



STORY: THE VIPER, AN AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION STORY

Adapted by Dianne de Las Casas
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Note from Dianne: The trick in telling this story effectively is to draw out the suspense with vocal variation and dramatization. Two distinct voices should be used: one for the old woman and one for the viper. It's a story that keeps audiences on the edge of their seats until the end where there is hilarious comic relief. It's part of my "Scared Silly" program.

There was once an old lady who lived in an apartment complex on the third floor. Everyday, she sat in her rocking chair with her quilt across her lap reading a book. She would rock back and forth, back and forth, back and forth... [Move back and forth while telling this part, placing hands together to symbolize reading a book. Have the audience move and chant "back and forth" with you.]

"RRRRIIINNGGG!" [Make the ring loud and startling. The audience will jump.]

The phone rang and the old woman answered, "Heeeeelllllll-ooooo?!" [Use a very old lady voice and draw out the "hello." Motion picking up a phone and holding it to your ear.]

A voice on the other end said, "The viper is coming. The viper is coming. I'm on the first floor." [Keep your voice husky and spooky.]

The old woman asked, "Who is the viper and why are you coming?"

Click. The phone hung up.

Now the old woman was nervous. She put down her book. She pulled her quilt up to her waist and rocked back and forth, back and forth, back and forth....

"RRRRIIINNGGG!"

The phone rang and the old woman answered, "Heeeeelllllll-ooooo?!"

A voice on the other end said, "The viper is coming. The viper is coming. I'm on the second floor." [Keep your voice husky and spooky but raise it just a bit.]

The old woman asked, "Who is the viper and why are you coming?"

Click. The phone hung up again!

Now the old woman was REALLY nervous. She pulled her quilt up to her chin and rocked back and forth, back and forth, back and forth... [Quicken the rocking motion and words to signify nervousness.]

“RRRRIINNGGG!”

The phone rang and the old woman answered, “Heeeeelllllll-ooooo?!”

A voice on the other end said, “The viper is coming. The viper is coming. I’m on the third floor.” [Raise the volume of your voice for urgency.]

But before the old woman could ask “Who is the viper and why are you coming?” Click. The phone went [place a pregnant pause here] DEAD!

Now the old woman was downright terrified. She curled her toes, pulled her quilt up over her head and rocked back and forth, back and forth, back and forth...

Suddenly, there was [pause] a knock at the door! [Lower your voice slightly when saying, “a knock on the door!”]

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! [knock three times firmly on a hard surface or tap on the microphone. This will cause the audience to jump.]

Do you think the old woman should get up and answer the door? [The audience always says “No!” Wait for them to respond and then say...] You’re right. She shouldn’t answer the door but in these stories, they never listen to you! The old woman got up, grabbed her cane, and walked to the door. [Walk like an old woman with a cane. Exaggerate the movement and your audience will laugh. I usually respond in my old lady voice. “What are you laughing at? I’m old. It takes me a while.”]

The old woman unlocked the door. [Motion unlocking several locks while making unlocking sound effects. Then look at the audience and say with a grin...] She believed in safety!

She opened the door. CREEEAAAAK! [Make a creaky door sound effect and draw out the suspense.]

There, standing in front of her was [pause] THE VIPER! [Look at the audience with a shocked face.]

He was a short man about this tall. [Put hand to chest to show how tall the viper is.] He had a sponge in one hand and a bucket in the other. He said, “Hello. I am the window viper. I’ve come to vipe your windows.”