

Psych Nick

by

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Cast:

RENEE – Female, 61, a psychologist, dressed professionally

MARY – Female, any age, receptionist

MAN – Male, 33, long hair, dresses in a white robe and sandals

Setting:

Present day, December. Action takes place in a psychologist office. There are two exits, one leading to a waiting room, and one leading directly to the outside. The office is decorated for the Christmas holidays, and there is a mirror. Note: the play is written to take place in Santa Rosa, California, but the location, highway reference, and university reference can be changed to give the play a local flavor.

Psych Nick

Scene opens with Renee sitting on a chair on stage. She reaches into her bag, pulls out a plastic water bottle, takes a short drink, and puts it back. She then stands up and picks up her bag as if to leave. Mary enters.

MARY

Dr. Robins? Good, you're still here.

RENEE

For a minute – I still have some Christmas shopping to do.

MARY

Well there's a ... man ... here to see you. He says you should be expecting him.

RENEE

I don't have any appointments listed.

MARY

I know, but he's very insistent.

RENEE

Direct him to psych services. That's what they're there for.

MARY

I tried. He's sure you're "anticipating his arrival." This guy is ... convincing. I can't explain it, but I think you should see him.

RENEE

Sighs – puts bag down.

O.K. send him in.

MAN

Enters

Good afternoon, Dr. Robins. Thank you for seeing me.

Mary exits

RENEE

Ummmm ... your ... wel ... come. You said I should be expecting you.

Psych Nick

MAN

My presence should have been foretold.

RENEE

No one called to make an appointment.

MAN

That is a hindrance – but here I am. May I sit?

RENEE

Sure. May I ask your name?

MAN

I think you know who I am.

RENEE

Just to be sure. So we can bill you properly.

MAN

Jesus of Nazareth.

RENEE

And I'm Renee of Sebastopol. So, um ... Jesus ... what can I do for you?

MAN

You don't seem to believe me.

RENEE

Sorry – I do believe that you believe you're Jesus.

MAN

I'm used to people not having faith. But it's vital you accept what I say as true.

RENEE

Let's just continue.

Man raises one arm. A loud clap of thunder.

MAN

You believe me now?

Psych Nick

RENEE

I'm sorry, I don't. You probably knew it was going to rain.

Man raises his arms. Lights go black.

RENEE (cont)

Whoa! What happened to the lights?

MAN

I'm not just the clapper. Look out the window.

RENEE

Dark too. What's going on?

MAN

Do you believe me now? Or should I leave the earth in total darkness?

RENEE

No – please – I'm convinced!

Lights up

MAN

You sure? I could bring on the frogs and locusts?

RENEE

I believe you. (Drinks again from water bottle in her bag). Why are you here?

MAN

Your ad said that you specialize in holiday depression.

RENEE

Do you feel depressed?

MAN

I often do during this time of year.

RENEE

What specifically makes you sad?

Psych Nick

MAN

For one thing, I have a birthday coming up, and no one seems to care.

RENEE

Billions of people celebrate your birth.

MAN

Uh huh. Your last birthday was February 18 – what did you get –

RENEE

Wait a minute. How'd you know my birthday?

MAN

Renee, I'm the son of God. It's not like I had to hack your computer. So what presents did you get?

RENEE

My boyfriend gave me an iPad, my daughter got me theater tickets, and my son, well he promised to wash my car every month for a year.

MAN

Cool. Know what I got? ... Nothing ... \$2 trillion spent on holiday shopping worldwide and not a single shekel for me.

RENEE

I don't think people realize that –

MAN

It's not like I'm hard to shop for. I'd love a pair of comfortable loafers.

RENEE

Presents aren't the important thing. Your birth is commemorated all over the world.

MAN

Is it?

RENEE

Yes.

MAN

I think it's more about some jolly white haired guy in a red suit.

Psych Nick

RENEE

It's about both of you

MAN

When your children were young, you took them every year to see Santa.

RENEE

Yes – so?

MAN

And you took them to Christmas Mass ... oh ... that's right ... never!

RENEE

O.K., I see your point. But you shouldn't –

MAN

Crosses to mirror

And why's that guy from the North Pole representing me? Tell me, do I look fat?

RENEE

No. I tell all my patients that they should consider the rest of the year. Particularly you – you have a second holiday. A very solemn remembrance.

MAN

Egg hunts? Chocolate treats? Doesn't seem solemn to me.

RENEE

That's to celebrate your ascension. Good Friday – people mourn your passing.

MAN

Tell me -- what's the most stirring memory of your childhood?

RENEE

I'd have to say the JFK assassination, but what does that have to do –

MAN

Two days after he was shot, were there a bunch of mourners dressed up in bunny costumes?

