

## **Humorous Story – Bounce House Party**

### **Craig Packnick**

- Peaceful Opening
  - o I had a couple odd jobs growing up, but my favorite job BY FAR was working for CT Bounce House. My neighbor knew a guy who had a small business where he had a storage unit of inflatable bounce houses and water slides that he would rent out to people where we lived in Fairfield County, CT.
  - o As a sophomore and junior in high school, my buddy Joe and I were part of a crew who were responsible for driving a small trailer around southwestern CT, dropping off and inflating bouncers, collecting waiver signatures, and then coming back later in the day to tear down and retrieve these bounce houses (we'd sometimes refer to them as bouncers) and collect our cash payment.
  - o I took pride in my professionalism. I had a CT Bounce House shirt, I wore my baseball cap forward, and I felt a sense of pride for the responsibility I had been given in my first official job.
- Tension Introduce
  - o Now, after a year and a half on the job, all of my professionalism, experience, and know-how we're put to the test one beautiful summer day during my final year of service with CT Bounce House. It was like any other day: my buddy Joe and I had a trailer with four bouncers, we dropped them off, and set them up with no problems. The last stop even included a group of college girls who were really gave Joe and I advice on our college search.

- After a quality morning session, we met back at the truck later in the day to begin the pickup process.
- The first three pick-ups went smooth as silk, and we even got some nice tips from each of the people we helped.
- Our final stop seemed like a lay up! It was in Shelton, CT, five minutes from home base. Easy in, easy out. As we pulled over at our final pick up, I straightened my hat, grabbed my clipboard, and headed toward the house with my buddy Joe.
- But from there things went sideways fast!
- Disorienting Conflict
  - We instantly knew things were bad when we were 50 yards from the house and could hear music playing as if the speaker were right next to us...
  - We were in downtown Shelton, where each property was pretty modest and the one we were walking toward had a small backyard that could fit about 20 people comfortably.
  - As we rounded the corner of the house to the back yard, I looked at Joe, who's a reserved guy, and he looked mortified.
- Describe the Mayhem
  - This was a full-on summer college rager. There were easily 60+ people at this party, folding tables, solo cups, alcohol, music. Every guy must've forgotten to pack a t-shirt and were really thirsty, because the first 5 guys I saw were belly out and had a drink in their hand.
  - Meanwhile, all the girls were wearing bikinis and also just as parched as the guys.

- In this moment as a young high school man, I was feeling every emotion and thought in the world... It was truly disorienting!
- Before I had time to gather myself, the same three girls we had spoken to that morning came and greeted us, but this time they were a LOT more friendly...
- Conversation with the Girls
  - “Hey guyssss!! You’re back so soon! What’re you doing here?”
  - All my professionalism I had been working on over the past year and a half went out the window, “Ugh hey again! So, ugh, normally we come around 9pm to pick up the bouncers, but we saved you for last one and gave you an extra hour, so, ugh, now we’re here to grab the slip in slide.”
  - Completely ignoring what we said they started openly trying to flirt with us to get us to stay. It was demeaning and insulting... but as an awkward high school guy I did appreciate feeling seen, I’ll be honest lol.
  - But then I had some Holy Spirit conviction. This conversation with the girls was manipulative and going nowhere. We had a job to do!
- It’s Time to Take Action!
  - I glanced at my watch, it was 10:15 PM, which meant we were already late getting back to the owner’s house. It was time to take action!
  - I said a quick prayer to myself, “Dear God, get me through this, Amen.”
  - I tapped Joe on the shoulder (who was currently enjoying the attention he was getting from the college girls) and ushered him over to the slip in slide to help me take it down.
- Ending the Party

- o I asserted my authority as a young scrawny high schooler and asked for the group of 20 college aged guys and girls to get off the slip in slide.
- o Nobody listened. I tried again... nothing.
- o Eventually I said, "Forget this," and I turned off the blower and the massive water slide began to slowly deflate.
- o Some people started booing ironically and it caught on, and then the whole party began booing us as we folded up the water slide. It was terrifying...
- o But things got worse.
- Surprise: The Extension Cord
  - o I went over behind the bushes to unplug the extension cord and noticed one of them was plugged into a separate outlet. As I followed the trail it led me to a massive speaker powering the music for the entire party...
  - o Crap...
  - o This was my moment. It was time to learn a lesson in doing the right thing even when it's hard.
  - o I took my professional CT Bounce House hat, lowered it to hide my face, and pulled the plug.
    - Deafening Silence.
  - o The booing was no longer ironic and turned into aggressive insults.
  - o We might as well have been the cops because we essentially shut down the party.
  - o Joe and I spent the next 10 minutes getting all our equipment together, collecting our money, and leaving before the mob got too angry at us.
- Reestablishing Peace

- o Joe and I wheeled the bouncer into the trailer, tossed in the blower and extension cord, jumped in the truck, and took a sigh of relief...
- o (exhale)
- o On the ride home we laughed the whole way as we recounted what just took place. It's a memory I'll never forget – when Joe and I single handedly ruined a college party.
- o But more importantly, we had experienced a glimpse of what it was like to be desirable to women.
- o Thank you

