

**J.C. Erhardt Memorial School, Makkovik**

presents

**"A WONDERFUL LIFE AFTER ALL"**

CAST

Gertie Gooston  
Lola Granola  
Tommy Tookalook  
Waldo Stiff  
Greta Garglesmell  
Boy named Eric  
Boy named Erroll  
Girl named April  
Girl named Kerri  
Fireman

Angie Chaulk  
Rebecca Winters  
Alvin Jacque  
Kirk Andersen  
Marilyn Winters  
Eric Andersen  
Erroll Andersen  
April Andersen  
Kerri Mitchell  
Eric Andersen

TEACHER ADVISOR

Brian Leslie

MUSIC

You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" (Righteous Brothers)  
Foxy Lady (Jimi Hendrix)

The play is a story about a naive young teacher from Newfoundland who is hired to work in a remote Labrador community. Due to her misconceptions about rural life in the north, she allows herself to be made a fool of by some opportunistic young students. By the time she finally realizes what has been going on she has been made to look like a complete idiot. In a strange twist of circumstances she gets the last laugh on the students as well as finding herself a man.



Michelle Whitty  
Peacock Elementary School  
Happy Valley - Goose Bay

SCENE ONE

(Setting - Late August during a hot sunny day at the airstrip of a coastal Labrador community called Outaluk. In the background, there is a windsock accompanied by the sound of airplane engines. When the engines stop, two young boys enter the scene from offstage. They have summer jobs unloading luggage and begin doing so from just off stage opposite and bringing it back to stage center. The boys are wearing shorts, T-shirts, and sunglasses. Each boy picks up two pieces of cargo; one boy picks up a suitcase and a box while the other takes two suitcases. As they are moving, one drops what he is carrying on the other's foot who yells, "Ah-h-h!" and jumps up and down. From the direction of the plane, a female voice screams.)

GERTIE GOOSTEN: Watch out! My life is in those things! (One boy then drops a suitcase.) Oh! Can't you people do anything . . . Ah-h-h! (Gertie trips on the steps to the plane and lands on the ground and onto the stage. She's wearing heavy winter clothing, goggles, fur coat and hat, gloves, etc.) Oh, no! Why did I even come? Leave my stuff alone! I'll handle it myself! (Begins to stand up. Boys leave.)

(Gertie goes over to her luggage and begins to pick up her things. Some kids who were berrypicking near the airstrip notice her situation and enter from offstage.)

GERTIE: Oh, here come some local children. Maybe I should speak to them. (Gertie reaches into her shoulderbag and produces a large English-Inuktitut dictionary. She gets frustrated while flicking through the pages, closes the book and tried to communicate to them in broken Inuktitut.)

GERTIE: Atita Nilik! (Children look at each other and giggle.)

ERROL: Hello, there?!

GERTIE: (Surprised.) You speak English?!

ERROL: Yes, of course I do! (Looking surprised.)

ERIC: Ah . . . Miss . . . What you just said . . .

GERTIE: Yes? (Smiling proudly.)

ERIC: That's not your real name, right?

GERTIE: What do you mean, that's not my real name?

(The berrypickers look at each other and giggle.)

ERROL: But you said that your name was . . . uh . . . Miss . . .  
us . . . Miss Fart!

GERTIE: No, I didn't!

BERRYPICKERS TOGETHER: Yes, you did!

GERTIE: Well, I certainly didn't mean to! I was trying to say,  
"Hello, my name is Miss Gertie Gooston and I need a ride into  
town."

ERIC: We are just berrypickers, Miss. We would give you a ride  
but we've got no gas! (The berrypickers begin to laugh.)

(The berrypickers exit laughing.)

GERTIE: Smart aleck kid!

(Another woman gets off the plane and stops and stares at Gertie.)

PRINCIPAL LOLA GRANOLA: (Smiling in disbelief.) You must be looking  
for a hunting lodge or something?

GERTIE: Why? Do I look like a person who likes to kill animals?

LOLA GRANOLA: No, more like a person who has eaten a few in her  
time!

GERTIE: Well! (Huffily.) You've got some nerve!

