

Excerpt terms and conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest you read the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

SHARING

A One-Act Play

by

O. B. ROZELL

Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 1980 by
Estate of O.B. ROZELL

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(SHARING)

ISBN: 978-0-88680-172-4

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., of Woodstock, Illinois.”

SHARING

CAST OF CHARACTERS

RICHARD KENDRICK

JIMMY, his 17-year-old son

SUSAN }
KAREN } his 16-year-old non-identical twins

DIANNA, his 14-year-old daughter

CANDY, his 13-year old daughter

JULIE, his wife

MRS. KENDRICK, his mother

MR. KENDRICK, his father

HANK BURNS }
CYNTHIA BURNS } his neighbors

TIME: The present

PLACE: The living-dining room of the Kendrick home

ABOUT THE PLAY

Richard Kendrick's world has turned upside down. His wife, Julie, was killed in an automobile accident at Thanksgiving, leaving Richard with their five teenage children.

Richard and the children find it impossible to talk about their mother, resulting in strained family relations at a time when the children and the father need each other more than ever. And now it's Christmas... and they discover that Julie bought presents for all of them before she died....

O. B. Rozell's plays portray today's families as they are confronted by today's crises. His ability to penetrate to the heart of the crisis and to understand the deep emotions of those affected by it has placed his work among the most significant and most poignant short plays of the modern theatre.

Sharing is an impressive contest play for all groups. It is also ideal for a program of one-act plays, especially in conjunction with Rozell's **Searching, Of Winners, Losers, and Games**, and/or **The Freeway**. And of course, **Sharing** is a meaningful Christmas play, although it is equally appropriate for any time of the year.

SHARING

By O. B. Rozell

[As the curtain rises RICHARD KENDRICK is standing Stage Right. He moves from Right to Left, turns to the audience as if suddenly aware of their presence, and speaks]

RICHARD. I'm what they call a single parent, or a widower. A lot of people simply refer to me as "that poor Mr. Kendrick." You see, my wife died...oh...uh...a month ago. *[He looks at his wristwatch]* Well, it was exactly four weeks, two days...seven hours and twenty minutes....I won't try to pretend it's easy or that I'm getting over it. *[He sits and lowers his head for an instant]* I don't think I really want to get over it. I want to always remember Julie...the love...the beautiful times...*[He chuckles]* ...the funny little things she did. Her friends called her a klutz or "the nut over on Cynthia Street." There was never a dull moment with her around here—and we had a daughter just like her. *[He rises and moves Upstage Center]* I have an idea..I'll see if you can pick the klutz out. *[He shouts]* HEY, KIDS!!!! C'MON DOWN! I want to introduce you to someone. *[He moves back to Stage Right]* Jimmy'll be the first one down. That kid has more energy than anyone I ever saw. Can't sit still for five minutes. *[JIMMY rushes in through the Up Center doorway]*

JIMMY. Yeh, Dad?

RICHARD. See? *[To Jimmy]* Let's wait for the others.

JIMMY. We seem to be doing that all the time. Those gals are never on time for anything and it's a cinch they're never in a hurry...unless there's some guy waiting.

RICHARD. Son, you'll just have to get used to that. Women don't like to be rushed...and besides, not everyone is as jumpy as you.

JIMMY. Mom always called me hyper-active. *[He moves to the sofa and flops down on it]*

RICHARD. *[Gestures to Jimmy]* He's the one who took it the best. I guess being the oldest and the only boy, he just helped take over. *[KAREN and SUSAN enter Up Center]*

SUSAN. What's up, Dad?

RICHARD. Here's the twins. I'll explain about that later. *[To the girls]* I want to introduce you to these nice people, but let's wait for Candy and Dianna.

KAREN. That may take awhile.

RICHARD. What do you mean?

KAREN. Candy just sprayed Windex on her hair.

SUSAN. Thought it was hair spray. Dee's helping her wash it out now.

RICHARD. *[To audience]* Well, I don't think you'll have to guess who our little klutz is.

