

Synopsis of the play, *After Dark*, by Mike Kenny

Maman, François, and Marie enjoy telling stories. *After Dark*, begins with Marie telling us that this is all a bedtime story. We see the three characters following their night time routine, telling a bedtime story, Maman singing a lullaby and the children asking questions.

We are introduced to each character and told a little about their lives. Maman is a cook and works in the café across the street. She cooks for the village and every night before she leaves she sings the children a song and tells them that the moon watches them and will look after them while she is at work. François asks Maman the same question every night, “What are you going to cook tonight?”. Maman gives him a different answer every night. That night François says the fair is in town. Marie and Maman decide to go to the fair the next day. Marie is older than François and teases him a little. She tells François that Maman was lying to them about the moon, that the moon can’t really see them. She says that “Grown-ups don’t always tell the truth, they lie.” Marie tells François that Maman tells them the lie about the moon so that François won’t be afraid, but really it’s Maman who’s afraid. Every night, after work Maman checks on the children.

The next day they go to the fair. They eat candyfloss and go on the Ghost Train, Marie and François talk about what makes them scared. François sees a clown with a balloon; he follows the balloon and gets lost. Maman is frightened and upset. She tells François, “Don’t you ever do that again”. Maman explains that people steal children and eat them. She tells François to stop crying and buys him a red balloon. Maman makes them food when they arrive home and they talk about what they enjoyed at the fair.

Maman doesn’t have time to sing so she opens the curtains to show the children the moon looking down on them. François is scared and doesn’t want to turn off the light. Marie tells François she knows something about the clown. While they are getting ready to go to bed, Marie teases François about the clown. Maman leaves for work. When she has gone, Marie says she saw the clown eating Children soup. François is frightened and asks Marie to turn on the light. He says he doesn’t like the dark. Marie says that there is Nothing there. Then François is frightened about the Nothing. François asks Marie to tell him a story because she’s good at telling stories. Marie’s story tells the tale of what happens at the fair. She tells François that the clowns take one child from every town the fair visits and the ogress, an evil witch that likes to eat children, cooks the children. Marie asks François if he remembers Lucas from next door? François says Lucas moved. Marie asks “Did he?” Marie goes to sleep, leaving François scared in the darkness.

The next morning François is still frightened. Marie and François decide to ask Maman a few questions to test if she is an ogress or their Maman. Maman doesn’t get

all their questions right so they decide that the ogress must have taken their Maman. They take a picnic and run to find the fair. They walk around the back of the Ghost Train and Marie continues her story of how the ogress cooks the children. That night they ask Maman more questions to see if she is their Maman or an ogress. François says it must be Maman because she sings the song to them. But that night when Maman is leaving and François asks her what she is cooking, he hears her reply as, 'Children'. François is scared, he looks up for the moon, but he can't see it. He asks Marie to tell him a story, but he keeps interrupting her because he doesn't want to hear a scary story. They imagine Maman is the ogress and she's discussing how she will make her **Children Soup**, she suggests that Marie join her as a cook. François asks Marie to stop the story, he thinks he will be eaten. He says he is the missing ingredient for the ogress's soup. Then Marie topples the ogress into the pot and puts the lid on. François decides to join back in with the story and says he helped to get rid of the ogress too. The two children go and find Maman across the street in the café and eat some chicken. The moon appears in the sky and the Maman, François and Marie go to bed.

The End.

This synopsis is simply a reference for you. After the children have seen the production why not get them to tell their own versions and record their versions.