LOLA GRANOLA: So have you to wear something from the Davey Crockett  
collection at Sears. It's late August for goodness sake!

GERTIE: Well, I was coming to Labrador!

LOLA: Even the Abdominal Snowman doesn't have on that much weasel  
wear. After all, it's Labrador, not the Ice Age. Has that  
thing had its shots yet? (Refers to coat.)

GERTIE: Everyone's a comedian. Who are you, anyway? America's  
funniest Inuk?

LOLA: Let's just say I'm a Labradorian who's seen one too many  
mixed-up visitor.

GERTIE: Look! How can I get a ride into town? Are there any  
tundra taxis around here.

LOLA: Tundra taxis?! (Shakes her head in disbelief.) That could be a problem! They're changing spark plugs on the huskies, don't you know! The two-thousand-icepan-check up! So! What're you doing up here, anyway?

GERTIE: I'm a teacher with a degree in English. I've just graduated from university, and it's my first time away from Newfoundland.

LOLA: That explains it! Back on the Island, a degree in English plus a dime might get you into a pay toilet at the Mall!

GERTIE: I doubt, considering your isolation, that you would be qualified to say anything about my career.

LOLA: Well, considering the fact that I am the principal at the school, you would be surprised to learn how qualified I am to control your career, Gertie Gooston. I have been expecting you.

GERTIE: Oh, my! I'm so terribly sorry! Please forgive me! You see, my medication is wearing off and I had no idea who you were. My therapist says . . . Oh, never mind, that's another story. I'm so embarrassed!

LOLA: That's okay, Gertie. I have met creatures from darkest Newfoundland before. It may take some time but with a good doctor and a strong belief in God, everyone will get used to you.

GERTIE: Thank you . . . ah . . .

LOLA: Lola . . . Lola Granola.

GERTIE: Well, it's a pleasure to have finally met you, Miss Granola.

LOLA: Oh, please, call me Lola, Gertie.

GERTIE: Oh, okay, Miss Lola-Gertie.

LOLA: What did you call me?

GERTIE: I called you Miss Lola-Gertie.

LOLA: Why are you calling me that?

GERTI: You told me to call you Lola-Gertie.

LOLA: I said, "Call me Lola, Gertie." I'm Lola and you are Gertie.

GERTIE: Oh! So your first name is Lola!

LOLA: Yes! That's right!

GERTIE: Well, Lola Lola-Gertie, you have a funny name, but I'm sure that I'll get used to it.

LOLA: (Frustrated.) Look, just call me Miss Granola!

GERTIE: Okay. Okay. Whatever you say. Boy, what a weird chick!

LOLA: Here comes Tommy Tookalook. He is here to drive you wherever you are staying. This is going to be one of those years! Good luck, Tommy! (Exits.)

TOMMY TOOKALOOK: Okay, boys, put these things in the truck over there. (Turns to Gertie.) So where is ya stayin'?

GERTIE: I'm staying in Greta Garglesmell's basement apartment.

TOMMY: That's right across the road from my house. So . . . is ya married, Gertie?

GERTIE: No, I'm not. How did you know my name?

TOMMY: Oh, I always finds out the names of new people when they comes to town. And you're the only fresh woman to come here in over a year.

GERTIE: Oh, no!

TOMMY: You know, Gertie, I senses a chemistry between us. You know, like opposites attracting.

GERTIE: Oh, you mean where I have teeth and you don't?

TOMMY: Well, actually I do. But my brother Billy needed them for a barbecue! Nothing worse than gumming your moose!

GERTIE: Tommy, just take me home.

TOMMY: All ready? (They exit.)

SCENE TWO

(Outside of Greta Garglesmell's house. Boys and girls playing ball.)

ERIC: You know, I can't wait for the new sports complex to open.

ERROL: I know. I just live for sports. If it wasn't for the new complex, school would be a real drag!

KERRI: We'll probably get to go on trips to sportsmeets and everything!

ERIC: Move over, Michael Jordan. Here comes Air Andersen!

APRIL: You mean Airhead Andersen!

ERIC: Hey, I'm no dummy!

ERROL: Oh, come on! You're probably the only person to spell potato with an E!

