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## **Family Plays**

# The Little Emmy Inn ... or L'emmy Out!



A mini-melodrama with optional music  
by  
**Patty Carver**

# The Little Emmy Inn ... or L'emmy Out!

*A mini-melodrama with optional music. By Patty Carver. Cast: 5m., 7w.).* Clarence Sterling was once a famous child actor—but he isn't anymore. He's now a middle-aged man who has gone a bit mad and speaks primarily in Shakespearean quotes. He lives with his sisters, Beatrice and Martha, in their big, beautiful Victorian family homestead. Times are hard, the sisters are broke, Clarence's savings from his career are gone and something must be done to make ends meet. So they decide to turn their home into an inn—The Little Emmy Inn. The centerpiece of the inn is, of course, Clarence's beloved Emmy that he won as a boy at the height of his career. Enter Leora Loot, the Sterlings' cousin and personal accountant, who has, over the years, secretly swindled Clarence and his sisters out of their savings. Leora recently also tricked Clarence into signing the house over to her, and the only way the homestead will be saved is if the sisters can make a successful go of The Little Emmy Inn. When Howard Bannister, the first customer, arrives, things are looking up, but one customer is not enough to save the homestead. Will the sisters make a go of their new business? Will Leora Loot get the inn? Will William Clancy, the pizza delivery man and certified public accountant, marry Nancy, the Sterlings' beloved niece? Will Susan Anderson, Leora's assistant, marry Howard? Will Harry, the handyman and inventor, come up with an invention to save the inn? Find out in this wacky, fast-paced mini-melodrama that is a fun-filled performance piece for middle-grade actors. *Unit set. Optional accompaniment CD available. Study guide available. Approximate running time: 45 minutes. Code: LK5.*

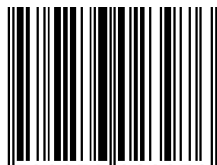
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ISBN-10 0-87602-397-9  
ISBN-13 978-0-87602-397-6



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MMXIII by  
PATTY CARVER

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(THE LITTLE EMMY INN ... OR L'EMMY OUT!)

ISBN: 978-0-87602-397-6

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*The Little Emmy Inn or ... L'emmy Out!* was first produced by Connecticut Children's Theatre in Carver's theatre camp July of 2009 at the Valley Regional High School Theatre in Deep River, Conn.

## CAST

Martha Sterling .....	Samantha Gudis
Beatrice Sterling.....	Caitlin Gance
Karen.....	Abbie Byers
Georgette.....	Mariah Concannon
Clarence Sterling.....	Sonny Capaccio
Garrison.....	Brennan Coutras
Harry .....	Connor Mitchel
Nancy Sterling .....	Lily Ball
William Clancy .....	Nate Ruso
Leora Loot.....	Grace Burleson
Susan Anderson.....	Kasey O'Rourke
Howard Bannaster.....	Tommy Perkins

# **The Little Emmy Inn ... or L'emyy Out!**

## **CHARACTERS**

*(In order of appearance.)*

**GEORGETTE:** The newly hired housekeeper at The Little Emmy Inn.

**KAREN:** The newly hired cook at The Little Emmy Inn.

**BEATRICE STERLING:** The middle-aged quirky co-owner of The Little Emmy Inn.

**MARTHA STERLING:** The middle-aged quirky co-owner of The Little Emmy Inn.

**CLARENCE STERLING:** The middle-aged former child star that hasn't been employed in 30 years. He has gone a bit mad and pretty much speaks only in Shakespearean quotes.

**GARRISON GRATE:** The computer guy.

**HARRY:** The handyman at the Little Emmy Inn and an inventor on the side.

**NANCY STERLING:** Martha, Beatrice and Clarence's niece. She wants to be a fashion designer.

**LEORA LOOT:** The Sterling's financial advisor who has the inside scoop on Clarence's stocks.

**SUSAN ANDERSON:** Leora Loot's unhappily employed personal assistant.

**HOWARD BANNISTER:** The Little Emmy Inn's first customer. A private detective in disguise.

**WILLIAM CLANCY:** An unemployed CPA currently delivering pizzas.



## PRODUCTION NOTES

In the tradition of the original, turn-of-the-century melodramas, audiences should be encouraged to cheer the hero and heroine, boo or hiss at the villainess and participate (within reason) throughout the show. An introduction before the show begins could explain audience participation, perhaps by the director or even by one of the cast members. The audience could even be asked to engage in a little rehearsal of the boos, cheers and hisses! This encouraged participation is a trademark of melodrama and adds a layer of fun for the audience and the cast.

