

# CURIOUS DOLLS AND THE TALES THEY MIGHT TELL

By Maureen Brady Johnson

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# CURIOUS DOLLS AND THE TALES THEY MIGHT TELL

*A One Act Drama*

**By Maureen Brady Johnson**

**SYNOPSIS:** If old and abandoned dollies could tell their tales, would they have some valuable lessons for us? Spend some time giving voice to these monologues, dialogues, trios and quartets. Listen, really listen to their sad and curious stories. A unique production with lots of flexibility in casting and performance.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(13 females, 9 male, 4 either; gender flexible)*

- PRINCESS DOLL 1 (f) .....Main narrator, direct, energetic and forceful. *(8 lines)*
- PRINCESS DOLL 2 (f) .....Polite, Courteous, Clear, comes to the point. *(8 lines)*
- PRINCESS DOLL 3 (f) .....Emotional, sympathetic, Soft-spoken. *(7 lines)*
- ADVENTURE BOY (m) .....High energy, Loves adventure with his whole being. High enthusiasm! *(Monologue)*
- GILDA (f) .....A gentle doll who longs for the warmth of the sun. *(Monologue)*
- DOLL IN A BOX 1 (f) .....Mover and shaker for change. *(22 lines)*
- DOLL IN A BOX 2 (f) .....Aware of her fragile beauty, wants good looks and freedom. *(20 lines)*
- DOLL IN A BOX 3 (f) .....Shy and full of Hope. *(21 lines)*
- TROLL DOLL (m/f) .....Wild, Unusual, Aware of the way they look, celebrates their uniqueness. *(Monologue)*
- CLOWN DOLL (m/f) .....Good humored doll with an easy laugh and a spirit that won't quit. *(Monologue)*
- SCOTTISH DOLL (m) .....Scottish doll with an accent, a bit frantic. *(16 lines)*

- ESKIMO DOLL (m).....Eskimo doll very emotionless, matter of fact, straight faced. (15 lines)
- JAPANESE DOLL (m).....Japanese boy doll nervous, tense, high strung. (14 lines)
- BED-TOPPER DOLL (f).....hysterical, trying to find a way to cope with her dilemma, having a hard time. (Monologue)
- BRIDE DOLL (f).....A doll with a dream to be in love & get married, but has been disappointed too many times. (Monologue)
- TIRED BABY (m/f).....Must be able to cry really loud and in many different ways. Forceful. Intense. (Monologue)
- QUARTET DOLL 1 (m).....Country doll with a southern drawl and a slow smile. Likes to take it easy. (23 lines)
- QUARTET DOLL 2 (m).....From a Department Store. A city Doll with big dreams of doing great things. (24 lines)
- QUARTET DOLL 3 (m).....From an exclusive Antique Shoppe (with an "e"). Better than everyone else. Full of herself. (23 lines)
- QUARTET DOLL 4 (m).....From a Big Box store and a discount shelf. Aware of her beginnings as an assembly line doll. (22 lines)
- BEAUTIFUL DOLL (f).....She has seen it all and loved and learned from her difficult life. Expansive. (Monologue)
- LUCKY (f).....Feels that she should be lucky with her life but keeps losing to other dolls. Strong! Emphatic. (Monologue)
- SPECIAL BABY (m/f).....She feels hopeless until the end. She is strong with a will to survive. (Monologue)
- WORN DOLL (f).....Battle-worn survivor. Really decrepit and chipped in body and in spirit. (Monologue)
- BROTHER PUPPET (m).....Hopeful and strong puppet. Speaks with an accent. Very aware that he is "different". (15 lines)

SISTER PUPPET (f).....A softer version of her brother. Speaks with an accent. Happy with a tinge of sadness. *(15 lines)*

**DURATION:** 45 minutes

**TIME:** Present day

### **SET**

Minimalist. Some chairs or black boxes with an area lit for the performers. Photos of the actual dolls available for use. Photos of dolls can also be used in the program.

