

Madame Doubtfire

Daniel Hillard has been divorced by his wife, and in order to see his children regularly he has been dressing up as Madame Doubtfire after answering an advertisement his former wife put in the local newspaper, hoping to find a child-minder. In this scene, LYDIA, his elder daughter, has come to see him after his disguise was discovered. Her father comes to the door of the flat to let her in.

LYDIA: Hullo Dad... I've come to see you... So *(she shrugs)* here I am. *(She is not happy. She walks into the flat and sits down)* No... I don't want any tea... you and Mum had such a barney, it was horrible. Horrible... you were both very nasty indeed... *(Confronting her father)* Listen, I don't want to talk, if you don't mind. Or listen, either. And I certainly don't want to talk about that... I'm only here because it's Tuesday... it's Tuesday tea-time. Which happens to be *your* time... *(She scowls)* It's just the principle of the thing... OK, so I'm asserting what is my right to see you... *(She sounds unhappy)* I'm not expecting to have a good time... OK, I'll have some tea. *(She takes her coat off and sits down. Her father gives her a mug of tea)* It isn't *just* the principle of the thing... there's something else as well. Something I thought about before a little, when Mum was telling us about your wedding. I thought then that, if either of you had backed out, none of us children would have ever been born... *(Trying to make her Dad understand)* Yes! And that's the point. We were born. And we're the only things that lasted aren't we? I mean, the marriage was a failure. A total failure. And you two aren't really even friends any more... *(She shakes her head, and then jumps up)* Oh! I know you make a pretty good show of getting along well when you bump into one another at other people's parties, or at school evenings and things like that. But you're not really good *friends* any more, are you? *(She sits closer to her Dad)* So, I was thinking, Natty and Christopher and me, we are the only three things to come out of that marriage. We're all that's left. We're the whole point now... Yes Dad! The whole point. The only reason you have any real contact. So that gives us a sort of extra right. Don't you see? Don't you see? If we three are not happy with the way things are, then what was the point

of all those years? None! None at all! If you can't work things out to suit *us*, then it was all a total waste and a total failure. In fact... *(She hesitates, upset)* Worse than just total waste and failure, just hatred and arguments and all that ugly, ugly stuff... *(Angrily)* No, no, I didn't, I would have tried, but Mum wasn't listening. She was too angry and upset. *(She jumps up and goes to the window)* We had a fight. She didn't want me to come. She called me disloyal. She said you'd forfeited your right to a visit today. *(She is near to tears)* I told her I was not going to live my life between the two of you any more, thinking about her rights and yours. *(She is tearful, but confronts her Dad)* I told her I thought I had rights of my own, and from now on you two had better start thinking of *mine*... And I yelled it... I yelled at her that, if she didn't let me go today, she would regret it!

by Anne Fine, adapted by LAMDA