

# THE FAMILY BYTES

*By*  
*Daniel O'Donnell*

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**Dedication**

To Linda, my wife of 45 years.

*Thank you for the 25 years of collaboration, co-directing, set designing, costuming, hundreds of make-up applications, the painting of endless flats, the use of your furniture and all those cupcakes, cookies and brownies the students couldn't wait for. It was a labor of love, indeed.*

*~Mr.O*

**SYNOPSIS**

Two inept detectives, Cagney and Lacey, have been put in charge of protecting an unusual family at a safe house until the mother, Elvira Bytes, can testify against a ruthless crime mob. The police are unaware, however, that Elvira, her husband Barnabas, and their three kids are vampires! The parents are trying to change the family ways but it isn't easy with sarcastic teenage daughter, Scarlett, who uses a voodoo doll, and teenage son, Jason, who thinks he is also a werewolf. Only the youngest daughter, Raven, wants to be normal. When she brings home Candy, a new friend, Cagney and Lacey go on high alert, which isn't easy for the two detectives who are not the brightest bulbs on the force. Is this new friend an associate of mob bosses Lucky Lucy and the germ-a-phobic Minnie the Mouth? Will two arrogant hotshot cops, Starsky and Hutch, have to step in to help? Sink your teeth into this comedy for an evening of non-stop fun! Approximate running time 65 minutes.

*This play premiered in 2012 at Freeport (PA) Junior High School.*

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(4 m, 6 w, 3 flexible)*

**LACEY:** Inept detective who acts tough but doesn't pull it off.

**CAGNEY:** Lacey's senior partner who acts as if she knows what she's doing.

**LT. KOJAK:** Their boss, a gruff, hard-nosed detective.  
*(Flexible)*

**BARNABAS BYTES:** The old-fashioned vampire father who wears long black cape; loveable, but a bit addlebrained.

**ELVIRA BYTES:** Vampire mother, down-to-earth.

**SCARLETT BYTES:** Oldest teenage vampire daughter who dabbles in voodoo; sarcastic and rebellious.

**JASON BYTES:** Teenage vampire son who was influenced by the movie *Twilight* and thinks he is a werewolf.

**RAVEN BYTES:** Youngest teenage vampire daughter who is quiet, level-headed, and wants to be normal.

**LUCKY LUCY:** Ruthless underworld figure. *(Flexible)*

**MINNIE THE MOUTH:** Lucy's underling and hit person, dim, and germ-a-phobic. *(Flexible)*

**CANDY:** Attractive, ruthless hit man – er, woman.

**STARSKY:** Hot-shot cop. *(In last scene only)*

**HUTCH:** His hot-shot partner. *(In last scene only)*

*(There is also one offstage voice of a neighbor.)*

## **Synopsis of Scenes**

### **ACT I**

**Scene 1:** Lt. Kojak's office in the police department.

**Scene 2:** Later that evening in the shabby neighborhood of the safe house and inside the house itself.

### **ACT II**

**Scene 1:** One week later in safe house.

**Scene 2:** A short time later in the safe house.

**Scene 3:** Minutes later, a short distance from the safe house.

**Scene 4:** Three days later at night, at the safe house.

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

Lt. Kojak's office and outside the run-down safe house can take place before the curtain or below the stage. Kojak's office has a desk with a swivel chair, telephone, nameplate and a clear jar filled with lollipops. After Act I, Scene 1, Kojak's desk can be pushed aside and covered with boxes and trash bags, while other trash cans can be added to indicate the rough neighborhood of the safe house. The neighborhood setting can stay in place the entire time after the first scene.

The interior of the safe house looks shabby with old, worn furniture including two small couches, chair, end table with magazines, dining table with five chairs (*don't have to match*), table lamp with torn shade, pictures on the walls hanging askew, and a dying plant or two. When the Bytes first enter the house, trash should be littering the floor. There are three entrances: stage right to the outside; stage left to the back rooms, and center stage to the kitchen.

