

EPISODE 23: "PETSITTER PENNY"

Gary: Man, that was a fun trip.

Bob: Yeah, we did a lot of real neat stuff.

Caroline: There was a lot of things to do around there.

Penny: My favorite part was - PIPPI!

(Pippi is skinny, underfed and in need of grooming)

Penny: Are you OK, sweetie?

Gary: What happened?

Penny: She's underfed! Clearly that petsitter didn't care for her at all!

Gary: I wonder how Felix is doing.

Caroline: Where is Felix?

Bob: I found him. He's hiding behind the laundry machine.

Penny: Oh, sweetheart! Guys, I think he's been hiding there this whole time.

Caroline: Who was that awful petsitter?

Bob: Petsitter Ryan. What? He was cheap!

Caroline: You really should have read reviews.

Gary: Did you check Yelp?

Bob: What's Yelp?

Penny: I can't believe that someone could treat our pets so callously! We should sue!

Bob: Well, you know, they're just a petsitter, it's not like there was an actual baby in danger.

Penny: I'm sorry, I just don't agree. Pets are just as important as people. Does that make me a bad person?

Caroline: Penny, we're not going to sue, but we should tell everyone we know about our bad experience with Petsitter Ryan.

Penny: That I will do!

Gary: I will too!

Bob: I think I'll write a bad review on his webpage. "Petsitter Ryan sucks. He is a sucky petsitter and the way he treats pets is sucky. He lets them starve which sucks and does not engage which also sucks. I bet he just goes around the house acting suckily. I again say, Petsitter Ryan is the suckiest petsitter ever. Suck suck suck suck suck. But that's just my experience."

Penny: I just don't think any pets deserve to be treated like this. I wish there was something I could do about it hands-on. Oh my gosh I'm having a lightbulb moment!

Bob: I wish I knew what that felt like.

Penny: Mom, can I start my own petsitting business? It would be a great summer job!

Caroline: Hmmm....well, you've never been the most responsible...I'm just kidding! Absolutely!

Penny: Hmm, I wonder what I should call my business...

Gary: How about just "Penny's Petsitting?" Classic alliteration!

Penny: I like it. Now, I should write up a resume! (Typing at the laptop) Alright, while I don't have any experience with prior-petsitting, I have taken care of our own pets several times when mom was away. I was also at the top of my class at caring for the class worm. I spend time with my animals every day and I've been described as "responsible", "dutiful", "punctual" and "prepared."

Hey guys, do you want to read over my resume?

Gary: It's better than I could do.

Caroline: Very professional.

Bob: Eh, it's a good rough outline. Just kidding, it's great.

Penny: Hmm...now to get it off the ground with posters and promotion and such! Hmm, anyone got experience with this kind of thing?

Gary: Marcy does. She did a lot of the same stuff you're doing now for her lawn-mowing business.

(Later, at Marcy's house)

Marcy: Penny, as someone who's been around the block, this sales pitch is a piece of work. You may not want to hear it, but that's why I think I can help you. First, you should put it in bullet points, maybe add some color. Maybe pictures of you taking care of the pets. That stuff will catch a readers' eye.

Penny: Sounds like a lot of work.

Marcy: Don't worry, I can help you. Here, let's just get it done, sound good? So, what color do you want here? What are your key points? Got any pictures on hand?

(A little later)

Marcy: See? Look at that! A true eye-catching poster in only 20 minutes! Oop, one last thing, we forgot to add the number to call.

Penny: One problem - my cell phone blocks unknown numbers.

Marcy: Hey I have an idea! We've got this sweet landline in the basement we're not using for anything. You want it for your business?

Penny: Yeah!

Marcy: (takes the phone up) Here ya go!

Penny: Thank you for doing all that work with me on my poster!