KAREN. This is the third time she's done that in the last two weeks. You'd think she'd learn. *[CANDY enters with wet hair, followed by DIANNA]*

CANDY. That makes me so mad I could spit.

DIANNA. You never look at what you're doing. Just pick up anything and spray away.

CANDY. Oh, get off!!!!

RICHARD. Girls!!

JIMMY. Candy, that was pretty dumb.

KAREN. So? What else is new?

CANDY. Dad, will you tell them to cool it? I didn't have my contacts on...I couldn't see.

RICHARD. And why didn't you have your contacts on? *[There are a few seconds of silence]* Well????

SUSAN. She swallowed one.

DIANNA. Most people clean them in the sink but not her...plop! She sticks them in her mouth. It's not only revolting but it isn't safe with a motor mouth like her.

RICHARD. When did you do it?

CANDY. This morning.

RICHARD. My God, that's the...what is it...tenth one in a year?

CANDY. I'm sorry, Dad.

JIMMY. There is one way of retrieving it.

SUSAN. Yuck! How disgusting!

RICHARD. Okay...that's enough! Now, I wanted to introduce you, like I said, but there's no need now. They've heard all your names.

KAREN. You could tell them about me and Susan. The twins who don't look like sisters even.

RICHARD. Good idea...the twins. A blonde and a brunette. Why? *[He shrugs his shoulders]* We saw the minute they were delivered that we needn't give them twin names because they didn't weigh near the same and they certainly didn't look alike. So, we came up with Susan Kay and Karen René...that's kinda twin-like.

KAREN. No one believed us when we said we were twins so we just gave up years ago.

SUSAN. Yes...and thank goodness Mom didn't dress us alike. *[There is a moment of strained silence]* I'm sorry...really. Dad, I'm sorry...I didn't mean to mention....

RICHARD. Honey, it's all right. You can talk about her.

DIANNA. No! I don't want to...I can't....*[She rushes off Up Center]*

RICHARD. *[Calling to her]* Honey? *[JIMMY rises]*

JIMMY. I'll go to her, Dad. She's been holding that for a long time. *[He exits Up Center]*

CANDY. Dee's right, Dad. It's too soon to talk about it. I wish we could just pretend it never happened.

SUSAN. That's dumb.

KAREN. It did happen. What do you want to do...play like she's still here?

CANDY. It's better than the way everyone's been actin' around here all the time. It's like living in a tomb. *[She storms off Up Center]*

KAREN. Dad, don't let her fool you. I think it hurts her the most.

SUSAN. Are you kidding? She's too ding-dingy to understand it.

RICHARD. Girls...you may not've noticed but Candy's just like your Mother and believe me, she understands. Don't sell her short.

KAREN. I think Dad's right. Her friend Buzzy said she'd changed a lot at school and even Miss Marshall's noticed how quiet she is, and that isn't normal.

SUSAN. Do you want me to talk to her, Dad?

RICHARD. No, Honey, I can handle it.

SUSAN. Okay, but if you think it'd help, I'll talk to her tonight.

RICHARD. Thank you, Honey. *[The twins turn to exit]* By the way, I noticed you two have breakfast duty this morning.

KAREN. Yes...are you ready for burned everything? *[She and SUSAN start off Right]*

SUSAN. I'll cook if you'll clean.

KAREN. That's what I meant by burned everything. I knew you'd try to make a deal.

SUSAN. Okay, I can take a hint.

RICHARD. Why don't you both cook and both clean up?

SUSAN. Good idea...why didn't we think of that? *[They exit Right]*

RICHARD. *[Moves to a chair]* This is one of the hardest times. Julie always had breakfast ready and the kids'd all storm down. It was like a three-ring circus or a political convention.

[Flashback—LIGHTS change to soft blue. JULIE enters from Right with a cart and sets the table. She rings a bell]

JULIE. BREAKFAST IS READY! *[RICHARD moves to her]*

RICHARD. Mornin', Honey. *[He kisses her on the cheek]*

JULIE. Mmmmmmm...I thought we already said good mornin'.

