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*Dramatic Publishing*

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# **The Calamityville Terror**

A Full-Length Play

By  
WILLIAM GLEASON



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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WILLIAM GLEASON  
Printed in the United States of America  
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(THE CALAMITYVILLE TERROR)

ISBN 0-87129-156-8

# THE CALAMITYVILLE TERROR

*A Full-Length Play*

For Seven Women and Five Men

## CHARACTERS

MRS. STOWE . . . . . owner of a school for girls

OLIN BARCLAY . . . . . executor of Barclay estate

ELSIE BARCLAY. . . . . his sister

MR. ADAMS. . . . . caretaker

EVA . . . . . Elsie's nurse

TAYLOR  
EMMY  
LINDA  
GIGI



. . . . students in Mrs. Stowe's school

JOE  
FRED



. . . . . local high school boys

ADAM BARCLAY . . . . . apparition

TIME: The present

PLACE: A Victorian home on the outskirts  
of Calamityville

## ACT ONE

### SCENE ONE

SCENE: Early afternoon. The great room of an aging Victorian home on the outskirts of Calamityville.

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: The stage is in darkness. We hear the distant howling of the wind. Suddenly, the sound of violins comes up . . . a screeching, discordant, staccato sound. The sound builds, and as it stops suddenly, ELSIE strikes a match. She stands by the mantle, a candle in her hand and lights the candle, holding it under her face. [She is an attractive young lady wearing a frilly white nightgown and robe.] She is humming in an eerie voice [see production notes] and moves the candle under her face as she slowly looks around the room. She moves the candle up to reveal the portrait of her father and slowly stops humming.

ELSIE (to portrait). I got out again, Father. I suppose Eva will be angry with me. But I do so hate staying in that room. Why do they make me stay in the room, Father? (Noise of people approaching front door. ELSIE gasps.) It must be Eva. I've got to get going, Father. Eva will be angry. (She blows out candle, puts it on mantle and exits R.)

MRS. STOWE (offstage, approaching front door). As soon as possible. I assume you have the papers.

OLIN (offstage). Ready for your signature, as agreed.

(The main door opens and light floods in. MRS. STOWE and OLIN enter.)

MRS. STOWE. I can't see a thing.

OLIN. Let me get the lights. Place is dark as a tomb.  
(Lights come up.) Yes, much better. (He crosses to table as MRS. STOWE looks around.) If you'll just sign these three copies.

(GIGI sticks her head in the door.)

GIGI. Mrs. Stowe?

MRS. STOWE. I'm busy now, Gigi. Can it wait?

GIGI. Okay if we look around outside?

MRS. STOWE. Don't wander off. We have a lot of work to do.

GIGI. Okay. (She scans the main room, shakes her head.) Very creepy. (Exits.)

MRS. STOWE (crossing to table). If you'll just show me where to sign, Mr. Barclay.

OLIN (pointing to paper). I think you'll find everything in order.

MRS. STOWE (signing). Quite satisfactory. Very reasonable. I never thought I would be able to find such a grand facility for such a low rental price.

OLIN. You'll find the prices here in Calamityville are much more reasonable than in the city.

MRS. STOWE. That was the reason behind my decision. Tell me, was the town named after Calamity Jane?

OLIN. No. It was originally called Good Hope. But

the town burned down three times in the 1800's, so they changed the name to Calamityville. Seemed more fitting. (Clears throat.) Now, about my sister. She usually stays in her room with the nurse, but if she should bother you or your girls, just let me know.

MRS. STOWE. I don't foresee any problems. She seemed to be a very sweet person.

OLIN. She's crazy, Mrs. Stowe. Harmless, but crazy. You'll do well to keep that in mind. I'd have sold this place long ago if my father's will didn't stipulate that she could live here for the rest of her life.

MRS. STOWE. An estate this size, there's room for all of us.

OLIN. Hopefully.

MRS. STOWE (handing him the papers). Signed, sealed and delivered, Mr. Barclay.

OLIN. And the check?

MRS. STOWE. Of course. (Hands him check.) As agreed.

OLIN. You'll start moving in today?

MRS. STOWE. At once. The girls and I have a great deal of work to do if school is to open on time.

OLIN. I'll let you get to it.

MRS. STOWE. Did you happen to find two boys who would work up here for the next few days?

