

Hey Baby Baby, Sis Boom Bah
By Claudia I. Haas

CAST: 10-21 (7-12 f, 3-9m)

DANAE (f) college student, college student majoring in graphic arts

*ERIC (m) college student, street musician – any instrument

AUDREY (f) 13-14, middle school student, runs track

SYLVIA (f) 17-18, high school student, Audrey's sister

MAGICALA (f), ageless, timeless, a "Superwoman" devised by Audrey

CHORUS

2-8 males: Divide the lines according to how many you use. They are all ages.

Al

Bo

Carl

Don

Ed

Flip

Greg

Hans

3-8 females: Divide the lines according to how many you use. They are all ages. Kat and Mim need to be part of the three. (Mim has an opposing point of view and Kat has some scenes.)

Kat

Lee

Mim

Nan

Pearl

Rain

Sam

Trish

RUNNING TIME: 65 minutes with the music and dance.

SYNOPSIS: Audrey has turned thirteen and with her new grown-up age, she finds herself subject to catcalls and unwanted advances on the street. She slowly retreats into her room, drawing comics of a female superhero who will fight for her. The play chronicles seemingly "innocent" street harassment from the point of view of Audrey, Danae, Kat and Sylvia. There is a chorus whose lines are taken from various internet forums expressing some points of view regarding street harassment.

Hey Baby Baby, Sis Boom Bah

SCENE 1 - Monday

In the dark, we hear whistles and absurd “kissy” sounds. AT RISE, we are on an urban street. There is a small park. There may be a tree, a bench or two, some trash cans. Upstage there are two acting areas. One will be for AUDREY’S bedroom (a bed should be present) and the other will be for DANAE’S living area (you would just need a table or a desk and a chair or two). DANAE is walking home from class. She carries a portfolio and satchels of art supplies. We may see the chorus of men in shadows or just hear their voices.

Hey Baby Baby ...	AL
Watcha doin?	BO
Lookie here ...	CARL
Looking good...	DON
Looking fine ... mighty fine ...	ED
Smile, Baby!	FLIP
Over here, Honey!	GREG
Come on, Baby!	HANS
Sugar –	AL
Honey –	BO
Smile!	CARL

(DANAE turns and with her cell phone snaps some photos and exits. AUDREY enters. AUDREY is dressed in a running track outfit – covered from head to toe. The MEN step out of their shadows.)

BO

Whoa, look at that!

CARL

Sweet!

DON

Gonna smile for me, Little Pumpkin?

ED

Little beauty ... Little Punk ...

FLIP

Here's my number. Give me a call.

(As he approaches her, AUDREY runs off as fast as she can.)

FLIP

What's your problem?

(ERIC plays his street instrument. It can be a guitar, a violin, a sax, a flute, a harmonica. The music can be original, it can be the theme from "Peter and the Wolf," a pop song, a folk song – it should be slightly menacing. If you don't have a musician in the cast, some background music should be heard. The MEN do some movement – not outright dancing – but something slightly celebratory. A few members of the MALE CHORUS could also join in. They own the street and are watched by a few members of the FEMALE CHORUS who stay on the sidelines. As the music subsides, the chorus speaks.)

KAT

Do they really believe we want their number?

LEE

Trouble is – we have their number!

GREG

If you all get catcalls you should smile and be happy that men think you are worthy of the attention.

MIM

Just chill, people. Catcalls are normal, expected and appreciated!

HANS

I was catcalled by a woman's soccer team once. It was fantastic.

NAN

That's the trouble with turning the tables and catcalling men. They like it.

(The lights change to AUDREY'S home. AUDREY runs into her room and slams the door. SYLVIA follows her.)

SYLVIA

Hey Punk?

AUDREY

Don't call me that!

SYLVIA

Been calling you that since you were born.

AUDREY

Don't like it anymore.

SYLVIA

Audrey?

AUDREY

Just don't.

SYLVIA

Got it. Mom's at the hospital till eight. Want to go out for dinner or do take-out?

AUDREY

Take-out. And *you* do the take-out. Not wild about going out again. Have a lot of homework.

SYLVIA

The usual? Medium spicy?

AUDREY

Medium American spicy. Don't get me the medium Thai spicy!

SYLVIA

Take it easy. I'll get whatever you want. Track go okay?

AUDREY

Yeah.

Ready for the meet? SYLVIA

Yeah, sure. AUDREY

Don't feel like talking? SYLVIA

No. AUDREY

Got it. Back in a few minutes. SYLVIA

(SYLVIA exits. AUDREY crawls under her covers. She hears voices.)

Hey Baby Baby. AL

Hey Little Pumpkin. BO

(We see SYLVIA plugged into her i-Pod start to go down to the street. The MEN are back in the shadows. Voices are heard.)