### **COSTUMES**

Costumes can be as simple or as elaborate as you wish. Can be done in street clothes or you can suggest the clothing that the doll is wearing with one color or clothing item (i.e. A bridal veil worn by the bride monologue performer or a straw hat for the country doll).

### **MUSIC**

Music should be used to fade in and out after one monologue begins and another ends. It will cover their exits and entrances.

## AUTHOR NOTES

The best way to produce this play is to have projections of the photos of the dolls as the set. As each performer takes the stage, they give voice to the dolls. The emphasis is on the portrait of the doll and then on the actual performer. Another way to produce this play is to suggest a costume or color that each performer wears onstage (i.e. country doll wears a straw hat, a pretty princess doll wears a crown, etc.)

A follow up activity could discuss the themes of each monologue that apply to real life experiences such as bullying, self-image and fear. The young performers give voice to the troubled dolls and then share how their lives reflect the exact same problems and the solutions. A list of monologue themes is included to use for discussion.

This production could be used for contest, as an integrated piece to use in the classroom, as a one act play or an evening of short plays for parents. I hope that it would also be used as a jumping off performance for some meaningful discussions for schools, church groups or social activities.

If you wish to produce this play with the original photos that inspired the monologues, please contact the publisher.

**SCENE 1***PRETTY, PRETTY PRINCESSES*

**AT START:** *PRINCESS 1, 2, and 3 enter.*

**PRINCESS DOLL 1:**

Pretty, Pretty Princess Dolls lined up on the shelves.  
Pretty, Pretty Princess Dolls can't speak up for themselves.

**PRINCESS DOLL 2:**

With servants running here and there  
To keep the royals happy.  
"A princess is pouting... oh no... oh no.  
Get something to make her happy!"

**PRINCESS DOLL 3:**

Pretty, Pretty Princesses,  
They scowl at other dolls.  
That one's too fat! That one's too lean!  
That one's too dirty, that one too clean.

**PRINCESS DOLL 1:**

Pretty, Pretty Princesses  
I think they're all quite sad.  
No one bought them. No one loved them.  
They're just a pretty fad.

**PRINCESS DOLL 2:**

Pretty, Pretty Princesses.  
They think they are the best.  
They turn their backs on lesser dolls  
And disregard the rest.

**PRINCESS DOLL 3:**

With customers who "ooh" and "ahh"  
When looking at the rest  
"Come over here and look at this...  
This Princess is the best."

**PRINCESS DOLL 1:**

"But mom, I like the baby doll...  
The one who's chipped and dirty!  
She needs my love much more  
Than those Pretty Princesses, so flirty."

**PRINCESS DOLL 2:**

“Their heads are empty, souls are shallow,  
All lined up in a row.  
I want a doll to cuddle with,  
Not one who’s heart is hollow.”

**PRINCESS DOLL 3:**

“I want a doll whose little face  
Is worn away from kisses.  
Not ones who’ve never left their case,  
With hearts as cold as fishes.”

**PRINCESS DOLL 1:**

“I want a doll who needs a home  
And needs me night and day.  
Who’s kind and sweet and nice to hold,  
Who always wants to play.”

**PRINCESS DOLL 2:**

The Pretty, Pretty Princesses began to realize that  
Pretty, Pretty Princesses should open up their eyes.

**PRINCESS DOLL 3:**

As Pretty, Pretty Princesses said,  
“I think there’s more than pretty,”  
Their cold, cold hearts began to melt.  
The Princesses felt giddy.

**PRINCESS DOLL 1:**

And then a kind of miracle took place upon the shelves.  
The Pretty, Pretty Princesses began to be themselves.

**PRINCESS DOLL 2:**

They learned that kindness felt so good.  
And so did smiles and laughter.  
They learned that there was more to life than  
“Happily Ever After.”

**PRINCESS DOLL 3:**

The Pretty, Pretty Princesses began to find their voices.  
They learned to care and listen to the other dolly choices.

