

# **THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS**

**By Carol Cornicelli**

**NAME:** Carol Cornicelli

**FROM:** Maplewood, NJ

**BIO:** Carol Cornicelli is an actress/singer/dancer who has also directed, choreographed, written and designed for The Strollers in Maplewood and other area companies, including Summit Playhouse. By day, she works for AARP (from home these days).

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## **What's keep her positive?**

Carol is looking forward to a COVID-controlled future when we can get back to live theater! In the meantime, she is writing and planning future productions.

**Yes, you can publish the above.**

## **CHARACTERS**

**(Can be of any race)**

MOMMA – A middle-aged woman from 50 to 70+ (depending on age of other actors). Lives alone in a country home.

DANNY – Age range 30-50. A trumpet player and actor living in a big city who primarily makes money playing band gigs.

DORY – Age range 25-50. Danny's younger sister. Married with kids and lives near Momma.

## **TIME**

Present day in the summer to early fall.

## **PLACE**

A country home. Region is the director's choice.

*It is dusk on a pleasant, breezy late summer-early fall evening. There is a full moon rising. The scene opens on the front porch of a cozy country home. The porch is covered, but open on the sides and there is a table and chairs on one side and other various homey touches. There is a screen door to the house with the interior door open to let in the breeze.*

*Off-stage, we hear a trumpet playing a couple lines from "That Old Devil Moon."*

*Momma comes out through the screen door.*

MOMMA: (To herself) Danny? (Louder) Danny?

*(We hear a little more of the song. Then DANNY appears from off-stage with trumpet in hand, his trumpet case and a duffle bag straps over his shoulder.)*

MOMMA: Danny, you rascal! Why didn't you call?

DANNY: Hey, Momma! I wanted to surprise you! *(They hug)* How ya doing' these days? How are those knees?

MOMMA: Oh, you know, same old, same old. Aging is not for the faint of heart!

DANNY: Yeah, I got my own aches and pains myself.

MOMMA: So how long are you here for?

DANNY: Just a couple days. I know, I should –

TOGETHER: - come again when I/you can stay longer.

MOMMA: Come in the house. I just baked a couple of fresh apples pies.

DANNY: Let's sit out here on the porch a while. It's a nice evening and the full moon is just coming up.

MOMMA: Okay, I'll bring out the pie and some lemonade.

DANNY: Why don't you sit. I can get it.

MOMMA: Don't be silly. I'm not that infirmed. You sit and watch the moon rise.

*(DANNY puts his bags down and sits wearily at the table looking out at the moon, his back to the door. A minute later, DORY sneaks through the screen door and up behind DANNY and puts her hands over his eyes.)*

DORY: *(In a fake low voice)* Guess who?

DANNY: I'd know that voice anywhere. Dory, what are you doing here? *(They hug)*

DORY: Me and the kids went apple picking today and brought over a bushel.

DANNY: Hence the "fresh apple pies."

DORY: If Momma knew you were coming, she would have baked a couple more.

DANNY: *(Patting his stomach)* Good thing I didn't call ahead. So where are the kids?

DORY: In the basement playing games. Poor things have to play old fashioned board games or real live ping pong since there's no computer or Xbox here.

DANNY: Hey, I could challenge them to a ping pong tournament. I'm still an excellent player.

DORY: And still an excellent trumpet player, I hear. Played any exciting gigs lately?

DANNY: Well, that's why I'm here. I have some news.

DORY: Oooh – do tell!

DANNY: Not yet. Let's get Momma out here and have some pie first.

DORY: Sounds mysterious. Let me go help Momma. I'll be right back. Don't disappear!

*(DORY goes into the house. DANNY puts his trumpet in the case. Then pulls out an envelope and looks at the document inside, shakes his head, and sets it aside. Then he pulls out a small Bluetooth speaker and syncs it with his smart phone.)*

*MOMMA and DORY come out of the house with trays of lemonade, glasses, pie, plates, utensils, etc., and sets everything out on the table.)*

MOMMA: At least there's a nice breeze. Should keep the mosquitoes at bay. *(To DANNY)* You know how they love you!

DANNY: Yeah, I'm to mosquitoes like honey is to a bear.