*The Little Emmy Inn ... or L'emme Out!* is a mini-melodrama, written with a hint of the turn-of-the-century genre. All the characters are big, colorful and over the top. The play is a fun opportunity for a cast of middle- and high-school actors (or older).

The show is written with the intention of being produced easily. There is one simple set; the interior of The Little Emmy Inn. There are no costume changes. Thus, each character wears one costume.

All entrances to and from the outside of The Little Emmy Inn are at L. Entrances to and from the basement or upstairs are at UC. Entrances to and from the kitchen/dining area are at R.

The Little Emmy Award prominently displayed on a pedestal-like table is just a little trophy or statue that doesn't look like much to audiences, but to Clarence and his sisters, it means everything. If possible, a special can be used to light the Little Emmy Award trophy when it's referred to in the script as the characters exclaim "Ta-da!" for a funny bit.

The "Open" sign can be hung far L on a free-standing sign post, or an easel can be used.

## SOUND CUES

If the director chooses to use music, the sound cues are as follows:

### Scene 1

1. Opening (The Little Emmy Inn theme music)
2. Nancy's entrance (heroine music)
3. Leora's entrance (villainess music)
4. Nancy's entrance (heroine music)
5. William's entrance (hero music)
6. Scene Change (The Little Emmy Inn theme music)

### Scene 2

7. Nancy's entrance (heroine music)
8. Leora's entrance (villainess music)
9. William's entrance (hero music)
10. Computer email sounds
11. Computer email sounds
12. Computer email sounds
13. Closing (The Little Emmy Inn theme music)

## COSTUME & ACCESSORY SUGGESTIONS

*NOTE: Characters wear the same costumes throughout the play, with the exception of Nancy, who simply puts the pink sparkly chiffon dress over the skirt and blouse she is wearing.*

**GEORGETTE:** Slacks, a blouse or a polo (perhaps with a light sweater over it), flats/comfortable shoes and an apron with pockets to hold dust rags and/or a Lysol bottle. The colors she wears should contrast Karen's color scheme. She is dressed for work as a housekeeper.

**KAREN:** Slacks, a blouse or a polo, flats/comfortable shoes and a bib or a regular apron. She is dressed for work as a cook.

**MARTHA STERLING:** An eccentric dress, perhaps a Victorian look with some sort of headpiece or close-fitting hat, modest heels and big, fun costume jewelry. Her hair is worn up. She is quirky and eccentric, so her costume should reflect this. It should also give the impression that she is stuck in the past.

**BEATRICE STERLING:** An eccentric dress, perhaps a Victorian look with some sort of headpiece or close-fitting hat, modest heels and big, fun costume jewelry. Her hair is worn up. She is also quirky and eccentric, but a little less put together than her sister. Like her sister, her costume should give the impression that she is stuck in the past.

**CLARENCE STERLING:** Dark slacks, a white button-down dress shirt with perhaps a scarf or an ascot, a lush-looking smoking jacket (perhaps red velvet and black) and slippers. He carries a *Hamlet* script everywhere.

**GARRISON GRATE:** Jeans, a polo or a T-shirt (his shirt may say "Grate Computers") and sneakers or work boots.

**HARRY:** Khaki pants, a flannel shirt, suspenders, a white science lab jacket and casual shoes. He looks a bit like a mad scientist/inventor.

**NANCY STERLING:** A colorful skirt and top with flats. The sparkly pink chiffon dress should be put on over the skirt and top, as it is a fast costume change. The dress should look silly (the sillier the better). Velcro should be applied to the skirt portion of the dress so that the grape juice stain (a purple piece of fabric with Velcro attached) can be quickly applied when Nancy spills her grape juice.

**LEORA LOOT:** A black dress or black skirt/blazer suit with a dark blouse, modest black heels, a black bag or briefcase, black jewelry, a watch, a black cape (short and feminine) and a black headband or hairpiece.

**SUSAN ANDERSON:** A conservative skirt, a blouse, a cardigan and a matching shoulder bag with flats.

**HOWARD BANNISTER:** Khaki pants and a belt, a light blue oxford button down shirt, a blue blazer and a travel bag with loafers.

