

THE WAITING ROOM

A Play in 10 Minutes

By

Julie King

Julie King
(address)
(phone)
writehearted@gmail.com

THE WAITING ROOM by Julie King

SETTING:

The old-fashion maternity ward waiting room where fatherhood begins...

CAST:

New Dad	Nervous would be an understatement.
Military Dad	Fatherhood is a military campaign and this is his fourth time in the waiting room, so he knows what to expect.
Science Dad	He is a new father feverishly working on the perfect formula for fatherhood before the "big bang" comes.
Coach Dad	He already has one or two kids, but he is wound up and ready for the "big game" to begin as he consults a stop watch.
Gangster Dad	Hey pal, even gangsters are dads, know whatta mean? Couise ya do and he knows the routine.
Christian Dad	Cool and collected, he calmly reads the Bible, knowing it's all the Father's Hands- it doesn't matter if this is first time or not.

PROPS:

- 1) Four sets of 1 or 2 waiting room chairs (magazines and end tables w/lamps are optional).
- 2) Whistle and stopwatch for Coach Dad.
- 3) Marker and slide rule for Science Dad.
- 4) Bible for Christian Dad.

c2003 Julie King, all rights reserved.

SETTING: IT'S A SQUARE WAITING ROOM WITH SETS OF CHAIRS LINED UP AGAINST EACH "WALL". THE ENTRANCE IS AT STAGE RIGHT.

GANGSTER DAD IS SITTING OPPOSITE THE ENTRANCE AND ALWAYS ON THE LOOK OUT FOR THE NURSE OR POSSIBLY THE COPS.

COACH DAD IS SITTING DOWN RIGHT BY THE ENTRANCE ALL SET TO GO-GO-GO AND WIN ONE FOR THE GIPPER!

SCIENCE DAD IS DOWN STAGE, FACING THE AUDIENCE AND COMPLETELY ABSORBED IN WRITING OUT A FORMULA ON THE "WALL" WITH A PERMANENT MARKER, OCCASIONALLY CONSULTING THE SLIDE RULE OR PACING BACK AND FORTH WHILE HE THINKS.

MILITARY DAD IS PACING BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE WAITING ROOM WITH MILITARY PRECISION AS THOUGH HE WERE ON GUARD DUTY.

CHRISTIAN DAD SITS UP STAGE FACING THE AUDIENCE AND CALMLY READING THE BIBLE. AN OUTBURST FROM ONE OF THE DADS WILL CATCH HIS ATTENTION AND THEN HE'LL JUST SHAKE HIS HEAD AT THE ABSURDITY OF THE OTHERS AND GO BACK TO READING.

AT RISE: NEW DAD ANXIOUSLY ENTERS THE WAITING ROOM ESCORTED BY A "NURSE".

NEW DAD

Are you sure she's okay? I know she's in good hands, but... No, "we" are not going to be "fine", "we" are a nervous wreck! Wait! Where are you going?

(Dashes back to the entrance)

You'll let me know the minute anything happens? That's Andersen with an "E" and my wife's name is- oh, you got that information already? Okay then, well I'll just be right here waiting!

(Turns back to the waiting room uneasily)

'Relax', she says, 'take it easy', she says. Sure, that's easy for her to say! She's not the one who's going to be a father! Oh boy, I'm going to be a father! What do I do? I don't know what to do, I've never done this before!

MILITARY DAD

(Marches up to NEW DAD and places a sympathetic hand on his shoulder.)

Get a grip on yourself, son, you've got a long march ahead of you.

NEW DAD

I'm trying, but this is all so overwhelming. How can you be so calm at a time like this?

MILITARY DAD

Son, this is my fourth Maternity Campaign.

NEW DAD

Fourth!? You already have three kids?

MILITARY DAD

That's right, I am the proud General of a fine young squad of boys and that's the key, son. Discipline, my boy, discipline! You follow regulations and you'll have an Army that will do the neighborhood proud!

NEW DAD

Regulations?

MILITARY DAD

Pay attention, son- stand up straight!- and I'll brief on the regs for new fathers. Reveille is at oh-six hundred hours. Feedings will occur every 4 hours hence, followed by diaper maneuvers and crawling exercises. Taps is at oh-twenty hundred hours which includes the bath and the bedtime story briefing.

NEW DAD

Whew! I guess that's one way to look at it... umm, what does your wife think about all that?

MILITARY DAD

Yes, well, she is the Commander In Charge of the night shift and I'm sure she has her own protocols to follow. Piece of advise, son, never question a WAC.

(NEW DAD looks confused)

Wife's Army Corp., son!

(COACH DAD CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT HE IS HEARING- IT'S A BUNCH OF BALONEY AND SCIENCE DAD IS GETTING EXCITED LIKE HE'S ON THE VERGE OF A MAJOR DISCOVERY.)