**PRINCESS DOLL 1:**

They learned that really hearing  
What the dolls said every day  
made friendship grow and kindness flow  
and love grew where it may.

**PRINCESS DOLL 2:**

The Pretty, Pretty Princesses forgot to primp and comb.  
The dollies stopped and played with them.  
They didn't feel alone.

**PRINCESS DOLL 3:**

They grew to love the stories told by dollies young and old.  
As weeks went by, the Princesses recalled each story told.

**PRINCESS DOLL 1:**

Each doll had her own perfect tale,  
As told in her own style.  
Some were brave, though chipped and pale,  
Yet still they wore a smile.

**PRINCESS DOLL 2:**

The days went by, their hearts were changed.  
They wrote a little play.  
And now they hope you'll listen, too,  
And not run far away.

*PRINCESS DOLL 1, 2, and 3 exit.*

**SCENE 2***ADVENTURE BOY*

**AT START:** *All the adventures should be a series of high-action, pantomimed adventures. Every time the actor says “Adventure Boy,” he should pose and say his name as if he were in an echo chamber.*

**ADVENTURE BOY:** *(Enters skipping.)* I’m a boy, I’m a boy, I’m a B. O. Y. An Adventure Boy doll—at least that’s what it said on my gift box. When my child opened the box at the birthday party, I tried to read the label as fast as I could. But as soon as my child saw me, I was yanked out of the box and thrown into the air. I whirled around and landed in a sandbox. But I giggled and laughed. After all, I am Adventure Boy.

The next day, my child dressed me like a pirate, and we went searching for the treasure of a lost ship. “Yo He Ho, me hearties,” a cardboard boat set to sail in a big backyard. I walked the plank, took a ride in the crow’s nest, and slid down the main sails. My child dug in a flowerbed for a treasure of marbles and cheap plastic beads buried the day before in an empty margarine tub. “We found treasure, me hearties!” my child would shout, and I was flung into the air a dozen times. I almost tossed my cookies, but I couldn’t... after all, I *am* Adventure Boy. The next day, my child dressed me like a cowboy and we rode on a bicycle down the driveway and back again, chasing the bad guys. “You’re going to jail, you side-winder,” and the gun would shoot and miss and shoot again. In the end, the cowboy in the white hat would win and I’d share a jail made out of cardboard from a refrigerator delivered the week before.

“Sam! Time for lunch!”

Sometimes the hero would be called in for a lunch of tomato soup and toasted cheese, and I'd be stuck in the jail all afternoon. But I was rescued by the faithful dog, Gus, and thrown into the air again. I ended up in the jail, and as the evening dew soaked and sagged the box, Sam helped me make an easy escape through a torn window to the freedom of another wild ride down the driveway with my child on a bicycle.

More adventures were in store for me—after all, I was Adventure Boy. During the winter, we discovered the North Pole. We were saved from a wicked avalanche, and we built igloos, a big one for Sam and a tiny one for me. There was a small, catastrophic sled ride into a sapling that dumped snow all over us, but we survived to enjoy a warm cup of hot chocolate with teeny, tiny marshmallows.

In the spring, I got buried in the dirt alongside rows of corn and beans. But Sam dug me up in time to put on a straw hat and overalls and take a ride in a Red Flyer wagon fixed up like the Jeep Nelly Bell from the Roy Rogers TV show.

In the summer, we stayed outside until it got so dark that the fireflies came out. We ran after them and caught a few and put them in a jar to sparkle until we let them go. I was tied up in a tree house where birds ate my stuffing and chipped my painted eyes. I didn't mind. I was Adventure Boy.

In the fall, we raked leaves into big piles and I was buried for days until all the work was undone in the frantic search for me. My child loved me and loved the crazy, breathless adventures we took together. After years of play, I lost an eye, and my hair was crazy wild from the wind, smelling of the seasons, the smoke of burning leaves, the soak of falling snow, the fresh dirt of spring, and the hot sweetness of a summer tree house.

