

READY FOR BABY

by JOHN COSPER

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: An impatient couple doesn't quite get the concept that they must wait nine months to see their baby, and even longer before the child can enter school and play sports.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 4

TOPIC: Patience, Parenting

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Proverbs 14:29

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Sermon Starter, Illustration

CHARACTERS:

DR. MILLMOSS—an OB/GYN

NURSE (voice only)

TODD and MEG Brown—an impatient couple

PROPS: Desk, chairs, paperwork

COSTUMES: Modern clothing

SOUND: Three wireless microphones

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Doctor's office

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ISSN 1084-5917

Publisher: Regi Stone

Executive Editor: Kimberlee Crisafulli / Assistant Editor: Scott Crain

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DIRECTOR'S TIP:

SAME PLANET, DIFFERENT WORLDS: Much of the comedy in *Ready for Baby* comes from the fact that the happy couple seems to be living in their own world. It's almost as if they're in their own scene, working off a different 'script' than the doctor. Explore this dynamic in rehearsals, making sure Todd and Meg are a unified team, while the baffled doctor struggles to get through to them. The more down-to-earth and 'normal' the doctor can be played, the more ludicrous the couple will seem, so encourage the actor portraying Millmoss to play it straight.

Likewise, the sheer magnitude of the couple's reactions should probably be out of touch with what Millmoss is trying to communicate. Meg's defensiveness about her son ("You saying our kid is slow?") could be fairly confrontational, which makes it all the more humorous, as not only did she entirely miss the point, but also got offended. The doctor is then in the difficult position of not only having to clarify, but pacify, which makes a difficult situation even worse.

A CLEAN GETAWAY: Meg's last line provides one last comic punch to end out the scene, and care should be taken that it doesn't get lost in the doctor's exit. The general rule of thumb in comedy is to have no movement during a laugh line, as it can distract the audience. Blocking requirements will vary greatly based on your performance space, but it's probably a good idea to give the doctor a good 'clean' exit (ideally through a slamming door), and wait until he's completely gone before Todd turns back to Meg.

HAD ENOUGH?: Take full advantage of the point at which the doctor finally reaches his limit with the goofy couple. Comedy is usually about taking a normal situation and pushing it as far as possible, so the doctor's patience should be stretched as far as it can before it breaks.

The stage directions call for the doctor to stand and exit following his last line, but it may be effective to have him on his feet earlier—his body language communicating his desperate attempts to reach the poor clueless couple. Even in a short scene there should be plenty of opportunity for 'build', so be sure to really play up the slow burn of the doctor's temper, until the moment when he exits and leaves them to their delusions.

The setting is a doctor's office. DR. MILLMOSS is behind his desk. The phone buzzes.

MILLMOSS: Yes?

NURSE: Dr. Millmoss, the Browns are here.

MILLMOSS: Send them in, please.