**WILLIAM CLANCY:** Black slacks and a black belt, a white button-down, short-sleeved dress shirt, a red bow tie and black dress shoes.

## PROPERTIES

### **The Little Emmy Inn**

An eclectic mix of items in the living room and kitchen/dining room areas should reflect the unique character of the Sterling household.

Little Emmy Award trophy  
pedestal-like table to display the Little Emmy Award  
“Open” sign  
kitchen table  
computer table  
couch  
knickknacks  
old photos  
show memorabilia  
flowers in a vases  
plants  
lamps  
odds and ends  
grape juice pitcher and glasses  
kitchen accessories:  
utensils  
napkins  
glasses  
serving trays

### **Georgette**

dusting cloth and a can of Pledge  
watering can

### **Karen**

toast  
juice

### **Clarence**

*Hamlet* script

### **Nancy**

grape juice stain (a purple piece of fabric with Velcro)

**Garrison**

big box containing:  
computer  
mouse  
cables  
webcamera  
slices of pizza (fake or real)  
paper money

**Harry**

pudding and a spoon  
Blot Begone spray bottle

**Howard**

newspaper  
fold-out wallet with FBI badge

**William**

two pizza takeout boxes

# The Little Emmy Inn ... or L'emyy Out!

## SCENE 1

AT RISE: *The Little Emmy Inn theme music plays. The setting is the interior of The Little Emmy Inn. The place is filled with hustle, bustle and excitement as it is getting ready to open.*

*The setting is a spacious area comprising of the living room area DL and the kitchen/dining area a bit UR. The living room is decorated conservatively, but warm and cozy. On a table prominently placed in the living room is a little trophy—The Little Emmy Award. Entrances into the inn are made from L into the living room. There is an entrance/exit UC leading upstairs to the family and guest rooms as well as downstairs to the basement.*

*GEORGETTE is arranging flowers in a vase in the living room area. KAREN is setting the table for breakfast. BEATRICE STERLING darts about, tidying. MARTHA STERLING enters from UC.*

*The music fades into scene.*

MARTHA (*as she enters*). Oh, Georgette, the flowers look beautiful!  
GEORGETTE (*as she finishes arranging the flowers*). Thanks, Mrs. Sterling.

BEATRICE. The table looks lovely, Karen.

KAREN. Thanks, Mrs. Sterling.

MARTHA. Let's finish the dusting, Georgette.

GEORGETTE. OK, Mrs. Sterling.

BEATRICE. And, Karen, would you please start breakfast?

KAREN. OK, Mrs. Sterling.

MARTHA. I'll get the feather duster.

GEORGETTE & KAREN. Mrs. Sterling!

BEATRICE. Wait! We have to do something about this. You can't call both of us Mrs. Sterling. It's silly, confusing and driving me crazy! So, why don't you call my sister Miss Martha and me, Miss Beatrice?

KAREN. How about Miss Bea, for short?

BEATRICE. Perfect. Now, back to the matter at hand.

MARTHA. The grand opening of The Little Emmy Inn!

BEATRICE. I hope this last ditch business venture is successful.

GEORGETTE. Don't worry, Miss Bea. This is a brilliant idea ... turning your big old house into a bed-and-breakfast ... it's brilliant!

BEATRICE. Thank you, Georgette. But it won't be brilliant until business is booming!

KAREN. Well, Miss Bea, as your new cook, I will do everything I can to help make this place a success!

GEORGETTE. And as your new housekeeper, I will, too!

MARTHA. Oh, we're so lucky to have found such wonderful employees!

*(CLARENCE STERLING enters holding a Hamlet script. He is very dramatic.)*

CLARENCE. Heigh-ho! Good-morrow and well met.

BEATRICE. Good day, Clarence.

KAREN. Hi, Mr. Sterling.

GEORGETTE. Hi, Mr. Sterling.

CLARENCE. How goes the world today?

MARTHA. We're opening our new bed-and-breakfast.

BEATRICE. You're just in time for the grand opening, Clarence! Drum roll, everybody! *(Puts up the "Open" sign.)* Ta-da!

*(Everyone celebrates except CLARENCE.)*

CLARENCE. Now is the summer of my discontent.

MARTHA. Now, Clarence, it's going to be wonderful ... Karen and Georgette have been such a big help. You'll see ...

