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Family Plays

The First Time Club



Drama by
KT Curran



The First Time Club

Prior to publication, *The First Time Club* was toured to Florida schools by the SOURCE Teen Theatre and the Planned Parenthood Association of Southwest Florida in Sarasota. Venice High School's production, directed by William G. Mossman, won the Florida statewide thespian competition, with superior ratings in every category.

"We feel that the realness of this play will pass information on to students far better than the passing out of literature." (Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources Center in Sarasota)

Drama. By KT Curran. *Cast: 4w.* Four girls seeking adventure decide to create The First Time Club. They meet at midnight on the first night of every month to share the things they have done for the first time and to look for new things to do that none of them has ever done before. To make their secret club official, they decide to pledge their loyalty in blood. Using a dirty razor, the girls slice their fingers and rub their blood together. They repeat this blood ritual every month at their meeting. Marie is the most rebellious of the group. She is the first to experiment with cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, etc. Alison is the most timid. Eventually, Marie and Alison become sexually active—one of them wants to while the other is pressured by Joel repeatedly saying, "You would if you loved me." When Joel winds up in the hospital with AIDS, the girls are shocked and scared. Have they contracted the HIV virus? Meanwhile, the girls continue to be bonded in friendship and adventure—and blood. *Simple set with 12 flashback scenes interspersed with direct-address speeches by Melissa. Costumes: modern clothes. Although the play follows the girls from age 10 to 17 or 18, the same actresses play the roles throughout. May be shortened by omitting scenes. Approximate running time: 30 to 40 minutes. Code: FD4.*

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The First Time Club

THE FIRST TIME CLUB

An AIDS Awareness Play

by

KT Curran

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311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

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“Produced by special arrangement with
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ABOUT THE PLAY

THE FIRST TIME CLUB begins when four innocent 10-year-old girls come up with “the most fantastic, incredible, wonderful idea”: to meet at midnight on the first night of every month, “and we will look for things that none of us have ever done before. We could have a new adventure every month—for the rest of our lives.”

Through the years their adventures become a little more daring, a little more risque, and a little more dangerous. They swear their loyalty by cutting their fingers with a razor and dripping their blood together. “Bonded in friendship, adventure, and blood” is their oath.

Eventually, two of the girls become sexually active—one because she wants to; the other because Joel keeps saying, “You would if you loved me.” When Joel winds up in the hospital with AIDS, the girls are shocked, and scared. Have they contracted the HIV virus?

Although the play follows the girls from age 10 to 17 or 18, the same actresses play the roles throughout.

Prior to publication, **THE FIRST TIME CLUB** was toured to Florida schools by the **SOURCE** Teen Theatre and the Planned Parenthood Association of Southwest Florida in Sarasota. Venice High School’s production, directed by William G. Mossman, won the Florida statewide thespian competition, with Superior ratings in every category.

Playing time is 30 to 40 minutes.

THE FIRST TIME CLUB

Cast of Characters

MELISSA—is a writer, a thinker. She serves as the narrator of the play, and it is through her memory of the events that we understand The First Time Club and its members. She feels things very deeply, loves her friends, and is always trying to analyze the situation.

MARIE—is the most rebellious of the group. She is the first to experiment with cigarettes, alcohol, pot, etc. She often is the instigator when it comes to doing something really wild and outrageous. Her parents both work, and she has a great deal of freedom. Her father is an alcoholic who is occasionally prone to violence.

CALLIE—is Marie's sidekick. She is always ready to go along with Marie's ideas. She is dreamy and often has her head "in the clouds."

ALISON—comes from a sheltered family and tends to act younger than her age. She wants adventure and can be talked into trying new things, but she has to be coaxed and pulled along the way. She is willing to go against her better judgment in order to keep her friends.

The Time: The twelve scenes are flashbacks. Interspersed throughout are direct-address speeches to the audience by Melissa.

Original Cast

Melissa	Michelle Garofalo
Marie	Cat Ford-Coates
Callie	Tyna Shetler
Alison	Gina Considine

THE FIRST TIME CLUB was originally produced by Planned Parenthood Association of Southwest Florida, Inc., and The SOURCE Teen Theatre.