OLIN. Yes, I did. They should be up here soon.

MRS. STOWE. Thank you for your help.

OLIN (crossing). Good day, Mrs. Stowe.

MRS. STOWE (nodding). Mr. Barclay.

OLIN. I'll expect another check by the tenth of next month.

MRS. STOWE. As agreed.

OLIN. As agreed. (He exits, closing door behind him.)

(MRS. STOWE turns into the room and looks around. She smiles.)

MRS. STOWE. Such a grand estate. And such a reasonable price. I am indeed very fortunate. (Screech of violin strings and the portrait of Adam Barclay tilts to one side, the lights flicker. [See Production Notes.] MRS. STOWE looks about, slightly nervous, but shakes it off.) Well now. (She crosses to front door, opens it and calls out.) Girls! Time to get to work. Hurry along. (She closes door and crosses toward DR closet.) If I recall, the brooms and mops are in this closet.

(MRS. STOWE reaches the closet door and opens it, coming face to face with ELSIE, who steps out at her, smiling weirdly. MRS. STOWE screams and steps back.)

ELSIE. Dear me. Have I frightened you?

MRS. STOWE. Merciful heavens!

ELSIE. I have. I have frightened you.

MRS. STOWE. I wasn't expecting to find anyone in the closet.

ELSIE. Naturally.

(TAYLOR, GIGI, LINDA and EMMY come tumbling in through the front door.)

TAYLOR. Mrs. Stowe?

GIGI. Are you okay?

LINDA. We heard a scream.

EMMY. What happened? (The girls begin to take in

ELSIE and her strange demeanor.)

MRS. STOWE. I'm all right. Miss Barclay just gave me a start.

ELSIE. Elsie. Nobody calls me Miss Barclay. Who are these girls?

MRS. STOWE. Some of my students. We will be living here in the house with you. (The girls look at each other.)

ELSIE. Oh, yes! Now I remember. How nice. We shall have a wonderful time. We can sing together.

I know a great many songs. Won't that be fun?

LINDA (weak smile). Yeah. (Looks to others.) Swell.

(EVA enters in her nursing uniform.)

EVA. So! Here you are.

ELSIE. Look, Eva. We have company.

EVA (crossing to her). Okay, Elsie. Back you go.

ELSIE. Please don't make me stay in my room. We have guests.

EVA (holding her by the arm). Don't make a fuss.

I'll tell your brother. (ELSIE follows EVA. EVA looks to MRS. STOWE.) I usually lock the door.

Went to the bathroom and forgot . . . Let's go,

Elsie. I'll let you watch T.V. (ELSIE hums softly

as she and EVA exit. The girls look at each other

and at MRS. STOWE, waiting until the song fades.)

GIGI. Oh, brother.

TAYLOR. She lives here? With us?

MRS. STOWE. She has a room on the east wing. She's harmless.

EMMY. She gives me the creeps. (Looks around.)

In fact, this entire house gives me the creeps.  
LINDA. Everything gives you the creeps.  
EMMY. Don't worry. It's just a stage I'm going through.  
MRS. STOWE. Did you see Mr. Adams outside?  
GIGI. Who's Mr. Adams?  
MRS. STOWE. The caretaker. I have a list of things for him to do.  
LINDA. We didn't see anybody.  
MRS. STOWE. I imagine he'll be around directly.  
LINDA. Where's the telephone?  
MRS. STOWE. Won't be installed for a few days.  
LINDA. How am I supposed to call Jeff?  
TAYLOR. Like this. (Puts hands to mouth and yells.) Hey! Jeff baby! It's snuggle-bunnies! (Girls laugh.)  
LINDA. Aren't we clever. I guess fat people really are funny. (TAYLOR gives cutting look.)  
MRS. STOWE. Calm down, girls. (To LINDA.) Jeff will have to wait. We've only a week before the others arrive and plenty of work to do. You all knew that when you volunteered.  
EMMY. I didn't volunteer — my father did it for me.  
MRS. STOWE. Nevertheless, I expect a good day's work for your wages. Understood?  
GIRLS. Yes, ma'am.  
MRS. STOWE. Any questions before we begin?  
TAYLOR (raising hand). Oh! Oh! I have a question.  
MRS. STOWE. Does it concern food?  
TAYLOR. No. Mental health.  
MRS. STOWE. Well?  
TAYLOR. When do we eat?  
MRS. STOWE. You said mental health.

