

KOLD Radio, Whitefish Bay

A full-length comedy with
jingles and everything

By
Phil Olson

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STORY OF THE PLAY

KOLD Radio is located in a corner of Carl and Lena's Place for Beer in a small Minnesota town near the Canadian border. Lars Knudsen is the host of a radio show called "Crappie Talk," devoted entirely to ice fishing for crappies. Because it is a somewhat narrow subject, Lars has no listeners, so he loses his only advertiser, Ole's Bait Mart and Deer Petting Farm. Martha Bjorklund, Lars' unrequited love interest, hosts "Book Beat." She has all the listeners, and all the advertisers. Lars has issues with Martha ever since she beat him in the 50-yard dash in 6th grade. Lars' jealousy toward Martha multiplies when a fish out of water Brooklyn Italian comes to Whitefish Bay, buys the radio station, promotes Martha and fires Lars. Lars has his work cut out for him. He needs his job, he needs his dignity, but most important, he needs Martha. *Winner of the Gilmore Creek Playwright Competition; finalist in the prestigious Chesterfield Writer's Project, and a Pick of the Week in the LA Weekly.*

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

"KOLD Radio, Whitefish Bay" was first produced under the title "Crappie Talk" at The Group Repertory Theatre in North Hollywood, California, on May 30, 1997. Directors, designers and cast included:

Artistic Director: Lonny Chapman
Directors: Mareli Mitchel and Stephen R. Hudis
Stage Manager: Joe Violante
Set Design: M. J. Mitchel
Lighting Design: Lonny Regnier
Costume Design: Pam Macchi
Sound Design: Paul Gandolfo
Lars Knudsen: Phil Olson
Sarah Knudsen: Jill Piwowar
Carl Norquist: Jack Goodman
Ole Swenson: Vince Cefalu
Ruth Streeland: Nora Meerbaum
Martha Bjorklund: Therese Lentz
Lena Norquist: Bethany Carpenter
Sal Carducci: Robert DiTillio
Donna DeCasola: Jennifer Cohen
Walter Gisselson: Doug Engalla
Sven Oxtrude: Vince Cefalu (Voice-over)

CAST OF CHARACTERS
5 m, 4 w, 1 teen girl, 1 male voice-over

LARS KNUDSEN: 30s. Host of a show called "Crappie Talk" on KOLD Radio.
MARTHA BJORKLUND: 30s. Lars' love interest.
CARL NORQUIST: 40s-50s. Husband of Lena and co-owner of a bar called, "Carl & Lena's Place for Beer."
LENA NORQUIST: 40s-50s. Wife of Carl and co-owner of "Carl & Lena's Place for Beer."
OLE SWENSON: 30s-40s. Owner of Ole's Bait Mart, Ole's Deer Petting Farm and Ole's Lutheran Hall of Fame.
SAL CARDUCCI: 40s-50s. A Brooklyn Italian, successful in the grocery business.
DONNA DECASOLA: 20s-40s. An attractive Brooklyn Italian. Ex-wife of Sal Carducci.
WALTER GISSELSO: 20s-50s. Host of the local news on KOLD Radio.
RUTH STREELAND: 40s-70s. Jingle-singer for KOLD Radio.
SARAH KNUDSEN: 10-15. Lars' daughter.
SVEN OXSTRUDE: Voice-over only. Double cast. 40s-60s. Calls in to the radio station.

SETTING

Present day in the winter. Carl & Lena's Place for Beer, a small bar in Whitefish Bay, Minnesota, a little town near the Canadian border.

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SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act I:

Scene 1: A cold January afternoon.

Scene 2: The same day only later.

Scene 3: The next day in the morning

Act II:

Scene 1: Two days later.

Scene 2: Two days after that, in the afternoon.

Scene 3: The same day only night time.

Scene 4: This time three days later.

Scene 5: Later the same day.

Scene 6: Two days after that, at night.

STAGE SETTING

Bar area: 2 tables, one SR with three armless chairs and one SL with two armless chairs. Bar with 2 bar stools. On walls: beer signs (Leinenkugel and Grainbelt Beer), stuffed fish, deer heads, and a dart board. Also a fishing pole that can be removed.

Radio area: SL adjoining the bar is a small one-room radio station, KOLD Radio. A large window in the studio wall allows people to see from one area to the other.

PROPS

Bar Area: Liquor bottles, sports trophies, beer tower, beer, radio, 8 beer mugs 2 bowls for pretzels, coffee cups, coffee pot, glass for water, 2 bar towels, waitress apron, newspaper.

Radio Station: 2 microphones connected to an "On Air" light sign, clicker to signal the jingle singer, 3 chairs, telephone, that works, notebooks/pens, a pamphlet, tape player.

Other props: Brown paper bag of groceries, bag of pretzels playing cards, poker chips, knitting needles and yarn or a book, dollar bills, girl's dress in a gift box, stage revolver, poster for the "Grand Opening of Donna's Hotel and Lounge," sandwich, ski mask.

KOLD Talk

(You may wish to include in your theatre's programs.)

Crappie: Pronounced, "Croppy" as in a crop of corn. A North American sunfish.

