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“Was it Something I Said?”

by
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SYNOPSIS

This play looks at two couples and the challenges they're facing in their marriages. It will inspire thoughtfulness in marriage and honor those who have been married for a lifetime.

Themes: Valentine's Day, Love, Marriage, Commitment, Men's Ministry, Women's Ministry, Mentoring

CAST

Tyler- young dad
Jordan- young dad
Troy- college age
Becky- young mom
Allison- young mom
Ginny- 60's+

PROPS and COSTUMES

Tyler and Jordan should be wearing casual business attire.
Troy can wear casual college student type clothing.
Ginny, Becky, and Allison should be wearing casual attire.

For Men's Side of Stage- Setting is in a park
Park Bench (or chairs put together to look like a bench)
2 Hot Dogs in Buns (on paper plates or in paper fast food baskets)
2 Fast-Food-Type Coffee or Soda Cups
Garbage Can

For Women's Side of Stage- Setting is in a living room

A Tea or Coffee Pot
3 Mugs or Teacups
Small Couch
Parlor Chair
Coffee Table

Optional Sound Effect: Knocking on a Door

There should be two separate "scenes" on stage. All of the men's actions and dialogue should happen on one side of the stage and the women's actions and dialogue should happen on the opposite side.

Tips for Men's Side of Stage-

The stage should be set with a park bench in the center of the men's staging area, with a garbage can directly next to the bench. When Troy enters, he should appear to just be going for a walk in the park, looking around, but not looking at Tyler and Jordan. He needs to get close enough to overhear their conversation before he realizes who is talking. The timing on this should be practiced, as all stages and buildings are different and will require differing amounts of time for Troy to get into position.

Tips for Women’s Side of Stage–

This portion of the stage should be set to look like an older woman’s parlor or living room with the props mentioned above. The couch/chairs should be arranged so the audience can see the three women at all times but should also be slightly angled so the women can look at each other. There should either be a stage entrance that can be used as a door into “Ginny’s House” or some sort of “door” (real or imagined) should be identifiable. If no entrance is easily used in this way, Ginny could simply call “Come in” to a backstage knock and the two women could enter the stage in that way. Knocking can either be a sound effect through the sound system or loud knocking on a backstage door or wall.

No special lighting is required for this skit but the ability to highlight the “active” side of the stage while dimming the “inactive” side of the stage is helpful. The two scenes are happening simultaneously but are completely separate.

The actors should never acknowledge that the other scene is happening. The end of the skit, when the dialogue crosses back and forth, should be practiced and seamless, while still never acknowledging that the other scene is happening. Actors/Actresses should look straight ahead and freeze when the script cuts to the other side of the stage.

WHY

1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 5:25, Colossians 3:19

TIME

Approximately 8-10 minutes

Becky and Allison knock on Ginny's door. Ginny opens the door.

Ginny: Becky! Allison! Oh, come in, come in. *(Ushers them "in")* Your boys are still napping and I hate to wake them. I think I wore them out! *(Laughs)* Can you stay for a bit and have some tea?

Becky and Allison look at each and agree. They sit down while Ginny pours tea.

Becky: Ginny, thank you so much for watching our boys today. It was so nice to have a little breather!

Allison: Yes. Thank you!

Ginny: It was entirely my pleasure. We decorated Valentine cookies! My kitchen looks like a sprinkle factory exploded, and your boys may have ingested a year's worth of sugar, but we had so much fun!

The three women laugh and take sips of their tea.

Ginny: So, tell me! Do you have big Valentine plans for tonight?

Allison: *(short laugh)* I doubt it! Tyler and Jordan will probably stop on the way home and buy something from some guy on the street corner...

Becky/Allison: *(looking at each other)* Uh huh!

Women look straight ahead and freeze. Cut to men's dialogue.

Tyler and Jordan enter and make their way to the park bench, holding their hot dogs and drinks. They can begin talking (or eating) before they arrive at the bench and then should sit down when at the bench. They should sit side-by-side, chatting amiably and occasionally looking at one another, taking a small bite of hot dog or small sip when there is time in the dialogue.

Tyler: Man did we luck out!

Jordan: Tell me about it! I thought we'd have to spend our entire lunch break shopping for our wives for Valentine's Day.

Tyler: But thanks to "Mr.-Handy-Dandy-Guy-on-the-Street-Corner-Selling-Valentine-Gift-Bundles", we are set!

Jordan: I know, right? Roses, chocolates, and Valentine cards in hand. Light turns green. We're off to grab hot dogs from THE best vendor in town and enjoy this weird warm weather we're having! We are killin' it!

Tyler: *(a little skeptical)* I don't know about killin' it... I'm pretty sure it's the same card we both gave our wives for Valentine's Day last year. Remember?

Jordan: Oh yeah. It was the only one left at the store on the way home from work. But...I don't think they'll remember. Wives don't remember that sort of thing, do they?

Both look at each other, unsure.

Tyler: Plus, this year we have flowers and chocolates so...we're good. *(Shrugs)* They know we love them.

Tyler and Jordan look straight ahead and freeze. Cut to women's dialogue.

Becky: *(looking back at Ginny)* Do you know BOTH Jordan and Tyler have given us the SAME Valentine card for 3 years in a row now? Three. Years!

Allison: It's not even a particularly good card.

Becky and Allison laugh but are obviously a little frustrated.