Hey, Beautiful! GREG

Smile! HANS

(SYLVIA turns and goes another way. Music is heard as the lights fade to black.)

SCENE 2 - Tuesday

(AT RISE it is a day later. DANAE enters on the street. She carries her portfolio, posters and the like. The MEN will step out of shadows, trees, doorways.)

(Stepping from shadows) FLIP

Well, lookie here!

Good morning, Beautiful! GREG

FLIP

Smile for me, won't you? Bet you're prettier when you smile.

GREG

Hey Baby Baby –

(AUDREY starts to enter but stops when she sees the men. She is about to turn around but holds fast when she hears DANAE speak.)

DANAE

Not your baby, little man.

(DANAE whips out a poster stating exactly that: "NOT YOUR BABY.")

You're not likely to get a date on the street if you insist on calling out "hey baby, baby!"
We're not infants!

GREG

What's your problem? I just paid you a compliment! A Comp-li-ment!

DANAE

Mating calls from doorways are not compliments.

GREG

What?

DANAE

Your catcalls? Not appreciated. Go away before I call the cops.

GREG

For what? For calling you "beautiful?" You know you are. You know you got yourself all gussied up for compliments. You're asking to get hollered at!

DANAE

I ask nothing of you. I am simply trying to get from Point A to Point B. If you feel compelled to yell at me in the street because you have no self-control, "Good Morning" will do. Although silence is golden.

GREG

I know how you think. You probably count how many compliments you get walking down the street, Women do that.

DANAE

I count how many times I am harassed!

GREG

Hey! No harassment going on here! Just a man appreciating a beautiful woman.

(DANAE whips out her cellphone and starts recording.)

GREG

Whoa! Want me to pose?

(And he does some improbable muscle-man poses.)

DANAE

Keep talking. Tell me why you harass women on the street. I know I'm not going to change you – so educate me. Why do you do it?

GREG

No harassment is happening here! I told you, I'm here to compliment.

DANAE

It's not taken as a compliment.

GREG

Your problem not mine.

DANAE

You're my problem.

GREG

It's my God-given right. Handed down to me from the Bible.

DANAE

Are you serious?

GREG

What was there in the beginning? Adam. And Adam did fine for awhile. There were animals he could eat. Vegetables which were - you know just okay. He just had to stay away from the apple tree. Being that he was a meat-and-potatoes kind of guy, that wasn't a problem. But something was missing. He really wasn't one to tend the garden. Hunting was fun but a man needs more than that. A different kind of hunt. He couldn't figure out what he was missing so he finally had a talk with God about that. To fix the situation. And God understood. He surely did. Because lo and behold - God sent him Eve! To please him. You were created for pleasing.

DANAE

You believe that?

GREG

Can't argue with the Good Book. I was here first. And then you were created. For me. Don't argue with the Word of the Lord.

DANAE

Arguing with your interpretation of it.

GREG

I'm just a God-fearing man who appreciates the ladies. It's my birthright handed down from the heavens.

DANAE

I have to admit – that's the most creative justification I've heard so far. You like your little fairy tale, don't you?

GREG

Your problem is – you don't understand men. You need to find your understanding through the creator. Read the Good Book. Toss your feminist magazines. You'll see the light. You'll understand that when a man sees a beautiful woman – he naturally wants to acquire her. It's his nature.

DANAE

Acquire her? Like she was a piece of property? A city lot? A goat?

GREG

Now don't go twisting my words.

DANAE

I'm just repeating what I think I heard.

GREG

What's wrong with wanting a beautiful woman by your side?

DANAE

I don't think you want her by your side.

GREG

Your twisting words again. That's what you feminists do.

DANAE

I'm looking for understanding! I am looking to discover why I cannot walk down the block without men like you hollering at me!

FLIP

She going nutzoid on you?

GREG

Just holding a little Bible class. We're cool, right?

DANAE

(Putting cell phone away)

Yeah. Cool.

(EMBOLDENED, AUDREY starts to walk down the street.)

FLIP

Hey, Little Lady –

(AUDREY stops in her tracks. DANAE notices.)

DANAE

Want me to walk you home?

(AUDREY nods "Yes" and they exit together. GREG, HANS and ERIC appear.)

GREG

How insulting! A man saying you are beautiful!

HANS

So sorry for living! People complaining about natural, human nature!

GREG

It's the feminists that drive us to do it. They're trying to take away our masculinity!

ERIC

I'm thinking real men shouldn't be scared of real women. I can stand up for myself. I'll admit I can get full of myself. But I eventually recognize when I'm being obnoxious rather than manly. Can you?

HANS

Get real, man! Did you see her? If I strutted down the street like her, the cops would be all over me!

ERIC

I walk down the street like that all the time.

GREG

Eric! My man! Don't get all feminista on me!