(Suddenly the truck stops and Gertie steps out. Tommy brings the bags.)

GERTIE: Look, Tommy, I appreciate the ride but I think that having dinner with you would be a bad idea. Somehow, when I think of romance, squirrel burgers and beer just don't cut it. Besides, dating you would probably violate the Wildlife Act!

TOMMY: Please, Gertie! You're the only wcmán for me!

GERTIE: Don't beg, Tommy. I only like men with class.

TOMMY: Tommy has class. No pride, but lots of class!

GERTIE: Go home, Tommy!

TOMMY: Okay, but remember this! You are destined to be Tommy's love muffin! (Tommy exits.)

GERTIE: Oh, brother!

ERIC: Hey, get a load of her!

ERROL: Didn't your father catch something like that once?

ERIC: Yeah, in the basement! Thank goodness for penicillin!

APRIL: Shhh! Here she comes!

GERTIE: Oh, hello there!

ALL: Hello!

GERTIE: Do you all speak English?

ALL: Yes!

GERTIE: Well, isn't this exciting! All of these delightful northern people speaking the language of Newfoundland!

ERIC: Ah . . . Yeah, right!

KERRI: Miss?

GERTIE: Yes?

KERRI: You eat too much fibre, don't you, Miss?

GERTIE: What?!

GRETA GARGLESMELL: I thought I heard a stranger's voice out there. You must be Gertie Gooston.

GERTIE: Why, yes, I am.

GRETA: I'm Greta Garglesmell. I own the basement apartment that you will be staying in. Why don't we go upstairs and I'll get you the key. You can also meet my pet cat, Puff.

GERTIE: That sounds good, except I'm allergic to cats.

GRETA: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Come on. I'll put Puff in the bathroom. (Greta and Gertie exit.)

ERIC: You know, if she is half as dumb as I think she is, we could have a ball!

APRIL: What do you mean?

ERIC: Oh, come on! She's only got two brain cells in her head, and one's there to keep the other alive!

ERROL: Oh, I see! So what do you want to do to her?

ERIC: Anything we can. If we are lucky, she'll even help us.

KERRI: Shhh! Here she comes!

GERTIE: Thanks so much, Greta!

GRETA: Now, remember, if there's anything you need, don't hesitate to ask!

GERTIE: I won't!

GRETA: Oh, by the way, have you met these kids yet?

GERTIE: Well, no, not really.

GRETA: Then let me introduce you to them. This is Eric, Errol, April, and Krista. They love sports, and always play near the house. Kids, this is the new teacher, Miss Gooston.

GERTIE: So you like sports, huh? Well, so do I. I even tried out for an Olympic team once.

ERIC: Yeah, the Olympic fart sniffing team.

GRETA: Okay, kids! Help Miss Gooston any way you can. I've got to go! See you later, Gertie!

GERTIE: How about helping me bring my things inside?

ALL: Okay, Miss! (Everyone enters the apartment with the bags.)

GERTIE: Just put them down anywhere. What a nice apartment! And the first thing that I have to do is to use the bathroom.

ERIC: Bathroom, Miss?

GERTIE: Yes, Eric. You know, the room with a sink and a toilet. (The kids all giggle.)

KERRI: But, Miss, this is Labrador.

GERTIE: I know this is Labrador, but people have bathrooms, don't they? (She walks to a door and opens it.) See! There it is!

ERROL: But, Miss, in this part of Labrador, we've still got big problems with the toilets.

GERTIE: What do you mean?

ERIC: Well, Miss, toilets are very new here, so they are still very dangerous.

GERTIE: Dangerous! Why?

ERROL: Because of the sewer shrews!

GERTIE: Sewer shrews! What are sewer shrews?



APRIL: They are like rats, Miss.

ERIC: Yeah, only smaller and nastier.

KERRI: And in Labrador they all got rabies.

ERIC: Yeah, and when you sit on the toilet, they finds ya and comes straight up the pipe for supper.

ERROL: He's right, Miss. They shoot up and nibble your bum.

KERRI: And then you catch rabies. It makes you drool and then you die.

GERTIE: So what do you do? Use outhouses?