### **Additional props and costume pieces include:**

Small notepads for Cagney and Lacey; suitcases for Jason; voodoo doll with hatpin for Scarlett; 5 toy pistols; white cotton gloves and spray disinfectant and hand wipes for Minnie; newspaper, 5 fake steaks and 5 plates; stage blood; bloody apron for Elvira; cell phones for Cagney and Lacey; fake money for Candy; board game, tablet and pencil; cape, tee shirt, sweatpants, undershorts with handkerchief, black socks and shoes for Barnabas; shredded shirt for Minnie; Wolfman mask and hairy clawed gloves for Jason; sunglasses for Starsky and Hutch.

**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: Lt. Kojak's office in the police department. CAGNEY and LACEY are waiting for their boss.)*

**LACEY:** *(Nervous.)* What do you think the lieutenant wants?

**CAGNEY:** I have no idea, my curious friend, but it must be important in order for us to be pulled off the mean streets with such urgency.

**LACEY:** *(Excited.)* Eww! Maybe we're being sent undercover to break up an international drug ring.

**CAGNEY:** Perhaps, or perhaps a serial killer is on the prowl and we, as part of the city's finest, are to hunt him down like the dog he is.

**LACEY:** Eww! I like the sound of that, "the city's finest." It gives me proud chills just to hear it.

**CAGNEY:** Indeed.

**LACEY:** You know, the way the hairs stand up on the back of your neck.

**CAGNEY:** Yes, okay.

**LACEY:** Or the way your whole body tingles those teeny, tiny goose bumps.

**CAGNEY:** Yes, I get the picture.

**LACEY:** Or, what about when –

**CAGNEY:** *(Losing patience, raises her voice.)* Lacey!

**LACEY:** Yes, Cagney?

**CAGNEY:** What did I say about focusing?

**LACEY:** Right, right focus. *(Uses her hand to draw a straight line from her nose outward.)* Gotcha.

**CAGNEY:** Good. Do you think you can stay there?

**LACEY:** Oh, I'll stay there alright, you can count on me, count on me all the way to busting those lowlife drug-dealing, serial-killing sons of a –

**CAGNEY:** *(Raising her voice.)* Lacey, that is not focusing; that is babbling, leading in to unnecessary and unwanted profanity.

**LACEY:** *(Confused.)* Profanity? What? Ohh! No, no, no! I was about to say "sons of a criminal element."

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**LACEY:** *(Cont'd.)* Geez, Cagney, I thought you knew me better than that. I don't do potty mouth.

**CAGNEY:** My apologies. *(Slowly paces.)* I'm afraid our being summoned here and taking us away from our current kidnaping case has placed my mind into a whirlwind of scenarios.

**LACEY:** Huh?

**CAGNEY:** *(Stops, shakes her head slowly with a look of exasperation.)* It means I'm confused – I'm sure you can relate.

**LACEY:** Relate? Who am I related to?

**CAGNEY:** Nothing, nothing forget it. *(Begins to pace again.)*

*(As CAGNEY speaks LACEY sits in lieutenant's chair and comically bounces up and down, spins around and looks at papers on desk. At first Cagney doesn't notice.)*

**CAGNEY:** *(Cont'd.)* What could be the reason for our summons? I've not heard of any new cases of pressing need. Perhaps it is so secretive, so sensitive that word hasn't filtered to the rank and file. Yes, that's it! Lacey this could be... *(Sees where Lacey is sitting and whispers in a panicky voice.)* What are you doing? Get up!

**LACEY:** *(Ignores her, reads office papers and laughs.)* Hey, guess who's not getting promoted this year?

*(Just then KOJAK, with lollipop in mouth, enters, standing in doorway.)*

**KOJAK:** *(Upset.)* And guess who will be fired if she doesn't get out of my seat? *(Walks to desk.)*

*(CAGNEY holds hand to head and shakes it in disbelief. Startled, LACEY jumps up and proceeds to arrange desk.)*

**LACEY:** Lieutenant Kojak! Sorry, sir, I was just...

**KOJAK:** Snooping? Reading my memos? Invading my privacy?

**LACEY:** Yes, sir. I mean, no, sir. I was just...

## **End of Freeview**

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