Planned Parenthood Association of Southwest Florida's SOURCE Teen Theatre is considered to be an award-winning and effective approach to peer health education. Conveying information on human sexuality, peer pressure, dating, teen pregnancy and AIDS, The SOURCE performs both published plays and original works developed by Planned Parenthood.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Properties

Razor blade wrapped in a tissue—Marie

Stage blood—each girl (a small drop of stage blood in a capsule can be concealed in each girl's hand or in the tissues to be squeezed open at the proper time)

Hand-rolled cigarette (marijuana "joint")—Marie

Cigarette lighter—Callie

Hairbrush—Melissa

Lipstick—Marie

Bag of wine coolers—Marie

Telephone—on stage in Scene 8 and Scene 10

Candy bar in wrapper—Callie

Portable radio (or other source of music)—on stage in Scene 11 or carried by Marie if the scene is played on the apron

Nurse's buzzer—on bed in Scene 12

Six-pack of beer in grocery sack—Callie

Costumes

Since the play must move rapidly in spite of the fact that the period of the play covers eight years or so, costumes must be designed for quick change (or no change). Over-dressing—that is, wearing one costume under another—is one solution. Another solution is to make no changes except in the instances where a character is offstage long enough to make a change. Wearing age-less costumes, like jeans and T-shirts, is one answer. Aging can sometimes be indicated by a change in hairstyle, as when the stage directions call for Melissa to undo her ponytail at the end of Scene 1. Of course, the best indication of a change in age comes from the posture and movements of the actresses.

The one change that is necessary is Alison's hospital gown in Scene 12; but she has all of Scene 10 and Scene 11 to make the change.

Music

Contemporary music is effective during scene shifts and to softly underscore Melissa's monologues.

The Set

The set, like the costumes, must be designed so that there is no delay between scenes—no pause longer than it takes for a shift in lighting. The action can be played on a bare stage, with the occasional addition of a set piece, as indicated below. Playing a scene on the apron while the set is being changed on the stage is a possibility in several instances. Area lighting—playing a scene at Stage Left while a prop is brought on at Stage Right—is another possibility. The scenes that take place at midnight can be played in a small lighted area, and Melissa’s narration to the audience can be played on a black stage with a spotlight focused on her. The scenes are as follows:

Scene 1: Backyard (bare stage)

Scene 2: The beach (bare stage)

Scene 3: School hallway (on apron while “haunted hotel” is being set)

Scene 4: Haunted hotel (a ladder may be used for the girls to “climb up to the rafters”)

Scene 5: Girls’ bathroom at school (may be played on apron, with the mirror mimed)

Scene 6: The beach (bare stage)

Scene 7: The beach (may be played on the apron while Scene 8 is being set)

Scene 8: A chair beside a telephone table

Scene 9: Marie’s room (the chair from Scene 8 may be moved to a new location as the girls enter)

Scene 10: Callie’s house (same business)

Scene 11: Marie’s house (may be played on apron, with Marie holding a portable radio or boom box)

Scene 12: Alison’s hospital room (the hospital bed may be set up while Scene 11 is played on the apron)

The play can also be staged using painted boxes that can be stacked, one upon the other, or used separately to serve as beds, chairs, etc., for a variety of settings. Creative use of platforms, levels, and abstract boxes or units helps keep the play moving swiftly.

THE FIRST TIME CLUB

Scene One

[Marie's backyard. Late at night. MELISSA, MARIE, CALLIE, and ALISON are playing a children's game and singing an old street rhyme]

GIRLS. *[Singing]*

Oh my playmate, come out and play with me
And bring your dollies three.
Climb up my apple tree.
Slide down my rainbow
Into my cellar door
And we'll be jolly friends
Forevermore, more, more.

[MELISSA breaks off from the game and addresses the audience]

MELISSA. We called ourselves The First Time Club. There were four of us. Four ten-year-old girls who desperately wanted adventure.

MARIE. *[In a whisper]* Melissa! Get over here! *[MELISSA joins the group]*

CALLIE. *[To Melissa]* What were you doing over there by yourself?

MELISSA. I was looking at the stars. *[Shouting up at the sky]* There's a million of them.

MARIE. Shhhhh!

ALISON. I'm scared. It's so dark out here.

MARIE. If we wake up my dad then you'll *really* be scared. He's like a mean, old monster when he's mad. I had to beg him to let you guys sleep over, and if he finds out we snuck out of the house in the middle of the night, he'll kill us.

ALISON. He can't kill *me*. My daddy wouldn't let him.