*(GARRISON GRATE enters with a big box.)*

GARRISON. Somebody order a computer?

BEATRICE. We did!

GARRISON. Where do you want me to put it?

BEATRICE. Over there, please.

*(GARRISON brings the box U to the computer table.)*

GEORGETTE. You bought a computer?

MARTHA. Yes, we did! Clarence, wait till you see our new contraption called a computer!

CLARENCE. True it is, we have seen better days.

MARTHA. Now, Clarence, it's going to be wonderful. (*To GEORGETTE and KAREN.*) We spent all the money we had left to buy it.

BEATRICE. I hope we did the right thing ... We've never owned a computer before.

GEORGETTE. You've never owned a computer?

BEATRICE. No.

GEORGETTE. You mean you've never emailed?

MARTHA. No.

KAREN. Or blogged?

BEATRICE. No.

GEORGETTE. You've never tweeted?

MARTHA. No!

GEORGETTE. That's unbelievable!

GARRISON (*coming D to BEATRICE and MARTHA*). Excuse me, ladies. I'm Garrison Grate, of Grate Computers. Get it, "great" computers?

*(Nobody thinks it's very funny.)*

GARRISON (*cont'd*). Anyway, I'm here to set up your new computer.

BEATRICE. Thank you, Mr. Grate. I'm Mrs. Beatrice Sterling and this is my sister, Martha. This is Karen, our cook, and Georgette, our housekeeper.

GARRISON. Nice to meet you, ladies. And please call me Garrison. So, you're opening a new bed-and-breakfast?

BEATRICE. Yes, and we need your help. We bought this computer to make our business boom!

GARRISON. No problem, Mrs. Sterling. You just leave it all to me. I'll get right to work.

*(He begins to unpack the box and set up the computer.)*

CLARENCE. Something is rotten in the state of this bed-and-breakfast.

BEATRICE. Oh, Clarence, we have to do something to pay the mortgage.

CLARENCE. I am constant as the northern star, of whose true-fix'd and resting quality there is no fellow in the firmament.



KAREN. What's he talking about?

MARTHA. He thinks he'll get a job and all will be well.

BEATRICE. Clarence, it has been 30 years since you've had a job!

KAREN. Thirty years?

GEORGETTE. Thirty years?

MARTHA. Thirty years.

GEORGETTE. What's he been doing all that time?

MARTHA. Honing his craft.

CLARENCE (*reciting, absorbed in his Hamlet script*). "This above all: to thine own self be true, / And it must follow, as the night the day, / Thou canst not be false to any man."

KAREN. If it's not honed now, it'll never be!

(*CLARENCE, absorbed in his Hamlet script, moves U, out of ear-shot as the MARTHA, BEATRICE, GEORGETTE and KAREN talk about him.*)

MARTHA. I suppose you should all know that Clarence Sterling is an Emmy award-winning actor!

KAREN. Really?

GEORGETTE. Wow!

BEATRICE. Yes, for his appearance on *General Hospital* as "The boy in the Restaurant."

KAREN. He won an Emmy?

MARTHA. Yes! When he was 12 years old ... his performance was quite wonderful. And he received a special Little Emmy Award. It's right here. (*Gestures to the trophy proudly displayed D on the table.*) Ta-da!

GEORGETTE. That's amazing!

BEATRICE. Hence, The Little Emmy Inn.

GEORGETTE. Can I hold it?

CLARENCE. No! Let every eye negotiate for itself!

MARTHA. Don't worry, Clarence. We won't touch it. (*To GEORGETTE and KAREN.*) It's his pride and joy.

(*BEATRICE speaks to GEORGETTE and KAREN so that CLARENCE can't hear.*)

BEATRICE (*softly*). Shortly after he won his Little Emmy Award, his voice changed, he grew up, time went by and nobody ever hired him again.

GEORGETTE. That's so sad.

KAREN. But 30 years? He hasn't worked for 30 years?

MARTHA. He auditioned here and there. But he can't take the rejection ... and over time he has gone quite mad, you see.

KAREN. So that's why he talks so funny.

MARTHA. We, his loyal sisters have stood by him. Good thing we had our family trust to live on.

GEORGETTE. If you have a family trust, then why do you have to open a bed-and-breakfast?

