

# nobody's here

*Diayn Day*

*Glendale Community College*

*Second Place, One-Act Play*

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CHARACTERS: PAM, Administrative Assistant  
MINNIE, New Assistant  
KELLI, Word Processor  
INTERCOM WOMAN, Disembodied Voice  
GINA, Data Entry  
FRAN, Office Supervisor  
ELIZABETH, Senior Secretary  
MITZI, Secretary  
CINDY, A granddaughter

TIME: Morning, summer.

SETTING: A modem office.

AT OPENING: Everyone's in her place.

MITZI: *Hey! Guys!* What's Jackie Wilson's nickname?

THE OTHERS: WHO?

MITZI: JACKIE WILSON. Rock-and-roll legend. What's his nickname? Don't you guys ever listen to fossil rock?

INTERCOM WOMAN: HE'S DEAD.

MITZI: I know he's dead! I need his nickname, not his autograph.

INTERCOM WOMAN: GONER?

MITZI: He went broke. That's all I remember. I need it for a contest.  
*Anybody!*

INTERCOM WOMAN: SPENDTHRIFT?

GINA: Are we bugged? How's that woman hearing us?

KELLI: Let's spike her coffee. Pam! Grab a brewski!

PAM: We chugged 'em all. Use Liquid Paper. Tell her it's fat-free Coffeemate.

MITZI: *Hey!* Remember me? *What's Jackie Wilson's nickname?*

ELIZABETH: Serious doughnut withdrawal here, people. Where's Mack and the sticky buns?

GINA: His power's off. Prime-Rib ate the bill again.

PAM: Remember the day Mack slammed the door on his nose—and then claimed a work injury because he was dodging the boss? Ten-to-one he's out for indisposed electricity.

ELIZABETH: *What?* You can't be serious! Cindy'll have to make the doughnut run. CI-I-INDY!

GINA: He's been lighting the house with old birthday-cake candles.

PAM: His stash must be *huge* by now. Feed me another line.

KELLI: What's cuter than Prime-Rib on a cake?

PAM: Prime-rib on a plate with cheese-stuffed potatoes.

KELLI: Cow products give me the runs. How about blueberry dumplings?

MITZI: Feed me.

PAM: This half-assed report's in limbo with Mack out. Where's the shredder?

ELIZABETH: CINDY! Are you free?

INTERCOM WOMAN: NO, BUT SHE'S REASONABLE.

GINA: Mack and the poodle chained themselves to the A/C at the Restwell. They're not budging 'till winter.

CINDY: Prime-Rib? When'd he call?

ELIZABETH: He didn't, dear. The puppy can't use the phone anymore. Mack clipped his toenails after that incident with 911. Can you get doughnuts?

CINDY: Prime-Rib doesn't live with Mack. He lives with his mom now.

PAM: Beanee-Weenee?

MITZI: Toss me three or four. I'm starving! I have my own can opener.

KELLI: *Bad Perm at My Doorstep*: The heart-wrenching saga of an abandoned poodle. It's a script! *It's an Oscar!* I'd better download my speech.

PAM: Kelli's in La-La Land and Mack's at the Tumble Inn with Bambi Bow-Wow. All alo-o-one am I...

GINA: Mack hits me up for dog food. How d'you suppose he's paying for...what? *Bambi!*

INTERCOM WOMAN: FREQUENT FLIER MILES.

GINA: *WHAT?*

PAM: Your sidekick's legendary in the get-a-room biz, Gina dear. He runs through puppies like a pet store. No-tells give him discounts from Alaska to Zanzibar and throw in kibble from gratitude. *Surprise!*

GINA: Mack? My...*OUR* Mack? Impossible!

PAM: A-a-and. . . h-e-e-e's. . . *OUT!*

GINA: Why haven't I heard about this before?

PAM: Beats the heck outta me. It wouldn't be that little motto on your desk, "Sin today, Hell to pay."