Psych Nick

RENEE

I'm a bit surprised – I'd think if you'd be more troubled by larger issues ... starvation ... famine.

MAN

See, that's my point. I've been dealing with those problems my entire life. I gave you penicillin ... high yield wheat ... Beyonce! Don't I ever get some ME time? I thought I'd get some compassion from you.

Begins to cross to exit

RENEE

Sorry. You're right. Please stay. (Man stops) Tell me about –

MARY

Enters

Excuse me, Dr. Robins.

RENEE

Please no interruptions. I'm still with ... um ...

MARY

It's about him. There are three men who say they're theology professors from USF. They want to warn you about a visitor.

RENEE

They're a bit late.

MARY

They got tied up on the 101.

Renee motions for Mary to leave – Mary exits

RENEE

Not even God can get around Bay Area traffic.

MAN

I don't see the humor in my predicament.

RENEE

Sorry, didn't mean to upset you.

Psych Nick

MAN

You should greet your visitors.

RENEE

I'll see them after you leave. Mary will keep them occupied.

MAN

Mary? Where?

RENEE

Mary's the name of my receptionist – you met her on your way in.

MAN

Oh. There've been too many Mary's in my life.

RENEE

Is that a problem?

MAN

I definitely have mother issues. My biggest source of shame.

RENEE

Don't feel bad. Most of my patients do.

MAN

Do their mothers still claim they're virgins?

RENEE

Actually, there are some who –

MAN

I really don't want to talk about that now. Too much to unpack. My father's the more pressing problem.

RENEE

Why's that?

MAN

You stayed married to a man for 20 years who you didn't really love. Why?

Psych Nick

RENEE

There were many reasons ... O.K. I did it for my children.

MAN

Exactly. You sacrificed the best years of your life for them, and –

RENEE

I don't know if they were the best. I'm looking forward to –

MAN

Spoiler alert! Those WERE the best years. (beat) I'm sorry, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. (Hugs Renee). Hey, tell ya what I'll do. You know that amazing new release of Pinot Noir you've been craving. (Renee nods) Well, check your bag. (Renee reaches in her bag and pulls out a plastic water bottle with wine-colored liquid) Go on, try it!

RENEE

Oh my g ... That IS amazing. Do you want some?

MAN

No thanks – I'm more of a Miller Lite guy.

RENEE

Let's get back to the issue. Why's the fact that I stayed married for my kids important?

MAN

Like you, most people will do anything for their progeny. But my father – he lets me die. As a career move!

RENEE

Jesus, your dad has ... unique ... pressures on him. He was taking the entire human race into consideration. And now you're together in paradise for eternity.

MAN

It's not as good as you think. We fight a lot. I know I disappoint him.

RENEE

You're probably just imagining it.

MAN

He keeps sending me Craigslist postings for roommates wanted. Last week he said two millennia is a long time to go between jobs.

Psych Nick

RENEE

Have you talked things out with him?

MAN

He always seems busy.

RENEE

I know your father has a deep love for you. He'll make the time if you ask.

MAN

You think so?

RENEE

I'm sure.

MAN

You know, he does listen to me. During the Apollo 13 mission, he was all like "let 'em die," and I was like "but dad, think of the inspiration for mankind."

RENEE

See.

MAN

Wow – I'll talk to him tonight. You know, you're great at your job, but I think you'd make a good priest.

RENEE

Not sure if you've been paying attention, but that's against the rules.

MAN

Still? I thought that guy from Argentina was a reformer. Oh well, dad created the world in six days, but changing the male ego? That'll take some time.

RENEE

Can I ask you, why'd you come to see me?

MAN

Told you – you had a great ad. Plus there's plenty of parking.

RENEE

I mean – why come to earth. There must be good psychologists in heaven.

Psych Nick

MAN

Most of them couldn't get in because of their billing practices. (beat) Thank you. I guess my problems aren't that unique.

RENEE

We all have our crosses to ... (Man gives her a hurt look) ... sorry. Hey, if you ever want to talk again, just let me know.

MAN

No, if I need you, I'll simply send one of my angels to call you up.

RENEE

No ... no ... I mean, I'm not ready to –

MAN

Don't be tripping. I was just having some fun. I must be feeling better! Can I go out this way?

RENEE

Sure.

MAN

I know they have good intentions, but I hate theologians. Always interpreting what I mean.

Man Exits. Renee' pushes intercom button. Mary enters.

MARY

Yes Dr. Robins.

RENEE

Please send the three professors home. I'm definitely done for the day.

MARY

Well, there's another man here. He's holding two tablets. And the shrubs outside keep catching on fire.

END OF PLAY