APRIL: No, we can't use outhouses.

GERTIE: Why not?

ERIC: Too much frost in the ground to dig 'em.

GERTIE: Not even in summer?

ERIC: Come on, Miss! This is Labrador! Don't you know nothin'?

GERTIE: Well, what am I going to do? I can't hold it forever! Everyone does it in the woods, right?

ERIC: Come on, Miss! We are more than that! What do you think we are, a bunch of savages?

GERTIE: Well, I'm sorry. But what do I do?

KERRI: We've got a really good system here in Outaluk.

ERIC: Yeah! You get a white plastic bag, spread it between two chairs and you can figure out the rest!

GERTIE: You've got to be kidding!

ERIC: No, it's the truth, and when you are finished . . .

GERTIE: Wait! Don't tell me! I'll bet you bury it out back right!

ERIC: Don't be so foolish. You hang it on the clothesline!!

GERTIE: You what?!

ERROL: You put it on the line . . .

APRIL: And a man comes by in his truck and picks it up.

GERTIE: This is insane! Do you really expect me to do all this?

APRIL: Well, if you don't, the sewer shrews will get you!

GERTIE: I'm beginning to regret coming here.

ERIC: Well, Miss, we'll leave now so that you do your bag thing.

SCENE THREE

(Gertie is in her apartment fretting about the day's events.)

GERTIE: Oh, how will I ever survive up here? A few more days like this and I may crack up! (There's a knock at the door.)

GERTIE: Who could that be? (She goes to the door and opens it. Tommy appears, with the song "You've Lost that Lovin' Feeling" playing in the background.)

GERTIE: Not now! Get lost! Oh, my nerves! Maybe a good steak will make me feel better. (There's another knock at the door.)

GERTIE: Who is it this time? (She opens the door.)

ERIC: Hello, Miss! Me and Kerri thought the we would drop in and see how you were doing!

GERTIE: How am I doing?! Because of your bag advice, Greta freaked out at me, and Mrs. Knobgobbler has gone mental!

ERIC: Mrs. Knobgobbler! She's the town nutcase!

KERRI: And everyone knows that Greta Garglesmell freaks out at everything!

ERIC: Everyone avoids her because any little thing could set her off!

KERRI: And she has always been against the bag idea, and doesn't mind showing it!

GERTIE: Really? I had no idea!

ERIC: Whatever you do, don't take them seriously.

GERTIE: Well, I did let them get to me. I thought that a big steak would cheer me up. You are welcome to stay and have some. I just have to go out to the grocery store and buy some meat.

ERIC: Grocery store? Miss, you are in Outaluk now, not Newfoundland! You can't buy meat that easily.

GERTIE: There must be some place to get meat up here.

ERIC: Well, there is one place where you can get some.

GERTIE: Good! What time does it close?

KERRI: It's one of those 24-hour places.

ERIC: Yeah, sort of like Sobey's Food Village in St. John's.

GERTIE: That's great! Where can I find it?

KERRI: Oh, you don't have to go far, Miss!

ERIC: Yeah, this place is really big, too. It stretches from the Torngat Mountains to the Labrador coast and the meat is fresh daily.

GERTIE: Oh, come on!

KERRI: He's serious, Miss!

ERIC: Yup. Up here in Labrador, you have to catch your own meat.

GERTIE: But I've never caught an animal in my life!

ERIC: Well, Miss, this is your lucky day because me and Kerri are two of the best moose catchers on the Labrador, ain't we?

KERRI: That's right, and we're going to help you bag your first moose!

GERTIE: What?! You two?!

ERIC: That's right, Miss. Besides, who else do you know that can help you?

GERTIE: Well, I suppose someone's got to teach me if I want to survive up here.

KERRI: That's the spirit!

ERIC: Come on, Miss! Stick with us. You're about to bag your first moose.

GERTIE: I've got a bad feeling about this. (All exit.)

(Soon, on a road near town, they lie in wait for their catch.)

GERTIE: Are you sure that this will work?

ERIC: Of course, Miss! Would we lead you wrong?

GERTIE: But we are so close to town. What if someone sees us?