RICHARD. Not formally. *[He bows like an antebellum gentleman]*

Good morning, Miss Scarlett.

JULIE. *[She curtsies—the Southern belle]* Good mornin', Mr. Rhett. *[They laugh. He embraces her as JIMMY rushes in quickly, followed by CANDY, KAREN, SUSAN, and DIANNA]*

JIMMY. Uh-oh! They're at it again. *[The kids sit at the table and JULIE moves to one end, RICHARD to the other. They all chatter]*

CANDY. Jimmy, pass the toast. *[He picks up a piece of toast and positions himself to toss it]*

RICHARD. *[Quickly lowers his head]* Heavenly Father...*[JIMMY freezes and bows his head]* We thank you for this food and the hands that prepared it. Bless it to the nourishment of our bodies. Amen. *[JIMMY tosses the toast to CANDY, who misses it]*

KAREN. Jimmy, why do you do that every morning? We can count on scratching one piece of toast every time you expect Candy Klutz to catch it.

DIANNA. Yeh...what a waste. There are millions of children in China who'd love to have that piece of toast.

JIMMY. Name two.

SUSAN. Oh, we have a comic in our midst.

JULIE. Shhhh...quiet...may I have your attention?

RICHARD. Your mother wants your attention.

KAREN. Cool it, gang!

JIMMY. Okay.

CANDY. Why does everyone call me a klutz?

SUSAN. Candy Joyce? *[They all laugh]*

CANDY. Well, I just wanted to say that I don't appreciate it. How would you like it if you had to go through life being called Klutz, Klutzie, two-left-feet????

JIMMY. I don't know. Ask Mom.

RICHARD. Jimmy! That wasn't very nice.

JIMMY. Gee, I'm sorry, Mom.

JULIE. That's perfectly all right. I used to feel the same way, Candy. But I decided to admit that I wasn't the type to model evening gowns

or crochet bedspreads. I just went along with what I was and started having fun with my life. You must admit...there's never a dull moment and you kids never know exactly what to expect. Keep 'em on their toes, I always say.

JIMMY. That's right...and you know? I like it...hey, I like it.

CANDY. Mom, did everyone call you a klutz when you were growing up?

JULIE. No, Honey...they called me...*[She chuckles]* ...they called me Julie Jumble. My best friend made up a story about me...let's see how it went...“Julie went to gym to tumble...and when Julie tumbled, her brains got jumbled.” At first it made me mad as a wet hen but after awhile I knew they weren't being cruel and they really did like me...just the way I was. I even tried to change, and when I did everyone kept asking what was wrong with me. You see, we have our own personalities and that's how people know us. If we change everything about ourselves, people either think there's something bothering us or we're sick.

KAREN. Now-a-days, if you change you're automatically on drugs.

CANDY. Well, I want to change the way I am.

SUSAN. Okay, change. What do we care if we have a new sister. Go ahead and change.

JIMMY. Yeh, and everyone'll call you a dooper instead of dopey.

KAREN. Yeh, go ahead and be boring.

DIANNA. I think what they're trying to say is that we love you just the way you are. If you change, we won't even know you.

JIMMY. We'll have a *[mysterious voice]* ...stranger in our house.

JULIE. Okay, that's enough. *[They all become quiet]* Candy, you do whatever you think is right. I remember that I tried to change and it was worse than ever. Everyone expected Julie Jumble to be a klutz but when I became a very quiet, serious person, it looked strange when I dropped my cafeteria tray on the principal's head. *[They all laugh]* Just remember, Honey, no matter what you decide to do, we'll all love you. Right? *[They all answer aloud. She starts to rise and knocks her chair over. There is a moment of silence, then everyone laughs again]*

CANDY. Thanks, Mom.

JULIE. Now, to another problem. Thanksgiving's coming up and we need to decide where we're going...if anywhere.

CANDY. I wanta go to Grandma's.

JIMMY. We went there last year.

