THE SILVER LADY

a Comic Thriller in Two Acts

by L. Don Swartz

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STORY OF THE PLAY

The Dark Harbor Lighthouse, abandoned by Sheriff Wilde after his wife's mysterious disappearance, sat empty for over ten years. Now the Hanson family has moved in, but before long, strange things begin to happen in their dream house: lit candles in the windows, eerie music from the piano room, moving furniture, and a shadowy figure who walks the lighthouse tower at midnight. As Raven, the disaffected teenage daughter, and Ethan, a next-door neighbor, try to discover what dark secrets Aunt Rosemary is keeping and the true identity of little Penny's imaginary friend, they unknowingly place themselves directly in the path of the recently awakened and vengeful Silver Lady. As deception after deception is revealed, the two friends race against the clock to prevent another grisly murder from occurring at the Dark Harbor Lighthouse.

To
Rosemary Elizabeth Swartz
for reminding me what's really important.
Love always,
Your Father

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 7 w)

MOTHER HANSON: Dark Harbor's mayoral assistant. Head of the household, 40s.

FATHER HANSON: High school principal, 40s.

ROSEMARY HANSON: Father Hanson's unmarried sister. Quiet, shy, clumsy, pleasant, no slave to fashion; 30s.

BRIDGETT HANSON: Pretty and popular high school teen. She's devious, yet dull-witted.

RAVEN HANSON: A dark, intense, angry, 16 year old. She's brilliant, perhaps a genius. An outsider.

PENELOPE (PENNY) HANSON: A bright young girl whose best friend is an invisible pirate named Captain Barracuda.

ETHAN SNOW: Handsome teenager; friend of Raven's. He's shy, secretive, smart. Also an outsider.

BRYCE CALBOT: Bait shop owner, Rosemary's boyfriend of 10 years. Quiet, bookish, sloppy, socially awkward; 30s.

SHERIFF WILDE: Dark Harbor's top cop. Fair, likeable, 40s.

MRS. MacHENRY: Retired cook of Ellsworth orphanage, 60s.

MADAME SHUVANI: Drunken carnival fortune-teller with a definite link to the other side, indeterminate age.

SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: Late September. Morning.
Scene 2: One week later. Stormy night.
Scene 3: Two days later. Night.
Scene 4: One week later. Night.

ACT II

Scene 1: The next day. Afternoon.
Scene 2: One week later. Mid-October. Evening.
Scene 3: One week later. Later October. Night.
Scene 4: One week later. Halloween. Night.
Scene 5: Two weeks later. November. Evening.

SETTING

The family room in a lighthouse on the jagged seaside cliffs of Dark Harbor, Maine. SR is a door that leads to the backyard. UPC are French doors that open to a balcony that faces the ocean. UL is a small wooden platform with three stairs. On the platform is a thick wooden doorway that leads to the offstage steps that spiral up to the lighthouse tower. UR is a archway that leads to other rooms in the house. A partial set of stairs, leading to the second floor can be seen through the archway. For furniture there is a sofa DL, a desk with a chair above the sofa, two comfortable arm chairs in front of the fireplace on the DR wall, and a rocking chair near the French doors. Upstage of the fireplace is a window that looks out on the garden. There is a storage cabinet on the stage left wall, and a television set, on a low table, extreme DL in front of the sofa.

The Silver Lady was originally produced by the Ghostlight Theatre Company at the Grant Street Theatre in North Tonawanda, NY on October 15, 1998. It was directed by L. Don Swartz, set design by Debby Koszelak Swartz, lighting and stage management by Julie Senko. The cast, in order of appearance, was as follows:

MOTHER HANSON.....Debby Koszelak Swartz
PENNY HANSON.....Leah Kingston
SHERIFF WILDE.....Carl Tamburlin
FATHER HANSON.....L. Don Swartz
RAVEN HANSON.....Sarah Averill
BRYCE CALBOT.....Michael Leszczynski
ROSEMARY HANSON.....Joann V. Mis
BRIDGETT HANSON.....Kristy Faulhaber
ETHAN SNOW.....Chris Fire
MRS. MACHENRY.....Catherine Sepulveda
MADAME SHUVANI.....Joy Ann Wrona

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: It is late September. Early Saturday morning. Someone is playing the piano – very badly – offstage. The tune is unrecognizable. The rocking chair is rocking by itself. PENNY, the youngest HANSON, enters carrying a box of blocks. She stops the chair from rocking and sitting on the floor, begins playing with the blocks. She giggles occasionally to herself. MOTHER HANSON enters carrying a very hot mug of coffee. She sets it on the table next to the large armchair by the fireplace and crosses to the door where she retrieves the morning paper. She places a section of the paper next to the coffee mug and sits on the smaller chair near the fireplace. Plucking a pencil from behind her ear, she sets to work on the crossword puzzle.)

MOTHER: Good morning, Penelope.
PENNY: Good morning, Mother. Mother, don't be rude.
MOTHER: Oh, I'm sorry. *(Addressing the air next to PENNY.)* Good morning, Captain Barracuda. How are you today?
PENNY: He says he's coming down with the scurvy.
MOTHER: Oh my. Scurvy? That sounds serious.
PENNY: Yes. And his peg leg is lousy with termites.
MOTHER: *(Vaguely.)* It pains me to hear it, Captain Barracuda. Help yourself to our oranges. You might try soaking that leg in a warm bath to drown those nasty little buggers.
PENNY: He's much obliged for your concern.

(There is a loud KNOCK on the door. MOTHER crosses and answers the door.)

MOTHER: Good morning, Sheriff Wilde. Won't you come in?
SHERIFF: Thank you, ma'am. Just for a second. I didn't mean to startle you. I wasn't sure anybody would be awake this early on a Saturday.

MOTHER: Oh, that's all right, Sheriff. We're early risers around here.
SHERIFF: I see you got yourselves all moved in. Here's the key for the lighthouse tower. Sorry it took so long for me to find it. I'd keep it locked if I were you. Especially with the kids.
MOTHER: Yes, of course.
SHERIFF: Keep the kids off the balcony. That's a seventy-foot drop to the jagged rocks below.
MOTHER: Good advice, Sheriff, good advice.
PENNY: Ssssshhh, Captain. That's not very nice.
MOTHER: Would you like a cup of coffee?
SHERIFF: *(Uncomfortably.)* No thanks.

(PENNY'S block tower comes down with a crash.)

PENNY: Captain! Stop that!
MOTHER: Penelope, please.
SHERIFF: I hope your family is going to be happy here.
MOTHER: If this first week is any indication, we sure will be. You stop by any time you want.
SHERIFF: I really got to get going. Have a nice day.
MOTHER: Thank you, Sheriff. Good-bye.

(SHE closes the door and crossing back to her chair, continues working on the crossword puzzle. FATHER enters in a suit and tie.)

FATHER: Good morning, Mother. Penny. Captain. Make anyone walk the plank this mornin', Captain?
PENNY: He says he doesn't care for your tone. And if he was still flesh and bones he'd suck the eyeballs out of your head and spit them in your landlubber face.
FATHER: *(Laughing heartily.)* Oh, my goodness.
MOTHER: Good morning, Father. The sheriff dropped off the tower key.
FATHER: Oh good.
MOTHER: The poor man. He seemed ill-at-ease.

End of Freeview

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