

# GOING FOR BROKE

By Michal Jacot

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*Going for Broke*

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*Dedicated to the memory of Sally Lippert.*

*--Michal Jacot*

*Going For Broke* was first performed by the Tawas Bay Players, East Tawas, Michigan, February 26, 1993, under the title *Tangled Webbs 3: The Final Nightmare*. It was produced by Nadeen Bouback and directed by Michal Jacot, with the following cast:

Rhonda Webb: Barbara Hunter

Psychiatrist: Katherene Range

Donald Webb: John Brock

Elwood Webb: Craig Sayer

Alex Webb: Dennis Szatkowski

Pizza Delivery Person: Mickie Philpot

Renter Guy: Todd Palmer

Renter Girl: Sharon Miller

Millicent Sweet: Laurie Jacot

Ernestine Webb: Betty DeWilde

Jedediah Fenwick: Keith Frank

Jedediah Fenwick, Jr: Dan Wickey

Charles Canterbury: Andre DeWilde

Judge Elizabeth Baker: Debra DeBois

Little Old Lady: Jacki Groff

Curtain Call Announcer: Dennis Kirk, Michal Jacot

*Going for Broke* is the third play in a trilogy of adventures about the wacky Webb family. The first, *Tangled Webbs*, and the second, *Putting on Heirs*, are also available through Eldridge Publishing.

### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

Formerly among the richest people in Boston, the Webb kids try to adjust to sudden poverty when crazy brother Elwood is given total control of the fortune. They just don't know *how* to be poor and try everything from renting rooms in the mansion to taking a job as a clown for children's parties. Their luck changes with the reappearance of their mother, whom they thought dead; their cranky butler, Fenwick; and the surprise introduction of Fenwick, Jr., a boorish, obnoxious lout, but also the sole heir to the Webb fortune.

Displaying their typical greed, the Webb kids do whatever it takes to get their hands on the money. A series of side-splitting schemes keeps the audience laughing until a twist ending takes them by surprise with the "final fate" of the Webb clan.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(7 m, 6 w, 3 flexible, doubling possible)*

**RHONDA WEBB:** The greedy, conniving daughter of the wealthy Webb family. She is power-hungry, whiny, self-centered and spiteful. And that's how her mother describes her.

**DONALD WEBB:** One of the Webb brothers. He spent most of his life in California and so affects the typical West Coast "laid-back" attitude. However, he may be covering up for the fact that he simply isn't too bright.

**ELWOOD WEBB:** Youngest of the Webb clan. Lives happily in a hallucinatory world where he imagines himself to be a spaceship commander. The family considers his delusions harmless enough, although Elwood can be a bit trying.

**ALEX WEBB:** Oldest Webb sibling. Somewhat dull-witted and lazy. He wants money, loves money, but has never quite learned how to earn money.

**MILLICENT SWEET:** The Webbs' cousin. She talks, walks and breathes cutesy. She is also a money-hungry gold digger.

**MRS. ERNESTINE WEBB:** The mother of the family. Believed to have been dead for a while now. She tries to rule over the family with the resigned air of the head of the insane asylum.

**FENWICK:** Formerly the Webb family butler, now husband to Mrs. Webb. He is nine years older than dirt but possesses a razor-sharp wit.

**FENWICK, JR.:** Looks just as old as Fenwick. A loud, obnoxious, overbearing man. His most notable feature is his passion for plaid; he wears plaid from head to toe, but none of it matches. A visual, as well as a personal irritant.

**CHARLES CANTERBURY:** Mrs. Webb's brother and the family attorney. Dignified and well-bred, he nevertheless gets caught up in the Webbs' insanity.

**JUDGE ELIZABETH BAKER:** A haughty, dignified, powerful and humorless woman. If she smiled her face would crack.

**LITTLE OLD LADY:** A walk-on part, no lines.

**ANNOUNCER:** Sums it all up at curtain call. Male or female.

**THE PSYCHIATRIST:** Can be male or female.

**PIZZA DELIVERY PUNK:** A tough punk. Male or female.

**RENTER GUY and GIRL:** A rather dazed pair of drifters.

### **SETTING**

The spacious living room in the mansion of the ultra-rich Webb family. USR is the main entrance that starts with two steps going down offstage, presumably to the downstairs section of the house. At the back wall there is a large window seat in front of a window that affords a summer's day view. At SL of the back wall there is a set of stairs leading off to the upstairs rooms. Part way up the stairs is a landing with a door leading into a closet. In front of the stairs there is a bookcase and a stocked bar. USL is an archway. DSC sits a sofa with an end table on either side.

