

THE CURE

By Peter L. Levy

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ISBN: 1-931000-56-5

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****This skit is designed to be played by students of any age.****

CAST:

DOCTOR-age in 40's

NURSE-Nora—28 years and pretty

HUSBAND-Mr. Benson in his 40's

MRS. VERA ALLENWAY-in her 40's, attractive, if not beautiful.

TIME: The not too distant future.

PLACE: Any chaotic place; in a hospital.

DOCTOR: **(To NURSE)** What do you mean, no syringes?

NURSE: We made the best offer we could: four folding chairs and a table for two dozen clean needles.

DOCTOR: Who are you dealing with these days?

NURSE: The fellow who has been supplying us with milk.

DOCTOR: **(Agitated)** Did you see it? Did you notice it's blue and not white?

NURSE: Everybody adds a little water to it. That's their profit.

DOCTOR: **(Sullen and resigned)** And where is the man that adds the milk? Does he exist, eh? Do they at least *start* with a little bit of milk?

NURSE: It's the times.

DOCTOR: Ah, the universal excuse. If we don't get paid, "It's the times." If I remove a patient's heart instead of the tumor, I suppose I can just shrug and say: "It's the times." Doesn't anything work anymore? Doesn't anyone care: **(Pause)** How old are you?

NURSE: Twenty-eight. Do you think I'm too old for you?

DOCTOR: Good heavens, don't start that meowing of yours. My question had no romantic implication whatsoever. What I wanted to know is whether or not you were old enough to remember that there was a time when planes rose on schedule, when hospitals had all the drugs that a doctor needed and when nurses had sufficient training so that they would save more people than they killed?

NURSE: You promised you wouldn't bring that up again. Nobody told me that two hundred milligrams of that stuff was a lethal dose.

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DOCTOR: That stuff was digitalis. Oh, how I wish we were back to the good old days when only doctors could prescribe drugs. Now listen to me Kali...

NURSE: My name is Nora.

DOCTOR: I know what your given name is, but this one you've earned.

NURSE: You think I don't know that you're making fun of me. I'm not stupid. Kali is an Indian Goddess. The goddess of death.

DOCTOR: **(Clapping his hands)** V – e – r – y g – o – o – d. Very good, except Kali has a hundred hands and she is efficient. Most importantly, she fulfills her assignment—which in her case is death! Now, what's your excuse for killing off patients?

NURSE: **(Crying)** You're insensitive and mean. I haven't killed off more people than any of the other nurses.

DOCTOR: **(Putting his arm around the nurse)** You're right. It's the times. I'm sure you're doing the best you can. **(Looking at a chart)** Get Mrs. Allenway ready. I'm going to discharge her today.

HUSBAND: **(Anxious and timid, arrives in reception area)** Are you the doctor?

DOCTOR: Of course I'm the doctor. Are you a patient or are you here to pick up someone? You don't look sick to me.

HUSBAND: Alice Benson, my wife. They called me and told me I can pick her up.

NURSE: **(Looking at a master list of patients, motions doctor to come over to her, in whispers)** You see...here...Benson..

DOCTOR: Humm. Yes. Strange. Another one of these things.

NURSE: **(To DOCTOR)** What do we do now?

DOCTOR: Same as before. **(Turning to HUSBAND)** Look, take a seat for a moment. I'm sorry we don't have any magazines for you to read, but we traded them for a bottle of aspirin. You don't have any syringes for sale, do you? No, of course not. That's the milkman.

HUSBAND: Are you all right, doctor?

DOCTOR: Of course I'm all right. Why shouldn't I be? I have patients and no medicine. The nurses have had less than three months of training. I am running a death trap. You're very lucky to be taking your wife home. Another day or two and she might not have survived.

HUSBAND: She's okay?

DOCTOR: Fine. Perfect. Just a touch of appendicitis; we removed it and that took care of everything. She's better than ever.

HUSBAND: But...she had a broken arm.

NURSE: You're not telling us our business, are you?

DOCTOR: **(Looking at chart)** It's all written down here. One appendix removed. Pathology normal. Very lucky. No rupture, nice clean sutures, small scar...and that will fade. Much better than a broken arm.

HUSBAND: Yes, I agree appendicitis might be better than a broken arm, but the fact is...

DOCTOR: The fact is that a broken bone is never the same as before. The calcium builds up around the break, there is a greater chance of arthritis and then, there are cases where the bone doesn't heal at all and we have to put in pins and the whole thing becomes very complicated. Now, do you understand?

HUSBAND: I know I'm not a doctor...

DOCTOR: Good, then you accept my explanation.

HUSBAND: I want to be agreeable, but the fact is...

NURSE: That is the second time you have used that phrase.

HUSBAND: Because you people keep interrupting me.

NURSE: For your own good.

HUSBAND: **(Exasperated)** How could my wife come in here with a broken arm and leave with an appendectomy?

DOCTOR: You obviously do not understand hospitals.

HUSBAND: I understand a broken arm. I want to see my wife. And I want to see her right now.

(NURSE holds up master chart and shakes her head)

DOCTOR: **(Very chummy)** Now Mr...ah...Mr.

HUSBAND: Benson. The name is Benson. My wife's name is Alice.

DOCTOR: To be sure. Benson. Did you ever consider changing your name to Allenway?

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