

In Safe Hands

by

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2010 Rob Talbot

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## Cast

Character

Played by

Ron Delaney, Taxi driver

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Ben Doyle, Baby's Father

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Melanie Doyle, Baby's mother

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Woman friend assisting

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## Synopsis

A Daylesford Victoria taxi driver is called to an address outside of town.

Arriving at the address, he finds a heavily pregnant woman needing to go to the town hospital. She is in labour and has been for some time.

The taxi driver is asked to take the woman into town for emergency attention.

What follows is enough to test the resilience of the taxi driver and make or break him in his chosen employment.

SCENE ONE - TAXI RANK, DAYLESFORD – NIGHT

RON DELANEY, taxi driver, waits at the rank in the quiet main street. All the pubs are closed. Nobody is around. Ron is just waiting in case there are some late night callers. He is watching a thriller on his portable DVD player, propped up on the steering wheel. The radio sounds. RON grabs the handset and presses the receiver button, answers.

TAXI DRIVER

Hello, Daylesford Taxis

VOICE ON THE RADIO

(sounding anxious)

Hello, taxi, I have an emergency. Can you  
Come to one, three, seven, nine, Miners' Road,  
Please?

TAXI DRIVER

(packing up his DVD player)

Yes, certainly, I'll be there in about fifteen  
minutes.

VOICE ON THE RADIO

(relieved)

Thank God. I didn't know if any of you  
would still be there. It really is an emergency.

Not thinking any more of it, RON proceeds to start the cab and drive off in as much haste as the situation appears to demand.

SCENE TWO - REMOTE PROPERTY OUTSIDE OF TOWN - NIGHT

Arriving at the property out of town, RON is met by the owner of the voice earlier on the radio, BEN DOYLE.

CONTINUED

TAXI DRIVER  
Good evening. What's up?

BEN DOYLE  
My wife is having a baby and there's been complications

TAXI DRIVER  
Have you called the Ambulance?

BEN DOLYE  
No, we can't afford that

TAXI DRIVER  
It costs about the same as one stubbie of beer a week

At that moment, TWO WOMEN come toward the cab, out of the dark. One of them is assisted by the other and is hunched over, having difficulty walking.

WOMAN ASSISTING  
(anxious)  
Open the back door, please

TAXI DRIVER  
(to assisting woman)  
You'll have to come with her

WOMAN ASSISTING  
YES, OK. Ben has to stay here. There's other kids

CONTINUED

They place the pregnant woman in the back seat, the ASSISTING WOMAN covering the seat with the blanket she had wrapped around the PREGNANT WOMAN

TAXI DRIVER

Stay in the back with her and we'll get her into town as quickly as possible

WOMAN ASSISTING

Yes ok, please hurry. I'm not sure what's wrong but the baby just won't come out

The taxi drives off and picks up speed quickly. The pregnant woman groans in discomfort

SCENE THREE – TAXI, EN ROUTE TO TOWN - NIGHT

TAXI DRIVER

(turning to the woman in the back seat)  
Are you a midwife?

WOMAN ASSISTING

No, I'm just a friend. This was supposed to be a normal home birth.

TAXI DRIVER

Go to any old graveyard and you'll see the result of normal home births, mothers and their babies

WOMAN ASSISTING

(lindignant)  
You can't judge us. We have a right to pursue an alternative lifestyle

CONTINUED

The PREGNANT WOMAN spasms and screams. RON looks in the rear view mirror, turning the cab light on, concerned.

The WOMAN ASSISTING also screams, which concerns RON.

TAXI DRIVER  
(to the WOMAN ASSISTING)  
Do you have any training or experience  
at all? This lady is in a lot of pain

WOMAN ASSISTING  
(frightened now)  
No, I'm just a friend. This wasn't supposed  
to happen

RON takes out his mobile phone and calls 000. A few seconds later he speaks

TAXI DRIVER  
Ambulance

Then

TAXI DRIVER  
Out along Old Logging Road, between  
Miner's Road and Daylesford, heading  
into Daylesford, about halfway.  
(pause, listening to for instructions)  
She's pregnant, full-term... not going well  
I may not be able to proceed. The lady is in  
distress. I may have to assist. Please hurry

The PREGNANT WOMAN screams in such a shrill voice that RON pulls over to the side of the road and stops the taxi

SCENE FOUR – TAXI, ROADSIDE – NIGHT

TAXI DRIVER  
(turning to the WOMAN ASSISTING)  
You're no use to her at all, are you?

CONTINUED

Ron gets out of the cab, walks around to the door closest to the WOMAN ASSISTING, opens it and physically hauls her out

TAXI DRIVER

(business-like)

Get in the front seat, here's my mobile.  
I'll let you know if I need you to call. Can  
you do that?

WOMAN ASSISTING

(quietly)

Yes, I can manage that much

RON leans into the cab, eases the PREGNANT WOMAN back onto the seat and examines her

TAXI DRIVER

(to himself)

Presenting wrong

WOMAN ASSISTING

What does that mean?

TAXI DRIVER

(busy at his task)

Means it's not coming out the right way,  
but it's not a breach. I can feel the head.  
Just need to turn it a little

The WOMAN ASSISTING looks between the front seats, goes wide-eyed as she sees what RON is doing. Her eyes roll upwards and she faints. Ron notices and is momentarily amused but gets back to business. The PREGNANT WOMAN screams with another spasm

TAXI DRIVER

(calmingly)

Don't push, just one more moment

CONTINUED

Then RON commands

TAXI DRIVER

All right, now, push

An Ambulance siren is heard from a distance. It stops with its lights on the taxi, shining through the windscreen. The coloured lights on top of the Ambulance keep flashing. An AMBULANCE OFFICER hurries to the open cab door. RON is sitting there on the very edge of the back seat. A WOMAN is lying across the seat with a new-born baby held to her, all wet and red-looking. RON gets up and turns to the AMBULANCE OFFICER

TAXI DRIVER

G'day. I'd shake hands but I'm a bit messy  
(nodding to the WOMAN on the back seat)  
She's all yours

The WOMAN ASSISTING has regained consciousness and is making 'ooh' noises as she looks at the new baby in its mother's arms. She turns to RON

WOMAN ASSISTING

You're my hero. Have you done this  
kind of thing before?

TAXI DRIVER

Sure, five times to be exact

WOMAN ASSISTING

Five times? Delivering babies in a taxi?

TAXI DRIVER

No, three lambs, one foal and a calf. On  
the cattle station where I grew up

EVERYBODY laughs at this, including the AMBULANCE OFFICER, and even the mother of the baby manages a faint smile. The baby cries

THE END