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At Granny 's House

By Les Mahoney

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Stir 'em up.

Watch the tea!

Watch my China!

Four crack.

East.

So who was that

young man you were with

the other day,

quite a studmuffin.

One of my young

lovers of course.

Five bam.

But you have so many,

it's like a revolving door.

You know people are

beginning to talk.

Yes, we are quite

notorious here.

Well if only that were the case.

Rebecca and I would be

having much more fun here.

Two flower.

Still though, all

those young men.

Keeps you young, doesn't it?

You'll never tell, I know.

Oh, we don't want that from you.

I never saw this coming.

I guess I was confused.

It's all about love, after all.

For 50 years, never

had a babysitter.

It's a caretaker, mom.

She's not here to babysit you.

Listen ma, it's not

even about the stairs.

Do you remember what happened

last time you mixed up

a caretaker can help you

keep 'em all straight.

What was wrong with

Carol, I liked her!

We already talked about this.

She wasn't qualified, and it really doesn't even matter if you liked her, we're not doing this for a rent-a-friend here. I guess my choice means nothing. No, that's not it, mom. I just meant... you know better than your senile mom, right? That's not it. I hire people all the time, it's what I do. I just know what I'm looking for, that's all. Come on ma. What time is your flight? Mom. Never mind. Thanks again for coming. The pleasure is all mine, it's great to meet both of you. I understand how this could be... Awkward for you. I'm here to help. Well I'm glad to hear that, thank you. You have a wide breadth of experiences. Yes, I guess I'm a collector. A collector? Collecting professions, as it were. Excuse me, a moment. Sorry about that, work. Where were we? Oh yes, a collector? Now that's an interesting way you put that. Let's see here, you've worked in health care, it, entertainment and... Excuse me, mortuary?

Yes.

I did that in college.

It was interesting,
but not really for me.

So, what brings you to Haley?

I've spent a lot of
time in big cities,
east coast, west coast...

I wanna get out of the rat race.

I just wanna go somewhere...

Simple.

Friendly.

Quiet.

Somewhere I can take
care of someone and...

Figure out my next step.

Do you uh...

Do you have any
questions about the job?

No, I think the job
description was pretty clear.

Similar to other jobs I've had.

Not to interrupt,

I just wanna say,

that although the

job is similar,

being a caregiver is
a huge responsibility,

and it's different

from place to place

and person to person.

I will do my best to

fit into your life

and to make it better.

Well thanks, I'm sure that...

have you ever been married?

Mom!

That, that has...

no.

It is a fair question.

If I'm gonna move in,

she has the right to know

a little bit more about me

than what's on my resume.

I've never been married.
I've been close a few times.
I don't know.
Maybe I'm not the
relationship kind.
Well I'm sure a pretty
woman like yourself
has had her chances.
Thanks, I suppose so.
Things just always
seem to fall apart.
I'm better single, I guess.
Well, I can understand that.
I don't know about her.
What's not to like?
She's got, she's got experience.
A great background,
good references.
I don't know.
She just seems too good.
Are you kidding me?
You don't want her here
'cause she's too right
for the job?
I don't believe this.
You know, mom, it
doesn't even matter.
I offered her the
job, she accepted.
We signed an agreement,
you do remember that right?
It was your agreement, not mine.
Dammit, I'm just trying to help.
You can't live here alone.
So you say!
You're damn right!
Look, you need help
and now you've got it.
Case closed.
I gotta go.
You always do.
I will call you next week, okay?
Everything will be
great, I promise.