MARIE. You sound like a baby.

ALISON. I'm not a baby!

MARIE. Shut up!

MELISSA. *[In a loud whisper]* Okay Marie. We're all very, very quiet. So what are we supposed to be doing out here?

ALISON. Yeah. What's the big secret? You and Callie have been whispering about something all week.

CALLIE. *[To Marie]* Can we tell them now?

MARIE. You're gonna die when you hear this.

CALLIE. Marie and I have come up with the most fantastic, incredible, wonderful idea.

MELISSA. Well what *is* it?

MARIE. Callie was talking to me at lunch the other day, and she was saying what a beautiful day it was and how she wished she could fly up into the sky with the birds or just do something different than the same old thing all the time and—

MELISSA. Yeah, and?

CALLIE. And Marie said she felt the same way. There's a million things to do in this world, and we haven't done any of them.

MARIE. Yeah, like we've never sneaked out of the house.

MELISSA. Until now.

CALLIE. And we've never watched an R rated movie.

MARIE. And we've never kissed a boy, and we've never tasted beer.

ALISON. Marie, we're only ten years old. Ten year olds aren't supposed to do those things.

MARIE. Why not?

ALISON. Because.

CALLIE. Why because?

MELISSA. Because we're ten years old!

MARIE. I guess you don't want to hear our idea then.

CALLIE. Our fantastic, incredible, *wonderful* idea.

ALISON. Yes we do.

MARIE. Too bad. I'm not going to tell you.

ALISON. Oh, come on, Marie.

MELISSA. If you don't tell us, I'll scream real loud and wake up your father. *[MELISSA starts to open her mouth to scream. MARIE puts her hand over Melissa's mouth]*

MARIE. The First Time Club.

ALISON. Huh?

MARIE and CALLIE. The First Time Club.

MELISSA. What are you talking about?

CALLIE. *[Excitedly]* We want to start a club.

MARIE. Just the four of us.

CALLIE. It will be a secret.

MARIE. Nobody will know about it except us. And we'll have adventures together. For *the first time*. We will meet at midnight on the first night of every month. And we will look for things that none of us have ever done before. And we'll share the adventures with each other.

CALLIE. Tonight we all snuck out of the house. Our first adventure. And the night is fantastic, and it's scary and *wonderful*. We could have a new adventure every month. For the rest of our lives.

MARIE. Well, what do you think?

ALISON. I think we're all in big trouble.

MARIE. Alison. Really. What do you think?

ALISON. *[Smiling]* I think it sounds ... great.

MELISSA. Me too.

CALLIE. I knew you'd want to! There have never been four friends like us. We'll always be together. Until we die.

ALISON. Yuck. Don't talk about dying. It's scary.

MARIE. To really have a special, secret club we must pledge our loyalty in blood.

ALISON and MELISSA. Huh?

CALLIE. *[To Marie]* Did you get one?

ALISON. One what?

MARIE. *[Pulling out a tissue with a razor blade wrapped up in it]* Yeah. I hope it works. It's kind of used. I got it out of the bathroom garbage.

MELISSA. Is that a razor blade?

ALISON. Gross!

MELISSA. Do you think this is okay to do? I mean, it's not dangerous or anything is it?

MARIE. I'll go first. *[She slices her finger]*

ALISON. I can't stand this. I hate blood. Blood scares me.

CALLIE. *[Taking the razor and slicing her finger]* It's just blood. We all have it running through our bodies.

ALISON. And dead people have it pouring out of theirs.

MELISSA. *[Taking the razor]* Does it hurt?

MARIE. No more than a scratch.

MELISSA. Here goes. *[She slices her finger too]*

CALLIE. It's your turn Alison.

ALISON. I just can't.

MARIE. We'll do it for you. Close your eyes. *[ALISON, trembling, closes her eyes and MARIE slices her finger also]*

ALISON. Ouch!

MELISSA. Now what?

CALLIE. Now we rub our blood together.

ALISON. What?

MARIE. That's how we make the pledge. Come on, drip it all together.

ALISON. I can't believe I am doing this.

CALLIE. Alison, make "yes" your favorite word.

ALISON. Yes. Yes. Yes.

MARIE. My blood with your blood.

CALLIE. My blood with your blood.

MELISSA and ALISON. My blood with your blood.

MARIE. Now. Spin yourself dizzy.