Pronto Pup: A hotdog on a stick dipped in batter and fried before your eyes in a deep fryer. A delicacy at the Minnesota State Fair.

Hot dish: A casserole consisting of a starch, a meat and a vegetable, mixed with some type of sauce for binding. Martha's favorite is macaroni and cheese, canned tuna and peas with cream of mushroom soup. Sprinkle crumbled potato chips on top for flair.

Lori's bun jam: Lori makes the best jam in town. Try some on her buns.

Dance the Wooden Clog or Clogging: A dance, wearing wooden clogs. Many cloggers take pride in the distinct steps that vary from region to region, such as "Wringing the Chicken's Neck," "Stepping on a Snake," and "Falling Thru the Ice."

"Oh, for": Used as a prefix before any number of phrases that can mean something is either really good or really bad or just really strange. As "Oh, for cryin' out loud," "Oh, for spittin' in the laundry," "Oh, for sittin' on the cat," "Oh, for cryin' outside," and "Oh, for dancin' the wooden clog."

Ice Hole Auger: A big hand-drill used to cut a hole in the ice for ice fishing. (Because you can't just fish in the summer.)

Uff da: Scandinavian term meaning "Oh, darn it." (Because "darn it" is too harsh.)

Spam: Some sort of meat. Can be used in a hot dish or for bait.

Lutefisk: Cod fish baked in a lye solution. That's right, in a "lye solution."

Lefse: Scandinavian potato pancakes. Looks like pita bread with age spots.

Hosebag: An undesirable person. Also known as a "hoser."

Broomball: Played on ice like hockey, using a broom and ball.

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ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: SR is Carl & Lena's Place for Beer. The bar is empty except for CARL and SARAH, who are playing gin rummy. SL adjoining the bar is a small one-room radio station, KOLD Radio. In the station is the host of "Crappie Talk," LARS KNUDSEN. Lars sits at the mic across from OLE. Also in the radio station, knitting, is RUTH.)

LARS: *(Leans into the microphone.)* ... and then there was the Norwegian who froze to death at the drive-in movie. He went to see, "Closed for the Winter." *(Laughs, looking out to CARL and SARAH, who are stone-faced, then to OLE, who is also stone-faced.)* Okay.

(LARS picks up a little cricket-like clicker and signals RUTH. She immediately stands up and sings into her own microphone.)

RUTH: *(Sings.)* "Crappie Talk," "Crappie Talk,"
We're talkin' about them crappies,
Ice fishin' for them crappies.
We're talkin' about them crappies,
Right now! "Crappie Talk"!

(RUTH sits back down and goes back to her knitting. LARS leans into the microphone.)

LARS: You're listening to "Crappie Talk" on K-O-L-D Radio, Whitefish Bay. I'm Lars Knudsen, and I'm here with Ole Swensen, owner of Ole's Bait Mart. Welcome, Ole.

OLE: Thanks, Lars. Good to be here.

LARS: It's cold out there today, isn't it, Ole?

OLE: Really cold, Lars. Froze my ass off getting here.

LARS: Ole, this is a family program.

OLE: Sorry, Lars.

LARS: The FCC is very strict on language.

OLE: I said I'm sorry. Holy crap!

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LARS: (*Shooting OLE a look.*) "Crappie Talk" is sponsored by Ole's Bait Mart. If you buy your bait from Ole's, you might catch a fish. (*Signals RUTH with the clicker who stands up to her microphone.*)

RUTH: (*Sings.*) Ole's Bait Mart, Ole's Bait Mart,
If you buy your bait from Ole's
You might, might, might ... catch a fish!
(*Sits down and continues to knit.*)

LARS: Ole's Bait Mart is located just a half mile north of Ole's Deer Petting Farm on Route 22 where you can have your picture taken next to the world's oldest moose.

OLE: Oh, and don't forget. Saturday is pronto pup day for the kiddies.

LARS: Getting back to the program, today we're talking about ice fishing for the crappie. Why don't I start out with a question for you, Ole? This is one I frequently get asked. Are crappies slower in the winter time, hence easier to catch?

OLE: Good question, Lars. It's a popular myth that crappies are slower in the winter time because it's so friggin' cold out. (*LARS shoots him a look.*) Sorry. However, the truth is that crappies are cold-blooded creatures who swim as fast in the winter time as they do in the summer.

LARS: All right, we're going to open up the phone line for callers. Any questions you may have regarding ice fishing for the crappie, we will do our best to answer. The phone number once again is 928-C-R-A-P. (*Pauses, no one calls.*) "Crappie Talk" is also sponsored by Ole's Lutheran Hall of Fame, where you can have all your prayers answered in the Chapel of Good Intentions.

OLE: Lars, I'd also like to mention that first-time visitors will receive a free glass of grape juice in the new Herring and Wafer Bar.

LARS: While we're waiting for a caller, let me ask you this, Ole. What kind of fishing lure do you recommend for the crappie?

OLE: I recommend the Silver Eagle Spinner with a three-pound test.

LARS: Half-inch or large-mouth flange?

OLE: Half-inch.

LARS: Free-flex or sport-fly?

OLE: Sport-fly, of course.

End of Freeview

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