ERIC: Nothing to worry about, Miss! Just do as we tell you.

KERRI: Okay! The first thing - if you want to bag a moose, you've

got to have a bag. Here you go! (Gives her a sac.)

ERIC: Now you need to put on this moose hat so that the moose thinks you're his buddy. Then you hide away and do your moose noise.

GERTIE: How do you do that?

KERRI: You put your hands up to your mouth and go "Mo-o-o-o-ose"!

ERIC: Now, when the moose trots by, you bang him on the head with this moose knocker (pulls out caveman club) and put him in the bag.

GERTIE: This must look ridiculous! I can't believe that I am doing this!

KERRI: Shhh! Something's coming! Do your moose stuff!

GERTIE: Mo-o-o-o-ose! Mo-o-o-o-ose! (The kids sneak off, snickering.) (Gertie jumps out to hit the moose, but it's Lola Granola, the school principal.)

LOLA: So this is what you get when you cross a moose with a moron!

GERTIE: Oh, Miss Granola! I know how this must look!

LOLA: Like one of Santa's reindeer experiments horribly gone wrong!

GERTIE: Oh, Miss Granola, I feel so stupid!

LOLA: Trust me, Gertie. Go with your feelings!

GERTIE: All I wanted was some fresh meat.

LOLA: Follow me, Gertie.

GERTIE: Where are we going?

LOLA: Back to your place. I think we need to have a little chat.

(They enter Gertie's apartment.)

LOLA: Okay, Gertie, sit down. We have to talk. (There's a knock at the door.)

GERTIE: Just one moment 'til I get the door! (She opens door and it's Tommy again, wearing pink fur coat and carrying flowers, this time to the tune of "Foxy Lady".)

GERTIE: You again! Forget it! You don't have a chance! (Slams the door.)

LOLA: Who was that?

GERTIE: Just a guy from Geeks are Us.

LOLA: I've got to be honest with you, Gertie. You have only been here a few days but already everyone in town thinks you're crazy! If you don't smarten up, you won't have a friend in this town. I mean, first, there was the plastic bag on the clothesline, and now this moose mess.

GERTIE: But I have only been doing what the kids have been telling me. I'm just trying to fit in.

LOLA: Look, you silly goose! Those kids are playing you for a fool and you are falling for it. You've got to start using your head! Tomorrow's a very important day for all of us, especially you, and I won't have one of my teachers acting like an idiot! The grand opening of the sports complex is the biggest thing to happen to this town, and the Superintendent himself will be coming. So get your act together! Understand?

GERTIE: Yes, Miss.

LOLA: Okay, get a good night's sleep tonight, and I'll see you tomorrow. (Lola exits.)

GERTIE: Good-bye.

GERTIE: How could I have been so stupid. I'll get those kids tomorrow! I need a good cup of tea to calm my nerves. (Gertie starts to make some tea and there is a knock on the door.)

(Gertie opens the door and it is the kids.)

ERIC: Miss . . . Miss!! (Frantically)

GERTIE: Don't you "Miss" me! I've got a good mind to . . .

APRIL: But, Miss, there's a house on fire!

KERRI: You've got to call the fire department, Miss!

GERTIE: I'm not falling for any more of your lies.

ERIC: But look out the window, Miss.

ERROL: See for yourself.

GERTIE: (Goes to the window.) Oh, my gosh, you're right! I've got to call the fire department. I'm so sorry for doubting you kids.

ERIC: It's okay, Miss. Just hurry before it's too late!

KERRI: Let's go, everyone! Maybe we can help the firemen.

GERTIE: Okay! Good-bye, kids . . . Hello, fire department? There's a house on fire next door to Greta Garglesmell's house. My name? Gertie Gooston. Yes, that's right. Please hurry! (Hangs up telephone.) I feel so bad for doubting those kids. For once, they were telling the truth. What's that sound? Oh, it's the firetruck! That was fast! (Gertie stares out the window at the smoke.) Okay, they are getting out. They are smashing in the door with their axes! That's this? One of them is walking towards my place. I wonder what he wants. (There's a knock at the door. Gertie opens it.)

