

The Double L Dude Ranch

a.k.a. The Double L Dud Ranch

by Margaret Witt

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DEDICATION

To my husband, Thomas, for his continued patience
and support of everything I do.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Luke needs to come up with money to pay the mortgage on the family ranch, and fast. His three friends offer to help him open up a dude ranch, and he knows he has no choice but to accept their generosity. At first, Luke is a little leery over the whole plan, but how hard can it be to teach a few city folk about life on a ranch? But things start to go wrong when his quirky guests arrive. There's Aspen and Ariel, two hillbilly sisters who can't keep their hands off of Luke's friends Nash and Nolan. Next to arrive are Martha, Mercy, and Grace, who want a final outing before taking their religious vows. Then there is adventure-seeking millionaire Francis along with three women who are following his money. And what's up with those two assassins? Oh, and Elvis makes an appearance as well, leading this crazy group in an optional song or two. Will Luke's friends abandon him in his time of need, or will they stay the course when the going gets tough at the Double L Dude Ranch?

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

March 28 & 29, 2014
River Valley High School, Correctionville, IA

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(9 m, 14 w, 3 flexible, some doubling possible.)

LUKE: Owner of the Double L Dude Ranch.
NASH: Nolan and Harper's brother and Luke's friend.
NOLAN: Nash and Harper's brother and Luke's friend.
HARPER: Nash and Nolan's sister and Luke's friend.

Visitors to the Ranch

ASPEN and ARIEL: Sisters disguised as a hillbilly-like, nerdy woman who are hiding a secret.
MARTHA, MERCY, and GRACE: Novitiates looking for adventure. Dressed in black robes.
KIPP and ARNIE: *(Flexible.)* Assassins who carry walkie-talkie but no weapons.
REED and GRETCHEN: Undercover FBI agents, assigned to protect Aspen and Ariel.
ELVIS: Elvis Presley impersonator. Wears Elvis suit. Plays guitar. Always speaks using titles from Elvis songs.
CHET: Elvis's tag-along friend.
FRANCIS: Rich. Has three girlfriends. Never been to a dude ranch.
HADLEY, SOPHIE, and WHITNEY: Snotty, uptown girls who travel with Francis.
LANE and DANTE: Boyfriend and girlfriend.
CRICKET and EMMA: Work at community center with children.
RYKER and DANA: Married couple. She is a possessive wife whose father is a mob boss.
RANDY: *(Flexible.)* Book publisher. Appears at end of play.

SETTING

There is a bunkhouse with a door USC. A wooden fence stands on either side of the stage. Stage is decorated with a ranch theme. Hay bales are positioned center stage in two slanted vertical rows directly in front of bunkhouse for seating purposes.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: It's morning. LUKE sits on a hay bale SRC with his laptop open. NOLAN and NASH are seated on hay bales SLC. Nash also has a laptop open on his lap. HARPER stands USC in front of the bunkhouse paging through a notebook. It's quiet for several beats.)

LUKE: *(Starts to type, then stops. Frustrated, resigned.)*
Yee-haw!

(The other THREE look at each other, worried.)

HARPER: Hey, Luke. What are you doing?

LUKE: *(Quickly snaps laptop shut.)* Nothing.

HARPER: Nothing, huh? Looks like something to me.

LUKE: Let it go, Harper. Will ya? I was just...ah, never mind.
(Puts laptop aside.)

(The three SIBS try to be encouraging and upbeat.)

NOLAN: Hey, it's pure genius, man. I can see it now. With Harper's marketing skills and our combined knowledge about ranch life, we're gonna pull this off without a hitch.

(Unconvinced, LUKE just shakes his head.)

NASH: Luke, we've been over this a thousand times. Your grandparents left you with a lot of debt. You know that the bank is going to foreclose on this place at the end of the month if you don't come up with the money to pay off your loan.

NOLAN: We gotta do this, man.

HARPER: *(Playing devil's advocate.)* Wait a second, guys. Hold on. There are a couple of other options.

LUKE: What options?

HARPER: Well, let's see. You could always write that best-selling book that you used to talk about.

LUKE: Ha, ha. What would I write about? That's just crazy.

HARPER: Well, what about producing that movie you wanted to make about the wild horses around here?

LUKE: That won't work either. You have to have money to make a movie, and I don't have any. That's why I'm in this situation.

NOLAN: I guess being a male dancer is out?

LUKE: I never said I wanted to be a male dancer!

NASH: Sure, you did. You used to—

LUKE: Okay, stop! I'm a horse rancher, plain and simple. I used to talk about doing a lot of things, but none of them ever worked out. Ranchin' is all I know how to do. I swear, it sure will kill me if I lose this place.

NOLAN: Then, don't. Fight for it. You can't just give up. *(Looking over Nash's shoulder at the screen, upbeat.)* Can you believe all of these names in here? We're booked solid.

NASH: You did an awesome job with that website, Harper.

HARPER: I did, didn't I? We told you this would work, Luke. The Double L Dude Ranch is officially opening for business today. Ta-da!

LUKE: The last time you three came up with a plan, I ended up in jail.

NOLAN: That was not our fault! Technically.

LUKE: Yes, it was. Technically.

NASH: No, it wasn't. We told you to run.

HARPER: It was kind of funny seeing you bein' dragged off in handcuffs.

LUKE: It was not funny. How was I supposed to know that my three best friends were gonna ditch me at the first sign of trouble? The plan was to just hang around at the corral until the cops arrived.

NASH: Those poor abused horses didn't have that long.

NOLAN: Yeah, Luke. Those horses didn't have a chance. We had to let them go.

LUKE: Yeah, but out here that's called stealing, in case you've forgotten. You guys took off and left me behind.

HARPER: It all worked out, didn't it?

End of Freeview

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