

The Red Baseball Cap

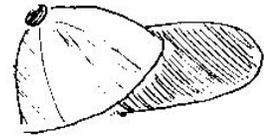
The Red Baseball Cap

by Tamara Kula

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CAST:

- * Big Bob, Mafia boss
- * Little Larry, thief
- * Gary, age 8
- * Toby, Gary's big brother
- * Gary's mom
- * Gary's dad
- * Marla, Little Larry's niece
- * Mel, Gary's uncle



SCENE ONE

(Big Bob is sitting in his office, smoking a cigar and talking on the phone.)

Big Bob: So do you have the money?

Little Larry: *(nervously)* What a question! Of course I do!

Big Bob: *(suspiciously)* No trouble robbing that bank?

Little Larry: None at all! It was a piece of cake! Don't worry – you'll get your money.

Big Bob: When? I want it today!

Little Larry: *(panicked)* Today?! ... uh ... today is good – meet me in Bluebird Park at 3:00.

Big Bob: How will I know which one is you? I've never even met you in person.

Little Larry: Ah, right – I'll wear a red baseball cap. Will that work?

Big Bob: That's fine. See you at 3:00, and you better be there.

SCENE TWO

(Little Larry is panicking in his small, messy apartment.)

Little Larry: What am I gonna do! If I show my face in Bluebird Park without the money, Big Bob is gonna kill me! He'll never understand ... I just can't rob banks anymore – I have to be respectable! *(tenderly)* My little niece Marla is coming to live with me tomorrow, since my poor brother died in that terrible car accident ... I wonder what she looks like now. I haven't seen her since she was a baby ... *(determined)* So I

have to set a good example! I have to go straight! That's it, I'm not going to the park today.

SCENE THREE

(Gary is getting ready for his 8th birthday party.)

Gary: Hey, Toby, are you coming to my birthday party?

Toby: Sorry, little bro, I'm not really up for hanging around with a bunch of little kids eating cake at the park.

Gary: *(disappointed)* Oh...

Toby: I got you a present though! Here.

Gary: Wow! A red baseball cap! Cool! I'm going to wear it at my party.

Toby: Great! Oh, by the way, your friend Tommy will be there, right? His big brother might stop by. I borrowed some money from him last week. If you see him, can you give him this for me? *(hands Gary an envelope)* Tell him I'll give him the rest tomorrow.

Gary: Yeah, no problem. *(Runs to the kitchen to show off his new cap)* Mom! Look what Toby gave me!

Mom: Wow, honey, that's great. Come on, let's go. Everyone will be arriving at the park soon! *(leaves for the park carrying cake and presents)*

SCENE FOUR

(Big Bob is at Bluebird Park, looking around for Little Larry. It's 3:00. Big Bob sees Gary in the red baseball cap and tentatively approaches him.)

Big Bob: Uh ... you must be Little Larry?

Gary: Larry? No, no, my name's Gary.

Big Bob: Gary, Larry, ok, whatever. So do you have the money?

Gary: *(reaches for the envelope)* Yeah ... I thought you'd be younger.

Big Bob: I thought you'd be older! *(takes envelope and rips it open, pulls out one dollar. Booms)* WHAT IS THIS!! Is this some kind of joke?!!!

Gary: Calm down! You'll get the rest tomorrow!

Big Bob: *(Booming)* Tomorrow? Tomorrow?! We agreed on TODAY!

Gary: Well, it's not my fault. Anyway, I have to get back to my party. Would you like some birthday cake?

(Big Bob storms away angrily.)

SCENE FIVE

(The next day, early in the morning, Big Bob calls Little Larry and demands his money.)

Big Bob: I don't know what you think you're up to, but you better get me the other \$9,999 by 8:00 today in that park, Little Gary!

Little Larry: Gary? It's Larry!

Big Bob: Whatever! If you're not there with the money, you're dead. *(hangs up)*

Little Larry: I'm in trouble! He'll find me and kill me! I've got to get the money somehow ... *(confused)* I wonder why he said \$9,999 instead of \$10,000?

SCENE SIX

(Little Larry phones his niece Marla.)

Little Larry: Marla? Hi darling! It's your Uncle Larry. I'll be there to pick you up at the station today, OK?

Marla: Ok, Uncle. But I don't know what you look like.

Little Larry: Don't worry. I'll wear a red baseball cap. You can't miss me!

SCENE SEVEN

(Gary's Uncle Mel and cousin Carla are coming to visit, so Gary's family is going to the train station to pick them up.)

Mom: Come on, kids, we have to be at the train station by 10:00! Aren't you excited to finally meet your cousin Carla?

Gary: Yeah! She's my age, right?

Toby: I wonder if she got the e-mails I wrote her.

Dad: I'm really excited to see my brother again – it's been so many years! It's too bad they can only stay a week ...

(At the station, they look around eagerly for their visitors.)