FIREMAN: Are you Gertie Gooston?

GERTIE: Yes.

FIREMAN: You must think you're some funny!

GERTIE: What do you mean?

FIREMAN: You know very well what I mean! The next time you tell us there's a fire and there isn't one, we're going to call the police!

GERTIE: But there was smoke pouring out of the house!

FIREMAN: Maybe that's because it's a smokehouse, you weenie! You know, a place where you put meat to smoke it. That's awfully hard to do without a fire!

GERTIE: I don't believe this!

FIREMAN: Neither do I! (Fireman exits.)

GERTIE: O-o-o-ö- . . . those kids! (Furious.) This is the final straw! Tomorrow they'll get the shock of their lives. ~~At~~ the opening of the complex I get my revenge! (Storms off stage.)

FINAL SCENE (SCENE FOUR)

(Official assembly in the gym.)

LOLA: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the official opening of this wonderful facility. It is a special day for us all and today we have some special guests among us. None is more important than the man who has worked the hardest to see our dream become a reality. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the Superintendent of our School Board, Mr. Waldo Stiff. (Applause.)

WALDO STIFF: Ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed a dream come true for the town of Outaluk to have the best gym and sports complex in all of Labrador. However, none of this could have come true without the tremendous generosity of the millionaire banker, David Lee Rothschild. Unfortunately, Mr. Rothschild couldn't be with us today as he is on vacation in South America due to some unfortunate criminal charges back in St. John's. However, he has given another person total authority over who gets to use these wonderful facilities so I would stay on their good side if I were you. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you his daughter, Gertie Gooston. (Applause.)

ERROL: Oh, no!

ERIC: It can't be!

GERTIE: Thank you, Mr. Stiff! I would like to say that as well as fulfilling my job as a teacher, I will work hard to make this facility work and to make my father proud. And on behalf of my father, I now declare these wonderful facilities officially open. (Applause.) I would also like to say that this facility will be open to all of the people of Outaluk for their enjoyment except for a certain group of children, whom I would like to have a chat with.

KERRI: We're doomed!

ERROL: What do we do now?

ERIC: As the old saying goes, "Let's make like horse dung and hit the road!" (The kids make a fast escape.)

WALDO STIFF: Thank you, Gertie! I would also like to say that the job of managing the financial affairs of the sports complex have been awarded to Tommy, or should I say, Dr. Tommy Tookalook.

TOMMY: Thank you, Mr. Stiff! When I finished my business thesis on Trickle Down Economics, I dreamed of the day when I could use my education to help my hometwon of Outaluk. Well, that day has finally come!



WALDO STIFF: Thank you, Tommy! I am sure that you will do a great job working closely with Miss Gooston.

TOMMY: The closer, the better!

WALDO STIFF: This concludes the official ceremony. I would like to thank everyone for coming tonight and if you would kindly proceed to the lobby at this time, there are free jello jigglers and kool-aid for everyone. (Everyone exits except Gertie and Tommy.)

TOMMY: Why did you come here if your father is so rich?

GERTIE: Because I wanted to get away from the pressure of being recognized as a spoiled rich girl. I wanted to prove myself and make a difference in the world without my father's friends and influence. But as I have learned the hard way, there is no real escape.

TOMMY: But what about your last name?

GERTIE: Oh, it's my mother's maiden name.

TOMMY: Too bad it sounds like fart. I guess that's why she got married. So that there would be one less fart in the world.

GERTIE: Why are you still in this town? With your Ph.D. you could have a great job anywhere.

TOMMY: Nope! I fished. The money's better on the government package.

GERTIE: You know, the government could use a mind like yours, Tommy!

TOMMY: No way! The skeletons in my closet got meat on 'em!

GERTIE: I suppose that there is a lot to get to know about each other.

TOMMY: I guess there is. Would you like to start by going to the dance with me Saturday night? I got new teeth and everything!

GERTIE: Oh, Tommy! I'm a sucker for a man with a full head of teeth. (They hold hands.)

TOMMY: Ya know, Gertie, if we got married, our kids would be rich, toothless wonders.

GERTIE: It could be a wonderful life after all. (They hug.)

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