This is some
house you have here.
How long have you lived here?
53 years.
Wow.
You don't see people
set down roots like that
much anymore.
Why did you move to
Haley in the first place?
My husband was a doctor.
You don't really
want me here, right?
It's nothing
personal, I just...
don't think you need help?
Maybe you don't.
And maybe your son
pushed you into this?
No, I didn't say that, i...
I know.
But I have eyes.
Listen, I really am here
to make your life better.
Really.
How about the nickel tour?
Is that your husband?
Yes, doctor passed away
12 years ago this month.
I'm sorry.
Part of life, death
comes to us all.
Next stop.
This will be yours.
Thank you, it's very nice.
Did you stuff those yourself?
Oh no, it was a family friend.
Kind of ghastly, actually.
I don't know.
I rather like them.
Pretty, well-preserved.
Oh, you don't need to
go down those stairs.
No need to take

unnecessary chances.
I'm fine, it's no problem.
Did you know that trips
and falls are statistically
the most common injuries
among the elderly?
I can take a quick
look around myself.
Really, I'm fine.
And I insist.
What's down there?
Well, okay.
There's a doctor's old office.
Another bedroom.
Now let's see uhm, a workshop.
Storage, oh and
the new basement.
New?
Oh, of course new is relative.
We added it on the
house years ago.
I guess I'll make some tea.
Would you like some?
A lovely idea, please.
I'll be right back.
Perfect.
Thanks.
You're welcome.
A very spacious
basement you have.
Hmm, haven't done
a lot with it lately.
Listen.
I know you're not comfortable
with me being here.
Yet.
But you will be.
We'll make a great team.
You'll see.
Oh, you're up, sleepyhead!
Going for the caffeine, eh?
We're gonna have
to switch to decaf,
it's better for you.

And I just about
have breakfast ready,
you'll love it.
My famous oatmeal.
Very heart-healthy.
We wanna take good
care of you, right?
I prefer bacon.
Hmm, nah-ah.
So, how do you like it?
It's good, thanks.
And it's high
in anti-oxidants,
fiber and flavonoids,
and low on cholesterol,
and trans-fatty acids.
Great.
Have you heard
from your son lately?
No, he hardly ever calls.
Now that you're here
he doesn't have to
even pretend he cares.
Oh, that can't be right.
He seemed like
such a caring man.
Hmm, caring for
his checkbook maybe.
I'm sorry you think that.
He told me he loves
you very much.
He told you that?
Hmm-mm.
Yes, it was very sweet.
You know, I'm thinking
I'll move downstairs.
Oh well, I think...
perfect, I'll take my
stuff down after breakfast.
It'll be just like home.
You in the upstairs.
Me in the downstairs.
Yeah...
What are you looking for?

Oh, I'm getting so
forgetful nowadays.
I could've sworn I had my
Oprah magazine right here.
Oh, it's not you,
I took your magazine
to read in bed.
I'll go get it.
Oh, thank you dear.
Coming right up.
You have some nice friends, fun.
They're good folks, I've
known 'em a long time.
But new friends are good too.
You know, I was thinking...
What dear?
Not really sure
how to say this...
Well, just say it,
what could be so bad?
Well, it's just you're
so good with people
and we have so much space here.
Have you heard of myfreebed.Com?
Oh, I don't use the
web portal very much.
Well, it's a great
site, people sign up
to meet new people,
traveling through,
to let them use their homes.
Is that safe?
Sure, people that about
themselves on the site,
and others who they have already
stayed with vouch for them.
I've used them both, both
offering places to stay
and staying with people.
It's a really neat experience.
And safe.
Come to think of it, we
did something like that
during the war, only it was

soldiers passing through.
Of course we didn't
have the web.
We barely had running water.
So what do you think?
It's a great way
to meet new people.
Ah, I don't know.
Don't worry, it will
always be just one at a time.
Come on, it'll be fun.
The visitor will
stay in the basement,
so they'll be out of your hair
and I'll take care of all of it.
Come on, live a little.
Maybe I should ask my son.
Your son?
This is your house.
Okay.
How does this work?
Okay, so this is a
listing of all the members.
You have to be a member
to request a bed.
And we have to make a
profile to offer a bed.
Ready?
Sure.
Okay, so first we
have to take a picture.
Oh...
Don't worry, you look great.
You look great!
All right, let's
squish together.
All right.
Great, here it goes.
Three, two, one!
Oh, nice.
Now what?
Okay, I just need
to finish the profile
and we wait for someone