MILITARY DAD

(Looks up at the entrance and responds to being called)

McArthur? Yes, ma'am!

MILITARY DAD (CONT'D)

(Turns back to NEW DAD, who snaps to attention)

Atten-hut! Chin up! Shoulders back! You can do it, son! Remember, you are the few, the proud, a father!

(Salutes and then marches up to entrance)

Report, nurse... ...A boy! Yes... ...yes. 10 pounds, 9 ounces you say? A fine, strapping soldier! And the Mrs?... ...Good, good. Well, lead on then and we'll conduct the baby inspection!

(Exits with military flourish).

NEW DAD

Hmmm, I don't know, that seems like such an extreme way to be a father. There's gotta be a better way.

(NEW DAD LOOKS AROUND AND STARTS TO SIT DOWN WHEN SCIENCE DAD GRABS HIM TO LOOK AT HIS FORMULA.)

SCIENCE DAD

Excuse me, but I believe I have the answer here. Yes, yes indeedy, I do. After years of research, I have found the answer!

NEW DAD

What is that? I don't think you're suppose to be writing on the hospital wall with a permanent marker.

SCIENCE DAD

(Starts rattling off the formula, punctuating different points with the with the marker)

Nonsense, this will revolutionize the world! By combining these proteins here, here and here with the exact balance of Simulac to the 12th degree of 9 times the square-root of milk here, here, and here; multiplied by the circumference of the sauce pan with the volume of the bottle, factoring in the optimum suction rate versus air-intake and the necessary burping applications here, here, and here.

(Pauses to take a breath and point out the critical part of the formula)

This part is very, very important- yes indeedy it is. You have to be very careful with the formula at this point- you don't want to start any sort of stomach combustion that might lead to an eruption out of either valve.

NEW DAD

Huh?

SCIENCE DAD

The subject- I mean, the baby! You must pay close attention to this part here, here and here, or you'll get eruptions coming out of the baby! Not good, not good at all. But there you have it! I, Jonas Lister Einstein Bunson has discovered the perfect formula. It will revolutionize the world! Science has the answer for

everything when you-

COACH DAD

(Jumps to feet blowing whistle and calling time out)

Whoa, time out! Time out!

(Pulls NEW DAD to the side for a huddle)

Don't listen to that pencil pushing, beaker burning bench-warmer! Life is game!
You gotta go out there tackle, tackle, tackle!

(ALL PAUSE AND TURN TO THE ENTRANCE AS THE "NURSE" MAKES AN ANNOUNCEMENT.)

SCIENCE DAD

Oh, my, that's me, yes indeedy.

(Hands NEW DAD the marker, then bustles over to the entrance)

Yes?... ..Hmmm, I see. ...A girl? Are you sure?... ..No, no, that can't be! No, no indeedy, that was not in the equation. There must be some mistake. All the tests proved conclusively that it would be a boy.

(Nervously pulls out slide rule and exits)

I must rethink this new development. Are you sure it's a girl? Nurse?
Nurrrrrrssssse?!

COACH DAD

(Pooh-poohs SCIENCE DAD and pulls NEW DAD back into the huddle)

Ah, forget him! Like I said, life is a game, and the only thing that matters in a game is winning! And the way you win is with a foolproof game plan.

(Glances at stopwatch)

Hmmmm, bottom of the 9th and still no baby. I hope the doc didn't call a penalty on my wife or anything. Anyway take the diaper, for instance. Easy win when you gotta good game plan to follow.

(Grabs marker from NEW DAD and writes out a game plan on the "wall")

See, corners A and B come to the center here and are secured with a pin. Then once you've got a good grip on the dirty diaper, go long for the diaper pail, dodging the crib here, feint to the left pass the toy box- watch out for the rocking chair!- straight for the diaper pail then score!

(Dances around making crowd noises)

He scores and the crowd goes wild- yeah! yeah!

(Stops, suddenly very serious)

But whatever you do, don't fumble the diaper. The wife doesn't like that and you might get benched.

(Hears name being called, then goes to entrance)

Time out! Yep, that's me. So what have we got out there?... ..Uh-huh... ..uh-huh... ..A boy? Score!!... ..9 pounds, 5 ounces? Yes! Another quarterback!!

(Jumps around doing the victory dance and blowing whistle as he exits)

And the crowd goes wild- yeah! yeah!...

NEW DAD

Boy, I don't know, that doesn't seem like the answer either.

GANGSTER DAD

Psssst. Hey, pal.

(NEW DAD looks around and then points to himself questioningly)

Yeah, you. C'mere. Have a seat, pal, take a load off. I see ya been nosin' around here asking about fadderhood.

