

The Truth

By: Les Rigolette

Synopsis:

Three young girls get sent to residential school, unprepared for the shocking truth of how cruel people can be.

Cast/ Character List

Violet Riche - Ukpik Winters

Danica Flowers - Ukiuk Williams and RCMP Dianne

Keira Sheppard - Anâna and Kajuk Shiwak

Abbygael Culleton - Sister Margaret and RCMP Lilly

Misty Sheppard - Tech.

Shania Williams - Teacher/ Director

Kevin Jacque - Chaperone

Scene 1

Stage left has a table and four chairs with a small couch, like a cozy cabin. Stage right is empty. Ukiuk- The Jerry Cans playing in the background.

Full stage lights come up as a Little Inuk girl is playing out around the cabin, pretending to hunt (Stage right) Her mom (anâanna) yells out from the cabin (stage left) to tell her it's supper time.

Anâanna: Attaik my little one. Come and have some tuktu.

Ukpik: Okay! *Beat.* Mmm. It smells really good, anâanna. I can't wait to eat. I'm so hungry.

Anâanna: You must have worked up an appetite hunting around like that all day.

Ukpik giggles to herself

Anâanna: What's so funny?

Ukpik: *(still giggling)* it's nothing.

(Finishing up her plate.)

Ukpik: Nakummek. It was delicious.

Anâanna: You're welcome.

Ukpik puts on her mukluks.

Ukpik: Nagligivagit Anâanna. I'm going to go and see Ukiuk.

Anâanna: Nagligivagit my love. Hurry back, it's getting late.

Ukpik: I know. I'll be back soon.

Ukpik skips off stage right. Lights fade, stage props are removed, and you hear little footsteps running.

Scene 2

Lights come up stage right. Empty stage. Ukiuk is trying to figure out how to play "Cat's in the cradle."

Ukpik: Boo!

Ukiuk screams and drops rope.

Ukpik: *(Laughing)* Did I scare you?

Ukiuk: Yes! I thought you were Old Mother Bucksaw!

Ukpik is laughing so hard she's crying. Ukiuk starts laughing with her and then hits her on the shoulder.

Ukiuk: Why are you always playing around like that? You could've given me a heart attack! I could have died!

Ukpik starts laughing even harder.

Ukiuk: I'm serious, Ukpik. What if I died? Would you be laughing then?

Ukpik stops laughing and still smiling.

Ukpik: You always ruin the fun by overthinking Ukiuk. It was just a joke. You take everything too seriously.

Ukiuk: I'm sorry... *Beat* Are you and your atâtsiak going hunting tomorrow?

Ukpik: I don't think so. He's not feeling well today. Plus he likes to take my brothers more than me. He calls them, "Future Hunters" or something. It's so annoying.

Ukiuk: That sucks. Hopefully he realizes that he's wrong and decides to take you sometime soon. My atâtsiak always takes me. He calls me his warrior princess.

Ukpik starts her laughing fit again.

Ukiuk: I'm serious. *(Beat) Starts laughing along.*

Girls are still laughing and playing around with each other. Lights fade.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bh5XSgozfTA>

Scene 3

Lights are dull, as if it's night time. Ukpik and Anâanna are sleeping in bed. Horse galloping toward the cabin. As they get closer the horse sounds get louder. RCMP barge into the cabin, Stage Left.

 [Horse Gallop Sound Effect YouTube](#)

Lilly: Everybody get up. Get out of this cabin. NOW!

Ukpik: Anâanna what's-

Dianne: You have the right to remain silent! *(To Lilly)* Take the girl.

Anâanna: No!

Dianne: If you don't let us take her, we will be taking you to prison.

Locked up for life. You'll never see your child again!

Anâanna: Well... Where are you taking her?!

Ukpik starts bawling for her anâanna while the RCMP is holding her by her arms.

Dianne: That's nowhere for you to find out ma'am. *(To Lilly)* Throw her in the cattle truck with the rest of them. She'll be back in no time.

Anâanna won't let her little girl go. RCMP has Ukpik held on by both arms. Ukpik is fighting to be freed. Dianne knocks her out with her baton, lights go completely black, and they drag her off stage right.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z46Qh6beFWY>

Scene 4

Blackout stage.

Ukpik: Hello? Is anybody there?

Ukiuk: Ukpik, is... is that you?

Lights come up as three little girls are sitting center stage. All blinded by the lights. Stage has three beds lined in a perfectly symmetrical row.

Ukpik: Ukiuk? Why are you - wait... Why is my hair short? *Looks around the room.* Where are we?

Ukiuk: Mine is too... This is so weird. *Notices another little girl.* Who are you?

Kajuk: I'm Kajuk Shiwak. *Beat* Who are you?

Ukpik: My name is Ukpik Winters, and this is my best friend Ukiuk Williams.

Ukiuk: I was just home with my anâanna and then all of a sudden I'm here... *Beat* and my head really hurts. *Rubs her head in pain.*

Ukpik: Mine does too... Why are there beds? This doesn't look like any home I've been in before.

