

There is a chair Stage Right. There is a screen or blank wall center stage (onto which various pictures and film footage are possibly projected upon throughout the show). There is a small chair Stage Left with a fairy chest with a few objects peeking out: a tutu, wings and other magical things. Offstage Left is an umbrella puppet and a small chair. Offstage Right are two big feet, which, when pounded upon the floor, make loud, echo-ey, monster-ish sounds.

(Pre-show slideshow plays with various vintage family photos & “Satin Doll” or other Big Band Jazz song playing)

LAURA *(knelt down, praying)* I'm sorry, God; I just can't do it anymore. It is 7 am, on a Monday before school. I am in Kindergarten. It is December of 1981 and I live in Normal, Illinois. I am 5 3/4 years old. I am doing my morning devotions and I read the verse, “Pray without ceasing, for this is the WILL of GOD.” King James version. So, I start making my bed *(singing)*, “Pray without ceasing for this is the will of God...” But, God, 'How can I pray without ceasing forever? But I have to, it's in the Bible!' I look down at my Precious Moments bedspread

Slide: Precious Moments picture

that says, 'Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.' 'Exactly. I know I can do this and with JOY!'

(continue to make bed, singing)

'Pray without ceasing,' *(top idea)* but, God, how can I pray without ceasing during school? And after school, during play practice? I was a green bean in a play at church called *Clarence the Carrot*. And while playing over at my friend Elizabeth Rose's house tonight? There were elves that played hockey with the ice cubes in her freezer...if I were praying without ceasing...every time someone opened the freezer door...

(plastic “ice cube or cubes” is/are thrown at LAURA from offstage)

(noise of frustration! She shows how this would make her cease praying)

The morning before, while waiting for church to begin, I was holding my offering money in my right hand very tightly because I was nervous that I was going to lose it. But, it got really hot, so I switched it to my left hand. It was then that I realized, too late, that *I broke the Bible* - I had *sinned*, because of that verse, 'Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.'

I was a very serious child.

(collapse on floor)

Slide: picture 1seriouslittleme flashes up on screen

I had to

(run around stage)

get all A's in school, be top quizzer in Jr. Bible Quizzing, be early for everything, be a good steward of my time, money and talents for Missionettes, obey all grown-ups and every time I saw a swimming pool, I had to swim the entire length of it under water, both ways.

(act out swimming under water)

It took a lot of work; I was exhausted.

(sit in chair)

I might have been serious forever and started gathering animals for the ark, if it weren't for my outrageous, unforgettable, wildly inappropriate, punk grandpa.

Slide: photo.30.jpg.crazywhoagpa

and "Cottontail" plays for about 30 seconds and Laura dances around, crazy, so excited to tell the audience about her punk grandpa! Perhaps this is where grandpa makes his entrance and dances with Laura.

Slide: Grandpa's voice, saying, "Bob Pohlmann, All-American Boy"

When I say that my grandpa was a punk, I don't mean that he was a punk rocker. I mean that he was mischievous and that he saw every part of life as an opportunity for his amusement. And, he wanted me to loosen up and be more like him. So, he called all of his grandchildren grandpunks!

I had recently watched the movie, "The Wizard of Oz," for the first time. Grandpa was a real wizard to me (not just some man hiding behind a curtain), because, being a punk, he wasn't afraid of anybody or anything and did whatever he wanted.

This one's for you, grandpa!

I am 5 3/4 years old. I think it's going to be a magical day, because I am at my grandma and grandpa Pohlmann's house

in Mount Prospect, Illinois! I am there with my family: my mom, dad, brother Josh and baby sister Katie (who looks like a little Shirley Temple). My mom is a strict librarian who wakes up in the mood to vacuum at 7 am on a summer morning and my dad is a CPA, who safety pins his socks together in the wash. My brother, Josh, is a four year old who makes fun of everything I do, always calling me

JOSH Freakshow! You aren't just a freak in the freakshow; you are the entire freakshow!

LAURA I love freakshows, but my brother didn't and him calling me freakshow hurt my feelings. I was not the favorite in my family; I just did *not* fit in.

My Aunt Susan once asked me

AUNT SUSAN (*smoking*) So, how did you manage to spring from the loins of those two? I think you are a changeling.

LAURA What's a changeling?

AUNT SUSAN A changeling is, according to the dictionary, "a fairy child left in place of a stolen human child."

LAURA I'm a fairy?!

(LAURA revels in what this could mean; might do a dance to fairy music, might use a song from the music of Gary Stadler, or possibly something from this fairy playlist:

http://8tracks.com/wilderbiz/fairy-kingdom#smart_id#play)

LAURA My brother, Josh, doesn't know that I am a fairy. He wrote "Laura is not allowed in the kids' bathroom" on the Kids' Bathroom Rules Sign, because I broke the soap a lot and no one else in the family did that.

And when I brown hamburger meat, I think it starts to look like an old man's head, you know, because of those wiggly lines in the ground beef, as they start to look gray as I brown them. So I feel like I'm chopping up an old man's head, as I brown every side of the hamburger meat! No one else in my family thinks this.

On that Saturday morning at breakfast at my grandma and grandpa's house, I was wearing my red reindeer pajamas with the feet in them, the kind that button up only in the back and I

was worried that my big butt might come bursting out of them any second!

I was worried about lots of things.

GRANDPA Let's pray.

LAURA Grandpa prayed a lot; he loved to do it, for all kinds of reasons: to find something that was lost, to pray for others and to give thanks.

GRANDPA Thank you, Father, for the pancakes.

LAURA I look down at my grandma's sparkly snowflake tablecloth

Slide: picture of grandma's snowflake tablecloth

and grab the Mrs. Butterworth syrup when no one is looking, except for Aunt Erna's peppermint stick kid figurine.

Slide: picture of peppermint stick figurines flashes up on screen

(to figurine) Don't tell anyone!

And I put just a drop of syrup on my pancake, because I was a chubby child. I try to spread it out over the whole pancake, but, I was shredding it.

I hear

(make or hear high-pitched ringing sound)

and then my grandpa says into his hearing aid.

GRANDPA Bob Pohlmann here, how's the foreign situation? Yes, FBI agent Kevin, my granddaughter Laura is right here.

LAURA My grandpa handed me his hearing aid and I looked at it

(trying to figure out right thing to do)

scared, wondering what the foreign situation was and what I must have done wrong this time.

(get idea) I remember the night before, when my brother and I were screaming at each other, fighting over who should get to hold my baby sister, Katie, and then she started to cry.

And then...

(get big feet and tromp on stage with them, making a big, scary echo-y sound with each footstep)

LAURA It was my dad! He had heard everything!

DAD See kids, even a baby can sense *sin!*

LAURA Did the FBI somehow find out about that?

(get hearing aid back)

I look at my family around the breakfast table and I carefully hold my grandpa's hearing aid; I was afraid of breaking it and just, everything about the situation. I look at it for a moment, take a deep breath and hold it to my ear. "Hello, agent Kevin, this is Laura Force. How can I help you?" I listened and listened

(mashing hearing aid into ear)

and, I just hear some static!

GRANDPA Hm, seems strange.