

THE TREADMILL

by SCOTT CRAIN

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: After a physical exam, a man finds that the diagnosis is worse than he feared.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: If an exam gown is too tricky to find, then Rick can be fully clothed, but wearing an undershirt on the "exam table". Whatever's simplest.

TIME: 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 2M

THEME: Christian living

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Ecclesiastes 3; 11:8-12:14

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Seeker Services; sermon illustration

CHARACTERS:

RICK

DR. BOB

PROPS: Stethoscope, pen, clipboard with notes, medical file

COSTUMES: Exam gown and contemporary clothes for Rick, lab coat for Dr. Bob

SOUND: Wireless mics if desired

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: An exam room

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Lights up. DR. BOB gently moves a stethoscope across RICK's back, frowning as he listens at each spot.

DOCTOR: Deep breath.

RICK takes a deep breath. DOCTOR adjusts the stethoscope slightly.

Again.

Another breath, and the DOCTOR steps away, removing the stethoscope from his ears and scribbling a few notes on the clipboard, his expression set in a frown.

RICK: Well? *(no response)* Do you know what it is?

DOCTOR: *(nods, still writing)* I think so.

RICK: Is it serious?

DOCTOR: Very serious.

RICK: *(sighs, lowering his eyes)* Is there a cure for it?

DOCTOR: Not that I'm aware of.

RICK: Well—what is it?

DOCTOR: *(lowers the clipboard, meeting RICK's eyes; ominously)* It's called...middle age.

.....Beat. RICK not getting it.

RICK: Middle age?

DOCTOR: *(grins)* There's nothing wrong with you, Rick. You're just getting old.

RICK: *(darkly)* Fifty isn't old, you quack.

DOCTOR: Hm. *(scribbling a new note on the clipboard)* Getting grumpy, too. And don't call me a quack until you see my bill. *(looks up)* That's an old doctor joke.

RICK: Then save it for the old patients.

He hops off the exam table and moves to a chair, where his pants are draped, and gets dressed over the following:

I'm telling you I've been out of breath and achy for the past month. Same exercise routine, on the same equipment. The treadmill hasn't changed.

DOCTOR: The treadmill hasn't changed, but you have. Try lowering the incline by a few