Kajuk: Guys... I don't think this is a cabin.

Door slams. Girls scream. Enter Sister Margaret, residential school teacher (RST) with a metre stick, stage left.

Sister Margaret: Quiet!

Smacks metre stick on stage. Hands the children a bag of clothes.

Sister Margaret: Shut up and put these on.

Sister Margaret: Be ready by 6 sharp tomorrow morning. Now you must pray.

Kajuk: Pray? What is “pray”?

Ukpik: Like prey? Like I’ll hunt the animal and they’ll be my-

Ukiuk: No Ukpik! Don’t be so dumb!

Sister Margaret: Enough! We don’t use names here. You (*Pointing at Ukpik*) are Number 261. You (*Pointing at Ukiuk*) are number 338. And you (*Pointing at Kajuk*) are number 453.

Ukpik: But I am not a number... I am Ukpik Winters.

Sister Margaret: Shut up! Get on your knees NOW!

All the girls get on their knees in front of Sister Margaret.

Sister Margaret: Not here. Get on your knees in front of your bed.

All the girls rush toward their beds and fall to their knees.

Sister Margaret: Close your eyes and put your hands together. And

PRAY!

The girls start mumbling to themselves not knowing what they’re doing. peeping at Sister Margaret to see if she’s watching.

Kajuk: *Whispers* ItsilikKunga!

Sister Margaret hits Kajuk with her metre stick. Kajuk yells in pain.

Other two scream.

Sister Margaret: Quiet! There will be no speaking of that Indian language here!

Girls get in bed with their heads hung low. Sister Margaret is watching while they cover up. Lights fade. Stage is cleared.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWRA1s6j05E&list=OLAK5uy_l8gmfbelgmcgF83Iiotdvnc9jHkg9jdhU&index=2

Scene 5

Stage has three school desks and chairs center stage with a flipchart closer to stage right. Sister Margaret has her metre stick in her hand.

Girls walk in class stage left.

Sister Margaret: Everyone take a seat.

Ukiuk and Ukpik sit in a row with Ukpik sitting in the middle, Ukiuk sitting on her right and Kajuk is not there.

Sister Margaret: Today we are going to learn about prayer. Prayer is when you...

Charlie Brown “wah-wah-wah” plays as Sister Margaret is going on about Prayer. The girls are dazed and confused.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_BU5hR9gXE

Ukpik: *Looks around the room and says to Ukiuk.* Where’s Kajuk?

Sister Margaret: I told you there are no names used here! She is now known as 453.

Sister Margaret, tapping the metre stick on her hand.

Sister Margaret: Does everyone understand?

Both girls: *Scared* Yes Ma’am.

Sister Margaret: Alright then.

Class ends. Lights fade, stage is cleared.

Scene 6

Three class desks are pushed together stage right with 3 bowls and a spoon sitting on the table. Kajuk is sitting at the middle of the table alone and doesn't say anything.

Both girls: Kajuk?!

Ukiuk: Why weren't you in class today?

Kajuk looks up and stares blankly at them. The other two notice her black eye and the girls gasp.

Ukiuk: Kanuiven?!

Beat

Ukpik: Itsiven?

Kajuk starts shaking her head and glances over at Sister Margaret who enters on stage right.

Kajuk: She's here.

The other girls rush to sit down next to Kajuk. Ukiuk on her right and Ukpik on her left. They look at their bowls of porridge, disgusted.

Sister Margaret: Hurry and finish off your porridge. We don't have all day.

The girls hurry and barely get the porridge down. Sister Margaret looks away for a second to check the time.

Sister Margaret: Go grab the cleaning supplies and clean up after yourselves.

Sister Margaret exits stage right. The girls grab the broom, cloths and bucket.

Ukpik: I don't understand why we need to do this.

Ukiuk: I thought we were supposed to learn.

Kajuk: Not whatever this is.

The girls are still cleaning.

Sister Margaret enters stage right.

Sister Margaret: You are dismissed.

The girls drop what they're doing. Sister Margaret goes up to Ukpik with her metre stick.

Sister Margaret: Why did you drop your things on the floor?

Ukpik: All the other girls did too.

Sister Margaret: You do not talk back to me like that!

Sister Margaret wacks her with the metre stick.

Sister Margaret: Now get to your rooms!

Lights fade. Stage is cleared.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ofCZObsnOo>

Scene 7

Lights are dull. Stage left has three beds. All three girls are kneeling by their beds praying.

Ukiuk: Ukpik you're not doing it right.

She goes over to Ukpik.

Ukiuk: You're supposed to go like this.

She shows her how to put her hands and bow her head.

Ukpik: I was doing that Ukiuk! Leave me alone.

Ukiuk: No you're not Ukpik!

Kajuk: Stop! Just go to bed before Sister Margaret comes in!

All girls go to sleep. They toss and turn for a few minutes. Ukpik's thoughts are playing on voiceover. She gets up.

Ukpik: *Whispers* Ukiuk... are you awake?

Ukiuk sits up and looks at her while rubbing her eyes.

