

A NICE LITTLE ISLAND:

A Thriller

*A Mystery in Two Acts
By Tim Wright*

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DEDICATION

*This play is dedicated, with love,
to Tom, Carol, Katie and Matthew.*

“A NICE LITTLE ISLAND” had its world premiere by the Fairfield Civic Theatre in California’s North San Francisco Bay Area, on August 15, 2002, under the direction of Barbara McFadden, with the following cast:

Kate Mcfadden

Emily Lyon

Jaqueline Haines

Barbara Mcfadden

Joe Estevez

Jimmy Robertson

Whitney Michaels

Sarah Stouffer

Colleen Hartnett

Frank Grisby

Erin Cookston

Jon Epperson

Sarah Hill

STORY

St. John’s School for Girls is located on a remote island, miles off of Northern California’s rugged Mendocino seacoast. It is an exclusive private academy which caters to troubled rich girls. However, it seems that a series of grisly murders occurring on the mainland are now taking place on this nearly deserted campus during spring break. With the “storm of the century” quickly approaching, the eight girls who remain, as well as three faculty members, find themselves cut off from communicating with the outside world, and only have hours to find the killer before they become victims. Soon, a terrifying question is raised: what if the slasher is one of them? Here is an exciting, stylish and modern Agatha Christie-like who-done-it in two acts offering mature and sophisticated roles for young performers, as well as adults. This is a true suspense play.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 M, 9 F, 1 radio voice)

LIBBY: Sixteen-year- old girl.
AGGIE: Thirteen-year-old girl.
MANDY: Thirteen-year-old girl.
SHELLY: Silly teenage girl, loves to play practical jokes.
DEBRA: An artistic-looking girl of fifteen.
RADIO ANNOUNCER: May be pre-recorded or live.
MRS. HASTINGS: St. John's teacher, Billy's mother.
CHELSEA: Teenage girl. Loves her cat.
LOUIS: St. John's handy man, bitter,
FRANK: School counselor.
BILLY: Adventurous twelve-year-old boy.
BRIANNA: Fourteen, Billy's best friend.
AUDREY: A tough street punk with a dark past.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

All of the action takes place one stormy evening in the recreation room at St. John's School for Girls, located on a remote island off the coast of Northern California. In the room are chairs, a game table, a huge sofa and a "home entertainment center" consisting of a television, radio and CD player. There is a door leading into the room from outside, and two other doors as well: one which leads to the other wings of the building, and an older door which leads to the basement. A fireplace is along one wall.

ACT I

Scene 1: The rec room, 8:30 p.m.

ACT II

Scene 1: The rec room, one hour later.

Scene 2: The rec room, two hours after that.

ACT I

(AT RISE: The stage is dark. Outside, a violent THUNDERSTORM can be heard and flashes of LIGHTNING periodically light up the interior of the rec room. The television screen suddenly glows in the blackness sporting a horrific scene from a horror movie, illuminating the silhouettes of AGGIE and MANDY, who watch the screen intensely. After a few beats, LIBBY's voice is heard offstage. Aggie and Mandy are oblivious to her cries, and continue to be glued to the tube.)

LIBBY: Mr. DeWinter! Mr. DeWinter! It's Libby! Mr. DeWinter! Here, kitty, kitty, kitty. *(SHE enters the rec room.)* Who's in here?! Why are these lights off? You guys know the school rules!

(LIBBY flicks on the overhead LIGHTS, and the GIRLS are infuriated.)

AGGIE: Come on, Libby! Cut the lights!

MANDY: Yeah, you're ruining the best part of the flick, stupe!

LIBBY: What did you call me?

MANDY: Oh, I'm sorry, Libby. I meant, "Your Highness ... The Stupe."

LIBBY: Very funny, Mandy. Listen, have either of two seen Mr. DeWinter around? *(No answer as the GIRLS are back into the movie.)* Mandy? Aggie? Have you seen Mr. DeWinter? *(Sees the TV.)* Just what are you two watching? Is this a bloody slasher movie?

(LIBBY turns the set off. The GIRLS are in revolt.)

MANDY: Hey, turn that back on!

LIBBY: No way, dude.

AGGIE: Come on, Libby. It's just getting to all the murders!

LIBBY: You think I want to wake up at three in the morning when one of you gets a nightmare from this junk and starts screaming her lungs out?!

MANDY: Will not!

LIBBY: Look, just because I'm stuck on this island for spring break doesn't mean I'm going to also be nursemaid to a couple of freaked-out snot-nosed brats!

AGGIE: Speak for yourself.

LIBBY: Hey, it wasn't me who was found wiggged out in the kitchen at four in the morning after I saw "Vampires II" on cable!

AGGIE: That was different! I was sleepwalking!

LIBBY: Sleepwalking?! Brianna told me you were pacing all night, and when Mrs. Hastings found you, you were hiding behind the freezer with a butcher knife.

AGGIE: *(Flustered.)* It's obvious she doesn't know the first thing about sleepwalkers.

LIBBY: But I know about you. Listen, with nearly every adult off this island for spring break but Mrs. Hastings, I don't think she's gonna want to pry a little kid like you out from behind a freezer again while you scream for your mommy, do you?

AGGIE: Who died and made you God?! Besides, I'm no "little kid." I'll be in upper school next year, and I'd match my figure to yours any day!

LIBBY: That's not a figure you've got, sweetie. It's fat. I suggest a little more Slim Fast and a lot less pizza.

MANDY: *(Confused.)* Behind a freezer? You told me you were making a ham sandwich.

AGGIE: I'm not taking your crap, Libby. I'm gonna ask Mrs. Parker.

LIBBY: She left this morning with all the lucky ones.

AGGIE: There's got to be some teacher or adult left. You're not the end-all and be-all.

(AGGIE and MANDY begin to storm out.)

LIBBY: There's Mrs. Hastings, but I don't think you want to talk to her, right? And our counselor, Frank ... but he helped Mrs. Hastings pull you out from behind that freezer, didn't he? Oh, of course, there's always the handyman,

LIBBY: *(Cont'd.)* Louis - maybe he's not passed out drunk in his shack yet. That's all there is, sweetiecakes.

(The two GIRLS stop reluctantly in their tracks, and look at Libby.)

AGGIE: Look, Libby, we've got rights! Our parents pay just as much for us to go to this school as yours do!

LIBBY: Aggie, honey, I don't know if you've ever come to this realization, but St. John's is not a school. It's a glorified prison for rich chicks, which is really only one step away from coming out of or going into juvie or rehab - depending on your rap sheet or your shrink's advice to the court. *(Begins to exit.)*

AGGIE: That's something you'd know more about anyway ... we've never tried to off ourselves by slitting our wrists in a bathtub.

(The GIRLS giggle maliciously. LIBBY turns to them.)

LIBBY: I know, sweetiecakes, I know what I did ... but, then, I'm not a daughter of a sleezeball running for governor, and I never called up some reporter telling them what my daddy did with his interns, just because I couldn't go to a slumber party. No wonder all your out-going mail has to go through your parents, and you've got no email or phone privileges.

(AGGIE tries to silence her friend.)

AGGIE: Mandy!

MANDY: *(Quickly.)* I swear I never said a word!

LIBBY: *(Exhausted from this conversation.)* Listen, I couldn't care less if you freak out and live behind a freezer until school is out ... just not this week. Wait until after break and someone else is here to hold your hands and blow your noses, okay? Now, I'm trying to find that cat. Chelsea's worried he might have hopped on the boat when a group was leaving for the mainland this afternoon.

End of Freeview

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