

This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing

Recipient of the 2010 Rodney Seaborn Playwrights Award

Written by
Finegan Kruckemeyer

(Australia/Tasmania)

Sides for this girl laughs

CHARACTER LIST:

NARRATOR
ALBIENNE
BEATRIX
CARMEN
GIRL
FATHER
MAN

Side 1

Prologue: Beginnings.

ALBIENNE: Once upon a time, a girl was born.

BEATRIX: And twice upon a time, a girl was born.

CARMEN: And thrice upon a time, a girl was born.

NARRATOR: Until there existed three girls who were sisters, who were triplets. There was an older one, and a middle one, and a younger one. And when the gap in age is minutes, only a little, it should not matter at all.

CARMEN: But it does matter, just this much – it matters only a little.

NARRATOR: The three sisters had three names. Albiene was the oldest, and Beatrix was the next, and Carmen was youngest.
And they looked identical, in the same way that when visiting a block of flats, a person from a faraway place may say: ‘those flats are identical’.
And of course they are right, but of course they are not. //because different people live in them, and that is a fine thing. Just as those three

identical bodies ended up looking different, because different people lived in them as well.//The three sisters lived in a forest and had as their parents a woman, who shall be the mother, and a man, who shall be the father.//...Until one day, it ended.

ALBIENNE: That day, I was sitting beside the river//

BEATRIX: That day I was balancing at the top of the tallest tree I'd ever climbed//

CARMEN: That day I was writing at my desk about dragons//

ALBIENNE: And from the river I saw the policeman riding on a horse as fast as he could along the road that leads to our house.

BEATRIX: And from the tree, I saw the policeman jump off his horse and run to our front door.

CARMEN: And from my room, I heard the door burst open and boots running in, and then the voice of the policeman asking Papa to sit down, and then the creak of a chair, and the putting down of a cup of tea, and then slow muffled talking... And then silence, and the footsteps leaving, and finally a long sigh from Papa, the longest sound I've ever heard.

NARRATOR: And after letting out every ounce of air in his lungs, the father breathed in again... and he pulled every daughter that he possessed to him, from out of the trees and off the riverbanks and through the doors of neighbouring rooms. Until there they stood, held in his arms, softly being told that...

ALBIENNE: Our Mama...

BEATRIX: Who we so loved...

CARMEN: Was dead.//

Side 2

Scene Two: The Woods and the Decision (12)

ALBIENNE: What becomes of children who are left in a wood, Beatrix?

BEATRIX: Different things, Albiene.

ALBIENNE: Good and bad things?

BEATRIX: ...Just different//

Scene Four: Albiene and the War (16)

NARRATOR: So Albiene headed East.

BEATRIX: So quickly the woods fell away and the ground began to rise. So quickly Albiene went from trudging in a flat way, to leaning in a steep way. Her face has gone red like a cherry cake, but she's determined.

CARMEN: She doesn't know what lies ahead, but that's the best thing about hills – they're like a secret you only hear the first words of. They promise they will reveal themselves eventually, but only if you are patient. Albiene walked for days, gradually getting ever higher. Until finally...

ALBIENNE: I have reached the top.

NARRATOR: That was a good thing to say, because that is what a journey must be – a lot of little successes. If you keep saying,

ALBIENNE: 'I have reached the top'

CARMEN: or,

ALBIENNE: 'I am at the water now'

BEATRIX: or,

ALBIENNE: 'finally I have worn out this pair of shoes',

NARRATOR: then your journeys shall always be successful things.

BEATRIX: My big sister studied the top of this hill and saw...

ALBIENNE: A cherry tree – fantastic.

NARRATOR: And she gobbled a handful and then filled her pockets with hundreds more, and set off. Over the next years, Albiene walked, dropping three

cherry seeds every mile – one for each of the sisters. And when in a land full of small villages and smaller people she ran out, Albiene bought more cherries, and two large sacks which she hung from her hips and filled with the tools of her planting.

And the trees, in their threes, slowly grew.

SIDE 3

- CARMEN: And then one day while she was taking a break from her travels and resting under a bridge with a fishing rod leaning against her knee, my eldest sister heard the clatter of hooves above her head. She ran out to see many, many people on horses charging away with the smell of fear pouring off them, and Albiene yelled:
- ALBIENNE: Stop! Where are you going, and why ever so quickly?
- CARMEN: And a man said:
- MAN: Our village – they pillaged! The land that I tillage... Our barrels – the spillage! The Vikings are here!
- NARRATOR: The Vikings! On their long, low boats they would row furiously towards land, hiding behind the large waves until... they appeared!
- MAN: Vikings! Run!
- NARRATOR: But by then there's hardly enough time. The best you can do is stand out the front of your house with your most expensive possession in your hands and a welcoming smile on your face, and hope they're in a nice mood – which they rarely are. Not on this day either, as the Vikings
- CARMEN: burnt down the barns,
- NARRATOR: and
- MAN: chased the people through the muddy streets,
- NARRATOR: and
- BEATRIX: wrote graffiti on the walls of the shops,

NARRATOR: and

MAN: smashed the windows,

NARRATOR: and

CARMEN: ran into houses without taking their shoes off,

NARRATOR: and

BEATRIX: spat in front of old ladies,

CARMEN: and on old ladies,

MAN: and bloodied their swords on anyone they fancied.

ALBIENNE: It was a horrible thing to watch.

NARRATOR: And so nobody did – they jumped on horses and fled across the bridge for safety. But Albienne would have none of it.

ALBIENNE: Stop running away, runaways! I have never met these Vikings tha/

MAN: /Vikings.

ALBIENNE: ...These Vikings that you talk about, but having heard your story, I don't think I like them! And if it were my village and not your village, I would stand on the roof of the tallest building and yell: 'Go away Vikings!'/

MAN: /Vikings.

ALBIENNE: ...'Go away Vikings and don't bother my friends or me anymore. And don't make us get really angry because if we do, you'll feel it in every inch of your Vikki... Viking body. Okay!'

NARRATOR: And everyone stares at this shouty lady who has climbed out from under a bridge, and they say nothing – because it's an unnerving thing to be told big information by little people.