Always with my boy, Sam...finding me and bringing me home.

Until the day I found out my child was not a boy.

“Samantha, time to come in and get cleaned up,” her momma said. Samantha? My Sam was a Samantha? How could Adventure Boy have a girl named Samantha as his child?

It was easy. The name changed, but the adventures continued. We went to Africa, and China, and India. We went to Tokyo, Finland, and even Tahiti! It just didn't matter. I loved her energy and imagination and she loved her best pal, Adventure Boy. *(Exits.)*

### SCENE 3

#### GILDA IN THE SUN

**GILDA:** *(Enters.)* I'm in the sun and I am warm! I know it fades my dress and makes my hair white, but I love the sun.

I get so cold on this shelf...but once a day I'm in the spotlight, shining on me.

It is a welcome bit of warmth in a cold antique mall. Most of the day, I'm stuck in a dark corner of an old oak bookcase. Lucky for me, I'm not afraid of the darkness. I got over my fear of the darkness years ago.

Long ago, I used to sit on a windowsill. My child put me in the sun. She would say, “I love to see your golden hair shine!” and she would lift me to my windowsill, already warmed by the sun, and adjust my bright pink, starched dress. She smoothed my hair gently, gave me a quick kiss, and said, “Gilda, you belong in the sun.” I would sit, warm with love, as she played with her baby dolls, dressing them, feeding them, and arranging elegant tea parties for her teddy bears.

Sometimes I would attend. The tiny teacups would topple over and spill tea all over me, staining my dress. The delicate cakes and cookies would crumble on my lap and into my golden hair and onto the rug. But I didn't care. I was warm with the sun and the love of my child. I wanted so badly to be included. Sometimes, when the weather was nice, she would bundle me up in a soft cotton blanket

and take me along on a carriage ride adventure. Those memories live in my mind now and keep the cold and darkness away from this pitch-black corner. This corner is not as dark as the dark trunk I lived in for years. My child grew older and played with other toys. I wasn't included in that part of her life. I was packed away. The trunk was in an attic with one tiny window. I was wrapped in tissue and forgotten in that dark place for years and years. I got used to the dark, but I missed my warm sunshine... and my child.

I finally was discovered by my child, who had grown into a lady and a wife and mother. She unwrapped the crumbling tissue and said, "Oh, Gilda! I forgot all about you. Your dress is still lovely. I'm glad I put you in this trunk. Time to sell you to the antique store so we can buy wood for the fireplace to keep my children warm and to burn in the stove so I can cook the vegetables for our soup tonight!"

It made me sad to think I was being sold for a few onions or a carrot or even a rutabaga. But I sacrificed my doll life so that my owner could give her children warmth... warm fire in the stove and warm soup for their meal.

I know what it's like to be cold and alone.

The lady who owns the antique store is now very old. I have been here on this dark shelf for many years. Once a day, the sun falls on the top of my head, turning my thinning hair golden again. My face is slowly covered with the kindness of the sun, and I remember the sunny windowsill I used to sit on and the child who used me to pay for a warm place and a warm meal for her children. I wonder where she might be. I wish I could see her with her children. I wanted to be a part of her life. But dolls grow old, and then they're sold. So when you see a dolly in the dark of an antique store, find a place in the sun for her to sit. Pick her up. Move her into the sunshine. Maybe pay for her and take her home with you. And then whisper to her, "Thank you for your sacrifices. You are still cherished and loved." (*Exits.*)

**SCENE 4***PRETTY DOLLIES IN BOXES*

**AT START:** Enter DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** We are the dolls in boxes.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** We have been Wrapped in tissue paper, Packed away, too delicate to play with. (*Slight pause.*)

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** (*Shouting all at once.*) Get me out of here!

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** We want equal time for play, like the baby dolls get!

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** Our beauty doesn't make us fragile!

