



SÄNDNINGSDATUM: 2012-12-08
PRODUCENT: Keith Foster

Script and Word list

Signature

Modern Ghost Stories: No substitute for life

Mr. Brown was sick. Again. Maybe it was our fault, we weren't the most obedient class in the world, and I guess the strain of controlling us would make most people sick after a while. But what did they expect? French was such a boring subject and you just had to play around sometimes. It wasn't anything personal.

So now he was sick, and that meant no homework this week. And it meant... a substitute teacher! Subs were more fun than Brown because they didn't know us. They weren't prepared, which meant we could pull our whole range of tricks. Throwing paper, passing notes, setting off each others' phones, trips to the toilet, asking pointless questions.. You know, we weren't aggressive or anything, we just liked a game.

So we were eager to see who would turn up when we sat there in classroom 110C. The school building was old. The windows in our room didn't shut properly and the books were all torn and curled up like old cabbage. Me, Mike, Davey and Janey, who all sat at the back, we had the best view and we got the best laughs.

So that morning we were all chatting when a voice came from the desk at the front, a voice that was almost a whisper, but which we all heard clearly. I looked up. There was a teacher at the desk, although I hadn't heard the door open. It was a woman, quite young, in a long black skirt and white blouse. She had her hair tied back in a bun, and wore sunglasses that made it hard to see her eyes.

"Good morning class. Bonjour! Alors, maintenant," she started saying. "Je m'appelle Madame Lutin," Lutin, didn't that mean rabbit? I asked Janey, and she giggled. Mike and Davey laughed too, although they didn't hear what I'd asked, and I collapsed with my head on my desk, laughing my ass off.

obedient - *lydig*
strain - *ansträngning*

a substitute teacher –
en vikarie
to prepare –
att förbereda sig
a range of tricks –
en räckta av trick

eager - *ivrig*

to curl up – *att rulla ihop sig*
cabbage - *kål*

a bun – *en knut*

Alors, maintenant (fr.) –
Nu så
Je m'appelle (fr.) –
Jag heter



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Then suddenly I felt something cold, like someone had opened a fridge right in front of me. I turned my head, and right next to me I saw the back of that black skirt. The sub teacher was standing there, looking at Janey.

I leaned back on my chair to see what would happen. Somehow I was glad that it wasn't me having to look up into this woman's face. Janey looked scared. The sub said something to her, very, very low, so low that I couldn't catch it even though I was only a metre or so away.

Janey's face went as white as the teacher's blouse, and she shut her mouth with a quivering lower lip. Her eyes were wide open and it seemed like she couldn't take them off the sub's face. After a few seconds I felt more than saw the black skirt move away, and Janey sat completely still, her staring eyes not moving or blinking.

"Janey! Janey?" I whispered. "What's wrong?"

No answer. She just sat there, and the sub, Madame Lutin, was talking again. The rest of the class had also shut up and it was quieter in there than I'd ever experienced before. I decided to do something about it – we had a reputation to protect!

I folded up a piece of paper into an aeroplane. OK, so it wasn't so original, but the classics work every time. I threw it - and I know how to throw paper planes. I've had practice! My little A4 jet fighter was sailing beautifully over the heads of the guys in front of me, making its way to the corner of the room. Heads were turning, the class was realising that something was happening! Here we go! Yes, at last!

Until it stopped. And I mean *stopped*. In mid-air. The teacher walked slowly down the aisle between the desks and reached up, and grabbed it. She screwed it up and threw it in the basket. The other weird thing? When she screwed the paper up, it didn't make a sound.

"Sorry miss, I didn't expect air traffic control!" I said loudly. Normally that sort of line would have got a big laugh, all round the class, but this time - not a giggle. How had she beaten us so quickly? She was beginning to annoy me.

quivering - *darrande*

a reputation – *ett rykte*

to realise – (*här*): *att inse*

mid-air – *mitt i luften*
aisle - *mittgång*

giggle – *fnitter*
to beat – (*här*): *att besegra*
to annoy – *att irritera*



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“*Daviid?*” She said it in a French accent, which annoyed me even more. I stood up. “Yes Miss?” I answered.

