SCAMILY

A One-Act Play

By

Kelly McCauley

Kelly McCauley
kpmcccauley@wpi.edu
203-727-3437
SUMMARY
Two bumbling individuals work against each other while both trying to scam a man with a concussion by convincing him that they’re his children.

CAST
Scammer 1/“Alex”, a woman who likes to think of herself as a career scammer
Scammer 2/“Owen”, a mischievous young man who rarely thinks ahead
Bernard Walters, a middle-aged man suffering from disorientation following a recent head injury
Jane Walters, Bernard’s daughter

SETTING
Suburbs, modern time, mid-day.
Most of the stage resembles a living room, with a couch and coffee table, a picture frame on it. A doorway is off to the side and beyond it there is a mailbox, a bush, and a newspaper on the floor.
(Lights up as Bernard, dressed in pajamas, walks through the doorway and picks up the newspaper. Scammer 1 can be seen crouching behind the bush, unbeknownst to Bernard)

Bernard: Afternoon already?

(He shakes his head and goes back through the doorway)

(Once he is inside, Scammer 1 moves to the mailbox, taking out its contents)

Scammer 1: (Shuffling through mail) Bill, junk, letter… (She pauses at one envelope) The DMV? (She glances around before ripping it open and pulling out a license) License, score!

Let’s see, Alex Marie Walters, age twenty-seven. This should do the trick.

(She dusts herself off and tucks the license away before knocking at the door)

“Alex”: Dad? Are you in there? It’s Alex.

(Bernard crosses over to the door and opens it)

Bernard: Alex? Did we have plans for today? Also, (squinting) are you doing something different with your hair?

“Alex”: (smiling) No, I just wanted to stop by and check on you.

Bernard: Oh, that’s sweet of you. For a second I was worried we had some sort of plans I had forgotten about. You know how frazzled I’ve been since that car crash.

(“Alex” and Bernard head over to the couch and sit down)

“Alex”: Have you been keeping busy these past few days? I hope it hasn’t gotten too boring.

Bernard: Doctor’s orders were no TV or reading, said those would be too much with a concussion this severe. I’d probably have gone crazy if I couldn’t knit.

“Alex”: Oh, what have you been knitting?

Bernard: Scarves, already on my second one. (smiling) Remember your first attempt at a scarf?

You were so embarrassed that it was asymmetrical, but I couldn’t be prouder.
“Alex”: Yeah, I remember. That’s a real trip down memory lane.

Bernard: *(laughing)* Oh, don’t get me started! You were such a shy kid. Remember what happened at Owen’s fifth birthday party? I wasn’t sure he’d ever stop calling you ‘Alrex’.

“Alex”: *(laughing awkwardly)* Dad, that’s enough teasing for one day.

Bernard: I know, I know.

“Alex”: Are you sure you’re alright though? You still seem a bit… disoriented. *(gestures to his clothes)*

Bernard: *(looking down)* Oh, look at me, still in pajamas. I guess you’re right. I’ll go change.

*(Bernard rises and leaves. As he exits, “Alex” shoves a nearby item into her pocket and gets up, moving around the room)*

“Alex”: Loose cash? Jewelry? Small electronics?

*(As she begins to rifle through belongings, a knocking is heard from the doorway and Scammer 2 is standing on the other side of the door)*

Scammer 2: Dad, are you home? It’s me, Alex.

*(“Alex” pauses before moving to the door and opening it)*

“Alex”: Don’t think you can fool me!

*(She takes the license from earlier out of her pocket and shoves it into Scammer 2’s face)*

“Alex”: Alex is a woman! Don’t come at me with some cheap scam, you amateur!

Scammer 2: O-oh. *(moving back to see the license)* Hey, your noses are super different. It’d be bad if you showed this to anyone else, they’d definitely notice the scam.

“Alex”: *(caught off the guard)* Scam? Me? What?
Scammer 2: I saw you hiding in that bush and going through his mail earlier. And then suddenly you were in his house, talking like old friends. I figured the mail had something to do with it so I looked at the envelope on the ground and got the name from there.

“Alex”: Excuse me? Have you been stalking me? That’s a crime, you know!

Scammer 2: Oh, relax! I was just going for a jog. Plus I noticed you lurking yesterday, so of course I was curious. No crime involved.

“Alex”: Well I—

Scammer 2: Anyway, I want in. Are you running a long con? What’s your plan?

“Alex”: Listen, I—I’m just grabbing some small stuff, this isn’t some elaborate scheme—

Scammer 2: (interrupting) Do you have a role for me? Is there some brother I can play?

“Alex”: I mean, he mentioned an Owen, that could be a brother—Wait, no, this isn’t happening. Just, just look at you. (She gestures at him)

Scammer 2: …Yes?

“Alex”: Don’t you realize? You and Mr. Walters aren’t exactly… (She looks at him expectantly)

Scammer 2: What? Aren’t exactly what?

“Alex”: To put it carefully, you aren’t exactly the same ethnic identity. You can’t just pass yourself off as his son!

(Scammer 2 is now staring past her at the photo on the coffee table)

Scammer 2: Oh, don’t worry about me. (He claps her on the shoulder) I’ve got this.

(Scammer 2 walks past a stunned “Alex” as Bernard re-renters)

Bernard: Owen? Is that you? (He moves to hug Scammer 2, who returns the hug) I wasn’t expecting so many guests today.
“Owen”: Sorry to surprise you, Dad! Alex mentioned that she was visiting so I figured I’d stop by too.