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** You can't keep us in here forever!

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** Equal time... equal play!!

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** How many times must we hear the sighs of a child as she looks into our boxes, pushes the tissue aside, and reaches down to pick us up?

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** Our hopes rise. Maybe this day will be different from all the other days. Maybe this day, she will make new doll clothes and dress us and comb our matted hair... or let us join the baby dolls in an afternoon tea party... or take us for a walk in a carriage.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** Our cheeks blush. Our eyes open. Our little doll hearts flutter wildly.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** (*With excitement.*) Maybe Today!

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** (*Questioning.*) Maybe today?

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** (*Stage whispered.*) Maybe today...

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** Then a voice from the hall says, "Don't play with those dolls in the boxes. You are not allowed to play with the dolls in the boxes! Don't touch the pretty dolls in the boxes!"

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** And our child sighs, and we think we see a tear. Our hearts break just a little more.

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** Why were we made if not to be played with and attend tea parties in the kitchen?

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** Why were we made if we cannot be taken on picnics in the park? Or simply, gently loved.

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** Why were we made if we are forced to live in boxes... untouched, unappreciated?

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** There's more to our lives than "pretty" or "beauty."

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** Even though we live in boxes, we've heard the stories from the other dolls in the nursery... stories about...

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** ...secrets whispered at dark.

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** ...laughter shared outside by the swings.

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** ...dresses stained with peanut butter and jelly!

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** We want out! We want...

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** ...baths with floating yellow ducks.

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** ...cookies and cocoa in front of the fireplace.

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** ...blue cotton blankets covering us when it is cold.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** Why are imprisoned? Because we must be perfect?

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** I stayed in a box on a shelf for forty years!

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** I think I was in a box in the back corner of a closet.

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** I know I was in a box in the dark attic in a cold trunk. For years and years and years...

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** We are perfectly preserved. Sitting on different shelves... in antique shops.

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** flea markets.

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** second-hand stores.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** Please. Whenever you see a doll in a box. Please. Push the faded cardboard aside.

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** Don't worry that it may crumble with age. Unfold the faded, yellowed tissue paper.

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** Please. Pick up the dolly...Smooth her hair. Unrumple her dress. Hold her close.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** And whisper: "I will take you out of this box and throw it in the trash. You will never be trapped in cardboard again!"

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** I will hold you close... even though no one else will play with you, I will.

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** I choose you. I love you.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** Get us out of these boxes and into your arms...

**DOLL IN A BOX 1:** Please!

**DOLL IN A BOX 2:** Please?

**DOLL IN A BOX 3:** (*Stage whispered.*) Please.

**DOLL IN A BOX 1, 2, and 3:** We're tired of being someone else's idea of perfect... we want to be ourselves. (*ALL exit.*)

## SCENE 5

### TROLL DOLL

**TROLL DOLL:** (*Enters.*) I know I am ugly... so don't try to argue with me and tell me it's not so bad to be really, really ugly, ...I am a Troll Doll, and I am ugly. I have learned that even being ugly is okay if a child loves you, no matter what.

I have a face only a mother could love... a mother Troll, that is. This face is so ugly, I could almost be considered cute... almost. Let me tell you the story of how I was created.

It was a cold winter in Denmark... and a Danish fisherman, Thomas, was finding it difficult to fish in the lakes and ponds and streams that year. They were all frozen solid. There would be no fish caught and no fish sold and no money for Christmas presents that year. But Thomas was a clever, talented man. He whispered to his wife—so softly he spoke. He did not want his young daughter, Lila, to hear.

"I'm going to carve her a doll for Christmas."

"A wooden doll?" his wife asked.

"Yes. It will be the only one of its kind, and it will be a Troll!"

Night after night, he carved after his daughter went to sleep. A face began to appear in the block of wood—(*Pointing.*) dark eyes, pointed ears, a mischievous smile, and a tail...so ugly, it might be cute!

