

# Glitz Family Robinson

*A parody based on the novel Swiss Family Robinson*

*By Eddie McPherson*

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## DEDICATION

I'm grateful to my Advanced Acting students who worked patiently with me, workshopping this script. Lots of input, edits and laughs. Thanks, guys. *Madison Richards, Thomas Johnson, Ryan Callahan, Alana Murdock, Jaqueline Mora, Jordan Peed, Aurora Russell, Hannah Stephens, Sarah Schneider, Taylor Hollands, Brianna Reimer, Remi Tasker, Madison Villines.*

## STORY OF THE PLAY

The posh and well-to-do Robinson family is on a ship excursion (*Without their nanny*) when they shipwreck on a deserted island. The mother is at her wit's end about having to do actual parenting (*Without their nanny*) and feels sorry for herself when she realizes her acting career might take a nosedive in her absence. The father of the clan is also at a loss (*Without their nanny*) and spends all his time speaking with a British accent and playing golf down on the beach. So, the kids find themselves on their own (*Without their nanny*) and begin to devise a survival plan. A band of not-so-bright pirates (*Also without a nanny*) land on the island, searching for a treasure chest they buried there months earlier. Desperate to regain their lost booty, they even kidnap one of the Robinson kiddos and hold her for ransom. Mother and Father, however, refuse to rise before 9 AM to deliver any money. (*That would be a nanny's job.*) Then, *another* castaway shows up (*Also without a nanny.*) who has been living on the other side of the island and might know the whereabouts of the treasure chest, but might not be willing to help. *Then* the *nanny* (*Ta da!*) shows up after searching for her long-lost family for months. But because the family changes due to their experiences on the island (*Without their nanny.*) they realize they don't need help after all and leave her there, taking her boat and sailing back home. But Nanny has a little surprise of her own. Oh, and there are monkeys, but whose side are they on? Funny one-liners and silly sight gags make this show a laugh riot, as the most well-to-do family on all the seven seas tries to survive their plight (*Without their nanny*).

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(3 m, 6 w, 4 flexible, plus extras)*

**MOTHER:** A soap opera star who often speaks in Shakespearean soliloquys.

**FATHER:** Talks with a bad British accent and frequently forgets which child is which.

**JACK:** The oldest child.

**FRAN:** The youngest and bravest child. She befriends a monkey.

**ERNESTINE:** Born between Jack and Fran.

**FREDA:** Also born somewhere between Jack and Fran.

**PHIL:** A native of the island. He's a smart-mouthed monkey.

**PIRATE ONE:** Leader of a band of pirates searching for a treasure chest.

**PIRATE TWO:** Second in command.

**PIRATE THREE:** Another pirate.

**PIRATE FOUR:** Another pirate.

**JENNY:** A castaway who has been living on the other side of the island. She likes herself.

**NANNY:** Finally shows up to take her family back home.

**EXTRAS:** Other monkeys and/or pirates as needed.

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

Alligator bag: Take green poster board, draw the outline of the top view of an alligator, and cut it out. Add a handle.

The double-ended flyswatter: Take two fly swatters with the flat parts on opposite ends and tape them together.

Monkey Costume: Simpler is better for this show. An actor playing the monkey should wear all black or brown with a painted face. Monkey tail is optional.

The butterflies: Draw and cut out butterfly shapes from construction paper in different colors. Attach the butterflies to clothing using paper clips.

This play is a sendup of the classic novel/films *Swiss Family Robinson*. It needs deliberate exaggeration from the actors for comic effect. The characters are stereotypical and one-dimensional. Overacting is okay here, but remember that the characters in the story should behave as though they are facing a serious plight. Acting thoughtfully and somberly in such silly situations is vital in making a parody work.

\*See additional notes at the end of the script.