ERIC

Just observing.

(ERIC goes back to his instrument. He may play a few notes as the lights dim on the street and rise on DANAЕ’S living room. She is by her computer. She has a poster with photos of her street harassers. She is on the phone.)

DANAЕ

Hey, Kat. It’s Danae. Got the last three up on the Hall of Shame. A lot of good it does us. The men don’t care that they’re on the website. I mean – they’re so proud – sometimes they pose! They consider it a badge of honor! And then they ask for the website address so they can see themselves there! I know – it’s supposed to be for us. To vent and empower us. But somehow the tables got turned and it seems to empower them.

Sometimes I wish I could go out and leave my body parts at home! Can we get a Star-Trek world where we’re “beamed” to places and don’t have to actually walk the streets?

Absolutely doing the March at the end of the week. Some high school students asked if they could join us – and I’m all for that. I know! It would be great! But I was told that the principal “encouraged” them to not participate – that they had better uses for their time. I know it’s ridiculous. The school board heard about some of our signs and thought their students were too “tender” to be involved in such things. Yeah – they’re real good about protecting their students from things they already know!

All right – have a ton of work to do so better get on it. It’ll be midterms before you know it. Don’t have one drawing ready for the art crawl. When you have new photos just send them. I’ll post them on the website as soon as possible. Sure. Take care.

(DANAЕ hangs up and props up her poster. All is quiet as she relives the voices.)

HANS

Hey Baby, Baby....

GREG

Looking good ...

HANS

Smile, Beautiful!

DANAЕ

JUST SHUT UP!

(Pause)

Wouldn’t it be nice ... if they did.

(The lights change to AUDREY'S room. She is drawing in a fairly large sketchbook.)

(SYLVIA enters. She wears her i-Pod.)

SYLVIA
You're home early.

AUDREY
Homework.

SYLVIA
Need help?

AUDREY
(Hugging her sketchbook to her.)

No, thank-you.
AUDREY
(Pause)

I know why you wear the i-Pod every time you go out.

SYLVIA
Like my music.

AUDREY
You don't want to hear the voices.

SYLVIA
Voices?

AUDREY
Yeah.

SYLVIA
Audrey?

(AUDREY shuts down and just sketches.)

SYLVIA
Got it. You want me to shut up. I have to get to study group. Mom's home at six. You good?

AUDREY

Yeah. Good.

(SYLVIA exits. AUDREY tears out a paper from her sketchbook and hangs it up. It is of a Superwoman – dressed simply in black pants and a black t-shirt. She is wearing a tiara. The following can be underscored with music or you could have a soundtrack of the catcaller’s whispers and kissy sounds.

MAGICALA appears in the shadows – wearing that same tiara. AUDREY steps away and doesn’t like the tiara. Too “princessy.” She rips out another piece of paper that has her Superwoman dressed in the same black but this time wearing a cape. MAGICALA quickly replaces her tiara with a cape. AUDREY again looks at it and is not pleased. Too stereotypical.

Finally, AUDREY tears out another sheet of paper and quickly makes some changes. This time her Superwoman is dressed as Rosie-the-Riveter.

MAGICALA quickly puts on a long-sleeved button down shirt and puts on a red bandana on her head. AUDREY steps away and smiles. She has her Superwoman – who is MAGICALA.)

AUDREY

You are Magicala. You are better than them. You can do anything. Anything! Understand?

(MAGICALA nods in agreement. AUDREY goes to MAGICALA who puts her arm around her as they watch the scene below.)

(SAM, TRISH, AL and BO enter.)

SAM

The first time I was groped, I was taking the bus home from school.

AL

If you dress like a slut, you get treated like a slut.

SAM

I was in my school uniform!

AL

Just saying – dress like a classy lady – get treated like a classy lady. And those school uniforms – way too sexy!

SAM

So, it was my fault for wearing a uniform and the school’s fault for making me wear a uniform. I get it! It’s everyone else’s fault – but not the “groper!”

TRISH

So, when I walked my dog last week and I was dressed in an oversized sweatshirt and sweatpants and this dude actually gets out of his car and hands me his phone number telling me to call him ... tell me again - how it was because of my suggestive outerwear?

BO

If it was me and I handed a girl my phone number – she would totally call. Girls go crazy for me.

TRISH

Zombie girls?

(THEY exit. AUDREY shows MAGICALA her comic strip.)

AUDREY

Can you help?

(MAGICALA nods and exits. MIM and PEARL walk down the street. They are watched by CARL and DON.)

CARL

Hey Baby, Baby –

DON

You two are a sight for sore eyes –

CARL

Beautiful – just beautiful.

DON

You know what I'd really like? I'd really like it if you smiled. You'd be even prettier if you smiled!

(And MIM flashes them a big, happy smile.)

CARL

Thanks, Baby.

