

THE BABYSITTER'S STORY

By Peter Lancaster Walker

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CHARACTERS

Diana
Jane
Cat Burglar (Not Speaking)
Lisa
Martha
Police Officer
Harriet

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The play is 35 minutes in length. There is a lot of opportunity for extra 'business' and it should be played at a fast pace.

PROPS

Footstool
Several chairs
Table/Cupboard, with drawer.
Handkerchief (Di)
Table Cloth
Gloves (Lisa)
Sofa
Big glasses (Martha)
Intercom

There needs to be a window big enough for the burglar to get through.

Sound Effects

Door Bell
Telephone Ring
Baby crying.

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SCENE 1

DI: Jane? Its me. Your sister!

JANE: (*dashing in*) You are an angel, Diana.

DI: Can't see any wings.

JANE: You must have them tucked under your coat. Thank you so much for coming.

DI: You sounded in trouble.

JANE: I AM in trouble. Ed wants to see me.

DI: Your ex-boyfriend wants to see you?

JANE: Ed Banks. Remember him?

DI: The guy who didn't turn up on your first date?

JANE: Ed doesn't like the cinema.

DI: He asked you out to a drive-in movie.

JANE: He drove away.

DI: Jane, you cannot see that man ever again.

JANE: He wants to see me. Di- he is a wonderful human being. He's everything I like in a man.

DI: You don't have any taste.

JANE: I must see him.

DI: He's dumped Laurel hasn't he?

JANE: Possibly.

DI: And Anna?

JANE: Probably.

DI: And Leanne?

JANE: Definitely.

DI: Ed would dump his own mother.

JANE: He mentioned her.

DI: I hope she isn't coming too.

JANE: So do I. He wants me to help buy his mother a birthday present. I need help, Diana.

DI: You do, but counseling isn't cheap.

JANE: I need your help.

DI: What can I do?

JANE: Look after James Junior.

DI: Who is James Junior?

(*Baby cries- off stage.*)

JANE: *That* is James, Junior.

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DI: I didn't think it was James senior. Who is James Junior? Is there something you haven't told your sister?

JANE: He's Harriet's son, the neighbor's little boy. They asked me to look after him.

DI: They asked *you* to baby sit for them?

JANE: I look intelligent.

DI: They trusted you with their child?

JANE: Yes.

DI: Where's Dad?

JANE: He's got something to do with golf.

DI: That is why Mum divorced him.

JANE: They still love each other.

DI: I live with Mum, you live with Dad. I have heard Mum's side of the story.

JANE: I've heard Dad's side.

DI: Neither tells the truth?

JANE: No.

DI: I thought you were sick. I rushed over to administer first aid.

JANE: I am sick.

DI: Love-sick!

JANE: Ed is so big and wonderful.

DI: Ed is a jerk, Jane. He has six mirrors in his car and they are not to help him drive.

JANE: Di- please. . . please. . . please. . .

(Baby cries again.)

DI: I don't know anything about babies.

JANE: You were one. I can show you a photograph.

DI: You are irresponsible. You are completely irresponsible Jane Dervish.

JANE: I know. Thank you. You *will* stay and look after James junior. Just for this evening. I'll be home before midnight.

DI: That's what Cinderella said. If you're a slipper missing, I want a full explanation. I'm crazy.

JANE: It's only for one short evening.

DI: I don't know. . .

JANE: Please. . .

DI: OK. You owe me one.

JANE: I'll remember. What a wonderful sister I have.

DI: You owe me one. That's in case you didn't hear me the first time.

JANE: He's a quiet baby.

DI: He's cried twice already.

JANE: It's only wind.

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DI: There's no wind outside. . . ohh. . . that sort of wind.

JANE: You see. You're getting the idea already.

DI: I've got the idea all right. You are selfish, reckless and stupid. Ed isn't worth it. He's only called you because he's run out of girls. He probably lost his little black book of girls to date.

JANE: That is a horrible thing to say.

DI: I'm sorry. I am horrible. Think of me as an Ugly Sister and let me go home.

JANE: You are a beautiful, beautiful sister.

DI: Why is James Junior upstairs, if you are looking after him? A baby-sitter usually has a baby in front of her.

JANE: He prefers his own company. There's an Intercom. You can hear everything he says.