[All four GIRLS start to spin in the moonlight, then spin off as Melissa speaks]

MELISSA. *[To audience]* My blood with your blood. We were bonded together now. Bonded in friendship, adventure, and blood. It's so amazing that we all stayed together. Month after month, year after year. Together we tried everything. Dyeing our hair, piercing each other's ears, sneaking into movies and smoking cigarettes, The First Time Club did it all. Without even noticing it, we were growing up. *[Taking her hair out of ponytail]* I don't know when it was exactly that things began to change. Were we thirteen, fourteen, fifteen years old? Suddenly we weren't little girls any more.

Scene Two

[Four years later. The Beach. At night]

ALISON. This is crazy. Look how dark it is. I wish my boy friend Joel was here.

CALLIE. No boy friends allowed.

MELISSA. Yeah. How are we gonna talk about them if they're here?

ALISON. I know. It's just so lonely on the beach at night. Anything could happen.

MARIE. That's why we're here. For that feeling of "anything could happen." And I've got a feeling anything can happen tonight. Let's start the meeting. *[She pulls out a razor from her pocket]*

ALISON. I don't see why we have to keep making promises in blood. I've got a permanent scar on my finger from four years of this blood sister business.

MARIE. It's the only way we know that we can really trust each other. *[Slices her finger and hands razor to Melissa]*

MELISSA. I think Alison's right. We can trust each other by now. *[She looks at Marie, but MARIE says nothing]* Okay. Let's get it over with. *[Slices her finger and passes the razor on to Callie]*

CALLIE. It doesn't hurt. *[Slices her finger too]* Alison give me your finger. *[ALISON closes her eyes and holds out her finger. CALLIE scratches it with the razor]*

ALISON. Ouch!

CALLIE. Okay, we're ready.

MARIE. *[As they drip their blood together]* My blood with your blood.

ALL. My blood with your blood. *[They drip blood together]*

MARIE. Bonded in friendship, adventure, and blood.

ALL. Bonded in friendship, adventure, and blood.

[There is a silence]

CALLIE. It really is beautiful out here. Look at the water. It's like looking into outer space.

MELISSA. Like looking into the future.

ALISON. My Mom said she read about this girl in the paper who was at the beach. She was with some friends. Just like we are tonight, and she walked off by herself for a minute ... I don't know, she probably was looking for some place to go to the bathroom or something ... and some weirdo guy grabbed her and raped her. Her friends found her under a catamaran, curled up like a baby. She was crying like her soul was broken in two.

CALLIE. Alison. Would you shut up?

MARIE. *[Turning to Alison]* Ever since we started The First Time Club, you've been scared of every idea we've come up with.

ALISON. Well the ideas keep getting scarier and scarier.

MELISSA. We've all been scared at one time or another.

CALLIE. Even you, Marie.

MARIE. When have I ever been scared?

ALISON. Oh right. When could "Miss Born To Be Wild" ever be afraid?

CALLIE. *[To Marie]* Do you remember when Melissa had that idea to steal some of your dad's whiskey?

MELISSA. Oh yeah. How old were we then? Thirteen?

ALISON. I remember. And Marie was scared to do it 'cause she thought her dad would notice some was gone and—

MARIE. Well if *you* had a dad like mine instead of that "Leave It To Beaver" family of yours, you would have been scared too.

ALISON. What do you mean, "Leave It To Beaver" family? What's wrong with my family?

MARIE. Nothing. That's what I'm talking about.

ALISON. Just because my family and I get along it doesn't mean there's anything wrong with them.

MELISSA. All I remember was you guys daring me to chug down a whole glass of that stuff, and the next thing I knew it was eleven o'clock in the morning and I was lying in my bed with nothing on but my winter coat. My parents were so mad at me that they grounded me for a month.

MARIE. *[Rubbing her cheek]* When I got home my dad said he smelled whisky on me.

CALLIE. He did? What happened?

MELISSA. Why didn't you tell us?

MARIE. I don't know. I was embarrassed, I guess.

ALISON. Embarrassed?

MARIE. Yeah. My Mom kept me out of school for a whole week. To hide the black eye.

CALLIE. I hate your dad. I've always hated your dad.

MARIE. Most of the time I deserve it.

CALLIE. Nobody deserves getting hit in the eye. Except maybe your dad.

MARIE. Is anybody interested in getting on with tonight's adventure?

CALLIE. What is it?