

THE DOCTOR IS IN

by Lorna Lee

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: Charlie, the Christian, struggles with the real meaning of the Christian life. Lucy suggests that busyness—whether secular or Christian—is the way to happiness. In contrast, Linus presents true satisfaction by adopting a life driven by God’s priorities.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 3

TOPIC: Christian Living, Purpose

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 10:38-39, Matthew 6:33

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Pre-sermon set-up

CHARACTERS:

CHARLIE BROWN—adult take-off on the Peanuts character

LUCY—adult take-off on the Peanuts character

LINUS—adult take-off on the Peanuts character

PROPS: Psychiatrist’s booth—small desk with vertical posts extending up on either side to support a crude, hand-painted sign, “Psychiatric Help, 5¢.” On the front of the desk is another hand-painted sign, “The Doctor is OUT,” designed with an OUT/IN flip card.

COSTUMES: Each player is dressed as near to his/her Peanuts character as possible.

SOUND: Sound bite from the Rolling Stones’ “I Can’t Get No Satisfaction”, Sound bite from Steven Curtis Chapman’s “The Change”, Three wireless mics

LIGHTING: General stage; spotlight for Linus

SETTING: Neighborhood sidewalk

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Director's Tip:

When an author assigns very specific props to a character, he or she usually intends those props to help explain the character's personality. Such is the case with this script. The props the author has assigned to Lucy will help the audience understand, in a relatively short time, what Lucy is all about. We catch on quickly that she's about things and busyness. It's important then not to cloud the issue by giving extra props to Charlie Brown and Linus. Charlie Brown has coins in his pocket, but he eventually gives those to Lucy, adding to her cache of props. Otherwise, Charlie Brown doesn't need anything. And Linus has his trusty blanket, but that's all he needs.

Sometimes, actors will ask if they can add props that aren't in the script. Often, this is a sign that the actor is uncomfortable with some aspect of the script or of his character and wants the prop as a crutch. Instead of adding extra props that could confuse the point of the script, work with the actor to figure out why he thinks he needs a prop in the first place. Chances are, you'll end up with a stronger performance without the prop, and the actor will have more confidence for his next performance as well.

Rock song playing as CHARLIE BROWN enters gloomily and sits on client stool. He reads sign. Sits and sighs deeply. Music fades out.

LUCY: *(Struts in joyfully, eating an apple, flips the sign to "IN," sits and props feet on booth surface)* Well, what is it this time, Charlie Brown?

CHARLIE: I'm depressed, Lucy.

LUCY: *(Sarcastically, takes a bite of apple)* Oh, that's a news flash.

CHARLIE: No, it's really bad today. I just feel—

LUCY: *(Interrupting)* Hold on, hold on! Before you begin, I must ask you to pay in advance. Five cents, please. *(Sticks homemade collection can in CHARLIE'S face. He digs into pocket then drops in a coin. LUCY shakes the can while dancing exuberantly.)* Boy, what a sound! That beautiful sound of cold, hard cash! How I love to hear that old money clink! Nickels, nickels, plinking nickels!

CHARLIE: *(Getting impatient)* Now, getting back to my problem?

LUCY: *(Plops back onto stool, waves him on)* Oh sure, sure. Go on. *(Takes bite of apple)*