"This doll is really turning out to be ugly. I am worried that Lila will be afraid of it...that she won't want it..." he said to his wife.

"Don't worry, Thomas. She will love it because you made it."

Christmas morning came, and the entire village was covered with new snow. Thomas slept little that night because he worried that the doll wasn't pretty enough. Lila found me under a branch of the Christmas tree. She spoke to me gently...

"Come here, little one!" she said, and I never left her arms for the rest of the winter. The townspeople heard about the ugly little Troll doll, and when they saw me, their faces twisted like this... (*Makes a twisted face.*) and like this (*Makes another twisted face.*). They made faces almost as ugly as mine and whispered, "What an ugly little doll! I would never give that to my children! It would scare them!"

But then came a small miracle... the children of the village weren't scared at all... they loved me! My ugly face wasn't ugly to them. They thought I was cute. Then they began asking their parents for their own Troll dolls. They whined and pined for a doll just like me!

Their mothers would say, "Don't you want a pretty doll?"  
"NO!" they said. "We want our own Troll doll."

Thomas began making Trolls by the hundreds. He tried to keep up with the demand until every child had a Troll doll of their own. That was how the Troll dolls began!

Leave it to the children of that Danish village to see past the pointed ears and snub noses and hair on our chins. They dressed us, hugged us, and combed and braided our wild hair. The more they played with us, the wilder and uglier we got... but they loved us more because of it.

My child played with my hair until a lot of it had fallen out. Her father made her a new Troll doll, and I traveled with an antique dealer to America, and now I sit next to my friend, the crazy American clown, and when it turns midnight, we whisper to each other, telling stories about the times we spent with all of our children... children who loved us no matter what we looked like! So when you see an ugly little Troll doll in a thrift store or a flea market or a house sale, and you say to yourself, "What an ugly doll!" remember the Christmas

morning when I was born—and the love of little Lila, her father Thomas, and the children of her village who loved an ugly doll that wasn't ugly to them at all. (*Exit.*)

**SCENE 6**  
*CLOWN DOLL*

**CLOWN DOLL:** (*Enters. Laughing.*) It tickled the day I was made. My maker had to sew all these ruffles into little round patches, and when she stitched them together, all those ruffles made me laugh. (*Laughs again.*) When my head was sewn onto my crazy-quilt body, it pinched a little... but I laughed. I've been laughing my whole life.

I was given to the baby of the house, and when she squished me with love, my face just kept smiling. I was jammed into the seat of a swing, stuck between the mattress and the crib, almost drowned in the bathtub, and crushed between the escape hatch of the play pen. But I kept smiling.

I was washed when she spit up on me, tumbled in the dryer after she drooled all over me. I even boomeranged from her Johnny Jump Up—halfway across the room and into the jaws of her dog, Christopher, who flung me this way and that. But I kept smiling...

When I was found behind the couch a few days later, I was covered with dried dog spit and dust bunnies. I got a long ride in the washing machine after that.

I had to keep laughing... it was hard to be upbeat and positive all the time, but my plastic face never stopped smiling... so I just told my heart to follow my face!

Well, as most dolls lives go, mine hasn't been so bad. When my child grew older, another baby came along, and I began the cycle again... the swing, the crib, the bathtub...then another baby and another...and another.... I think there were twelve in all. And I kept smiling...

The twelfth child threw me into the dustbin, and I thought I was finished forever. No more smiling for me... just being recycled and shredded into a hundred colorful bits.

But my first child rescued me! She pulled me out from the dirt and dust and said, "I am going to save you." And I kept smiling!

Now I live on a shelf with my friend, the Troll. We're happy to sit here all day. It's quiet, there aren't any dogs to chew on us, no baby spit or drool on our faces... just an occasional hug and kiss.

Our grown-up girl comes home from school and puts down a big pile of books to do her homework and she looks at us every night and says...

