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*Dramatic Publishing*



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# All Out



One-act comedy by  
John Rester Zodrow



# All Out

**Comedy.** By John Rester Zodrow. Cast: 6m., 4w. (The character count includes 6 to 7 extras.) The stage is set for a television game show, but it's to be a game that goes to the essence of morality today. To what extremes will the contestants go to win a prize of \$100,000? The show begins as a typical, enthusiastic, laugh-it-up contest. Then, peeling away layer by layer the exteriors of the various contestants, the sometimes debasing price of success begins to be revealed. Will the mother reveal ugly incidents in her past to her son and to the audience? Will the husband slap his wife in front of seven million viewers? Will the wife go "all out" in her quest for the big prize? And will the audience realize, as they become unwitting participants in the game show, exactly what they are encouraging the wife to do? The roles are challenging and the message strong in this shocking, relevant play about lack of ethics and what people will do for money. *One int. set. Approximate running time: 30 minutes.*  
Code: AA8.

Cover design: Jeanette Alig-Sergel



ISBN-10 1-58342-676-0  
ISBN-13 978-1-58342-676-0



**Dramatic Publishing**  
311 Washington St.  
Woodstock, IL 60098  
ph: 800-448-7469



Printed on recycled paper

[www.dramaticpublishing.com](http://www.dramaticpublishing.com)

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# ALL OUT

A One-act Play

By

JOHN RESTER ZODROW



**Dramatic Publishing**

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(ALL OUT - one act)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-676-0

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# ALL OUT

A One-act Play  
For 6 Men, 4 Women, 6-7 extras\*

## CHARACTERS

PETHEY – the announcer  
JOHNNY MITCHELL – the host  
JULIA COLBY – a contestant  
CHARLEY RITTER – a contestant  
GEORGE REEDY – a contestant  
THELMA MANN – a contestant  
WILLY – Julia's son  
ELAINE – Charley's wife  
GEORGE'S MOTHER  
JAKE – Thelma's fiancé

TIME: The present.

PLACE: A television studio.

APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME: 30 minutes

\*3 cameramen or (camerawomen), 3-4 shills in audience

# ALL OUT

*(The curtain parts. We are on the set of a popular game show. The audience eagerly cheers the start.)*

ANNOUNCER. Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to ALL OUT, the game of game shows where you can win \$100,000 if you go ALL OUT! This first portion is brought to you by Contract Suds. When you use Contract you have a contract! And now here is our one and only JOHNNY MITCHELL!

*(A tall, well-dressed, handsome Monty Hall or Bob Barker or Peter Marshall-type steps winningly onto the stage. The audience screams.)*

JOHNNY. Hello, everybody, and today we've got another exciting segment of ALL OUT, the game show that requires guts and perseverance instead of luck. As you know, each day four of our contestants are selected from the studio audience.

AUDIENCE. We're ready!

JOHNNY. Okay, Petey, who do we have?

ANNOUNCER. Today our first contestant is Julia Colby, right here from Watts, California!



*(The camera excitedly scans the audience, picking out a very large black woman. She is crying from the honor. She moves out quickly and down to JOHNNY.)*

JOHNNY. Hello, Julia Colby, are you excited?

JULIA. Oh, Johnny, I'm so excited...I can't stop crying.

*(The audience laughs sympathetically.)*

JOHNNY. Well, Julia, you've just been picked to try to win \$100,000; what do you think of that?

JULIA. I'm real tough, Johnny. I'm gonna give it my best!

JOHNNY. She is gonna give it her best! A big hand for Julia Colby!

*(The audience applauds wildly.)*

ANNOUNCER. Our next contestant is Mr. Charles Ritter!

*(Applause. A man in his fifties rises, surprise on his face. He moves controlled through the audience. Looks like he'd be a good poker player.)*

CHARLEY. My friends call me Charley. I'm gonna win.

JOHNNY. Did you hear that, ladies and gentlemen? Here's a man who's sure of himself!

*(Applause. Laughter.)*

CHARLEY. I'm gonna go ALL OUT!

*(The audience whistles, stomps. Bloodthirsty in anticipation.)*

ANNOUNCER. Thelma Mann, get up and come on down!

*(The camera finds her as she springs up. Young, maybe twenty-five, and very pretty. THELMA is down in a flash.)*

JOHNNY. How are you? Whewwwww! *(He rolls his eyes in appreciation.)* What do you do for a living, Thelma Mann?