GINA: That hypocrite'll be fanny-deep in brimstone if he's picking up *puppies* with my grandmother's gold-leaf Bible!

CINDY: Does Mack raise foster pets? What's Zanzibar?

PAM: Pammy want crib. Pammy thirsty, want Scotch. Throw in a Prozac.

ELIZABETH: Zanzibar is a Hope-and-Crosby road picture, Cindy.

CINDY: Hope. . .what?

ELIZABETH: Ladies! Here's a birth announcement from Fred's ex-assistant for...Aurora Livonia...Giselle...Bell...Birnbaum...Cleveland. Mercy! Whatever was going through her mother's mind?

INTERCOM WOMAN: ANESTHESIA?

GINA: Is this company a hideout for ex-comics? Liz! Who dug up the Pam-clone?

INTERCOM WOMAN: THEY HELD AUDITIONS.

ELIZABETH: She's an Armed Forces veteran. *Show some respect!*

GINA: Absolutely! American soldiers deserve our thanks and support always—no matter who they are. Where was she? The Gulf? Vietnam?

PAM: Gettysburg?

INTERCOM WOMAN: I HEARD THAT.

PAM: Damn! There's gotta be a bug in here. Oh no! I feel a war surplus joke building up. *It's breaking loose! HE-ELP ME-E-E.*

ELIZABETH: Thank you, Pam. Moving on. How was class, Kelli?

KELLI: I don't know. I got there too early.

INTERCOM WOMAN: HOW EARLY WERE YOU?

KELLI: TWO WEEKS.

GINA: Don't humor her. She'll never stop.

INTERCOM WOMAN: ASK FOR EXTRA CREDIT.

PAM: Is she still here? I thought we poisoned her.

GINA: Run to the store and get Liquid Paper. I'll give you money.

ELIZABETH: Get bear claws! Get Slim-Fast.

KELLI: I stuffed myself into a desk that was *three...times...too...small*. Chubby people are gaining the majority, pun *not* intended. It's time we make our voices heard! Carbs rule!

ELIZABETH: Cancel the bear claws.

KELLI: That piece of junk cut off my circulation. I was trapped *twenty minutes* before I realized nobody else was in the room, not even the professor.

PAM: Kell? Bi-fo-cals.

FRAN: (*Enters with MINNIE*) Good morning, people. Meet Minnie Strugg, Fred's new assistant. You'll find Minnie quite an interesting person.

MINNIE: Hello all. I am Minnie Strugg. I will say "God bless you" when you sneeze only if I like you. In parting, let me say that enough is as good as a feast and never lift the brush-hog off your tractor.

*(They exit)*

PAM: Is Fred playing with his chemistry set again? What the hell was that?

KELLI: Fat jokes.

PAM: That woman looks like the eye doctor who breathed martinis in my face.

GINA: That's a doctor Pam misses.

MITZI: *HEY!* I still need food...*and* Jackie Wilson's nickname. *Am I invisible around here?*

KELLI: A teaching assistant popped in and said the prof's old cat died and class was scrubbed.

MITZI: Nuts.

ELIZABETH: Thanks, Mitzi. Cindy! Get bear claws with nuts.

GINA: Old cat. What a terrible thing to call his wife.

KELLI: He's a widower.

PAM: I imagine he is, if the old cat's dead.

KELLI: No! No! His actual *feline* died. Maybe I can squeeze a couple of brownie points out of the old guy if I get a sympathy card for the cat.

MITZI: I thought the cat died.

KELLI: Not for the cat. For the *professor!* It's pointless talking to you people.

ELIZABETH: History teachers have ice water for blood.

KELLI: Then why was he out? He's never out.

INTERCOM WOMAN: VIAGRA.

KELLI: He's seventy-five years old!

INTERCOM WOMAN: AND A FULL-MASTED SCHOONER IN TWO HOURS! HOIST THE MAINSAIL, MATEY! UP, UP AND AWAY!

KELLI: She's signaling the mother ship for more hallucinogens.

