

THE JOY OF FATHERHOOD

By Rod

Designed for use on Father's Day to illustrate the demands of being a Dad.

CAST

Narrator *Probably male*

Mum *Also plays referee*

Dad

Young Child *Below teenage*

Older Child *Teenage*

Narrator The joy of fatherhood really begins when you first take that little bundle into your arms. Happiness oozes through you.

[Mum gives baby (a doll) to Dad. He holds in arms and smiles etc]

And as something else oozes through you, it is not long before you discover that being a father demands the mastery of a large number of roles: NUMBER ONE: MIDWIFE.

[Dad smells baby's bottom. Mum hands nappy to Dad.]

Mum Your turn I think. *[Dad looks unhappy]*

Narrator Talking of number two's – NUMBER TWO role is ACTOR

Young Child Happy birthday, dad, I've got you a present. *[Hands present wrapped badly]*

Dad Thanks, son. That is kind of you. *[Opens present to reveal tasteless tie. He reacts through gritted teeth.]* Oh look – a tie. It's lovely. It will go really well with my....er.....dark suit.

Narrator NUMBER THREE: CHILDREN'S PARTY ENTERTAINER. *[Dad addresses audience as if they were the children]*

Dad OK children. Let's all play musical chairs. We all love that don't we? *[Hopefully with fixed smile]*

Narrator NUMBER FOUR: UNITED NATIONS PEACE ENVOY.

Dad George, don't do that. The idea of the game is not to push Lucy out of her chair but to find your own. I don't think Lucy liked that - did you Lucy? No – *[as if to self]* and that's why you have just hit George. *[Falsely cheerful]* OK everyone – how about jelly and ice cream?

Narrator NUMBER FIVE: SPORTS COACH. *[Dad and young child enter. Child has bat. Dad has pretend ball.]*

Dad Right. I will throw the ball and you try to hit it. *[Throws underarm, child swings, they pretend to watch the ball sail away].* OK, that was well hit. *[Enter Mum, arms crossed looking stern]* Which one of us is going to tell mummy how her greenhouse window got broken?

Narrator NUMBER SIX: FOOTBALL SUPPORTER

Dad *[Wearing scarf]* Here we go, here we go, here we go. Come on Tom... Shoot. What. Foul! That's got to be a penalty. Come on, ref, are you blind or something? *[Referee (could be Mum) shows him red card]*

Narrator NUMBER SEVEN: TEACHER

Child Can you help me with my maths prep, dad? *[Hands question paper]*

Dad Certainly. I was pretty good at maths when I was your age. *[Starts to read]*
 If $u_1 = 1$ and $u_{n+1} = 3u_n + 2$ for $n \geq 1$
 Prove by induction that $u_n = 2(3^{n-1}) - 1$
[Totally baffled] Er.. prove it. I would have thought it was blatantly obvious. You don't really need my help. *[Hands paper back and walks away.]*

Narrator NUMBER EIGHT: TAXI DRIVER

Mum You need to pick up Lauren from ballet at 6. Drop her at Susie's. Then collect Tom from Arthur's and take him to football. Then drive Mary to her party before collecting Lauren. Bring her home. Then go back to collect Tom after football. Got that?

Dad Yes, I think so.

Mum Oh, and don't forget to collect Mary from her party at 11.00 o'clock.

Narrator With all that going on, you are only too happy to take on role NUMBER NINE which is DRIVING INSTRUCTOR.

Dad *[In seat at front next to older child]* OK, Tom, let's move off nice and smoo..oo oo thly. *[Shakes up and down as if kangaroo start].* change up. *[Through gritted teeth, trying to stay calm]* Try not to

crunch my gears. Remember to depress the clutch. *[Very calmly]* Right, there is a car ahead so you need to brake gently..... Brake nice and gently.... Er brake. ... BRAKE!!!!

Narrator Which is swiftly followed by NUMBER TEN: CAR HIRE COMPANY

Older Child *[Enters clutching L plates]* Dad, I passed!

Dad Well done, I'm proud of you son.

Child Can I borrow your car?

Dad Well, I'm not sure. So soon after your test...er...

Child Great, thanks. I've got the keys from the hook in the hall. I'll see you later. *[Rushes off.]*

Dad Wait... I mean... er...drive carefully in *[trailing off despondently]* in my car..

Narrator Fortunately this is often soon followed by NUMBER ELEVEN: REMOVAL MAN

Older Child Dad, I'm moving out.

Dad Oh good.. er.. I mean, we'll be sorry to see you go.

Child I just need a little help with moving my stuff.

Dad *[Dialling and speaking on phone]* Hello – Apex hire company? Yes, me again. I need the usual white van. Yes, for my youngest. So could be the last time. You never know.

Narrator So they leave home and the only contact is the occasional phone call, which serves as a reminder that one role never changes. That's NUMBER TWELVE: BANKER

Dad *[On phone]* Hello, Tom. How much do you want this time?

THE END