TAYLOR. If we don't eat soon, I'll go crazy.

GIGI. We had lunch an hour ago.

TAYLOR. You call two Twinkies and a banana lunch?

LINDA (pointing). You stole my banana.

TAYLOR. Sorry. I was out of my head with hunger.

MRS. STOWE. Since you are so food oriented, Taylor,  
I will put you in charge of the kitchen.

TAYLOR. Wonderful! My mother doesn't let me  
near the kitchen. She says I'm disaster-prone.

MRS. STOWE. Gigi, you will be in charge of the  
kitchen.

TAYLOR. But . . .

MRS. STOWE. You can help me sort boxes outside,  
Taylor. Emmy, you and Linda can start sweeping  
in here and then uncover the furniture. The brooms  
are in the closet. Let's get to it. (GIGI exits L,  
MRS. STOWE and TAYLOR out the front door.)

EMMY. I hate house cleaning.

LINDA. Who doesn't? I'll get the brooms. (She  
crosses to closet as EMMY follows. LINDA goes  
inside while EMMY stands by the closed door.)

EMMY. I read an article by a man who was married to  
a compulsive cleaner. It was called "Life With  
Lysol." She had this thing about germs. They had  
to sleep in plastic garbage bags to keep the sheets  
clean. She sprayed their guests with Lysol, vac-  
uumed their lawn, and wouldn't let her husband kiss  
her unless he boiled his lips first. It was horrible.  
(Calls out.) Linda? . . . I promised myself I would  
never be that way. Consequently, I haven't cleaned  
my room at home for three years. My father calls  
it "The Burial Ground." He says that old clothes  
from all over the western hemisphere make a sacred

trek to my room when they know it's time to die . . . kinda like elephants . . . Linda? Are you in there? Linda? (A hand reaches out from the up-stage exit that borders the closet and grabs EMMY on the shoulder. She gasps and does a staggering backstep.)

LINDA (stepping out of closet). That closet goes all the way through to the hall. (She has brooms.)

EMMY (stamping her feet). Are you crazy or what?

LINDA. Did I scare you?

EMMY. No! My hair always stands on end like this. If I could get my heart out of my mouth, I'd beat you over the head with it.

LINDA. No reason to get so huffy about it.

EMMY (yanking a broom from LINDA). Let's just sweep, okay? (Crosses toward L, mutters under her breath in mocking tone.) Did I scare you? Jeez.

LINDA (begins sweeping DR). I didn't see any boys when we drove through Calamityville, did you?

EMMY (sweeping). I didn't even see Calamityville when we drove through Calamityville.

LINDA. There must be some boys around here.

EMMY. Boys, boys, boys.

LINDA. Just curious.

EMMY. Curious like a shark.

LINDA (stops sweeping). Meaning what?

EMMY (stops sweeping). Not more than four hours ago you were weeping openly in Jeff's arms while the rest of us sat in the car fighting back nausea.

LINDA. It wasn't easy saying good-bye.

EMMY. It looked like something out of "Gone With The Wind." Chest heaving, eyes glistening, tortured sobs literally gushing out of your mouth. Now the

sun hasn't even set on day one and you're ready to make goo-goo eyes at the first thing with pants on.

LINDA. You're just jealous.

EMMY. Hah!

LINDA. You don't even know what true love is.

EMMY. Do, too.

LINDA. Yeah? When was the last time you kissed a man?

EMMY. This morning.

LINDA. I'm not talking about your father. Well?

EMMY. That's none of your business.

LINDA. You don't have to tell me. I know. It was Brian Watson. Yech!

EMMY. Looks aren't everything.

LINDA. How about personality? Brian is the only boy I know who collects lint.

EMMY. If you'd sweep more and talk less we might finish this job before Christmas. (Sweeps angrily.)

LINDA. Dear me! Have I touched a nerve? (Smiles.)

EMMY. Just sweep, okay?

LINDA. Don't worry about me. I'll do my share. Why don't you take the covers off the furniture?

EMMY. Why don't you?

