



Playing Pretend

By Charlotte Seaver

The Characters

Alex- any gender. In 2nd grade. The rule maker.

Jamie- any gender. In 2nd grade. Just happy to be here.

Carter- any gender. In 1st grade. The younger sibling.

The Setting

After school at Alex's (and Carter's) house in the backyard.

It's spring time and still light outside.

Note for Director

These children take play very seriously, but don't let that stop you and the actors from having fun! Make wild choices, improvise, run around, scream, dance, and laugh! Let the children be fully formed human beings with their own personal styles, personalities, and views on the world. Go wild!

SCENE ONE

Lights up on Alex's backyard. Alex and Jamie are sitting, drinking juice boxes, and talking about the struggles of being a child.

Alex

Second grade is kicking my butt.

Jamie

(gasping) You just said the B word...

Alex

It's fine, my mom doesn't care...don't tell her though.

Jamie

I won't, pinky promise! I know what you mean though, second grade is the worst. I mean, who needs multiplication tables? When am I ever gonna use that in real life?

Alex

I'll drink to that!

Alex chugs the juice, making loud slurping noises, then crushes the box on their head.

Jamie

So cool...

Alex

Thanks, my dad taught me that trick.

The two kids sit in comfortable silence for a moment.

Jamie

You're my best friend.

Alex

Thanks. Sarah G is my best friend.

Jamie

Oh. Can I also be your best friend?

Alex

...No? You can only have one best friend. I'm Sarah G's best friend, Sarah G is my best friend. I guess you can also call me your best friend if you want...

Jamie

(smiling) Okay, I will!

Jamie continues drinking their juice happily.

Jamie

Thanks for inviting me over after school.

Alex

Yeah, totally! Sarah G. and Sarah M. have soccer practice on Wednesdays so they couldn't come over. And you're, like, the best person in our class at playing pretend.

Jamie

You wanna play right now??

Alex

Yeah!

They both jump up and begin stretching.

Jamie

What game do you wanna play? Cops and robbers? Pirates? Wizards?

Alex

Maybe later, let's warm up with something simple, like... Superheroes!!

Jamie

Awesome!!! I'll be the bad guy!

Just as they are about to begin, Carter, Alex's younger sibling, runs in. The two older children stop what they're doing and watch Carter catch their breath.

Finally, Carter speaks.

Carter

Mom says you have to let me play with you. What are you playing? Are you playing house? I call being the dog!

Jamie

I'm the uncle!!

Alex laughs mockingly. Jamie joins in, not sure what they're laughing about. Carter pauses, then also joins the laughter.

Alex

We're not playing house. That's so first grade. We're playing superheroes. I'm the hero, Jamie is the bad guy, and you can be...a helpless civilian who ends up caught in the crossfire.

Carter

No fair! I wanna be a superhero too!

Alex

Well that's too bad.

Carter

MOMMMM ALEX IS BEING-

Alex covers Carter's mouth, shushing them.

Alex

Fine... you can be my sidekick, I guess. I'm Captain Colossal and I have super strength and laser eyes.

Jamie

I'm the evil Doctor Killgood and I've just made a deathray that's pointed right at the...
puppy... orphanage! Muahahahaha!

Carter

I'm Spiderman!!!

Alex

No! You're supposed to make up your own superhero!! And Spiderman isn't a sidekick!!!!

Jamie

Well if you follow the logic of the multiverse theory, then-

Alex

You're not helping. (to Carter) Pick a new name.

Carter

Fine. I'll be....Superhero...Kid.

Alex rolls their eyes, then gets into character as Captain Colossal.

Alex

(In a Hero Voice) Alright, Superhero Kid, let's go take down Doctor Killgood once and for all!

Jamie runs to the side and becomes Doctor Killgood, laughing evilly.

Jamie

(In a Villain Voice) You'll never stop me, Captain Colossal! I hate puppies! Especially when they're orphans!! Muahahaha!

Jamie and Alex run around and "fight", adding their own sound effects to each moment.