Marcy: Yeah, it's cool, we've all been there. I learned the same things when I started my lawn-mowing business. First it was just "I know how to use a lawnmower, I have a lot of experience with grass, and I like to cut on the short side." Then my brother helped me polish it up. And he knew how to do that because of his computer assistance business! And my dad helped him because he had had a car repair business. See, us young entrepreneurs are an ecosystem.

Penny: Wow, I guess you're right. Thanks for all the help, Marcy!

Marcy: Hey, want me to help you put them up too? I know a lot of good spots. I'll show you all around town for a mere ten dollars.

Penny: Hey! What's with the charge?

Marcy: Hey, I'm trying to make money too. And anyway, that's nothing compared to the money you'll get when you start profiting! Also, not to brag, but I really know how to hit a nail.

(Montage, they put the posters on telephone poles in several neighborhoods and on the bulletin boards in the library, the community center and the Lucky Moon cafe.)

(Marcy and Penny admire their work)

Penny: Nice! You've done it again, Marcy! Thanks!

Marcy: No problem! (they shake hands)

(Penny comes back home)

Gary: Were you with Marcy that whole time?

Penny: Yeah, we made a professional poster and put them up all over town!

Gary: Cool! I'm so jealous.

Penny: And she gave me this retro landline phone for me to take calls on!

Gary: Landline?

Bob: Oh yeah, my dad had one of those!

Penny: (Sits by the phone, and starts fidgeting while she waits)

(Phone rings)

Penny: Ooh! A call!

(It is Mr. Frontporch, their elderly next door neighbor)

Mr. Frontporch: Hello, Pet sitter Paisley...

Penny: Penny, yes?

Mr. Frontporch: You're right next door, isn't that right, dearie?

Penny: Yep!

Mr. Frontporch: Well then, I suppose it wouldn't be too much trouble to walk over here...

Penny: That is correct.

Mr. Frontporch: So...if it's not too much trouble...could you perhaps sit for my chickens while I go to bingo night at 5:30?

Penny: ...Yes I can!

Mr. Frontporch: Alright, see you soon dearie...take care.

Penny: Bye! (Puts phone down) Huh. Okay.

Gary: What happened?

Penny: Well, I got hired by Mr. Frontporch to petsit his chickens. I was thinking more along the lines of cats and dogs, but I'm still going to take it on. I hope it goes well.

Caroline: Chickens are a different animal, Penny! Are you sure you can handle it?

Penny: Well, I can't be sure of anything, but I know I'm running a business here and part of running a business is taking some risks and trying new things! Well, I have about a half hour before I have to go. I guess I'll try to read up on chickens.

Bob: All I know about chickens is that they lay eggs and wake people up.

(A little later)

Penny: Alright. Deep breaths. Here we go. (knocks on Mr. Frontporch's door)

Mr. Frontporch: Hello, little miss! Have you come to sit for my chickens?

Penny: Yes indeed I have, heh!

Mr. Frontporch: Alright. The main things you need to do is...oh, it's slipped my mind. Darn dementia! I need to get to bingo. See you later, darling! (He hobbles over to a bus called the Geezermobile)

Penny: On my own...well, I can estimate what I need to do. I can estimate they need to be fed. And given something to drink. And if there are any eggs lying around in their coop I should pick them up and store them. First let me say hi to them, good old meet and greet...

(she goes out back and looks at the coop) Wow, there are a lot! Three! No, four! No, five! No, four! That one just has different coloring on each side! According to my Googling, the rounder and shorter hackle feathers are hens, and the longer and pointier ones are roosters. By that logic, there are three hens and one rooster...he must be real henpecked!

(Cutaway to Dan playing the comedy rimshot on his drum kit)

(Cut back)

Penny: I wonder if I can pet one...hey, henny! What a sweet girl you are - OW! Okay, they peck. I forgot about the pecking. Let me get some food. Maybe that will help improve our relations. (goes back in) Hmm, chickens like veggies...where would he keep veggies? (snaps) In the fridge!

