

SPANNER IN HER POCKET

A Classroom Play

by Brian McGuire

SchoolPlay Productions Ltd

SPANNER IN HER POCKET,
SANDGRAN
and
PUPPETS

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CAST

- Joanne** *Young woman, about twenty-seven. She is dressed in overalls. Spanners stick out of her top pocket.*
- Bill** *Middle aged man, traditional in dress.*
- Paul** *Young man, aged about thirty. A nurse but his clothes do not indicate this.*
- Pam** *Young woman, early twenties, eight month pregnant.*

PRODUCTION NOTES

The play should be presented end on. The actors form a queue at a bus stop. A bus stop is all that is required for the set.

Close lighting is recommended. If possible use a blue flashing light when the ambulance arrives. The lights fade slowly at the end of the play.

There can be background noises of traffic. The main traffic sounds are the arrival and departure of the ambulance and the bus plus the ambulance's siren. Perhaps a piece of lively music can be used at the beginning and end of the play.

B. McG.

SPANNER IN HER POCKET

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(BILL arrives at the bus stop. JOANNE arrives immediately after. There is an oily smudge on her face. She works as a garage mechanic and is dressed appropriately. Small spanners are actually sticking out of her top pocket. She waits, looks at her watch then looks to the right to see if the bus is coming. BILL glances at JOANNE and raises his eyebrows. They both look at their watches and look to the right to see if the bus is coming. JOANNE faces downstage again, BILL continues to look at JOANNE. JOANNE senses this and looks at BILL).

Joanne: Is there a problem?

Bill: *(Facing downstage).* No.

(JOANNE takes out a compact case, looks in the mirror, realises there is a smudge on her face, takes out a tissue and removes the smudge).

Joanne: My face was dirty, wasn't it?

Bill: Mm.

(BILL steals a disapproving glance again. JOANNE is aware of this. She faces slightly to the right. BILL stares at her and shakes his head. He continues to stare. JOANNE quickly turns and stares back).

Joanne: Is there something wrong?

Bill: I'm looking at your clothes.

Joanne: I know I'm a mess. I've come straight from work.

(Enter PAUL, a young man of similar age to JOANNE. He stands next to BILL).

Bill: What's your job, then?

Joanne: Garage mechanic.

(BILL shakes his head).

Bill: *(To PAUL).* She's a mechanic.

(PAUL nods).

Bill: A garage mechanic. (*He shakes his head again*). I wouldn't let her touch my car.

Joanne: That's okay with me.

Bill: It's not right is it? Garage mechanic is man's job.

Joanne: And what is my job, then?

Bill: To stay at home and look after your kids. That's what my wife does.

Joanne: And that's what my husband does.

Bill: He can't be much of a man. Can't he find a job?

Joanne: He'll be going back to work in September when Rebecca starts school.

Bill: How long has he been looking after her?

Joanne: Four years.

Bill: I've never heard of anything so stupid. Well, I suppose it isn't any of my business.

Joanne: You're right, it really isn't.

Bill: (*To PAUL*). That's the trouble with society today. Women don't know their place. They'll be wanting to work on building sites next.

(PAUL turns away).

Bill: It's not as if they've got the strength, is it? Well, they haven't, have they? They want us to open doors for them. I mean you can't have everything, can you? (*Still trying to engage PAUL*). I'm right, aren't I? You know I am. (*He shrugs and addresses JOANNE*). If you're a garage mechanic, where's your car then?

Joanne: It was in an accident last Saturday.

Bill: (*To PAUL*). Woman driver.

Joanne: A man ran into the back of me.

Bill: But whose fault was it?

Joanne: It wasn't mine and it isn't your business.

Bill: What does your husband really think about you?

Joanne: He's happy and unlike you he's not a short-sighted arrogant pain in the backside. Are there any more questions, are there any more comments, is there anything else you want to say? If you're finished I would like to stand without listening to your chauvinistic comments and wait for the bus. Now, it's not sexist to wait for a bus, is it?

Bill: (*To PAUL*). She's got some chip on her shoulder, hasn't she?

(PAUL shakes his head. PAM arrives. She is pregnant. PAUL and PAM

recognise each other).

Pam: Hello.

Paul: Hello there. Was everything all right today?

Pam: Doctor Hardy said it might be earlier than I expect. Have I missed the 357?

Bill: It's always late. I don't know why I'm here on time. It means I'm standing about. They don't care if they waste people's time.

Pam: *(Gently patting her stomach).* As long as this isn't late.

Bill: They should send an inspector round. Find out which buses are late, change the times; then we'll all know where we are. *(To PAUL).* Do you get this bus regularly?

Paul: When I work the day shift.

Bill: What time do you start?

Paul: Six o'clock.

Bill: And what time do you finish?

Joanne: He'll want to know your life story.

Paul: About four.