Bernard: *(smiling)* To be honest, I’ve been getting caught up in a lot of memories today, so hearing you call me dad is nice. It means so much to me that you see us as family, biological or not.

“Owen”: *(smiling back)* Oh, Dad. What’s got you all nostalgic today?

(“Alex’s” mouth hangs open at this exchange. When Bernard turns to sit down, “Owen” points towards the photo.)

“Alex”: *(under her breath)* He actually looks like Owen…?

“Owen”: *(aside to “Alex”, grinning)* Told you I’d be fine.

Bernard: What was that, Owen?

“Owen”: I was asking why you were so nostalgic.

Bernard: I guess it’s just what happens when you’re left alone with your thoughts for so long *(laughs).*

“Alex”: So, speaking of nostalgia, remember your fifth birthday, Owen?

“Owen”: I, uh, yeah?

“Alex”: What was it you called me again? ‘Palex’?

“Owen”: Well, I, I mean, maybe—

Bernard: Alex, no teasing your brother. *(He shakes his head and smiles)* Or else Owen may have to start calling you ‘Alrex’ again. *(He winks at “Owen”)*

*(Bernard is slightly startled, reaching down to his pocket.)*

Bernard: Excuse me a minute.
(He moves to the side of the stage and takes a phone out of his pocket and holds it up to his face, 
the next part alternates focus between the scammers and Bernard)

“Owen”: Hey, what was that?!

“Alex”: (innocently) What was what?

“Owen”: Were you trying to set me up? You wanted me to say the wrong thing!

“Alex”: (dropping the act) Duh!

Bernard: Hello? Oh, Jane! Where are you again? … Visiting the academy? How are things there?

“Owen”: We were supposed to be a team! We were gonna be partners in crime!

“Alex”: I never agreed to that. I was here first. You think I’m just going to let some college kid 
swoop in and ruin things for me? Get real.

Bernard: Good to hear. Are you going to be back soon? Both Owen and Alex are here right now.

“Owen”: Fine, if that’s how it is then I don’t want to work with you anyway. I can do this all on 
my own.

Bernard: What? They’re out of town? Well, obviously not anymore, they’re here right now.

“Alex”: I have experience and you have what, luck? This is a joke.

Bernard: I don’t understand, but—I mean, if you insist… Okay, alright, love you too, sweetie.

(Bernard ends the call and re-enters)

Bernard: Sorry about that. Hey, there should be some cookies in a tin on the kitchen counter. 
Could one of you grab them?

“Alex”: (with spite) Yes, Owen, could you grab them? From the kitchen?

“Owen”: (with equal spite) Oh, come on, Alex, you’ve already had some time with Dad. How 
about you go grab them?

“Alex”: Oh, but it’ll only take a few seconds.
“Owen”: Then why don’t you—

Bernard: I can just grab them myself. (to himself) Kids these days…

(Bernard moves to the side and returns with a tin which he places on the table. “Alex” and “Owen” glare at each other while his back is turned.)

Bernard: So, uh, how have you two been?

“Owen”: Good.

“Alex”: Great. Hey Owen, which vacation was your favorite?

“Owen”: Oh, I don’t feel like picking favorites. What about you?

“Alex”: Likewise.

Bernard: Okay… Cookies? (He takes one from the tin) Come on, don’t make me finish these by myself, your mother would kill me.

“Owen”: Right, right, sorry, Dad. (He takes one)

Bernard: Say, why don’t we break out those old photo albums?

“Alex”: No!

(Bernard startles and stares in confusion)

“Alex”: I, I mean, you just brought out cookies! (laughs nervously while taking one) Wouldn’t want to get crumbs in the albums, right?

Bernard: (relaxing) Oh, that’s true.

“Owen”: Aw, come on, we won’t be eating forever. Why don’t you grab the albums after, Dad?

Bernard: That’s also true, how about one more cookie and then albums?

(As Bernard reaches forward to grab a cookie, “Owen” makes a face at “Alex” behind his back)

“Alex”: (tense) Oh, hey, Dad, I was wondering, what were you doing earlier?

Bernard: Huh?
“Alex”: When you left the room?

Bernard: Oh, your sister called me. It was weird, she seemed so on edge. Hopefully nothing’s wrong.

(“Alex” and “Owen” exchange a nervous look before glaring again)

“Owen”: Is…Is she going to be coming here too?

Bernard: Should be any moment now.

(Sirens are heard in the distance, getting louder until they stay a constant volume)

Bernard: That must be her now. (chuckling) I hope she didn’t use the sirens just to get here faster.

“Alex”: Wait, what?!

Bernard: She was out visiting the police academy so maybe she wanted to show off there? Your sister’s a funny one.

(Jane bursts through the doorway in a police uniform, drawing a weapon)

Jane: Dad, get away from them.

Bernard: Jane, what are you—

Jane: You impersonated my siblings to try and scam my father. I suggest you give up and don’t make a scene. There’re more officers outside, so don’t try to run.

“Owen”: (quickly) Hey, fun fact, this woman also opened your family’s mail.

“Alex”: What—

(“Owen” turns and runs off stage, away from the doorway)

“Alex”: You rat!

(She runs off after him)

Bernard: …Your siblings realize there isn’t an exit down there, right?
Jane: *(sighing)* Don’t worry about it. *(She follows them off-stage)*