But how do I tell which is his and which is for the chickens? Well, they can't eat eggplant or avocado so those must be his...what else is in here...ew, this spaghetti is rotten! It smells like kimchi! I'mma get rid of that. Saving Old Man Mr. Frontporch from an untimely death. (throws it away)

And then up here...prunce juice prune juice prune juice prune juice prune juice...prune ice cream...actual prunes...aha! Here's some kale! I read that's good for chickens! Let me give some to them...and I'll also bring out some more water..

(She goes back out to the pen) Let's try the corrective approach...here you go! Um, I'm not sure where to put it exactly... (drops the kale in the pen and the chickens gobble it up) And to wash it down...(puts the water bowl in) Now let me check for eggs... (reaches inside the coop and everyone starts pecking her) OW! OW! OW! Okay, for some reason they're still unhappy with me.

Mr. Frontporch always seems to spend a lot of time with his chickens...I wonder what he does with them...what would a senior citizen do with his chickens? I know! I'll play some classical music for them! (Puts Vivaldi on for the chickens, who seem to become happy)

Alright! Now let me reach in there. (She reaches in) Aha! Three eggs! Let me take these in and store them. (She puts them away in the fridge) Farming your own eggs IS a clever economic tactic. I wonder what I should do for the rest of the time...guess I'll just keep playing the music they like so much!

(a little while later)

Hey, there's Mr. Frontporch, back from bingo!

Mr. Frontporch: I'm back...how were the chickens doing?

Penny: Oh, just great! I fed them, gave them new water and I collected their eggs!

Mr. Frontporch: Nifty! What did you feed them?

Penny: Just some kale.

Mr. Frontporch: WHAT? YOU FED THEM MY KALE? I WAS GOING TO EAT THAT! An infomercial told me it was a super food, and if I ate enough, I'd live forever!

Penny: First of all, that infomercial is psuedoscience, and second of all, do you really want to live as an elderly widower forever? Life would get boring, don't you think?

Mr. Frontporch: Well, I suppose so.

Penny: I'm sorry, I really am. But at least they enjoyed it. Say, what was I supposed to give them?

Mr. Frontporch: The mealworms! They were in that tupperware...

Penny: Oh, shoot! That must've been the "rotten spaghetti" I threw out!

Mr. Frontporch: You threw it out? Why you little...

Penny: You should know that I spent quality time with them! I played them classical music!

Mr. Frontporch: Classical music? That's what I always do! It's their favorite thing!

Penny: That's right! I played them Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Beethoven's 5th, Beethoven's 9th, the Moonlight Sonata, and the score from The Empire Strikes Back!

Mr. Frontporch: Well, I'll be darned. You are a good sitter! I'll give you a hundred clams! (Hands Penny a hundred dollar bill)

Penny: Thank you! I'll see you later, and if you ever need a petsitter, you know who to call!

Mr. Frontporch: Goodbye, little lady!

Penny: Bye! (she leaves) YESSS! Currency *and* credibility!

(Back at the Joneses, maybe the next day)

Gary: I want a summer job too! Got any ideas?

Bob: Yeah! You could do what I did when I was your age, and volunteer at the local pool snack bar!

Gary: Sounds great! I'll apply now!

(Cut to him at the pool snack bar)

Gary: Wow, that was an easy interview. All they were looking for was grades, personability and a friendly smile. (smiles) And the best part about this job is as much snack bar food as you can eat! (starts eating an ice cream sandwich)

Marcy: (surprised) Hey, Gary! Wait a minute. I wasn't expecting to see you here. You're working the snack bar here now?

Gary: (eating) Oh, Marcy! (spits it out, not wanting to be embarrassed) Hey! Yep, I sure am. I wanted to compete - er, I was inspired by Penny's new job. So I decided to get my own. Pretty easy hiring process.

Marcy: Sweet! Alright, I'd like a Dr. Pepper float and some french fries.

Gary: Alright, I'll get that posthaste. (Hands it out) That'll be 7 dollars, 25 cents!