DORY: Or apple pie is to you!

MOMMA: So how are things in the big city? You playing enough to make ends meet?

DANNY: I'm hanging in there...

DORY: How about your acting – get any bites?

DANNY: I'm hanging in there!

MOMMA: You seeing anyone these days?

DANNY: Momma...

MOMMA: So why the surprise visit?

DANNY: Well, I have some news.

MOMMA: Don't keep us in suspense! Out with it!

DANNY: Well, let me set it up for you. *(He sets up the speaker and starts playing a soulful song that he recorded with a band he plays with.)*

DORY: Always gotta be dramatic...

DANNY: *(During the monologue, DANNY goes back and forth playing himself and the caller.)* So, I'm practicing my horn the other day when I get this phone call out of the blue. This woman asks for Daniel Baker. Yeah, you got him. I'm Danny. You're the trumpet player? Yeah, that's right. I hear you're also a pretty good actor. Yeah...and I can walk and chew gum at the same time, too. She laughs. My name is Carrie Mitchell. I'm a casting agent and I need someone for an indie film featuring a trumpet player. It's shooting in New Orleans for six months. Shooting starts in 2 weeks. You interested? Hell, yes, I'm interested! Do you need a reel – a video? I can send one if you give me your email address? That won't be necessary. The director asked for you specifically for this part. Really? Wow! Who's the director? Oh, you probably wouldn't know his name – Ben Rosen – but he saw you in a local production a while ago and kept you in mind for a project. I mean, this doesn't even happen in the movies! And get this, they're paying me \$100,000 for the film plus 5% of the profits! Of course, I went to the agent's office and met the director and producer and it's all legit! Look, here's the contract in black and white and signed in ink!

*(All hug and talk at once.)*

MOMMA & DORY: That's wonderful! That's great news! How exciting!  
Congratulations! I'm so happy for you!

DANNY: Can you believe it! I mean, can you believe it!

DORY: I think this calls for something stronger than lemonade! How about some sherry?

MOMMA: Or brandy!

DANNY: Or bourbon!

DORY: I'll bring 'em all out! (*She goes into the house with a tray.*)

DANNY: I keep waiting for the sky to fall. I mean this is...

MOMMA: Hush! Don't jinx it! Just be thankful that fate is smiling on you!

DANNY: I mean for this windfall to come to me at my age – it's amazing!

MOMMA: Well, you deserve it. You're a good person who's worked hard all his life – so why not now?

DORY: (*Returning with the tray of drinks.*) Okay, choose your libation and let's celebrate!

*(They all toast, drink, laugh, general joyous hubbub, and DANNY turns the music to a lively dance tune – again something that his band recorded – and they all start to dance on the porch. DANNY takes turns twirling MOMMA and DORY as they dance a couple minutes, then poop out and sit – either on the chairs or on the porch steps, etc.)*

DANNY: Wow – I'm beat... I've been so excited I barely slept the past three days.

MOMMA: Well, take your things into the guest bedroom and get settled. We can talk later.

DORY: Yeah, I need to get the kids home and Ray'll be wanting his apple pie.

DANNY: Okay, let me just take my stuff in, (*to DORY*) but don't leave before I can see the kids and say goodbye to you all. And I'll be here tomorrow – how about I make my famous pancake breakfast for everyone.

DORY: Sounds great! (*DANNY takes his trumpet and duffle bag into the house.*)

DORY: (*To MOMMA*) So.....he has no idea, does he?

MOMMA: And he's not going to, either! Don't you breathe a word! I don't want him finding out until the movie's out and his career is on its way.

DORY: Maybe not even then. I don't know how he'd feel about his momma giving him an advantage like that.

MOMMA: Well, in show biz, everyone needs a leg up to get ahead. And what else was I going to do with all that lottery money? You got the house and the car and the college funds for the kids. The least I could do was invest some money in a project that could help Danny with his career.

DORY: Good thing you could collect anonymously. In some states you have to collect in person and the whole world knows you won. Sounds dangerous to me.

MOMMA: Well, fate has smiled on all of us, so let's just be grateful and make the best of it. Cheers!

DORY: Bottoms up!

*(Music swells as light fade out.)*

**THE END (for now)**