“MadAME Lutin,” she said, gliding slowly towards me. Even though I was angry, I felt my legs getting weak as that coldness grew around me again. “You ‘ave been naughty, little boy,” she whispered. Close up she smelt funny. Old, like libraries. And when I looked at her I still couldn’t make out her eyes behind those glasses. “In my day you would ‘ave been tied to a post, so everyone could throw mud and sticks at you. But sadly this is no longer so. Instead, you will report to the headmaster’s office. *Maintenant!*”

She backed away, still looking at me, like some kind of 3D film effect. I found myself following her, walking forwards, being guided to the classroom door. It opened for me and I walked out, not even stopping to give the ghouls a wink or a wave.

Once I was out of the room and halfway down the corridor, the influence I had felt began to wear off. What had she done to me, and the class? It was like she had some kind of hypnotic trick. And what was that stuff about tying me to a post? That sounded like a threat! I decided to go to the headmaster. But only to report that I had been threatened with violence! That would put her in real trouble.

I walked down a flight of stairs and along another corridor, checking in through windows to see what was going on in the other classes. There was chemistry over there, music there, and... wait a minute! In room 45B there was a woman with a white blouse, black skirt and glasses! Teaching some spotty class of 4th graders! I stood outside the door, trying to get a really good look at her, when it opened and a scared-looking kid came out. I grabbed him by the collar.

“Ow! Get off me!” he whimpered, but I had him in a good grip.

“Shut up turnip,” I said. “Who’s the teacher in there?”

“I don’t know, Mrs. Luton or something. She’s a sub!” he said in a shaky voice. “Let me go! I’ve only got two minutes to go to the toilet, or she’ll do something nasty!”

naughty - *stygg*

to tie – *att binda fast*
a post – *en stolpe*
mud - *lera*

a wink – *en blinkning*

influence - *influens*

a threat – *ett hot*

a flight of stairs - *trappor*

spotty class –
(här): ett gäng med småpluttar
a collar – *en krage*

turnip – *kålrot (sl. idiot)*

nasty - *otäck*



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Modern Ghost Stories

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I let the kid go, and he ran off to the loo. So she had this class frightened too? But how could she be in two lessons at once? Did she have a twin sister, or was I dreaming?

I was about to turn the handle to the headmaster's office door when the door opened and something hit me. It wasn't like actually bumping into someone, more like I guess an electric shock would feel. Right in front of me was Madame Lutin! I stood there gaping at her. She looked me up and down, and reached up to her glasses.

"Aha so it is you. You run into ladies, like some farm goat. Do you know how to use your eyes?"

She pulled down her sunglasses over her nose. But behind them was nothing. Nothing. Just two black, empty sockets, sucking me in like cold, windy caves. That old, cold feeling grabbed me and I just lost it.

I woke up in the headmaster's office. I was sitting in a big leather chair, and old Mr. Macdonald was waving a newspaper in my face.

"Ah, David Miller. So you're awake! Good, good. And I think this time that you've learnt a lesson without any lecture from me, so off you go." He sat down and turned away from me, as if telling me it was all over. But not for me!

"Who was that woman, Mr. Macdonald? She was at my class, and she was here, and she was.."

"Ah, yes, Madame Lutin. This is a poor school, David. We don't have any sponsors, we need new books and some computers would be nice. But with so many teachers taking sick days, I have to bring in substitutes all the time, and they cost so much!"

"Now you mustn't tell anyone this, but that lady is the answer. This place has always been haunted, some ghost from the 17th century or something. A woman and her son died together here. In fact there's a book about the story in the school library, but you lot never go in there, do you?"

I nodded. That was true.

loo – *sl. toalett*

to gape – *att gapa*

a socket – *en ögonhåla*

a lecture –
(här): en straffpredikan

haunted – *hemsökt*
17th century – *1600-talet*



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“Madame Lutin is saving us! A teacher who can take two or five or ten classes at once.. And she doesn’t need to be paid! Apart from one small thing, I’ve agreed to lock up a student in the cellar, next to her skeleton, once a year.

Your name is on my list of possible victims, so don’t give her any more trouble. Now, off you go, I have reports to fill in.”

I left his office and closed the door. A ghost as a sub? No wonder a paper plane didn’t work. Hmm, how about if it was made out of a Bible page? Walking off to lunch, I began to think up some new ideas....

This ghost story was written and read by Keith Foster. The sound engineers were Carl Nilsson and Kristina Buddee Roos and the music was by Nadine and Tanya Byrne. A UR production.

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a cellar – en källare