who wants to stay here.
In Haley?
You'd be surprised.
Done.
In the city,
and I had a hard night
with some Singapore slings.
And the waitress
who served them.
Good lord, what's wrong?
I'm not feeling
too much like business.
It's just one
knock on the office door.
I just got my name on it.
We have one on myfreebed.
Someone who wants to visit.
Really, oh?
Look.
Okay, look.
His name is Bob rusk, let's see.
25 from des moines, on
his way to California,
wants to stay on the 14th.
Wow, that's three days from now.
What'cha think?
It'll be fun.
Yay, I'll let him know.
So Bob, why are you
going to California?
Well, my uncle has got a
fruit business out there,
so I figured, I'd go
out there, you know,
help him out a little bit.
Enjoy the awesome
weather for a change,
and who knows, maybe
even try my hand
at being an actor.
Well that sounds wonderful.
I remember when I went to
California, it was lovely.
Oh really?

When was that?
Oh, years ago, you probably weren't even born. You know, I can't thank you ladies enough for letting me stay here, I mean, it's making a huge difference in my very, very small budget. Well good. It's our pleasure. May I show you to your room? Sure. Excuse me ma'am. Off course. Like I was saying, the weather in the winter, back when I was young, was much colder. Loads, yes. I remember back in '64, now that was cold. It was so cold. Hmm-mm. That pigs were freezing in their slop. Oh, what a mess that was to clean up. Nothing, just in Haley doing this myfreebed thing. And I'm not sure about this whole global warming stuff, you know, back when I was a girl... As soon as I can, trust me. Can I get you something to drink? No, I'm just sitting around, you know, doing nothing, like the usual. Ssshht, ssshht. It doesn't take long, it doesn't take long. Strong one.

I gotta go but
I'll be right back.
So much to do.
So little time.
Hey there.
Not like you to stay in so late.
Hmm, didn't sleep well.
Our young friend
is sleeping late too.
No, he left early this morning.
Said he had to
catch the early bus.
Oh, what a shame,
nice young man.
Any new requests?
Nope.
Everything at its time.
Yes?
I just wanted to tell you...
It's been nice having you here.
It just took some
getting used to.
That's understandable.
Change can be difficult.
Exactly, thanks
for understanding.
I wanted to talk to you
about your eternal salvation.
Excellent!
Pick up my son from
my mom and dad's house,
and this really saves on hotels.
And then you're
out of here at dawn?
I'm sorry.
Uhm yeah, uh, tomorrow morning.
Tomorrow morning.
That is so neat.
I always thought being a
vet would be fascinating.
It is, I'm blessed to be
where I'm at in my life.
I know the feeling.
So, how did you get

started in this line of work?

Well, it was actually when

I was just a little girl.

I was outside playing,

when I heard the sound

of brakes screeching

in the street.

When I got there, I found

that someone had hit a dog

and then just drove

away and left it.

Horrible!

How could someone

do such a thing?

I have no idea.

Anyway, I picked it up

and carried it home.

My mom and I took it to the vet,

and then I took care of it.

You nursed it back to life?

What a wonderful story.

I had a dog when

I was a little girl.

We should get a dog.

A dog?

Oh dear no, they

require a lot of care.

What do you think?

Did you hear what I said?

You went to the dogs

there for a moment.

Yes.

They require a lot of care.

And you seemed like

such a nice lady.

I really liked your dog story.

Feel and

breathe, that is the key.

Now open your eyes.

And how do you feel?

Very good, I feel good.

Say now, look behind you.

Looks like we

might have visitors.

Wonderful.

What else do you see?

When did

you say they would be here?

15 minutes ago.

You're as nervous
as a long-tailed cat
in a room full of
rocking chairs.

Oh, that must be them.

What were their names again?

Ted and Linda steiner.

Come on in, have a seat.

Thank you.

Hmm-mmm.

So, what brings you to Haley?

Well, we're kinda in transition.

So we decided to travel a bit.

What he means is,

I'm in-between jobs.

And since he can

work from anywhere,

we have some flexibility.