Marcy: Thank you. Here's a ten dollar bill!

Gary: Wow, thanks for the tip.

Marcy: Uh, Gary, you're supposed to give me change. Hand me money for the part that was more than what it costs.

Gary: Oh, yeah, uh, (starts looking a little sweaty and fanning) Is it getting hot in here?

Marcy: What?

Gary: Sorry, I just...didn't think I was going to have to do any math...that's my weakest subject, remember?

Marcy: Okay, what's ten minus eight?

Gary: Two...

Marcy: What's a hundred minus twenty-five?

Gary: Seventy-five! Oh, alright. I see what you're doing. (Hands her two dollars and three quarters) Here you go!

Marcy: Thanks! By the way, how's Penny doing?

Gary: She just had her first job yesterday with Mr. Frontporch's chickens...she got a hundred bucks!

Marcy: WOW! Well, he is pretty generous. Anyway, glad the help I gave is paying off.

(Back to Penny, waiting patiently at her landline again)

(Phone rings)

Penny: Let's go! A call! (answers phone) Petsitter Penny, how can I help you?

Mrs. Autumn: Hi Penny!

Penny: Mrs. Autumn? My science teacher?

Mrs. Autumn: The one and only! (laughs) Now, you remember my cat Angela, right?

Penny: I sure do. Do you need me to petsit her?

Mrs. Autumn: Yes, I do! I'm going on a date with my fiance this evening and I would like you to watch her, feed her, play with her...

Penny: Sure thing!

Mrs. Autumn: Alright. Can you come over at 6?

Penny: Absolutely!

Mrs. Autumn: Thank you so much. And no, this won't count for extra credit. You don't need extra credit anyway. Well, see you then! Bye!

Penny: Bye! (Hangs up) Well, I guess I'll start preparing for -

(Phone rings)

Penny: Yeahhhh! Another call! Hello, this is Petsitter Penny, how can I help?

Colin: Hey, Penny!

Penny: (sigh) What do you need, Colin?

Colin: I-I need you to watch my dog Cosmo while I go shopping for a

new computer chip!

Penny: Alright. What time?

Colin: Seven o'clock!

Penny: Well, you see, I'm already booked for then. Could I come earlier or later?

Colin: Nope. I'm booked too. At 5, I am going to work on my brain teasers. At 5:30, I am going to eat shrimp flavored microwavable ramen. At 6, I am going to revise the code for my new plugin. And at 6:30, I am going to play my synthesizer. And at 8 -

Penny: Okay, you're booked, you're booked, I get the idea. Well sorry, I just can't sit for you today. Aren't either of your parents around?

Colin: Nah, they're going to a baseball game.

Penny: Well, I don't know what to say, Colin.

Colin: I'll pay you any amount of money! I don't want Petsitter Ryan, I want you! I want what's best for my little Cosmo!

Penny: Alright, you've touched me. I'll try my best to make it.

Colin: You're the best, Penelope!

Penny: Don't call me that, bye! (hangs up) What am I gonna do? I have two conflicting gigs!

Caroline: Why did you agree to both jobs? That was silly. You'll just have to call one of them and say you have to cancel.

Bob: Wait! There's another way. She can alternate! Run back and forth between the two houses!

Caroline: Bob, that's absurd.

Bob: I did it once! I was working the snack bar at two different pools.

Caroline: Well what happened?

Bob: I lost the job. But Penny's so much better at this than me in every way! I'm sure she could do it!

Penny: Yeah, whatever. I'll try. Canceling is bad for business. Now I'd better get going. (goes out the door)

Caroline: But not doing a good job would be even worse for business...(sighs).

(Penny goes to Mrs. Autumn's house)

Penny: Hi, Mrs. Autumn!

Mrs. Autumn: Hello, Penny! Angela's lying in the dining room right now. Well, I gotta go, I'll be back in a little over an hour. Bye!