PEARL

What did you do that for?

MIM

What's the harm? They told me I was beautiful. I like that.

PEARL

You're encouraging them!

MIM

To say nice things! What's wrong with them saying nice things?

PEARL

They want something.

MIM

Just chill, Pearl. Not all men have ulterior motives.

PEARL

They want something.

(MIM and PEARL exit. MAGICALA appears. SHE puts on a huge smile and walks the street. You can add the male chorus or just leave CARL and DON on the street. There should be a light change. MAGICALA is AUDREY'S character and this is AUDREY'S fantasy. AUDREY watches from afar.)

CARL

Hey Beautiful Baby

DON

Smile for me, won't ya?

MAGICALA

I'm nobody's Baby, little boy.

DON

Just asking for a smile – bet you're beautiful when you smile. Smile, Baby!

(At that, MAGICALA takes out a bottle of bubbles and waves the wand. The bubbles appear. Intrigued the MEN move closer to the bubbles and to MAGICALA. As they hit the bubbles they are frozen into various positions. MAGICALA calmly walks around them blowing or waving bubbles into their faces.)

MAGICALA

Now, why do you think you can catcall me?

CARL

(He can hardly believe this is coming out of him.)

I believe it cheers up women when I make them feel unsafe in a public space.

DON

I hope men treat my sister this way.

CARL

I'm a man so I cannot control what I say on the street.

DON

I like objectifying women.

MAGICALA

Thought so.

(And MAGICALA exits calmly waving her bubbles around. SHE looks at AUDREY who gives her the high-five or thank-you nod and they exit. The men are unfrozen at their exit.)

DON

Did something just happen?

CARL

Dunno.

DON

Feeling – weird. Was someone just here?

CARL

Can't remember. Think there was a chick here in spandex or something. Think she got her knickers in a twist cause you called out to her.

(MIM enters and listens.)

DON

This is retarded. A woman walks around in spandex type stuff and dude's holler! What's the problem?

CARL

It's freedom of speech, you know? Instead of trying to change *everyone else in the world* – why don't women change their attitude? They need to learn to not be affected by what others say.

DON

Seems to me it's the fat, ugly, entitled, feminist women who are upset about being objectified by men! Pretty women like it.

MIM

I like being catcalled. I smile and go on with my day. I mean seriously – there are a lot worse problems in the world. People go hungry. People live in war-zones. If you think having someone yell to you that you're beautiful is a problem – you're the one with a problem.

CARL

You tell 'em, sister!

(And the lights fade to black.)

SCENE 3 - Wednesday

AT RISE we are see AUDREY in her room – drawing. SYLVIA enters.

SYLVIA

Track cancelled again?

AUDREY

Not exactly.

SYLVIA

So why are you home?

AUDREY

Don't nag, Sylvia. You're not the boss of me. I have homework. Lots of homework.

SYLVIA

Really? I don't remember eighth grade being that tough.

AUDREY

Advanced Math.

SYLVIA

You're a whiz at math.

AUDREY

Not Advanced Math.

SYLVIA

Come on –

AUDREY

I have priorities, okay? School before running.

SYLVIA

If you say so –

(indicating sketchbook)

That doesn't look like math.

AUDREY

Taking a break. My brain hurts.

SYLVIA

Looks like – a drawing? Comic strip?

AUDREY

Nothing. It's nothing.

SYLVIA

Can't I just peek?

AUDREY

NO! It's not done. I'll show you later – when it's – you know – done.

SYLVIA

Getting touchy these days.

AUDREY

Just have – lots to think about.

SYLVIA

Boys?

AUDREY

No! Give me a break!

(Lights change to the street. AL and BO are hanging out. ERIC begins his music.
KAT enters.)

AL

Hey Honey-Pie...

BO

Having a good day? Want to make it better?

KAT

(Rushing over to them. The music abruptly stops.)

I am soooooo sorry, guys! Please forgive me. Pleeese~! See – I got this craving for chocolate chip cookies and was going out for some butter and eggs and chocolate chips of course – and I must have really, *really* confused you because *you* must have gotten the impression that I was here on the street to get hollered at by strange men! I mean, how would you know that my purpose for being here was to get baking ingredients? It's not like I was holding a cookbook or a sign that says, "Not here to get hollered at, strictly on the street to get some eggs and chocolate." I should have known better – I should have carried a sign regarding my purpose for being on the street. I apologize for the confusion and leading you up the wrong garden path. Misunderstandings happen all the time! But now that you know my real reason for being here – I know you will stop shouting at me. Right?

(And KAT turns to go. As she takes a step, AL and BO take a step. KAT stops and listens. She takes a few steps. AL and BO follow.)

AL

Like chocolate chip cookies?

BO

I do. I surely do. In fact, I have a hankering for some right now.