Oh, and what kind of job...

what do you do?

Are you some sort of consultant?

Uh yeah, I guess you

could call me that.

I work in it.

Managing company's networks.

Boring tech stuff.

No, not all.

I worked in it before.

Fascinating.

To answer your question,

I worked in a nonprofit,

advocating literacy.

Now that sounds

like a rewarding job.

Well rather, worked,

I got downsized.

Oh...

So, here we are.

Put our life in storage

and left the big city.
To Haley, and beyond I suppose.
Meanwhile I'm still
looking for a job,
I'm sending out resumes,
making phone calls.
Amazing what you can
do with the Internet now.
Indeed.
It's all about
bringing people together.
So we normally don't have
couples stay with us.
But your picture was so nice.
Yes, I do have
experience in that area.
We thought, why not try?
Yes, that'd be fantastic,
thank you for calling.
All right, that's exactly
what I've been looking for.
Why not?
Great, yes, I would love to.
Guess we need a lost and found.
Bad habit?
The worst.
So if you need anything,
I'm in the room down the hall.
Will do.
Excuse me.
I guess I wasn't
paying attention.
I should've seen you coming.
Distracted?
I guess you could say that.
And your wife?
She finally fell asleep.
Finished her phone calls?
No...
Not now.
Your wife is a problem.
Tomorrow?
Wow, this is tasty, what
do you call this again?

Scrapple, an old family recipe.
What'cha think
hon, good stuff huh?
Yeah.
She's not much of
a morning person.
Neither am I, I
made this last night.
So, what are your plans?
Well, I've been
thinking about that.
I think we should
stay another day.
What, why would we stay here?
I mean it's nice here and
all, but, we have plans,
right?
Well as always you're right,
but you do have a lot of
e-mails to catch up on.
And the signal is good here.
So, spend the day, relax.
Take care of business.
Okay, one night, that's it.
Okay, that should
be all we need.
Well, that's it for me.
Time for my long winter's nap.
Nighty night, folks.
Oh thank god.
I thought that show
would never end.
All about murder and CSI.
I'm probably gonna
have nightmares.
Oh honey.
I can fix that.
Fix what?
Your nightmares.
I have a surprise for you.
What?
Meet me downstairs, 15 minutes.
Oh, there you are.
It's about time.

Movie night.
You're kidding right?
Someone else's home movies?
This is your big surprise?
Come on, it will be great,
we'll watch perfect
strangers, you love that.
Strange maybe,
perfect, doubtful.
There you go, have a seat.
Okay, but if I fall
asleep, don't let me drool.
Perish the thought.
We were in
love, it was beautiful.
So, how are you
settling in downstairs?
Quite well, thanks.
I'm in the guest room, but
if we have any free bedders,
I just move the air mattress
into the living room.
Hmm.
And I wanna thank you
again for having me here.
I think it's gonna be
a good place for me.
Too bad about your wife.
Yeah, that was tough.
But we've been growing
apart for years.
I should've seen it coming.
Hmm, so many people
split up nowadays,
I just don't understand it.
What have you heard from her?
Let's see, where do
you want her to be?
Last I saw on
Facebook she was in L.A.
Does she know anyone there?
No.
She's never been there.
East coaster all her life.

That's a good place for her.
Fresh start.
Good cell service.
What's next?
We post some stock pictures
from L.A., Hollywood,
whatever, every once in a while.
Post some generic
status messages.
"Looking for a new place!"
"Oh, great restaurant!"
That kinda stuff.
How long do we have to do that?
Not too long.
People don't pay
that much attention.
She worked in nonprofits right?
Yeah.
Oh, perfect.
She'll get a do-gooder
job overseas.
Will fall off the grid,
won't have time for friends.
That happens all the time.
And that's that!
You are a genius.
You inspire me.
Granny didn't say a word.
I made Rebecca happy, and
that was enough for her.
At first.
Is Becca here?
Shopping.
Uhm, I usually watch
the news right now.
Really?
I like Seinfeld.
Guess we'll just
have to take turns.
Am I in your chair?
Oh, sorry about that.
I'll be done in a jiffy.
Ri, r-i?
Yep, look it up.