Bill: Those hours sound like a good day's work. *(To JOANNE).* That's what your husband should be doing.

Joanne: And I should be in the house making his tea. Like your wife?

Bill: She used to.

Joanne: *(Thinking that BILL'S wife has died).* I'm sorry.

Bill: She left me.

Joanne: Oh, what a surprise!

Pam: Oh!

Bill: What?

Pam: Oh, ah!

Paul: Are you all right? You should be sitting down.

Bill: Can anyone change a pound coin? They only complain if you don't have the right money, don't they?

Joanne: Especially if they're a woman driver.

Bill: Well you said it, not me.

Joanne: It was a joke.

Bill: Oh.

Pam: Oh!

Bill: Someone should take her to the hospital.

Paul: I'll take you.

Bill: *(Pointing to JOANNE).* It would be better if she did.

Paul: And why would that be better?

Bill: Well, she's a woman. She's been pregnant herself. She understands better

than you

Paul: I'm a state registered nurse.

Bill: Well, I've heard it all today, a female garage mechanic and a male nurse. I don't know what the world's coming to. I didn't think you looked soft either.

(BILL is startled when suddenly PAUL turns and pushes him).

Paul: I'm not.

(BILL drops his coin).

Bill: Look what you've done! I'm standing here minding my own business then you knock my bus fare out of my hand. *(He stoops to pick it up).*

Pam: Oh! Oh! I'm going dizzy. I need to sit down!

(JOANNE gives BILL a push. He falls on to his hands and knees. PAUL and JOANNE help PAM sit on BILL's back).

Paul: It's a good job you were there mate. You've saved a nasty accident. Well done. I'll get help.

(PAUL begins to exit).

Bill: What if the bus comes?

Paul: I won't be long.

(He exits).

Pam: I hope I'm not too heavy.

Joanne: Don't worry he's strong enough. He's a man. *(Tongue in cheek).* You're being very noble. You were in the right place at the right time. Now you're the man supporting the woman and child on your back.

Bill: And child?

Joanne: Don't worry, she hasn't given birth, yet.

Pam: Oh! Oh! I'm going to pass out.

Joanne: Hang on, the ambulance will be here in minutes.

Bill: I can't stand the weight any more.

Joanne: You're not standing. You're on all fours.

Bill: Like an animal.

Joanne: Yes, like an animal, groaning and grunting like a like a pig, a

chauvinistic pig.

Bill: This is ridiculous. You've no right to speak to me like this. You're making me feel a right idiot. I'm getting up.

(JOANNE gently pushes PAM'S shoulders. It is enough to prevent BILL from standing).

Bill: Oh!

Pam: Oh! Oh!

Bill: She's getting heavier.

Joanne: Breathe deeply.

Bill: That doesn't help.

Joanne: It's not you who's having the baby.

Bill: This will injure my back.

Joanne: You're going to be all right.

Pam: Oh! Oh! Ah! Ah!

Bill: I'm going to be off work. Can't you get her to stand up?

Pam: Oh! Oh! Oh! Please don't let him move, please! Oh! Oh! I appreciate what you're doing for me.

Joanne: It's the least I can do.

Bill: I think she's talking to me.

Paul: *(Rushing in)* It's on it's way!

Bill: *(Suddenly standing up).* What?

(PAUL catches PAM).

Joanne: *(To BILL).* Of all the idiotic things to do! *(Angry).* Couldn't you take the weight of a woman for a couple of minutes?

Bill: It's my back!

Paul: Let me get you to the other side of the road, it will be safer there.

(Helped by PAUL, PAM begins to waddle off).

Pam: I appreciate what you did for me. I must be heav..y..y..ah! Oh!

(The siren of the ambulance is heard and a blue light flashes. BILL and JOANNE watch the events on the other side of the road).

Bill: They're in the ambulance.

(BILL and JOANNE face downstage. JOANNE looks at her watch, then looks to her right to see if the bus is coming. She turns to look at BILL. She sneers. He does not notice. They both look at their watches, then look to the right to see if the bus is coming. BILL faces downstage again, JOANNE continues to look at BILL. BILL senses this and looks at JOANNE).

Bill: What's the problem?

Joanne: You moaned more than she did and she's about to give birth.

Bill: Here's the bus. *(Annoyed)*. Ah, look it's packed. *(Listening)*. What did the driver say?

Joanne: She said room for one only.

Bill: Then that's me, I was here first.

Joanne: *(Stepping towards the bus)*. Your bus fare is still on the pavement.

(BILL scrambles down to pick up his money, JOANNE exits, BILL steps towards the bus shouting).

Bill: That was my place! I was here first! I was the one who helped that pregnant woman! If I see you again you'll meet the nasty side of me! You women need to know your place. I was here first!

(As BILL rants the sound of the bus exiting is heard and the lights slowly fade).

CURTAIN