GINA: Earth's full, go home! That's from my bumper sticker.

MITZI: Do space aliens do drugs?

PAM: They might if they're in the Merchant Marines. *That's it!*

MITZI: Phone NASA and tell 'em our Martian's a junky?

PAM: She said the "V" word. We'll complain. Say she insulted our delicate sensibilities with the "V" word.

GINA: Nobody in this entire company believes you have sensibilities, Pam. You're better off suing her for bad jokes.

INTERCOM WOMAN: I HEARD THAT.

ELIZABETH: (*Hangs up phone*) Pam, Mack's toilet stopped flushing. He forgot to notify us earlier.

PAM: This is a great shock, Elizabeth. All I can say is well-done, good and faithful servant. I felt very close to Mack's toilet. I think we all did. Remember the picnic at Mack's place when the potato salad gave us food poisoning?

ELIZABETH: PAM!

PAM: WHAT?

ELIZABETH: He may not be in tomorrow either. He'll have to call a plumber.

PAM: *WHAT?* Dammit! This blasted report's due and I *won't* be responsible. I'm sick of waiting on idiots and their housing problems to get my work done! WHERE'S THAT SHREDDER?

MITZI: My toilet stopped flushing last year. My apartment was so dirty I was embarrassed to let the plumber in.

PAM: How many months has it been since you flushed your toilet?

MITZI: You're funny. I filled a bucket with water and poured the water in the bowl. It worked perfectly.

KELLI: (*Hangs up phone*) GIRLS! EVERYBODY! LISTEN! Cops grabbed Lori's husband for spouse abuse. They say he patted her. Lori says he didn't. A nurse at the hospital ratted on him.

GINA: No!

ELIZABETH: She was in the hospital?

PAM: Yummy! Give!

KELLI: She was walking her dad's Great Dane and the big bruiser pulled her off her feet—splat—face first onto the sidewalk.

ELIZABETH: Big bruiser meaning...

INTERCOM WOMAN: BIG *BOWSER*.

PAM: Ignore her. She's from a galaxy far, far away and we're her experiments.

KELLI: Lori says Jack's innocent, but I don't buy it. Those two don't even pretend to like each other anymore. The whole thing sounds fishy.

GINA: I have church with *those two* every week. Jack teaches Sunday school, every week! We've spent hours in mission work. Jack would *never* do anything to hurt Lori.

ELIZABETH: An outsider can't know what happens in a marriage, Gina, no matter how much you like the couple.

MITZI: You can never tell about married people.

GINA: If Lori says she tripped over a dog or fell off a church steeple, I say give Jack the benefit of the doubt. *Some* men deserve it.

PAM: *(Jumps up)* I say, grill Lori! Who's with me?

GINA: *Pam! Sit down!* It's none of your business! You throw around a bunch of idiot wisecracks and think you're entitled to say any damned offensive thing you please about anybody. I'm fed up!

PAM: *(Sits)* Who died and made you God? I can see why you were married for six whole weeks, Gina. Your...holiness...sucked up the oxygen and the poor guy suffocated.

MITZI: Is the Pope here? Can we get him?

GINA: Pam, have you ever met God?

PAM: We've bumped into each other. On the road to Damascus. Impressed?

MITZI: /sure am. Does he need a secretary?

GINA: Good road, Pam. Lots of potential for the right person. You should've stayed for a chat. Why didn't you? Couldn't look him in the face? Scared?

PAM: We tossed the ball around, Gina. Turns out we have mutual friends. Funny *your* name never came up, seein's how you two are so tight and all.

GINA: Obviously he was too busy sharpening his pitchfork!

PAM: *Just a damn minute!*

ELIZABETH: STOP THE MADNESS!  
*(Everyone freezes)*

GINA: Liz? Are you okay? Pam and I were just passing time till lunch. Right, Pam?

PAM: *(Silence)*

ELIZABETH: Cubicles were invented for women like you. Catheters are the last straw. I've had enough.