THELMA. I'm a secretary. And my fiancé is here with me today. Hello out there, Jake!

JOHNNY. And just why do we have the pleasure, and I do mean pleasure, of your person on this show?

THELMA. You wanna know why I'm here?

JOHNNY. I'm listening, Thelma!

THELMA. Because I'm greedy.

*(JOHNNY laughs, hugging THELMA close to him. She loves it. The audience loves it, too.)*

ANNOUNCER. And our final contestant... *(Hush in the audience, waiting expectantly.)* Mr. George Reedy!

*(Camera closes quickly on a soldier in uniform. We see immediately the corporal has no left arm. He rushes down. Audience applauds.)*

GEORGE. Hiya, Johnny!

JOHNNY. It's good to have our armed forces represented, George. Can we ask how you lost your arm?

GEORGE. Iraq, Johnny. But I don't miss it.

JOHNNY. What a wonderful tough spirit! And here they are, ladies and gentlemen, our contestants for tonight's game of ALL OUT. I ask you, have you ever seen such a determined foursome? (*Audience applauds.*) We'll be right back for the start of our show after this brief message.

ANNOUNCER. Fade out...commercial. And fade in! (*And he points back at JOHNNY.*)

JOHNNY. Thank you, thank you and welcome back to ALL OUT. Remember... (*Audience applauds.*) ...to win ALL OUT and our final prize, you must play to the finish. There are three rounds. If you drop out at any time, you forfeit all of your prizes and money. Is that clear? (*Nods.*) And now for our first game. (*He pulls out an envelope from his vest pocket.*) Got it right here. And our producer told me earlier it was a dilly. Nasty man. Now, contestants, each of you has brought a loved one with you tonight? And here they are...

*(The curtain again parts, and onstage there are four "loved ones": a black boy about eighteen, a middle-aged woman, an elderly woman and a young man.)*

JOHNNY (*cont'd*). Each of you knows these people, is that right, contestants? Would you identify your loved ones by standing next to them, please?

*(They do. JULIA before her teenager, WILLY; CHARLEY before his middle-aged wife, ELAINE; the soldier,*

*GEORGE, in front of his mother; and the secretary, THELMA, faces her fiancé, JAKE.)*

JOHNNY (*cont'd*). Now. For the sum of \$25,000, you must strike your loved one in the face. The audience will be the judge if you have won the prize money. Do I hear any quitters? (*None of the contestants say a thing.*) Very well. Julia, proceed!

*(She hesitates. Then softly cuffs the boy.)*

AUDIENCE. Booooooooooooo!

JOHNNY. No go, Julia. The ladies and gentlemen in our studio audience do not agree you deserve the \$25,000.

JULIA (*anguished*). Oh, lawd! Willy!

WILLY. Go 'head, Mama. I been hit before. We gotta have that money.

*(JULIA swings full and knocks him down. The audience roars.)*

JOHNNY. She's done it. Julia Colby is our first winner!

*(WILLY is up. JULIA reaches out lovingly and rubs his cheek. CHARLEY is next. The audience hushes.)*

JOHNNY (*cont'd*). Charley Ritter!

CHARLEY (*facing his wife, whispering to her*). We agreed, remember?

ELAINE. Don't hurt me, Charley.

CHARLEY. I got to, honey. We're gonna win!

*(She closes her eyes and nods. He strikes hard. Very hard. She stumbles down, bursts into tears.)*

ELAINE. Oh, Charley...

*(He bends solicitously to her and helps her up. She comes into his arms. He kisses her, comforting her, smoothing back her disheveled hair. The audience breaks into applause.)*

JOHNNY. You've won, Charley Ritter! You've won!

*(CHARLEY leads his sobbing wife offstage.)*

JOHNNY *(cont'd)*. Two winners, ladies and gentlemen! Unbelievable. George Reedy! Will you go ALL OUT?

*(GEORGE faces his mother. The audience quiets. His mother is looking up into his stare. He raises his hand to strike her, but freezes.)*

GEORGE. I can't...I won't. I don't want the money that bad.

*(His mother rises on her tiptoes, kisses him gently. She leads him offstage. Silence from the audience.)*

JOHNNY. Goodbye, George Reedy. That really surprised me, didn't it you, ladies and gentlemen?