Penny: Alright, Angela! You want to play yarn tug of war? (Gets out a string of yarn and Angela takes one side while Penny takes the other.) Now, I bet I'm going to win this, but we'll never know until the match is over. (fakes the cat winning) Ohhhh, you got me! Want a rematch? No? Well, I've got to go over to my other house, so I'll see you in a little bit. (Puts the yarn away and leaves in a hurry)

(Running over) Whew, than goodness they live in the same neighborhood! (Gets to Colin's house and knocks on the door)

Colin: (Opens the door) Salutations, my fair lady! For Cosmo - feed him, walk him, but DO NOT let him touch the special doggy ice cream treat thawing on the kitchen island. Have I made this clear?

Penny: Yep. Crystal clear!

Colin: Now, sign this contract I've written in pastel just to be clear.

Penny: (Signs it) Alright, it's been signed!

Colin: Now, I need to go shopping for my computer chip. I'll be back in 72 minutes. If you want to find Cosmo, he's in the kitchen. Bye!

Penny: Bye! (Walks in) In the kitchen...in the kitchen...oh no! He might be trying to get to the doggy ice cream! (Sees Cosmo, who is trying to jump up to the kitchen island) Cosmo, NO! Down, boy! I'll get you some real food. (Pours Cosmo's dog food) Now, I'm supposed to walk you...I know! Let's go walk over to Mrs. Autumn's house so I can check back on Angela!

(They start walking. Cosmo sniffs around the grass)

Penny: We've got no time for that, Cosmo! We have to get over to Angela! (Cosmo spots another dog and looks over at it) Keep going, Cosmo! (They make it to Mrs. Autumn's) Alright...here we go...

(Penny tethers Cosmo to the front porch and then goes in) I'm back, Angela! I'll get you your wet food AND your dry food! (Dishes out both kinds of foods) There you go! I'll stand by to make sure you eat it.

(Angela begins to eat it) Wondrous! Just keep eating. I've got a dog tethered outside, so I've got to get him back. I'll be seeing you! (salutes to Angela and leaves again, untethers Cosmo and walks back to Colin's)

Penny: Alright, Cosmo! Maybe we can go over some commands. Wait! I completely forgot to refill Angela's water! Cosmo, I just have to dash back over there real quick, I'm okay if you're okay. Are you okay? (No reaction from Cosmo) Alright, see ya in a minute!

(Goes out the door. We see Cosmo walking over to the kitchen and looking at the doggy ice cream on the island)

(A little bit later)

Penny: Alright, Cosmo, I'm back! (Cosmo is gorging himself away with the doggy ice cream which is now on the floor) (Gasp) COSMO NO! SHOOT! Now when Colin comes back I have to tell him I screwed up. (sigh) There goes my career.

(The next day)

Caroline: Why haven't you gotten any calls today? You've been doing so well!

Penny: I think I know why. I unintentionally let Cosmo get to the doggy ice cream that he wasn't supposed to get until Thursday. And Colin made it into a whole big thing.

Bob: Let me check your webpage...oh, here's a new review. A one star review. "Petsitter Penny is a heinous, abominable petsitter. She is worse than Petsitter Ryan and another really bad petsitter combined. If you think Petsitter Penny is even close to being a good petsitter you have no brains and no future." Yep, that sounds like a real career killer.

Caroline: I'm sorry honey.

Gary: Yeah, I'm sorry too.

Caroline: Gary, you're home early.

Gary: Well, I quit the snack bar job. Too much commitment. Too many numbers.

(Penny is talking to Marcy)

Penny: I think we ought to take down all my posters.

Marcy: Aw, what happened?

Penny: I got one scathing review and it made my career disappear.

Marcy: Huh, the same thing just happened to my lawn-mowing business. I accidentally mowed down someone's ferns and he ruined my career too.

Penny: Who was it, may I ask?

Marcy: Colin.

(Penny gives a mysterious look to the camera)

THE END