## **SET**

The set is a tropical island. You can make it as elaborate or simple as you like. Palm trees stand all over the stage with underbrush along the stage floor. You may choose to build tall palm trees using old carpet rolls. Take a roll of brown butcher paper, crinkle it, and glue it all around the carpet roll to make the trunk. A mic stand makes a perfect stand for your tree. For the leaves, an old umbrella stripped of its cloth makes good limbs, then add green butcher paper or construction paper leaves. Wire clothes hangers that are untwisted and stretched out also make good limbs. Or, you may choose to use all live plants placed around your stage. Or, a combination of both looks nice and fills the stage successfully. The cave is offstage.

## Glitz Family Robinson

*(AT RISE: Fun calypso-type MUSIC plays as a line of MONKEYS file out and perform a dance/routine for the audience. After a minute of this, they file out the opposite side of the stage as the MOTHER enters dressed to the nines. She speaks to herself as she powders her nose, using a small compact mirror.)*

**MOTHER:** We have been shipwrecked on this dreadful island for months and any hope of eating caviar again is looking slim. No rescue in sight. These children of mine are driving me absolutely coo coo. Why, oh why didn't we bring the nanny along?

**JACK:** *(Offstage.)* Ready or not, here we come!

*(JACK, FRED A and ERNESTINE run in and scatter about the stage as though they are looking for someone.)*

**MOTHER:** *(Closing her eyes.)* Children, stop the foolishness at once. Must I remind you that Mummy does *not* have her aroma therapy?

**FREDA:** *(Still looking around the stage.)* But, Mummy, we're ever so bored. Won't you play with us?

**ERNESTINE:** If Nanny were here, she would at least pay us some attention.

**MOTHER:** Not bringing Nanny along was your *father's* idea. "Family vacation," he said. "Bond as a *family*," he said. Now look at us. Stranded with no nanny, no aroma therapy and children who act like ... *children*.

**JACK:** Look on the bright side, Mummy.

**MOTHER:** There is no bright side when a woman's Gucci bag lies forever at the bottom of the ocean. Woe is me. Oh, woooo is me.

**JACK:** Mummy, you're not acting in your TV soap opera. This is real.

**MOTHER:** Your mummy is a star, Jack Robinson. My popular soap opera *Nights of Our Forever Death Beneath the Underworld on a Rainy Day in December and January, But Not February or November* is the number one daytime show. They will forget me if I can't get back home, Jack. My public will *forget* your mummy. (*Extreme overacting.*) Woe, oh, woe is me!

**JACK:** But at least our ship went down near an island. We're safe here on dry land.

**MOTHER:** (*Looking offstage, pointing.*) But why couldn't our ship have landed on the shores of Maui, Hawaii or Aspirin?

**FREDA:** Aspirin?

**MOTHER:** (*Sarcastic.*) Aspirin, Colorado.

**FREDA:** (*Beat, staring at MOTHER.*) Bless your heart, Mummy.

**JACK:** But, Mummy, *Aspen*, Colorado doesn't have a coast—

**MOTHER:** Don't argue with your elders. Away with you while Mummy gets some rest. See what your father is doing.

**FRAN:** (*Running in.*) Everyone, look what I found.

(*FREDA, JACK and ERNESTINE run over to FRAN. MOTHER sits in a beach chair.*)

**FREDA:** What did you find?

**FRAN:** (*Holds up a pineapple.*) This.

**ERNESTINE:** What is it?

**MOTHER:** Let Mummy see. (*Lifts her sunglasses and glances over.*) Oh. That, dear children, is what common people call a watermelon.

**FRAN:** No, Mummy. I saw a picture of one of these in my World History book at school. It's a giant hand grenade. We can use it as a weapon against the ugly creature I've been seeing at night.

**JACK:** (*To FRAN.*) That's not a watermelon *or* a grenade. It's a pineapple, imbecile.

**FRAN:** What's a pineapple imbecile?

**JACK:** It's a fruit that grows wild here on the island.

**FRAN:** But we can still use it as a defense against the *thing*.

**ERNESTINE:** Mummy, Fran is talking about the *thing* again.

## **End of Freeview**

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