Carter, who has been very excitedly watching, "flies" over to Jamie and shoves their hands out repeatedly.

Carter

Fireball fireball fireball!!

Jamie is "hit" by the "fireballs". They "burn" and flop to the ground dramatically.

Jamie

Fire...my only weakness...

Carter

I won!

Alex

No you didn't! You played wrong! And this isn't the kind of game you can win!

Jamie runs over to Alex, comforting them.

Jamie

Deep breaths and happy thoughts, Alex, just like the school counselor says. Remember the butterfly taps she taught you after you attacked Caden for stepping on a roly poly? Let's do some butterfly taps, okay?

Jamie wraps their arms around themselves and lightly taps with their fingers. Alex follows their lead. They take some deep breaths together. When Alex is calm, they turn to Carter.

Alex

(Slowly and perhaps a bit condescendingly) Alright, let's play a new game... Let's play royalty! British royalty! I'll be the King.

Alex gets into character as the king.

Alex

(In a British accent) Hear ye, hear ye! My annual royal ball has now begun! Please, enjoy yourselves and indulge in all the frivolities of life we have available.

Jamie gets into character and bows to Alex.

Jamie

(In a proper British accent) Thank you for inviting me, your majesty. You always throw the most lavish parties!

Alex

(In an even more proper British accent) Why of course, m'lady, it's not a true celebration if the Duchess of Windsor isn't here!

They both laugh like refined British royals. And then Carter joins the game.

Carter

(In a thick Cockney accent) oi oi wots all dis den mate? lets get 'ammered bruv!!

Alex

NO.

Jamie

Why would you immediately go for a Cockney accent?

Carter

You never specified what region of Britain we were originating from!!

Alex

Jamie, hold me back.

Alex moves to pummel Carter, but Jamie steps in the way, grabbing their shoulders and attempting to dispel the tension.

Jamie

Okay, new game! How about Cats?

Carter

The animal or the musical?

Carter begins singing Cats. Jamie joins in. Alex is more of an Evita fan.

Alex

The animal.

Carter

I'm allergic. We could be hairless cats?

Alex

No, gross. How about Supermarket?

Carter

In today's economy? No thank you.

Jamie

How about Orphanage?

Carter

That game just makes me feel sad.

Jamie

Yeah honestly that's fair.

Alex

OKAY. Final game. Monster Hunter. Carter, you're the monster and we're hunting you.

Carter

Sick!!!! Okay so what kind of monster? Like Alien style or more like Loch Ness Mons-

Alex holds their fingers out like a gun.

Alex

Bang. You're dead.

Carter freezes for a moment. They fall to the ground, letting out a soul crushing wail.

Carter

Why, God, why?? It hurts...I had so much to live for... I never meant to scare anyone... tell my monster family that I love them... oh God, my monster wife... I'm leaving her all alone with our children... I'll never get to see my children grow up... I'm getting so...cold... please have mercy on my soul... if there is a God, why would they let this happen to me... what have I done wrong... goodbye...cruel...world...

Carter, giving the performance of a lifetime, lays down and, with a few final coughs and sobs of anguish, "dies". It is silent. Alex and Jamie look at each other.

Alex and Jamie

...AWESOME!!!!

They rush over to Carter's side and cheer. Carter sits back up, a huge smile on their face. They all laugh together.

Jamie

Let's play Monster Funeral now!!! I call being the gravedigger!

Alex

I'll be GOD!

They get into character immediately, Carter lying down and Jamie "shoveling dirt" onto them. Jamie pats down the fresh soil.

Jamie

May God be with ye, monster friend.

Alex "floats" down, voicing their own angelic choir. They put out a hand to Carter. Carter, as a "ghost", takes their hand and rises to "heaven".

Alex

You can rest easy now, my child. You're home.

Carter, no longer acting, hugs Alex. Alex hugs them back. Jamie gets very excited and joins the hug.

Carter

You guys are my best friends.

Lights down.

The End :)