NEW DAD

Well yeah, it's just so overwhelming and I have so many questions, I don't even know-

GANGSTER DAD

Ahhh, don't listen to dem shmucks. Let me tell ya, fadderhood is all part of da Family. Da Family takes care of ya, know whatta mean? So ya wanna make sure ya raise da kids to be a part of da Family and ya can't go wrong, know whatta mean? Couise ya do, pal!

NEW DAD

Umm, well no, not really...

GANGSTER DAD

What? You got cement in there for brains, or what. Okay, lissen, pal, say yous gotta kid with a head for noiumber. Sos he becomes an accountant and loins how ta cook da books, know whatta mean? Couise ya do. Or say he's gotta an eye for da law, sos he becomes an lawyah cause da Family always needs good lawyahs that sees things our way. And if ya have a little goil? You got it made there too, pal. Goils are special. Ya treat her like a little princess sos ya can marry her to some special joe in da Family, know whatta mean? Couise ya do, pal. And when in doubt, ya go to da Godfadder and he takes care a-ya, know whatta mean? Ya can't go wrong when yer in da Family.

(Glances at the entrance)

Hey, I don't remember it taken so long before- I'm gettin kinda noivous here. I wonder if da Doc needs a little "persuasion" ta move things along here before the heat comes.

NEW DAD

Persuasion?

GANGSTER DAD

Yeah, yeah, sure, pal. I'll give 'em anudder minute or two and then- oh hey, here comes da nois now. ...Correlli? Ya, so who wants ta know?... ...Oh, da baby's here, well why didn't ya say so... ...A goil? Well whatta ya know. Thanks a lot nois, ya been a real doll.

GANGSTER DAD (CONT'D)

(Gets up and shakes NEW DAD's hand)

Well hey, pal, good talkin' to ya. Lissen, if ya ever wanna join da Family, come down to O'Malley's and I'll take care of ya. But hey pal, if da cops come nosin' around here, ya never saw me, know whatta mean? Couise ya do, pal. I can sees your a good joe.

(Gives NEW DAD an encouraging pat on the shoulder and heads for exit)

And remember pal, da Family takes care a-ya. Hey, nois? Is there a backdoor arounds here sos I can slip out the back all quiet like, know whatta mean? Couise ya do, youra real doll.

NEW DAD

(Starts pacing in a panic)

Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy! I didn't think fatherhood could be so complicated! There's got to be a better way. I want to be a good father, isn't there someone I can turn to?

(CHRISTIAN DAD IS ABOUT TO SPEAK UP BUT THEN THE NEW DAD HEARS HIS NAME BEING CALLED AND DASHES OVER TO THE ENTRANCE.)

NEW DAD (CONT'D)

Andersen with an "E"? Yes, yes, that's me!... ..A girl, I have girl? Oh thank you, thank you nurse, congratulations! I mean- what?... ..Another girl- I have two girls??!! Are you sure? Are you sure you didn't count the same one twice? I mean- they all look alike- how can you tell? Oh boy, I'm a new father and there's two of them already??!!... ..What??!! One more??? Another girl??!!

(Starts reeling around looking faint)

Nurse, I don't feel so good...

CHRISTIAN DAD

(Jumps up and helps NEW DAD sit down)

Here, sit down here and put your head between your legs. The nurse is going to get you some Alka-Seltzer.

NEW DAD

(He puts his head down and practically curls up into the fetal position)

I can't believe it, I just can't believe it. Three, I've got three of them! I've never been a father before and now I've got a huge family. What am I going to do?!

CHRISTIAN DAD

Take a deep breath, it's going to be okay.

NEW DAD

Sure, that's easy for you to say.

CHRISTIAN DAD

Actually, yes- it is easy for me to say that. You see, no matter what happens, I know where to turn to for answers and I know Who I can count on for everything.

NEW DAD

(Straightens up with hope)

Really? Who? What? Tell me, I'll pay anything.

CHRISTIAN DAD

(Chuckles and holds up the Bible)

You don't have to pay anything. It's free and it's all right here. And you can count on your Heavenly Father who loves you to see you through anything. Here, take it.

(Hands NEW DAD the Bible)

It will help you get started.

NEW DAD

This is for me? And you're saying that everything I need is in here?

CHRISTIAN DAD

The Word and the Lord hasn't failed me yet. Listen, we go to this wonderful church—great kid's program, adult education, prayer support, soul stirring worship and sermons—and a hip new pastor.

NEW DAD

Hey, that sounds great!

CHRISTIAN DAD

Good, well the address is on the back cover, there. Why don't you bring your new family and I'll introduce you to the pastor.

(Looks up to the entrance)

Yes, nurse, he's going to be just fine.

NEW DAD

(Get's up, holding the Bible like a treasure and starts flipping through the pages while exiting)

Finally! Something that makes sense...

THE END

(No whistles, markers or chairs were harmed during the production of this script.)