MITZI: You have catheters?

GINA: Should we call someone?

ELIZABETH: Noisy arguments that vaguely involve the Almighty are one thing. I don't even mind discussing the sex habits of baboons. But I draw the line at catheters. They make me twitch. Mitzi, *please* turn that down.

MITZI: National Public Radio. Sorry.

KELLI: Show off.

GINA: Now, girls, birds in their little nests agree.

KELLI: Louisa Alcott, nineteenth-century novelist. Her Transcendentalist father associated with Ralph...

MITZI: Show off. That wasn't even Alcott's line. She took it from a poem. Furthermore, *the human body is a dust magnet!*

KELLI: One-upper. *What?*

MITZI: You're not the only person with an education...and which one of us spends her *entire* life bragging about her massive IQ?

KELLI: I would guess...not *you*.

MITZI: That's right. Not *me*. OH! *Why you...!*

PAM: FIGHT! FIGHT! Ringside seats, ladies and gents. I'm taking bets. Five-to-one on...

ELIZABETH: CHILDREN!

GINA: Speaking of cats...

PAM: Shut my mouth and call me a cab. Gina has a sense of humor. Who'd have guessed?

GINA: I mean the kind I like, Pam.

PAM: Ouch. We've been insulted.

KELLI: /haven't been.

GINA: A little cat meowed outside my door this morning and wouldn't stop, so I let her in and gave her some food and she ran all over the house like she lost something. It was weird.

MITZI: Reincarnation. Are you close to any dead people?

GINA: She pooped on the carpet.

MITZI: Any dead people with a grudge?

GINA: In front of the Bible stand!

PAM: A sarcastic cat, an atheist, a blasphemer, a heretic.

GINA: I never saw that cat before. Why'd she pick *my* house?

PAM: If you don't flush for several months, the odor gets out. It's an advertisement. It's like one of those welcome mats. "My Outhouse is Your Outhouse."

GINA: Pam?

PAM: Calling all cats! Giant litter box! Pick your spot! Bring the gang! Free snacks! Drop by at your leisure for moments you'll treasure.

GINA: PAM!

PAM: WHAT?

GINA: That was Mitzi.

MITZI: I can't live anything down.

KELLI: Loose lips sink ships. Intercom Woman taught me that.

GINA: I flush several times a day. I even flush by remote control.

PAM: Gina's mind was a terrible thing to lose.

ELIZABETH: I had a doctor who hated cats. He said they were the dirtiest animals on earth. He didn't like Frenchmen either.

KELLI: It's fashionable now and then not to like Frenchmen. Pam! Do you like cats?

PAM: Hate 'em. Filthy vermin.

KELLI: What do you think about the French?

PAM: DUMP THE MUSTARD! VAPORIZE THE FRIES! MELT MISS LIBERTY! BURN THE TOAST! SMASH...

KELLI: See? Soul mates. Introduce Pam to your doctor, Liz. They're perfect for each other. They hate everything.

ELIZABETH: He died a month after turning ninety-one.

GINA: Dig him up. Pam won't notice. She likes men she doesn't have to kill first. Pam! What's that quote you always mess up?

PAM: Alice Roosevelt's? My hero. She was at a party one night and said "If anybody doesn't have anything nice or something good to say about anybody or if they just want to be bitchy, they can come over here by me and take a load off."

KELLI: Said all that, did she?

PAM: I *love* that woman.

KELLI: Hitting the bottle pretty hard that night, was she? A stewed-to-the-gills kind of gal?

PAM: I may not have the words exactly right, but the flavor comes through loud and clear.

INTERCOM WOMAN: GIN AND TONIC. HOLD THE TONIC.

PAM: Loud and clear like that. We can breathe a sigh of relief, folks. Intercom Woman has returned safely from her galaxy.

CINDY: *(Back with doughnuts)* Judge Judy said beauty fades but dumb lasts forever.

PAM: Cindy! My child! I'm so happy. I knew one day you'd turn into me.