DI: I bet that's exciting.

JANE: He gurgles a lot.

DI: Do I give him a meal or anything?

JANE: Harriet fed him before she left.

DI: That's a relief.

JANE: I have to go.

DI: Anything I need to know?

JANE: Got my cell phone number?

DI: I have. 911.

JANE: No. 7639231 or something like that.

DI: I have it down somewhere.

JANE: Good. If anything. . .

DI: I will.

JANE: Promise.

DI: I do.

JANE: How do I look?

DI: Flushed.

JANE: I don't!

DI: You look ok.

JANE: Good. Oh-there is something I have to tell you. We have a burglar.

DI: In the house? Where?

JANE: In the street. Four houses have been burgled.

DI: Thanks Jane!

JANE: The burglar isn't violent. It's not as if I'm leaving you with an axe murderer. He or she is just a cat burglar.

DI: Have you bought a cat?

JANE: No.

DI: We should be safe then?

(JANE prepares to leave.)

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JANE: See you later. . .

DI: I hope so. I'm going to watch TV.

(JANE stops a second.)

JANE: There's a problem.

DI: Is there?

JANE: It isn't working.

DI: The TV isn't working?

JANE: Funny lines all over. It will be mended tomorrow.

DI: That's a lot of use! What am I going to do?

JANE: Read a book.

DI: They're all on golf, Jane.

JANE: Put some music on.

DI: So I can't hear the baby?

JANE: No, that's not a good idea. Have a great evening.

DI: I will. I am sure I will.

(JANE leaves. DI walks round room. Baby cries.)

DI: All right, all right, I heard you. . .

(DI goes off, as the cat burglar creeps in via the window. The burglar starts to rob the place: the producer can let the burglar steal anything, if it can be put back very quickly. The burglar stops when DIANA returns and the burglar has to hide behind a chair. Telephone rings. Burglar picks up phone and hands to DIANA who does not notice.)

DI: Thanks. Hello. Hi Mum!

(Burglar starts to creep back to window. DIANA turns and burglar hides again.)

Jane's gone to meet Ed. Yes, I know. It was a shock to me. We all feel the same way about Ed. I'll be fine. Dad's playing golf.

(Burglar tries again.)

I know it's dark. He must have fluorescent golf balls. Guess what? I am babysitting. Can you believe that?

(Silence at other end.)

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No, Mum, don't panic. It isn't *Jane's* baby. I am sure she'd have told you. It's the baby next door. Jane said she'd do it. And then Ed rang her. I will be OK. Nothing's happening here.

(Burglar tries again. Taking more things. Knock on door.)

DI: Just a minute. . . Ring me back, Mum.

(Burglar takes phone from her and places it down. Baby cries.)

DI: You be quiet! *(Baby stops crying.)* I'm better than I thought.

(DI opens door. Woman stands there.)

LISA: I'm Lisa.

DI: Really?

LISA: Yes. . . Who are you?

DI: I'm Diana.

LISA: Diana?

DI: That's right.

LISA: You must be John's other daughter.

DI: Probably. You're not after a cat?

LISA: I heard there was a burglar in the area.

DI: How do I know. . . ?

LISA: Fair enough. I'm a friend of your fathers.

DI: I see. Any identification?

LISA: I don't carry a passport and I came by cab.

DI: When's his birthday?

LISA: August. . . 15th?

DI: 16TH but close enough. Mother never remembers it. Come in to his house.

LISA: Thank you, dear.

DI: I'm not a deer.

LISA: Is your father out. . . ?

DI: Yes.

LISA: He said he'd be in.

DI: He had an emergency golf match.

LISA: We're. . . seeing each other.

DI: Not tonight you're not.

LISA: No. We've dated a few times.

DI: Have you?

LISA: You don't like me, do you?

DI: Should I like you?

LISA: I like your father.

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DI: So do I.

LISA: Good.

DI: So does my mother.

LISA: He told me they were divorced.

DI: They are. She still loves him.

LISA: That's not what he told me.

DI: He gets confused.

LISA: I think you're joking, Diana.

DI: I don't joke. You've had a wasted journey. Goodbye.

(Baby cries.)

LISA: What's that?

DI: My. . . er. . . brother.

LISA: It sounds like a baby.

DI: He's quite young still.

LISA: Your father has a baby?