What the hell does that mean?
Are you challenging?
Never mind.
Ah, my turn.
S-l-i-t.
Slit, I guess we
know that means huh?
Any new bed requests?
Not yet.
Hmm, too bad.
Indeed.
Always nice to meet new people.
Ah, got one.
I got one!
Oh...
Yes.
Nicely done, love.
Hello?
Hello ma'am,
is this Marion Rogers?
Yes, it sure is.
What can I do for you?
Ma'am my name is
boarstag, I'm investigating
the whereabouts
of Linda steiner.
Hello ma'am?
Oh, I'm sorry, I was
just thinking of your name.
How do you spell that?
B-o-a-r-s-t-a-g.
It's Lithuanian.
Why isn't that interesting,
I've never heard a name
like that before, it's...
yes ma'am, it's unusual.
Now about miss steiner.
Oh, I'm so sorry, I
drifted there a bit.
Happens when you're
my age, you know.
Yes ma'am, I understand
she and her husband
visited you.

Yes, they did.
Quite some time ago now.
Late may perhaps?
That sounds about right.
And you say this
woman is missing?
Yes ma'am.
Since shortly after
her visit with you.
Well, I'm very
sorry to hear that.
I sure hope you find her.
Thank you ma'am.
Ma'am would you mind if come by
and talk to you about this?
Stop by, my house?
Yes, ma'am, I could
be there in an hour
if that suits.
An hour?
I'll be there in an hour.
He's looking for Linda.
Ladies, I'm lavrans boarstag.
Thank you ma'am.
That was very tasty.
Oh, you can call me Marion.
So, the steiners
found you on uh,
now what did you
call that site again?
Myfreebed.Com.
That's an interesting idea.
Do you get many visitors
from that site to you?
Oh, not that many.
We're kind of out of the way.
Hmm...
So the steiners found
you through this site,
and then what happened?
Well, they arrived
a bit late one night.
We had a nice chat, and they
left pretty early the next day.

Sweet couple.
They said they were headed west.
L.A. I think.
Interesting.
Why is that?
Well that doesn't jive with
what they told their friends.
Really?
Really.
Told them they were
heading out to Texas.
Miss steiner had a job
interview out there.
Maybe a change of plans.
They did seem kind of flighty,
if you know what I mean.
Perhaps.
So you haven't seen
either of the steiners
since they left your place?
After one night?
No.
I see.
Hey ma'am is that
your garage out back?
I asked miss Rogers.
Yes.
That buick park Avenue,
Virginia vanity plate "de
menos", is that your car?
You know it's not.
It belongs to the steiners.
My gosh.
They leave here walking?
Of course not,
they took the bus.
They left the car behind?
Do you find that unusual?
They were an unusual couple.
So you say.
Well.
I'll be needing to
look at the car.
Oh, one more thing.

Mr. steiner.
What about him?
He does it consulting, so
he's on his computer a lot.
So?
His e-mail address
and his ip headers
come back to this area.
Yesterday.
Ladies.
Ted steiner's still here.
Of course not, we
told you they left.
Yes ma'am, I know.
Well, mind if I
have a look around?
I don't think
that's gonna be ne...
I can do it now, or I can
come back with the police.
But that's your choice.
Of course, we have
nothing to hide.
Your room upstairs?
No.
More private down
there I suppose.
Of course, be my guest.
I'll stay up here
if you don't mind.
Your room?
May I?
Everybody needs a hobby.
Mr. steiner I presume?
Owh!
You needed a knife.
Bastard kicked me.
Let me guess.
You showed him old home movies?
That's when everything changed.
Is that enough?
I don't know, I hope so.
It depends on who
he might have told.

