Urban Legends

American Folklore
Adapted for the stage by

Bryan Starchman

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DEDICATION

This play is dedicated to my mom and dad who always made sure there were no monsters under my bed.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Here is a collection of six stories to make your skin crawl and your blood turn cold. "Urban Legends" starts with a whirlwind tour that covers many of the famous and infamous urban legends we've grown up hearing and fearing. It then delves deeper, dramatizing full stories for the stage in chilling detail. In "The Survivor" we meet the sole survivor of a plane crash who has lost his only love, but while the other bodies have been retrieved, hers will never be found. "On Second Hand" features a young man who has a close call with death and suddenly his life is literally flashing before his eyes. "Who's Calling?" shows what can happen when a seemingly harmless practical joke is taken way too far. And in "The Con" we meet a charming couple who put their full trust in one another…for better or for worse. After leaving the show you will definitely feel the need to check the back seat of your car and look under your bed before going to sleep; but beware of your dreams because these spooky tales will stick with you for quite some time. (This full-length play is also available as two one-act plays, "The Survivor" and "The Con.")

******Premiere Performance******

URBAN LEGENDS was performed in the Fall of 2009 featuring Grady Northrop, Emily Clingenpeel, Laura Hill, and Myles Jellison.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Widely flexible cast ranging from of 16-40 actors.
Smallest cast of 16 calls for 6 m, 5 f, and 5 flexible roles.
Largest cast of 40 calls for 15 m, 12 f, and 13 flexible.
Feel free to double, triple, or quadruple actors as needed.)

ACT I

Scene 1: Opening Scene

Actor 1: Hitchhiker, Son, Soldier
Actor 2: Young Man, Doctor
Actress 1: Betsy, Nurse, Waitress
Actress 2: Driver, Older Woman

Scene 2: The Survivor

Doctor Tuttle *(Flexible)*
Bernard Sap
Chloe Reynolds
Narrator *(Flexible)*
Edward Reynolds
Jenny Reynolds
Frank

ACT II

Scene 1: On Second Hand

Jeff
Laura
Doctor Jenkins *(Flexible)*
Bradley Beattie
Father
Mother
Monique Lopez
Coach *(Flexible)*
English Teacher *(Flexible)*
Math Teacher *(Flexible)*
Girl 1, 2
Principal *(Flexible)*
Students 1, 2, and 3 *(M)*

Scene 2: Who's Calling?
Blythe Roberts
Frank Nutley
Margie Nutley
Suzanne Roberts
Justin or Justine/ Caller *(Flexible)*
Ben or Beth / Caller *(Flexible)*
Police Officer *(Flexible)*

Scene 3: The Con
Cooper
Lucy
Clerk *(Flexible)*
Frank
Guido *(M but could be played by a tough female)*
Louis *(M but could be played by a tough female)*

Scene 4: Final Scene
Actor 1
Actor 2
Actress 1
Actress 2

ACT I
Scene 1: Opening Scene

(AT RISE: Two ACTORS and two ACTRESSES are standing across the apron, looking out at the audience. They act as narrators and re-enact the various short tales that start our show. Basic props are needed, including four chairs that can be arranged to represent a car, a bed, a hospital gurney, etc.)

ALL: This really happened.
ACTOR 1: I swear to you…
ALL: This is absolutely true.
ACTOR 2: I read about it in the newspaper.
ACTRESS 1: It was sent to me in an e-mail from someone who saw it.
ACTRESS 2: I wasn't there, but it happened to my uncle's brother's daughter.

(The OTHER THREE look down at HER in disbelief while she stares out at the audience with a blank naïve stare.)

ALL: This really *truly* happened.

(A SPOTLIGHT shines on ACTOR 1 as the OTHERS exit the stage. Throughout these scenes one actor acts as the narrator in a spotlight while the other three play out the urban legend in a separate area of the stage.)

ACTOR 1: Would I lie to you?

(LIGHTS come up on ACTRESS 1 as Betsy. She sits on a chair and puts her feet up on another chair to simulate lying in bed. She places a blanket over her legs. A text book sits in her lap; one hand hangs down, the other holds a cell phone to her ear.)

ACTOR 1: There was this girl that my sister's college roommate went to high school with.

BETSY: *(On the phone.)* Hi Dad, how's Hawaii? How is Mom doing?

ACTOR 1: Her parents went to Hawaii for a second honeymoon, leaving their only daughter at home because she had to study for the SATs.

BETSY: *(On the phone.)* Yes, I made myself some dinner. Tell Mom thanks for the leftovers she had waiting for me in the fridge. The turkey was delicious.

ACTOR 1: But she wasn't alone…her faithful dog Reggie was lying under her bed.

BETSY: *(On the phone.)* Of course I locked all the doors, because unlike *someone* I know, I'm actually responsible. *(Beat.)* I'm talking about *you,* Dad; you left the front door wide open when you drove away. Leaves had blown in all over the living room by the time I got home from school.

ACTOR 1: But her father distinctly remembers locking the door. He even stopped the car halfway down the driveway to double check because he knew his daughter would be home alone for the next week.

BETSY: *(On the phone.)* Well Dad, you *are* getting older. Maybe you just *think* you locked the door. Besides, don't worry, I'm safely locked away in my bedroom for the night, studying, and I have Reggie under the bed to protect me.

ACTOR 1: But her pet pooch has been acting strange all night.

BETSY: *(On the phone.)* Of course I put food in his bowl, but he didn't come when I called for him. I looked all over and finally gave up. About an hour ago I got into bed to study and he scared the heck out of me. I reached down to grab my calculator and he started licking me. You know how he gets when you aren't around to play with him, he's just sulking.

ACTOR 1: The girl says her goodbyes…

BETSY: *(On the phone.)* I love you, Dad, and give a big hug to Mom from me. I'll call you tomorrow.

ACTOR 1: …and gets back to studying.

End of Freeview

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