### **SYNOPSIS**

The Prologue takes place on an afternoon in late summer.

Act I: Another late summer afternoon.

Act II: Somewhat later that day.

Act III: Still that day, even more somewhat later.

### **SOUND EFFECTS**

Door opening and closing; doorbells; thumps of two people falling down stairs, "Good Ship Lollipop" music, explosion.

## PROLOGUE

*(AT RISE: The spacious living room of the Webb mansion. RHONDA is lying on the couch. Seated in a chair is a PSYCHIATRIST, taking notes as they talk.)*

PSYCHIATRIST: All right, Rhonda. Now where did we leave off at our last session?

RHONDA: I was telling you about my miserable family.

PSYCHIATRIST: Of course.

RHONDA: My father died when I was a child, you know.

PSYCHIATRIST: That must have been very traumatic. *(SHE starts to write notes.)*

RHONDA: Why? Oh, right, right. Very traumatic. Him being so ... dead and all. Now Daddy was the one who brought our family to financial power. He was a very savvy businessman. So, when he died, I felt the same thing that any daughter would feel in that situation, which was, "Why didn't he leave me the entire estate?"

PSYCHIATRIST: I see. *(SHE erases her notes.)*

RHONDA: I mean, anybody could see that I was the most capable member of the family for dealing with business matters and having control of all that money!!! *(HER voice shows her excitement at the word "money." She regains control of herself and continues.)* Instead, my father left control of the family fortune to someone with far less experience in such matters.

PSYCHIATRIST: Uh-huh. *(Takes more notes.)* And who would that be?

RHONDA: My mother. *(PSYCHIATRIST rolls her eyes, then erases some more.)* So, ever since Daddy died, Mother has always been the head of the family. She controlled the strings of the entire Webb family fortune. All \$77 million of it. Not that I was jealous or resentful or anything.

PSYCHIATRIST: Good. That's a healthy attitude to have. *(SHE takes more notes.)*

RHONDA: I mean, what's money? All it does is buy things ... clothes ... dinner at Sardi's ... power ... respect ... fear ... *(Through gritted teeth now)* ... but no, I wasn't jealous or resentful or anything. Just because she thought I couldn't handle it. Ha!!

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*(The PSYCHIATRIST, shaking her head, erases some more. RHONDA gets up and strides around the room.)*

PSYCHIATRIST: *(To HERSELF.)* I should have brought more pencils ...

RHONDA: Then Mother died a couple of months back and my brothers and I were all thrown into a state of confusion. I mean, everybody was grief-stricken and all that garbage, yeah, right. But we were all really wondering who inherited the money. *(SHE notices PSYCHIATRIST glaring at her.)* Hey, don't look at me like that! *(Holds out HER hands like scales, "weighing" the two options.)* On one hand \$77 million, power, prestige, president and owner of a major worldwide conglomerate ... *(The other option.)* ... or one old lady. So, she was our mother, we could live with it. Well, you know what she did?

PSYCHIATRIST: The suspense is killing me.

RHONDA: First, she willed \$5 million to our worthless butler, Fenwick, who immediately disappeared after mumbling something about palm trees and kissing his coconuts.

PSYCHIATRIST: Why, I knew Fenwick. He was a very dedicated servant to your family.

RHONDA: Hey, whose side are you on? *(PSYCHIATRIST rolls her eyes.)* Anyway, after that we got down to the real meat of it. Did Mother will the money to my oldest brother, Alex? That dimwit was 27 before he realized that 10 o'clock comes twice a day. The laziest man alive. So, he didn't get it. And at least she had the good sense not to give it all to my other brother, Donald. Donald, who spent his formative years in California and refers to his huaraches as his "formal wear." But did she leave it to the most obvious choice, the most level-headed, money-wise sibling in this family, namely me?

PSYCHIATRIST: I think I know the answer to this one...

RHONDA: NO!! *(SHE beats on a throw pillow.)* She left every penny of what should be my money to my little brother Elwood. Cute little Elwood. Sweet, innocent Elwood. Darling little crazier than a soup sandwich, Elwood!

PSYCHIATRIST: Oh yes, Elwood. My therapy sessions with him helped buy my condo in Costa Rica.

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