

Loonies and Snatchers

*By
Emilio Regina*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

An undercover policeman is sitting on a park bench impersonating an old woman in the hopes of catching a purse snatcher red-handed. To his surprise, there is more than one purse snatcher, or so he thinks. Passersby, including a jogger escaping a vicious dog, a harried business woman, a male model and others, become victims of wacky experiences leading to more than one suspect being handcuffed to the park bench. On top of that, three mental patients have gone missing from the hospital located close to the park and the old lady the undercover cop was impersonating shows up as well. It all adds up to 30 minutes of inspired lunacy.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 3 w, 5 flexible parts)

IMPERSONATOR: Male police officer working undercover.

PARK CUSTODIAN: Flexible role.

WOMAN: Running from a vicious dog.

BUSINESSWOMAN: On her way to work.

PART-TIMER: Male model.

MR. RELATIVE: An intellectual of sorts.

MS. HELLIWEATHER: The real old lady who faints easily.

FIDO: A vicious dog.

POLICEMAN: In uniform.

GUARD: From psychiatric ward of hospital.

PARAMEDIC: Rushes to help Helliweather.

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SETTING

A park with two benches, one bench at CS, the other SL with a garbage can beside it.

PROPS/COSTUME PIECES

Litter on ground, 2 purses with upright handles; 2 shawls; 2 pairs of white gloves; novels; wig; maintenance tool such as a litter stick; newspaper; wallet with dollar bills; umbrella and briefcase; 3 sets of handcuffs; pad and pen; whistle; cell phone; dog collar with pointy studs and upright leash; sunglasses, hacksaw; and paramedic bag.

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(At RISE: There are sounds of CRICKETS followed by dogs BARKING. LIGHTS then gradually go up and birds begin to CHIRP. ENTER IMPERSONATOR dressed as an old woman wearing white gloves and shawl and carrying a purse and novel. Impersonator looks around and sits at CS bench and deliberately places his purse at the opposite end of bench. ENTER PARK CUSTODIAN with litter stick.)

CUSTODIAN: *(Whistling.)* Well, hello, Ms. Helliweather. You're here early, aren't you. It looks like it's going to be a fine day, not like yesterday with all that rain *(HE picks up debris and puts it into the garbage can.)* Yep, a fine day. Don't you agree, Ms. Helliweather?

IMPERSONATOR: Ah, yes. A fine day.

CUSTODIAN: You sound like you're catching a cold.

IMPERSONATOR: *(Coughs.)* Yes.

CUSTODIAN: Ms. Helliweather, you should keep your purse closer to yourself or you'll get it stolen again. *(CUSTODIAN takes purse from opposite end of bench and places it on IMPERSONATOR'S lap.)* You've been mugged more than once; you should know better than that.

IMPERSONATOR: Yes, of course.

CUSTODIAN: *(Picks up a newspaper from SL bench.)* Well, well, will you look it here: *(Reads headline.)* "Three Patients Missing From Psychiatric Ward." Now, that hospital is close to this park. It seems that not only do we have to keep a look out for purse snatchers in the vicinity but three loonies as well. Now keep an eye out and have a nice day, Ms. Helliweather. *(Takes newspaper and reads to himself as he EXITS.)*

IMPERSONATOR: Good day.

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(IMPERSONATOR takes purse from lap and places it at the end of bench once again. A dog is heard BARKING viciously offstage and a few SCREAMS are heard from a WOMAN.)

WOMAN: *(Offstage.)* Run, Martha, run! *(ENTER A WOMAN out of breath.)* Help! Help! Get away from me, you beast. Excuse me, madam, can I sit here and catch my breath for a moment. Thank you. *(Takes purse and places it on IMPERSONATOR'S lap and sits.)* There's a rabid madman with a great big canine - and boy, oh boy, oh boy, what a canine! It's got bulging red eyes, razor-sharp teeth, grizzly paws, and wears a vicious pointy collar. It's horrid! Just horrid! Have you seen it?

IMPERSONATOR: No.

WOMAN: It won't be hard to miss 'cause it has bulging red eyes, razor-sharp --

IMPERSONATOR: Yes, I know. You've told me already.

WOMAN: Oh. Well, did I tell you it bit my friend Martha on the leg?

IMPERSONATOR: No, you didn't.

WOMAN: Well, it did and it won't be long until it comes after me again. It's picked up my scent, you know.

IMPERSONATOR: Run along then.

WOMAN: Maybe you should come too. It's not safe here for someone as old and as helpless --

IMPERSONATOR: I'll be fine!

WOMAN: OK, OK, OK, but don't say I didn't warn you. If you see my friend Martha can you tell her I'll be waiting at the park entrance for her.

IMPERSONATOR: I will.

WOMAN: She's a tall woman wearing a light blue dress.

IMPERSONATOR: OK, bye-bye now.

(WOMAN EXITS.)

(IMPERSONATOR takes his wallet out and places it half way into the purse with a few bills sticking out. Impersonator puts purse at opposite end of bench once again.)

End of Freeview

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