ELIZABETH: *(Takes doughnuts)* Cindy! Thank you from the bottom of my ravenous ulcer. Ah, bear claw. Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

KELLI: Liz? What kind of doctor was that old fellow?

ELIZABETH: Before I forget, ladies, we'll have to buy our own pencils for a while. The company's tightening our belts.

PAM: I've heard of pencils, but I've never used one. Weren't they invented for slow learners?

KELLI: *(To GINA)* Let's find a church steeple and push her off.

MITZI: Sharpening pencils is a metaphor for life.

PAM: So's collecting the garbage.

MITZI: I'm *serious*. A pencil...

KELLI: Liz? What've you got against history teachers? Don't tell me somebody hit on you.

MITZI: *HEY! I'm explaining something...*

ELIZABETH: I could handle a pass. *My* dimwitted teacher brought in a tape of Mark Twain's daughter gurgling down the drain.

KELLI: Run through that slo-o-wly for us slow learners?

MITZI: THE HUMAN BOOMBOX POUNDS THE BEAT. *(The others look at her)* Nothing personal.

ELIZABETH: Mark Twain's daughter drowned in the bath.

KELLI: That rings a distant bell.

MITZI: The bong of forty million classes.

ELIZABETH: This so-called comedy tape had the sound of the daughter going down the drain with the water. Glub-glub. It was repulsive.

PAM: Ladies and gents! Are you bored with tired old saws like "throwing the baby out with the bath water"? Create literal interpretations with modern sound effects. Send for your free catalog.

GINA: Did you complain?

ELIZABETH: I was too young. I still regret not telling him he was first cousin to a drunken jackass.

GINA: Most people wouldn't say anything—especially that—no matter how old they were.

MITZI: Sure. I didn't say anything to the psychic.

PAM: Deep. Were you channeling any dead person we know?

MITZI: Maybe. Throw out a few names. I had a reading at a psychic's house. For *fun*. She went into a trance and got called to the kitchen.

PAM: Fast. I like that in a witch. Was the kitchen apparition a regular at the House of Psychics? Did it come for lunch? Did the Phantom of the Fridge call out in a high, wavery voice, fe-e-ed me-e-e or I will e-e-eat you-u-u. Was a restaurant attached? Was the pantry poltergeist part owner?

MITZI: It was one of her alive, in-person kids. If you're going to be ridiculous...

PAM: Me? Heaven forbid.

MITZI: She came back a few minutes later like nothing happened.

PAM: Was it really her? Did she have a glassy-eyed, possessed look? Did you get the cold, creepy feeling you were peering into the face of evil?

MITZI: Maybe. She looked a little like you, Pam. She shook herself awake and asked for money.

PAM: And you fell for it?

MITZI: I paid her and didn't say anything. I was there for *fun*, Pam, *clear*? She's not in the phone book anymore.

PAM: She wasn't fast enough with lunch. A ghost with low blood sugar is not a ghost to fool with.

MITZI: Fine.

PAM: She beamed to the other realm to avoid creditors. She's on the run from evil spirits. The Force dumped her. Karma's fiery breath is singeing her neck hairs. She's waiting to reincarnate into Donald...

MITZI: *PA-A-AM.*

PAM: ...Duck.

GINA: Talking to you is like walking over broken glass with open sores on your bare feet.

PAM: I was born to serve.

ELIZABETH: A housefly's dive-bombing my bear claw. Nasty insect. Any bug spray around here? (*Phone rings*) Mr. Ellison? One moment, sir. Girls! HUSH! It's our CEO and Cindy's grandpa. Sir? I must tell you the cutest thing Cindy said: "What's Hope and Crosby?" Isn't that ador...I felt a bit mature, myself, but what can you do? Yes, management is attending the Hilton conference, but Mr. Andrews left the accounts for you. Certainly, sir. How droll. You're more than welcome to "snoop" in any office you wish. You have the complete run of the building, Mr. Ellison. Nobody's here.

END