's mail.

SANDRA: I'm a concerned parent. Oh look, a dress ... and matching shoes.

CALVIN: If you complete a questionnaire about the wearability of the dress and shoes they'll give you a free digital camera. ... We don't have a camera.

SANDRA: And here is a two-hundred dollar savings bond for Claire. It appears she won an essay contest on why Green Tree Elementary is the best school.

CALVIN: I went there, and it was pretty darn good, thank you very much.

SANDRA: Calvin, will you please stop this madness. Maybe you think this is justifiable, but you are bordering on the illegal. (*Opens an envelope.*)

CALVIN: I can open the rest of them. Why don't you take the groceries in the kitchen?

SANDRA: Look at this one. "Dear Claire: Thank you for your interest in our art school. Please complete the enclosed application including your social security number. If you do not have one yet, talk to your parents about obtaining one for you"

End of Freeview

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