

## SHIPPING AND HANDLING

by Ray Fisher

**GENRE:** Comedy

**SYNOPSIS:** Jake, in fear of sinning, delivers himself to Ryan's house in a big box for a friendly conversation.

**DIRECTOR'S TIP:** The practical logistics of getting a large cardboard box pushed onstage with an actor inside might be difficult, so you may consider having the box already set on stage (with actor inside) before the service begins. Another option would be to place him in a tall box (e.g., a refrigerator box) and cut out the bottom—thereby allowing the actor inside to “walk” as the box is moved into position—but this should be rehearsed with the actor playing the delivery man to insure that it can be done smoothly. The main humor of the scene's opening lies in the audience not knowing that Ryan's just received a human being in the mail, so great care should be taken not to give away the “device.”

**TIME:** Under 5 minutes

**CAST BREAKDOWN:** 3

**TOPIC:** New Year, Sin

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** 1 John 1:8

**CHURCH YEAR SEASON:** New Year's

**SUGGESTED USE:** Worship Service

**CHARACTERS:**

RYAN  
JAKE  
Delivery man

**PROPS:** Two chairs, tape, a knife, two small slips of paper, a really big box

**COSTUMES:** Contemporary

**SOUND:** Three wireless microphones

**LIGHTING:** General stage

**SETTING:** Ryan's house

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*DELIVERY MAN brings a large box to the front of the stage and knocks on an imaginary door. When there is no answer, he knocks again, even louder.*

**RYAN:** *(Running on stage to get the door)* Relax, I'm coming. *(Opens the door)* Hello, sir.

**DELIVERY MAN:** I have a package for a Mr. Palmer.

**RYAN:** That's me.

**DELIVERY MAN:** Sign here, please.

*He holds out a piece of paper, which RYAN signs.*

**RYAN:** What is it?

**DELIVERY MAN:** I've been delivering packages for eleven years. You're the 34,861st person to ask me that. I don't know what's in the package.

**RYAN:** You keep track of that question?

**DELIVERY MAN:** Yeah, somebody at the office gives me a nickel every time I hear it. It was part of our union labor plan. The money goes in my retirement fund. Can you sign this to verify that you asked and I answered your question? *(Holds out another slip of paper, which RYAN signs)* Thank you, and have a good day.

*RYAN tries to pick up the box, but can't. Tries a second time, and gets the box a little off the ground, then drops it hard.*

**JAKE:** Ouch! Hey, dude, open the box. It's me—Jake.

**RYAN:** Jake?

**JAKE:** Yeah, your old college roommate.

**RYAN:** Oh, Jake! What's with the box?

**JAKE:** I can explain the box—could you just let me out? It's hard to breathe in here.

*RYAN attempts to open the box, but it's taped rather well. After a struggle, RYAN exits to get something to cut it open. When he is gone, JAKE tries to escape but fails. RYAN enters with a knife.*

**RYAN:** I got a knife from the kitchen. Hold still.

*RYAN begins to cut.*

**JAKE:** Ahhh! My eye!