Ukiuk: Now I am.

Ukpik: Come here. I need to show you something.

Ukiuk: ughh. Just got to sleep, Ukpik.

Ukpik: No. Come here.

Ukpik drags Ukiuk out of bed and exits stage right. Light fades, stage is cleared.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqQn9gGpYF8>

Scene 8

Lights are dull. The girls are creeping across to stage left.

Ukpik: Look Ukiuk. This is where the kids go to hide away from the Nuns and Priests. I'll get in one and you'll get in the other.

Ukiuk: What about Kajuk?

Ukpik: She'll be fine, Ukiuk. Just get in.

Ukiuk: Fine.

Ukiuk starts walking toward backstage. Ukpik pushes her in and slams the door and locks it. Ukpik runs offstage right.

Ukiuk: *Offstage* Ukpik? Are you sure about this? *Beat* Ukpik?

Ukiuk starts banging on the door and yells for help. Ukiuk gives up and lights blackout.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqQn9gGpYF8>

Scene 9

Lights are dull, stage left has three beds. Kajuk is sitting up in her bed wondering where the other two are. Ukpik enters stage right. Rushing to get back to bed.

Kajuk: Ukpik? Where's Ukiuk?

Ukpik: We were going to use the bathroom and Sister Margaret caught us. She took Ukiuk with her to a different room... I don't know where she went.

Kajuk: Oh no... I hope she's okay...

Ukpik: I know... Me too.

The girls get back in bed. Lights fade. Stage is cleared.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZSCXE4CpCA>

Scene 10

Lights come up with three school desks and chairs centre stage and a flip chart closer to stage right. Sister Margaret enters stage left.

Sister Margaret: Where are those girls? *Checks the time.* It's 6:13.

Ukpik and Kajuk enter stage left and sit at a desk.

Sister Margaret: Where's number 338?

Kajuk: *Looks at Ukpik, concerned and looks back at Sister Margaret.* I thought you took her last night?

Sister Margaret: What are you talking about you dirty little Indian.

Kajuk: umm... Nothing. Sorry ma'am.

Sister Margaret: What is she talking about number 261?

Ukpik shrugs her shoulders as if she has no clue what's going on.

Sister Margaret: SPEAK!

The girls jump in fright.

Ukpik: I don't know.

Sister Margaret: Take this. *Hands Ukpik the metre stick.* Now punish her.

Ukpik looks at Kajuk for a second, then wacks her with the metre stick three times while smiling. Kajuk is yelling in pain. Lights fade, stage is cleared.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8l2orzWG1qU>

Scene 11

3 Years later.

Lights come up, bedroom set up. The two girls are packing their things and folding the bed clothes.

Kajuk: We're finally going home! *Beat* How long has it been?

Ukpik: It's been too long. I can't wait to go hunting with my grandfather.

Kajuk: I know. I hope they remember who I am...

Ukpik: I hope so too. I hope my mother made me some Indian food.

Sister Margaret enters stage left.

Sister Margaret: Alright girls, your rides are waiting for you outside.

Sister Margaret hand them their bags. The girls exit stage left in glee.

Lights fade, stage is cleared.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jevGL7i1BVQ>

Scene 12

Lights come up. Stage left has the same set up as scene one. Stage right is empty. Anâanna is sitting on the couch reading a book. Horse galloping towards the cabin. Ukpik enters stage left. Anâanna jumps up to hug her long lost daughter. Ukpik just stands there.

Anâanna: Oh, my love! You're back! I've missed you so much! *She squeezes her cheeks.* Nagligivagit!

Ukpik gets nervous that her mom is speaking Inuktitut and looks over her shoulder.

Ukpik: Mom. We're not supposed to speak like that anymore...

Anâanna: What are you talking about?

Ukpik: They said we're not supposed to... They said it's the Devil's tongue...

Anâanna: Wh... What are you going on about?

Ukpik: At residential school. They taught us that if we spoke the Indian language -

Anâanna gasps.

Anâanna: Don't you ever say that again!

Ukpik: Well, it's true. If we spoke in that language, we would get punished...

Music fades in. Ukpik sits on the couch with her anâanna and tells her stories of what happened to her and the other girls at residential schools.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKtQQwQtKac&list=OLAK5uy_18gmfbeIgmcgF83Iiotdvnc9jHkg9jdhU&index=7

Ukpik finishes her stories. Anâanna hugs her and Ukpik hugs back, digging her head in anâanna's shoulder. Lights fade. Stage is cleared.

Scene 13

60 Years Later

Lights come up, full stage. One single bed centre stage, Kajuk sitting on a chair next to her. Praying. Heart monitor sounds.

Ukpik: *Quietly* Kajuk...

Kajuk looks up at Ukpik.

Kajuk: Ukpik?

Kajuk moves closer to hear her.

Ukpik: I... Killed... Ukiuk...

Kajuk looks at the audience, shocked. Lights go black, stage is cleared.

The End

Cast members go to sit at the edge of the stage. Slideshow plays of children at residential school.

Bibliography

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