Did you check his phone?
You know I did, you saw me.
I saw you look at
it, did you check it?
Do you wanna do it next time?
No, I'm just saying
we have to be thorough.
Oh, yes, thorough.
Who forgot to take
care of their car?
Or mask their ip address?
Who was that?
You're right.
I'm sorry.
What about her?
What about her?
She knows.
No shit she knows, so what?
She can turn us in.
If she told, she'd fry too.
They actually use the death
penalty in this state, remember?
We just need to lay low
and stay off myfreebed.
It will all blow over
if we play it cool.
You okay with that?
Good.
You've reached
the Rogers residence,
we can't take your
call right now,
but please leave
your name and number
at the tone and we
will get back to you
as soon as we can, thanks.
If you're like
me, you hate telemarketers,
but hang on, because
what I have to say...
He's right, I
hate telemarketers.
It's a fine day.

Let's take a walk.
Shall we?
This town is lovely
in the summertime.
We should do this more
often, it really...
you need to do
something about Ted.
What do you mean?
He's not handling this well.
He's a man, he's weak.
Women are always
stronger, right?
I'm not sure
if I know what you mean.
He puts us at risk.
I...
I don't think I can do that.
Of course you can dear.
Beautiful, don't you just
love red roses in bloom.
Nice walk?
Lovely.
Would you be a dear and
get me some lemonade?
Hot outside.
With ice.
My pleasure.
Did you have a nice day?
Fine.
Kinda strange, her
wanting to take a walk, huh?
What did you two talk about?
Flowers.
The weather.
Current events.
I'm gonna go to sleep.
What are you doing down here?
This is my house.
What are you doing here?
I wan...
we're just cleaning up a bit.
Long overdue, really.
That's mine.

Oh, you better take it then.
Ted, we're having lunch outside.
I'll be right out.
All right, let's eat.
What's going on?
We de...
let me, dear.
Have a seat.
We think it's best
that you leave.
What?
We?
Do you agree with this?
She's upset enough,
don't make it worse.
She's upset?
Things change,
we have to adjust.
Adjust, by me leaving?
I don't think so.
It's best if you leave
as soon as possible.
You don't understand.
I'm not going anywhere.
I thought you might say that.
Look at it this way.
If you don't go, we'll
pin it all on you.
After all it's your
wife and your car.
You had motive, and ability.
I'm just a little old lady.
Who do you think
they'll believe?
I'm sorry.
I love you.
I love you.
I'm not going anywhere.
I know a thing or two, too.
We'll all fry together.
Morning.
Hey, I'm thinking about
going into town later.
Does anybody need anything?

Nothing for me.

Marion!

Call 911.

Call 911!

I don't know what happened.

I thought we solved
this problem before.

Oh Sam.

Don't you "oh Sam" me.

You gotta be careful with
these pills you're taking.

They get mixed,
big time bad news.

I've you known you
since were a little girl,
don't you worry about me.

And don't even think about
taking me to the hospital.

I'm not going anywhere.

I still think you should've
gone to the hospital.

For observation, like Sam said.

I can observe myself just fine.

And I have you to
help me, right?

Of course.

He did this.

No, I don't believe it.

It's easy to confuse your
pills, you put your...

no, no, it was him.

I remember thinking that
my pillbox was moved,
but I took the pills anyway.

That's crazy.

Killing your wife for a
woman you just met, is crazy.

Him trying to kill
me makes sense.

Ted and I are in love.

Seriously, your
pillbox was moved?

You're jumping at shadows.

You'll have to kill him.

It's the only way out.
Now that is getting up.
Hey, looks like
you're feeling better.
In that case it
is a fine morning.
So, who's hungry?
I know I am.
Me too, I could eat a horse.
Must be all the exercise.
Okay, I'm on it.
Bacon and eggs, all around.
You're not hungry?
Are you feeling okay?
I feel fine.
Are you gonna eat that?
Yes, I am.
Just checking.
Going to bed?
Everything is gonna be fine.
You'll see.
I wish I could be so sure.
Everything will be
better in the morning.
Sleep well.
You too.
Hey boy.
You thirsty?
Not yet, but I will be.
This is all for
the best, my love.
Calmly, please.
It will all be over soon.
Lay back, sweetheart.