

Drama Ministry®

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THE GRUDGE

by John Cospers

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: A teenage girl realizes that if she wants to stay connected to God, she must do away with a grudge against a former friend.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: Try to have the Creature be as menacing as possible when he enters to make the comic effect of his being sick on candy all the more funny. His pitiful nature will also be highlighted throughout the piece if he has been adequately humbled at the beginning of the drama.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 4

TOPIC: Relationships, Forgiveness

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 5:23-24

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Youth Ministry

CHARACTERS:

WADE and KATE: good friends

LAUREN: Kate's former best friend

JON: Lauren's friend

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: General clothing

SOUND: Four wireless microphones and sound effects if desired

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: A church youth meeting

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Director's Tip:

Comedy: One of the secrets of effective comedy is to take an ordinary situation and just turn it up a couple of notches. The punch line of *The Grudge* is of course the fact that such an unbelievably big deal is being made of such a small offense (and that a somewhat larger offense is largely ignored). For this reason, it may be helpful to play it straight for as long as the scene will allow it. Direct your actors to play the scene almost exactly as they would a drama, right up until the ironic ending.

Blocking: The first half of this scene requires Lauren and Jon to be having a conversation on stage while the audience's focus is supposed to be on Kate and Wade, so the trick is to keep Jon and Lauren "alive" without drawing too much attention. They should probably be directed to pantomime a conversation without too much animation, in order to keep the congregation's eyes and ears where they belong.

It may also be helpful to block Jon and Lauren at upstage left and Kate and Wade at downstage right. Downstage people tend to draw focus, and upstage left is the "weakest" stage position, so it should keep your audience's attention on Kate until she bridges the gap and approaches Lauren. As an added bonus, movement from stage right to stage left is one of the most natural crosses to make on stage, as it follows the line of reading for Western audiences (we read from left to right). So Kate's move to Lauren for reconciliation will seem all the more "right."

Getting Started: Always bear in mind that a scene doesn't always begin with the opening line. The first real "moment" of the scene is Kate's reaction to seeing Lauren—not her first line of dialogue—so make sure the physicality of that reaction is very clear. Audiences also sometimes require a few seconds to get tuned in to a scene, so make sure that moment is big enough to be unmistakable.

LAUREN and JON are on stage, talking and laughing. WADE and KATE enter. KATE sees LAUREN, freezes up, and turns away. WADE senses something wrong.

WADE: What's wrong?

KATE: What is she doing here?

WADE: Who?

KATE: The girl over there. That's Lauren!

WADE: Lauren?

KATE: My so-called "best" friend of ten years until she betrayed me.

WADE: Oh.