

# **BE MY BABY**

**a new play  
by**

**Ken Ludwig**

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## CHARACTERS

John Campbell

Maud Kinch

Christy McCall

Gloria Nance

All other parts played by two actors, a man and a woman.

## ACT ONE

In the darkness, we hear the Ronettes' hit song "Be My Baby" coming through the sound system.

The lights come up and two women are riding in the front seat of a car on a bumpy road. The younger woman, GLORIA NANCE, is 19 years old. She's English, rich, vivacious and very sure of herself. She's the one driving. The other woman, in the passenger seat, is her aunt, MAUD KINCH. She's English, in her 50's and rather behind the times. At the moment, she's extremely unhappy. They're driving along a back road outside Aberdeen, Scotland, and the road is full of holes. The time is 1963. The music transfers loudly to the car radio.

GLORIA

(over the noise of the song)

We're almost there. We must be ...

MAUD

*What?!*

GLORIA

I said we're almost there!

MAUD

*Would you turn that thing down for heaven's sake!*

(Gloria turns down the radio.)

Honestly ... Now what did you *say*?

GLORIA

I said we're almost at the house and it should be any – ... *Wait!* There's the barn!  
Do you see it?! Through the trees! ... Aunt Maud?!

MAUD

Yes?

GLORIA

(ecstatically)

*Do you see the barn?!*

MAUD

(blankly)

... Stunning. A miraculous barn.

GLORIA

It's Christy's, you know. And he owns all the land between here and the main house. And they named a whole village after his family. Over three hundred years ago. Oh, I love Scotland, don't you?

MAUD

It's very quaint.

GLORIA

And Christy is a real honest-to-God lord up here. I mean, he's nobility!

MAUD

I'm aware of that.

GLORIA

Oh, Maud, why do you hate him so much.

MAUD

What a thing to say.

GLORIA

You know you do. And it's unfair!

MAUD

(boiling)

I'm unfair. *I'm* unfair?! You completely disregard my advice! You make a mockery of my position. I made a promise to your parents before they died that I would take good care of you, and yet you force me into a position that makes a joke of my responsibility -! My authority!

GLORIA

But he's wonderful!

MAUD

You are nineteen years old. You haven't the faintest idea what is wonderful and what is not wonderful. You should have waited to get engaged. I blame both of you.

GLORIA

In most societies, the woman is married when she reaches the age of fertility.

MAUD

How educational.

GLORIA

Aborigine women have all had intercourse by the time they're thirteen. Have I shocked you by saying that?

MAUD

Tremendously.

GLORIA

In some tribes, they actually celebrate the breaking of the woman's hy -

MAUD

(cutting her off)

Let's *not* discuss it.

GLORIA

Oh, Maud, don't be a prune! I want you to love Christy as much as I do. And don't you simply adore John? He practically raised Christy, single-handed. Christy was orphaned even before I was. Did you know that?

MAUD

Of course I did.

GLORIA

John was their sort of house manager or something.

MAUD

Yes, I kn -

GLORIA

John is such a stone-face. But it's all show. He just takes some getting used to, that's all.

MAUD

(with intense dislike)

That is the understatement of the century. John Campbell is the rudest man that ever walked this earth.

GLORIA

Well *I* like him. I think he's funny.

MAUD

I'm sure you do. And I'm sure you'll be very happy living here -- in the wilderness.

I'm sick of London.

GLORIA

In my opinion, that is so ty –

MAUD

(suddenly)  
*Oh, Maud, there's the house!* Isn't it gorgeous! Oh, I wish you were getting married, too! It's so exciting! You will live with us? You promised.

GLORIA

I said I would think about it.

MAUD

(distressed)  
But you *have* to! We'll be so happy together!

GLORIA

We shall see.

MAUD

Oh, Maud, I can't live without you. It's impossible. Please say yes. *Please!*

GLORIA

Well, I –

MAUD

*Look! There he is! It's Christy!*

GLORIA

Wait until the car stops.

MAUD

*Christy!*

GLORIA

*The car! Mind the car!*

MAUD

(Maud is thrown around like a rag doll, as Gloria screeches to a halt.)

GLORIA

(jumping out of the car before it completely stops)

*Christy, we're here!*

(As Gloria jumps out of the car, we see CHRISTY McCALL and JOHN CAMPBELL. Christy is about 25, good-looking and likeable. He's Scots. John is in his 60s, very matter-of-fact and unsmiling. Very Scots. Both men speak with a Scots accent, but John's is more marked. Gloria runs to Christy and throws her arms around him.)

CHRISTY

*Gloria!*

GLORIA

*Oh, Christy!*

(They kiss furiously. They're bursting with sexuality, and their lips and hands are all over each other. Maud gets out of the car, swaying from the near-disaster. She nods to John. They clearly don't like each other in the least.)

JOHN

Miss Kinch.

MAUD

Mr. Campbell.

JOHN

Welcome to Scotland.

MAUD

Thank you.

JOHN

... They're far too young to get married, you know.

MAUD

I'm very well aware of that.

JOHN

"Wisdom cries out in the streets and no man regards it."

MAUD

I agree entirely.

(This entire time, Christy has been kissing Gloria's neck and ears, and Gloria has been getting more and more excited. Now she jumps up and throws her legs around Christy's waist and their petting gets even more intense. They're virtually having sex in front of John and Maude.)

JOHN

However, I think we'd better set a date for the wedding before a child appears from spontaneous combustion.