"After all you two have been through, you are still smiling. Wish I could be like you! Growing up is hard work. Wish I could be a kid again. I'm glad I have you to keep me going. You have been spat on, crushed, and almost ripped into shreds...but I can always count on you to greet me with a big smile, no matter how hard life gets."

My doll life has made a difference in her life... and... I'm still smiling... *(Exit.)*

## SCENE 7

### EYES WIDE OPEN

**AT START:** SCOTTISH DOLL, ESKIMO DOLL, and JAPANESE DOLL enter.

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** I can't close my eyes!

**ESKIMO DOLL:** I've seen everything since my child glued my eyes open.

**JAPANESE DOLL:** She thought she was putting eye shadow on our open and shut lids and it was Elmer's Glue! Aargghh!

**SCOTTISH DOLL, ESKIMO DOLL, and JAPANESE DOLL:** No matter how we try to close our eyes, they are always open!

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** The night is the worst time – thrown around the playroom facedown in the dark, dust and dirt catching in the corners of our eyes.

**ESKIMO DOLL:** Sometimes, the mother of our child comes in as the sun is setting and picks us up and dusts us off and puts us...

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** ...on a shelf.

**ESKIMO DOLL:** ...on a bookcase.

**JAPANESE DOLL:** ...in a box with no lid.

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** The lights go out, but our eyes stay open—we see everything in the half night light.

**ESKIMO DOLL:** The cat comes in and curls up in a corner.

**JAPANESE DOLL:** The dog sniffs around for crumbs of cookies left behind after a tea party.

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** One night, a mouse ran along the baseboards but didn't stay long. The cat took him out for a walk.

**SCOTTISH DOLL, ESKIMO DOLL, and JAPANESE DOLL:** There are bad things that happen and we cannot look away.

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** Things like the dog eating Little Dollie Dingle. She's a paper doll, and she had some bacon grease spilled on her at breakfast. The dog ripped her limb from paper limb and ate her... whole and entire! It was terrifying!

**ESKIMO DOLL:** Then there was the time when the nanny stepped on the Long Ross and Allie dolls in the dark and their heads popped off. She searched for Allie's sweet Ozark Mountain head and found it under the dresser. She searched for Long Ross's head, but the cat got it and we never saw it again. She buried what was left of them, these Southwest Missouri folks, in the trash before our child could see their poor decapitated bodies.

**JAPANESE DOLL:** And remember the jewel bead dolls who were under the bed until the rat chomped on them? Their elastic snapped and their body beads scattered and shattered. I'm still finding arms and legs everywhere.

**SCOTTISH DOLL, ESKIMO DOLL, and JAPANESE DOLL:** We can't NOT see it all! We can't blink the tears away, we are a silent witness to every horrific act.

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** Tell them about the good times!

**JAPANESE DOLL:** The very best part of our day is morning, when the light is soft and it doesn't hurt our opened eyes. The playroom is clean...

**ESKIMO DOLL:** ...and our child comes in rubbing the sleep from her eyes. She smells like soap... "Who do I want to play with today?" We all shout...

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** Pick me!

**ESKIMO DOLL:** Pick me!

**JAPANESE DOLL:** Pick me!

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** And we see her little hands reach.

**ESKIMO DOLL:** We see her dimpled face.

**JAPANESE DOLL:** We see the love in her eyes...

**SCOTTISH DOLL, ESKIMO DOLL, and JAPANESE DOLL:** While the other dolls, their eyes closed, sleep through the morning fun.

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** And it's then and only then...

**ESKIMO DOLL:** ...we forget the terror of the night.

**JAPANESE DOLL:** We forget the awful things we are forced to see.

**SCOTTISH DOLL:** And we see...

**ESKIMO DOLL:** ...every bit of love that our child has for us.

**JAPANESE DOLL:** And we forget that she glued our eyes open.

**SCOTTISH DOLL, ESKIMO DOLL, and JAPANESE DOLL:** And we forgive her...and live on, with our eyes wide open. *(ALL exit.)*

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