BEATRICE. *Had* a family trust, Georgette. We're broke.

*(CLARENCE is in the corner reciting from his Hamlet script.)*

CLARENCE. "To be, or not to be: that is the question. To be, or not to be: that is the question."

BEATRICE. He has no idea how serious our situation is.

MARTHA. We'd prefer it if you didn't talk about it too much around him. He gets upset. *(To CLARENCE.)* Clarence, come sit down and we'll have some breakfast.

CLARENCE. Cakes and ale?

KAREN. No, Mr. Sterling. Toast and juice. I'll get it.

*(KAREN goes to get the toast and juice.)*

CLARENCE. I desire cakes and ale.

MARTHA. We have no cakes and ale, Clarence.

CLARENCE. No cakes and ale?

MARTHA. None.

CLARENCE. Ahh, well. Nothing can come of nothing, I suppose.

*(KAREN enters with a tray.)*

KAREN. Here we are. Toast and juice.

*(HARRY bursts in.)*

HARRY. Do we have any pudding?

KAREN. Pudding?

HARRY. Yes, pudding. I'm working on a secret invention!

GEORGETTE. A secret invention?

HARRY. A secret invention!

GEORGETTE. And the pudding is a secret ingredient?

HARRY. No! The pudding is my snack. Inventing makes me hungry!

KAREN. I'll get you some pudding, Harry.

*(KAREN goes to get the pudding.)*

CLARENCE *(referring to HARRY)*. Who's there?

MARTHA. Clarence, this is Harry.

HARRY. You remember me, Mr. Sterling! You hired me yesterday.

CLARENCE. What do you here?

HARRY. I'm your handy handyman ... and an inventor on the side.

And I am on the verge of a scientific breakthrough!

CLARENCE. I am amazed and know not what to say.

*(KAREN enters, bringing HARRY the pudding.)*

KAREN. Here you go, Harry.

HARRY. Thank you! *(Takes a bite.)* Delicious! Well, as long as I'm not needed up here, I'm back to the basement to work on my secret invention!

KAREN. What is it, Harry?

HARRY. It's a secret! I'll be in the basement if you need me!

*(HARRY exits.)*

KAREN. I'd love to know what his secret invention is.

GEORGETTE. Me, too.

*(Heroine music plays. NANCY STERLING bursts in from UC. The music fades into the scene.)*

NANCY. Hi, everybody!

MARTHA. Good morning, Nancy.

CLARENCE. Ah, my good niece. Sit down and sup with me.

NANCY. I can't eat, Uncle Clarence. I'm too excited!

MARTHA. What is it, Nancy?

NANCY. I have wonderful news!

BEATRICE. What is it, Nancy.

NANCY. When you hear, you'll be stunned! Positively stunned!

ALL. What is it, Nancy?

NANCY. I've decided I want to be a fashion designer.

MARTHA. A fashion designer?

NANCY. A fashion designer.

CLARENCE. For goodness' sake.

NANCY. So, to be a fashion designer, I have to go to design school.

MARTHA. Go on ...

NANCY. So I applied to RISD ... (*Pronounced "Rizdee."*) That's Rhode Island School of Design.

ALL. Ooooh!

NANCY. I sent in the application with, of course, a sample of my work ... and I got a letter today! I'm in!

ALL (*as they shake her hand and hug her*). Congratulations, Nancy! Wow! Great job! (*And so on.*)

BEATRICE. Wait!

ALL. What?

BEATRICE. Nancy, what is this going to cost?

NANCY. Only \$58,000 and 99 cents.

MARTHA. Fifty-eight thousand dollars?

NANCY. And 99 cents.

BEATRICE. Nancy ...

NANCY. You've always said I should go to college, Aunt Beatrice.

MARTHA. That's true.

NANCY. And now, I'm going! Oh, I'm so happy I could just burst! You know what I'm going to do?

MARTHA. What?

NANCY. I'm going to show you the dress I made that got me into RISD! Wait till you see it! It's a beautiful sparkly pink chiffon dress! I'll go put it on right now!

*(NANCY runs offstage to get her dress. BEATRICE and MARTHA sadly sit down on the couch.)*

KAREN. What's the matter, Miss Martha, Miss Bea?

GEORGETTE. You look so sad.

MARTHA. We can't afford to pay \$58,000.

BEATRICE. We can't even afford the 99 cents!