SUSAN. Yeh, let's go to Granny and Gramps'...it's closer.

JULIE. All of you know Granny's been sick.

DIANNA. We could do everything. I mean cook everything.

JIMMY. Have you ever tasted burned turkey?

DIANNA. Wise guy.

SUSAN. Yeh, we don't see you breaking your neck to get in the kitchen.

JIMMY. Cookin's women's work. Right, Dad?

RICHARD. No comment.

KAREN. Jimmy, the days of hiding the women folk off in the kitchen are over.

SUSAN. Yeh!

CANDY. Yeh!

DIANNA. I agree!

JIMMY. Okay...okay...sorry I brought it up.

RICHARD. Let's get back to the subject at hand. Honey, where do you want to go?

JULIE. Oh, it doesn't really make any difference to me as long as we're all together. It won't be long before you kids'll all be gone so I want to take advantage of togetherness while we still have a chance to have it.

JIMMY. Let's take a vote. All in favor of Granny and Gramps'? *[All raise their hands except Candy]*

CANDY. But, what about Grandma?

RICHARD. Oh, Honey, I'll drive on and pick her up after we get to Gaston.

JULIE. No, since she's my mother, I'll do it. Besides, it's a nice drive and I think I'd enjoy the peace and quiet for a change. Speaking of peace and quiet, you kids better get a move on or you'll be late for school. *[The kids rise]*

CANDY. I hate school!

JIMMY. You shouldn't hate school. An education is very important.

DIANNA. Especially when Sara Jane Copeland's around.

SUSAN. Oh, you noticed that, too?

CANDY. Sarah Jane Copeland?

KAREN. *[As the kids exit]* You mean you didn't notice?

SUSAN. Jimmy never thought about education until Sarah Jane moved here. *[They all exit Up Center chattering]*

RICHARD. They're good kids, Honey.

JULIE. I know...but I do worry about Candy. It isn't easy being the youngest and the klutz. I should know.

RICHARD. I know, but don't worry about her. She's a duplicate of you.

JULIE. That's what worries me. *[She picks the piece of toast up from the floor]* Like this...I'm sure she'd go into shock if she ever caught it. *[She tosses the toast to Richard, who catches it without any trouble]* See?

RICHARD. Just luck. *[He rises and helps her to clear the table]*

JULIE. Honey, you don't have to do this.

RICHARD. I know...but I want to. I like doing things together. That's what life's all about, isn't it. *[She nods and begins to push the cart of dirty dishes toward Stage Right]* Besides, if I don't help, you might break all the dishes.

[JULIE exits and he moves back to Center and sits. LIGHTS change from soft blue to standard lighting]

RICHARD. That was a typical breakfast around here. Yeh...we had a good time. Oh, we decided for sure to have Thanksgiving at Mom and Dad's...that's Granny and Gramps...and Julie drove on up to her mother's to bring her back for the feast...only she never made it there. One minute we were waving good-bye to her and the next minute...she... didn't exist. *[CANDY enters as he lowers his head in his hands]*

CANDY. Daddy? *[He doesn't respond]* Daddy? *[He looks up]* I'm sorry about the contact lens...it seems like I always do something dumb at the wrong time.

RICHARD. Honey, it's all right.

CANDY. No, it isn't. I need to learn responsibility. I've decided to get a job.

RICHARD. Come here, Honey. Sit down...here... *[She sits beside him]* Listen, I love you just like you are.

CANDY. But, Daddy—

RICHARD. No, I'll admit that swallowing a contact lens isn't exactly brilliant, but, Honey, you don't need to get a job. What brought this job thing on, anyhow?

CANDY. Well, Jimmy has a job and the twins are looking for one.

RICHARD. Jimmy has a job because he insists on making his own spending money for dates. It's different for boys, Honey. And the twins are trying to get jobs over at the hospital since they both want to be nurses. They're all a lot older than you, too.

CANDY. Okay...I guess you're right.

RICHARD. Now, you stop worrying about money. Just be yourself