

THE NOT SO GREAT DEPRESSION

by Donna Langerquist

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: To give the audience an inside look at depression from the point of view of the sufferer and a loved one.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: The sketch is written so audience members will be drawn into the depression as it progresses. It is important to have both characters, especially Ted, start out as upbeat as possible. You want to keep the audience guessing about why Sally is at home. It is also important to make both characters likeable. Ted is not in denial and Sally is not self-absorbed. The audience should know that they love each other.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 2

TOPIC: Depression

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Psalm 22:1

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Worship Service

CHARACTERS:

Sally—Age 35–40; she was a bubbly go-getter until recently; now she is depressed and cries easily

Ted—Age 35–40; he is still a bubbly go-getter; a businessman; he does not deny his wife's depression but thinks if he maintains a positive attitude, she'll snap out of it.

PROPS: 1) Office desk and chair, 2) Laptop, 3) Briefcase, 4) Papers on desk, 5) Recliner, 6) Card table, 7) Papers and envelopes, 8) 2 telephones, 9) A bottle of aspirin, 10) A box of facial tissues

COSTUMES: Ted is dressed in business attire. Sally is in her bathrobe; she looks somewhat unkempt.

SOUND: Two wireless mics; sound effect of phone ringing

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: We see two "settings:" Ted's office at work and Sally at home.

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Sally enters stage right in her bathrobe. She crosses toward an easy chair with a card table in front of it. There is a phone, a bottle of aspirin, a box of tissues and a stack of envelopes are on the table; papers are scattered on the table and the floor. Sally stares at the mess, shakes her head and moves away. She crosses to look out a window down stage right. Stage left, we see Ted standing beside his desk at work. He has a phone, a laptop, and some papers on his desk.

TED: *(On the phone)* Yeah, she's been working out of our home the last few months. She loves it. She can work in her pajamas if she wants to. *(Laughter)* ... Really? That's great. Congratulations! Well, I'll be sure to tell Sally ... oh, that's right, you can tell her yourself on Friday night! I almost forgot about that ... I guess we'll see you then, Bill. Say hi to Carol for me. Bye. *(He hangs up and sits. He begins working on his laptop.)*

SALLY: *(To the audience)* Ted has been telling people I'm working out of our home. They're happy for me. They think it's a cost-cutting measure or more convenient for me. *(Crossing back toward table)* I suppose it's okay if they think that. Ted wants them to think that. *(Pause)* He'd like to think that, too. *(Ted picks up the phone and dials. The phone rings. Sally answers.)* Hello.

TED: Hi, honey. How's it going?

SALLY: Fine, I guess. How's it going there?

TED: *(Ted sits back in his chair.)* Fine, fine. I just got off the phone with Bill Simmons. He said to say hi and that he and Carol are looking forward to seeing you Friday night at the sales awards dinner.

SALLY: Did you tell him I'd be going?

TED: No. He just said he was looking forward to seeing you and I said—

SALLY: I'm not going, Ted.

TED: All right, honey.

SALLY: I'm not going.

TED: All right. We'll talk about it when I get home. *(Awkward pause)* I should be home around six. I've got to finish a report here.

SALLY: Sure.

TED: Are you doing okay with that mailing?

SALLY: *(She looks at the incomplete work.)* Yeah, fine.