Mom: Let's see. Gate Seven. They should be here any minute!

Dad: *(Looking at Gary's cap)* Nice cap, son! *(Takes the cap and puts it on his own head)* Hey, it fits me pretty well!

(Suddenly a little girl comes running up to Gary's dad.)

Marla: You must be my uncle! I'm so glad to finally be here!

Dad: How you've grown! I haven't seen you since you were two years old! I'd like you to meet your cousins, Gary and Toby. And of course, this is my wife.

Marla: Wow, Uncle, I didn't know you were married and had kids!

Dad: *(surprised)* But didn't you get our Christmas letters and see our pictures?

Toby: Didn't you get the e-mails I sent you?

Dad: *(Cheerfully)* Oh well, you know us now! So, Carla ...

Marla: Carla? No, no, my name's Marla!

Dad: Oh, so you like the name Marla now! *(laughs)* Well, Marla, where is your dad? I'm dying to see my brother Mel again!

Marla: *(sadly, slowly)* I thought the judge explained everything ... I'm coming to live with you because my parents died in a car accident last week...

Dad: *(shocked, whispers)* What?! My brother! *(covers face)*

Mom: *(gently)* Come, let's all go home.

SCENE EIGHT

(Little Larry is speeding down the street to the train station.)

Little Larry: *(driving quickly and impatiently)* I'm late! This is terrible! Poor Marla – she'll be there waiting for me feeling completely abandoned. *(He arrives at the station and looks frantically for Marla.)* Marla? Where are you? Where can she be!

SCENE NINE

(Marla and Gary are playing hide-and-seek in Bluebird Park. Little Larry is sitting dejectedly on the park bench.)

Gary: Ok, I'll count to 50, and you hide. 1, 2, 3 ...

Little Larry: \$9,999! I need \$9,999 by 8:00 tonight! *(Looks at Marla hiding behind a tree and smiles slowly.)* Wait, I have an idea I'll kidnap this little girl and hold her for ransom! *(Grabs Marla before she can scream, drops a note for Gary, and speeds away in his car with Marla.)*

Gary: *(Finding the note, reads)* "If you ever want to see this little girl alive again, tell your parents to leave \$9,999 under the park bench at Bluebird Park by 8:00 tonight. Don't call the police or you'll be sorry." Oh no! My cousin has been kidnapped!

SCENE TEN

(Little Larry is driving, with Marla in the back seat. He is very nervous.)

Little Larry: *(mumbling)* What have I done! I kidnapped a child!

Marla: Don't you even want to know my name?

Little Larry: No! For goodness' sake, no! I feel guilty enough without knowing your name! Oh, my conscience will never let me rest ... This little girl is probably about Marla's age!

Marla: Marla? I'm Marla!

Little Larry: Stop, stop! I can't stand the guilt!

Marla: No, really – I am Marla! And you look a lot like ... my father. Are you my real uncle?

Little Larry: *(turns around in disbelief)* Marla??

Marla: Uncle! It's really you!

Little Larry: Oh, sweetie, I'm so sorry! I'll never do a bad deed again! I won't even collect the ransom money. I'm starting a good life with you right now! We'll have to leave the country, of course...

SCENE ELEVEN

(Gary, Toby, and their parents sit nervously in their house that evening, waiting.)

Mom: *(nervously)* Well, we've done everything we can. We left the money in the park, so we can only hope that the kidnapper will give Marla back to us!

Dad: Hello?

Mel: Hi! I hope you're not too mad at us for not showing up at the station today.

Dad: *(choking)* Mel? Is that you?

Mel: Well, of course! Why are you so shocked to hear my voice? *(laughs)*

Dad: Uh ... it's just that ... well Never mind.

Mel: Anyway, Carla got sick at the last minute; that's why we didn't come today. But can we plan for next week instead?

Dad: *(Dazed)* Certainly ... see you then ... *(hangs up, looks at his wife)* That was ... my brother. He says he's sorry that he and Carla can't come this week after all ...

Mom: *(shocked)* What?! That means that Marla ... isn't Carla? Gary, Toby – go run to the park and grab the money we left there! Hurry, it's almost 8:00!

SCENE TWELVE

(Big Bob strolls into Bluebird Park at 8:00 and sits on the bench. The sun is starting to set. Suddenly he notices a briefcase under the bench. He takes it and opens it.)

Big Bob: Well, what do you know ... It looks like Little Gary or Little Larry or whatever his name is – he got the money after all!

(He walks away whistling as Gary and Toby enter the park out of breath. They pause behind some trees and watch Big Bob leaving with the money.)

Toby: *(whispering)* Oh no! We're too late!

Gary: *(gasps)* Look! The kidnapper is Tommy's big brother!

Toby: What are you talking about? Tommy's big brother is only 10 years old!

Gary: I thought he looked suspicious ...