LINDA. Okay, I will. (She crosses to chair and pulls off the cover and begins folding it.) I can tell that this week is going to be a real blast. (She throws the cover on the chair and crosses to the couch.)

EMMY. I wouldn't know — I just work here.

LINDA. That's a matter of opinion. (She reaches out and pulls the cover off the couch in one big motion.)

(ADAMS, the caretaker, is lying on the couch. As the

cover is pulled off he sits up — wide-eyed and gasping. LINDA screams and throws the cover back over ADAMS, who yells and staggers up. EMMY turns and sees the covered figure of ADAMS rising off the couch. She drops her broom.)

EMMY. Ghost!

(EMMY and LINDA break for the door and are intercepted by MRS. STOWE and TAYLOR. ADAMS is staggering around under the drop cloth, trying to pull it off.)

MRS. STOWE. What's going on here?

LINDA (pointing). Man . . . on couch.

EMMY. Ghost!

ADAMS. Get me out of this thing! Help!

MRS. STOWE (crossing). Not quite a ghost, girls.

(She pulls the cover off revealing ADAMS.) May I introduce Mr. Adams, our caretaker.

ADAMS (shaking head). Darn girl liked to scare me to perdition.

LINDA. Me? Scare you? That's a laugh.

ADAMS. Just tryin' to take a little nap.

MRS. STOWE. Do you always sleep under a drop cloth on the couch, Mr. Adams?

ADAMS. No. Sometimes I sleep under a drop cloth on the chair. Keeps the light out.

MRS. STOWE. From now on, you take your naps in your bungalow. Is that understood?

ADAMS. If you say so.

MRS. STOWE. I say so. I've been looking for you. I've made a list of things that need tending to.

ADAMS. Reckon that's what I'm here for. Been tendin' to this place for better'n twenty years.

Know her like the back of my hand.

MRS. STOWE. Good. You can start by shoring up the boards in the well house.

ADAMS (suddenly moody). Don't nobody go down to that well house .

MRS. STOWE. I've been down there and it's dangerous.

ADAMS. You should stay away from there.

MRS. STOWE. That's not the point.

ADAMS. Mark my words.

MRS. STOWE (growing impatient). Mr. Adams, I've got a thousand things to accomplish in a very short amount of time. I am not going to stand here and argue with you. If you can't handle the job, then I will send to town for someone who can.

ADAMS. I'm the only one works on Barclay Manor.

MRS. STOWE. Then do so. (ADAMS, brooding, walks to the door. The girls move out of the way. He stops at the door and looks back at MRS. STOWE.)

ADAMS. You're strangers here. You got a lot to learn. (Smiles.) You'll find out soon enough. (He chuckles ominously and exits.)

TAYLOR. Yech.

GIGI. I take it Igor comes with the house.

MRS. STOWE. That's right.

EMMY. Who'd you lease this joint from, Count Dracula?

LINDA. Crazy Elsie lurking inside and crazy Adams lurking without. A thrill a minute.

TAYLOR. Wonder why he doesn't want to work on

the well house?

MRS. STOWE. Laziness, no doubt. He should have fixed it up long before we got here. (There is a knock at the door.) Taylor, would you get that?

(TAYLOR opens the door revealing JOE and FRED, two high school students.)

TAYLOR. Well, hello there.

JOE. Is Mrs. Stowe here?

MRS. STOWE. Who is it, Taylor?

TAYLOR (calling in). Local talent. Somebody restrain Linda. (Gestures.) Won't you come in? (The boys enter and look at each other nervously as the girls begin to whistle and make bawdy gestures.)

MRS. STOWE. That's enough, girls. (To boys.) They're usually better behaved. I assume you're here about the jobs.

JOE. Yes, ma'am.

FRED. Mr. Barclay sent us.

JOE. I'm Joe Tyler and this is Fred Waller.

LINDA. I got dibs on Joe.

TAYLOR. I saw him first.

MRS. STOWE (to boys). Would you excuse me? (To girls, she points toward door.) Out! You've got plenty to keep you busy. (Girls shuffle out, calling ad lib to boys.)

GIRLS. 'Bye, Joe. 'Bye, Fred. (Boys look at each other.)

JOE (to MRS. STOWE). Not very bashful, are they?

MRS. STOWE. More so than you might think.

FRED. How many girls you got up here?