DI: Er. . . Well. . . Yes.

LISA: That is a surprise.

DI: It was to all of us.

LISA: He's never mentioned a baby before.

DI: Just like Dad. He is absent minded.

LISA: The baby is still crying.

DI: I know it is.

LISA: Shouldn't you do something about it?

DI: Probably. Will you leave?

LISA: I must see your father. I have a lot to talk to him about.

DI: You mean *Junior*?

LISA: Good starting point.

DI: He could be a long time.

LISA: I am going to stay.

DI: If you must. I'll just go and see to the baby.

LISA: Yes, you do that.

(DI goes upstairs. LISA sits down. The burglar rises up and as LISA sits there, starts to remove the belongings from the room. SHE (the cat) hands them through the window to an accomplice outside. First to go is a foot stool lisa is using. SHE moves away and the stool disappears. LISA is puzzled but does not guess what is happening. The burglar then takes a chair that is by the table and that goes out the window. DI returns.)

DI: He's stopped crying.

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(DIANA looks a bit surprised by the missing items. does a 'double take.' But doesn't guess. The burglar hides again. As LISA and DI talk, the burglar slides open a drawer and takes out a necklace and some other jewelry. DIANA sits on a chair.)

LISA: Can't you call your father? Tell him Lisa wants to see him.

DI: Can't you?

LISA: I'd rather you did it. I have come to see him. I want a few explanations. A few things in our relationship seem to be missing.

(Baby cries again.)

DI: Stay if you must.

LISA: I am very observant, Diana. I know there is something you are not telling me.

DI: Dad still loves Mum. That's it.

(More things are stolen. DIANA gets up and the seat SHE was sitting on is stolen and it goes out the window. Baby stops crying)

DI: That's a relief! *(Baby starts crying. Telephone rings.)* Hello. . . !
Excuse me one moment. . . could you see to the baby?

LISA: *Me?* See to a baby?

DI: Yes. I am on the phone. Hi- *Mother!*

LISA: I'm not a baby person. Can't we get it adopted?

DI: Leave then. *Hello Mother. . .*

LISA: I'll see what I can do?

DI: Thank you.

LISA: All right.

(LISA reluctantly goes upstairs.)

DI: Hello. Hello, Mum. *(Sees Burglar)* Oh, no you don't!

(The burglar attempts an escape. DI sticks out a leg and trips her up. The burglar rolls over several times and lays still.)

DI: I'll ring you back, Mum. I've just killed a cat burglar! I need help!

(LISA returns.)

LISA: What was that noise?

DI: I need an ambulance!

LISA: Are you sick?

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DI: Look over there.

LISA: Diana-there's a body in the room!

DI: I know there is.

LISA: What did you do?

DI: I just put my foot out. . .

LISA: She's definitely dead. It's a woman. I can tell the shape.

DI: She can't be dead! She's a cat burglar. Don't they have nine lives?

LISA: Perhaps she's had eight already.

DI: I didn't mean to kill her.

LISA: You *did* kill her.

DI: It's murder, isn't it?

LISA: No. No. Manslaughter. Be about ten years.

DI: Help me. Do something, Lisa, please.

LISA: This is nothing to do with me.

DI: Dad will expect his girlfriend to help his daughter.

LISA: Not cover up a murder!

DI: You said it wasn't murder.

LISA: Well—it might be.

DI: Thanks.

LISA: You need to know.

DI: It's my duty to ring the police, isn't it?

LISA: Yes.

DI: She was carrying out a burglary. I was only defending my home.

LISA: It's not your home, is it?

DI: No.

LISA: So you weren't defending it?

DI: It's my Dad's home. I was defending him.

LISA: They might accept it in court. If you get a good lawyer!

DI: What do I do, Lisa?

LISA: I'll wait in the car.

DI: You will help me. Please.

LISA: What can I do?

DI: Advise me. Should I ring the police?

LISA: Of course you should.

DI: I will then.

LISA: It might ruin your father if his daughter is up on a charge of murder.

DI: It won't do me a lot of good, will it?

LISA: I was thinking of your father- a brilliant career ruined. He does have a brilliant career?

DI: Yes, dazzling.

LISA: It is all over now. If you call the police.

DI: Are you sure she's dead?

LISA: She looks dead to me.

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