

The Da Vinci Cold

*By
Bradley Hayward*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Laura has carefully plotted a day off school in order to find out the meaning of life. Playing hooky, along with her ditzy best friend, she has concocted a foolproof plan to get to the bottom of things. Chaos ensues when her attempts to leave the house are foiled by a lazy cable guy, a rapper who's come to install high-speed internet, a disapproving Mary Kay consultant, a devious Girl Scout selling cookies, and an insecure FedEx driver. It seems all is lost until Laura's older brother arrives with a man claiming to be Leonardo Da Vinci. He, too, knows the secret ... but can he trust the wacky group of strangers to keep it quiet?

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(4 m, 5 w)

- LAURA:** A savvy teenager, 17.
PENNY: Her best friend, 17.
THEO: A cable guy, 40.
NATHAN: A DSL installer, 18.
DARLENE: A FedEx driver, 30.
BETSY: A Mary Kay consultant, 50.
OLIVIA: A Girl Scout, 8.
JOSH: Laura's brother, 28.
LEONARDO: A deep thinker, 60.

PERFORMANCE TIME

Approximately 40 to 45 minutes.

SETTING

The present. Laura's suburban living room. There are three exits: a main door to the front yard, another to the kitchen, and an archway that leads upstairs. In the center of the room is a huge sofa. Scattered around are one or two more chairs (*perhaps recliners*), a large television set, and a computer desk.

PROPS

Blanket
Box of tissues
Bucket
Two doctor's notes
Cell phone
2 bags of chips
Keys
Toolbox
Cables
Clipboard
Fork and casserole
FedEx box with ballet slippers inside
Tools
Large spool of cable
Pink caboodles of makeup
Money
Chicken legs
Girl Scout cookies
Stethoscope, medical bag
Long beard
Pine tree air freshener
Bag
Cryptex (foot-long tube)
Marker
Cloth
Slip of paper
Powder puff

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(AT RISE: LAURA is curled up on the sofa, under a huge blanket. There are rolled up wads of tissue everywhere, and a bucket by her side. She speaks to the audience.)

LAURA: I woke up in bed this morning, sick as a dog. I'm talking German Shepherd sick. You know, after they lap up your Thanksgiving leftovers right off the table. That's how sick I am. Here's a bucket, just in case. I'm not lying, either. I have the doctor's note right here to prove it. *(SHE produces the note from her pocket.)* The same doctor's note that got me out of school today. What my mom and principal don't know is that all it takes to get this note is one heck of a good performance. That and slipping the doctor a twenty. For twenty smackers, I get the flu and out of school for the day. Fifty and he gives me mono, but that requires heavy medication. Believe me, a week off school is not worth the suppositories. Not to mention Mom breathing down my neck all day. With the flu, she can still go to work, so long as I call her every hour to let her know I'm okay. And with today's technology, I can be home sick and out with my friends at the same time. Watch and learn. *(SHE pulls out her cell phone and dials. She fakes being sick.)* Can I speak to Mrs. Weber, please? ... It's her daughter ... Her incapacitated daughter. ... Thank you. *(To the audience.)* You may be asking yourself what kind of doctor gives a sick note to a perfectly healthy teenager. I'll tell you what kind of doctor. An awesome doctor! Actually, he's my older brother. It was his idea for me to take the day off. This morning he met the man who knows the meaning of life. Did you hear that? The meaning of life! And being the great brother that he is, he's letting me in on the secret. So today's the day my life changes forever. *(Into the phone.)* Mom? ... Oh, I'm okay ... I just wanted to say you don't have to come home for lunch ... I'm sure. I'll just barf it up anyway.

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PENNY: *enters with two big bags of chips. She's extremely pretty, but not the sharpest knife in the drawer.*) Laura, do you want barbecue or dill pickle?

LAURA: *(HER hand over the receiver.)* Barbecue. *(PENNY opens the barbecue and starts eating.)* I think I'm going to sleep the rest of the day No need for you to be here if I'm going to be out like a light Sure, I'm sure I just want to be alone Yes, Mother, I heard you the first time! I'll eat. Even if I can't keep a thing down. *(SHE reaches into the bag, takes a chip and crunches on it.)* What was that? Oh, nothing See you when you get home. *(SHE snaps the phone shut and takes another chip.)* God, she's so bossy!

PENNY: She's not that bad.

LAURA: You try living with her, then you can complain!

PENNY: Okay, okay. Forget I said anything. Are you ready to go?

LAURA: Yep. I've got my doctor's note right here. How about you?

PENNY: You betcha!

LAURA: Did he give you the flu? Or something worse?

PENNY: Actually, I didn't quite have the twenty bucks he asked for. All I could scrape together was eight fifty. *(SHE passes LAURA her note.)* So here's what I got.

LAURA: *(Reads.)* Dandruff?

PENNY: Borderline, but Mom bought it. So are we going or what?

LAURA: Just let me get dressed. *(SHE climbs out from under the blanket, fully dressed.)* Okay, let's go.

PENNY: *(Laughing.)* That was fast.

LAURA: We haven't a second to lose. Mom gets home at four. That doesn't give us long to complete our mission.

PENNY: Tell me again what exactly our mission is.

LAURA: Penny, we've only gone over it about a hundred times.

PENNY: I know, but I'm missing chemistry for this. I can't risk failing unless it's really, really important. I'm already in hot water for exploding the lab.

End of Freeview

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