Becky: We don't mean to complain. We know our husbands love us, it's just...I don't know. *(Shrugs)*

Ginny: So, they aren't so good at planning. Got it. *(Gently)* So then, what did you plan for them for tonight?

Becky and Allison look at each other, surprised.

Allison: Well, *(pause)* I was going to make some dessert, but then I figured we'd have the valentine cookies you and the boys were going to make, so... *(trails off)*

Becky: *(uncomfortably)* Uh, yeah. Me too. I guess I didn't plan anyth... *(trails off)* Wait. When did this get to be about us? *(Laughs)* We were talking about how our husbands don't notice US, remember??! *(Good-naturedly)* They notice everyone else BUT us. You should hear them when they get together at a park or a coffee shop!

Women look straight ahead and freeze. Cut to men's dialogue

Troy enters the stage and walks slowly toward Tyler and Jordan while the two men continue onto the next lines, but Troy doesn't look at them yet.

Tyler: So, what do you think about the people here?

Jordan: Hmmm. That couple over there? *(Nods to the right)* I'm thinking a "5". No kids yet. Probably an "H".

Tyler: Could be. And those two... *(Nods to the left)* Definitely a "10". Thinking they are NOT an "H" at this very moment.

Jordan: *(considers it)* Probably right. And over there... *(Nods to the left of center stage)*

Both men look at each other and nod as they say the next line.

Tyler/Jordan: "N"!

Tyler and Jordan laugh. Troy approaches them.

Troy: Tyler?

Tyler: *(Tyler stands)* Hey! Troy! Good to see you. *(To Jordan)* Jordan, this is Troy. *(Jordan stands)* We go to church together. He's a senior in college but I've known him for years. He and his family have been at my church for as long as I can remember. *(To Troy)* Troy, this is my friend and co-worker, Jordan.

Jordan stands and the two fist bump and exchange greetings "Nice to meet you, etc."

Tyler: *(to Troy)* Jordan and I have a little time before we have to get back to work. Care to join us?

Troy: Hey sure. Thanks.

All 3 sit down and there is friendly silence for a short moment.

Troy: *(clears throat)* Uh, I didn't mean to eavesdrop, but I heard you both saying some numbers and letters. Mind if I ask what that was all about? *(Smiles)* My curiosity is killing me!

Tyler and Jordan laugh.

Tyler: Well, that's a little embarrassing. *(Tyler and Jordan look at each other)* It's a dumb game we play. We like to watch people, so one day we started trying to figure out what their lives were like. It turned into guessing the relationship status of the couples we saw. Like that couple over there... *(nods left and all three men look that direction)* We said "10", because we think they've been married 10 years. The kids are a dead giveaway on that one. See? Wife is pushing the stroller and giving crackers and juice boxes to two kids. Husband is preoccupied and on his phone. "H" stands for whether they are happily married...and by the look on her face, the "H" is seriously in question at this very moment.

Troy nods.

Jordan: And that couple over there... *(nods to the left of center stage and all three men look that direction)* "N" equals newlywed. See how they are leaning into each other, making full eye contact, holding hands, and giggling?? Only newlyweds do that! "N's" are easy!

Troy: Cool! Let me take a crack at it! See that really old guy over there? *(Points directly center)* The one with the walker? I'm going to go way out on a limb here and say he is an "M", *(an aside to Jordan and Tyler)* that stands for married *(grins)*...and he and his wife are a "65", and definitely an "H".

Jordan: Well, I can sort of see a wedding ring, so I'll give you the "M". But the older ones are tricky. It could be a lot less than a "65".

Tyler: *(laughingly, to Jordan)* Troy is a cheater. That's his grandpa!

Jordan laughs.

Troy: *(also laughing)* Sorry. Couldn't resist. My grandpa comes here every day to walk that sidewalk there. He just walks and prays, walks and prays.

Thoughtfully, as if he is just thinking out loud.

You know, someday, when I get married, I want to be just like my grandpa. That man loves like Jesus loves! He's all in.

Suddenly remembering the men sitting next to him and addressing them.

You know, he gets up every morning and fixes tea for my grandma. Then he leaves a sticky note by her breakfast plate with one thing he loves about her written on it. She has years and years of them stored in a box in her closet. *(Pause)* And you should see the way he lights up when she walks in the room, even after 65 years of marriage. No one else makes his eyes shine like they shine when he sees her. You should see them together. They're a "65" but they still look like an "N". 65 years of putting each other first pays off, I guess!

Long pause, looking thoughtfully in the direction of the imagined "grandpa".

I never thought about it before, but people are totally watching how we treat each other, aren't they?

Troy stares off into the distance, thinking, and clueless about how his words are affecting Tyler and Jordan. Tyler and Jordan look at each other, wide-eyed.

Tyler and Jordan look straight ahead and freeze. Cut to women's dialogue.

Ginny: They may notice everyone else, but let me ask you, when was the last time you noticed them?

Becky and Allison look at each other thoughtfully.

Ginny: May I tell you a story?

Becky and Allison both agree. Ex. "Of course", "Sure", "I'd love it", etc.

Ginny: I was once where you are now. I felt taken for granted. Ben and I had been married almost 10 years. *(Pause)* I loved him and I knew he loved me, but we were sort of in a rut, I guess. Then one day, I decided to do something about it. I promised myself I'd make him a special dinner that night and that we would eat by candlelight. I'd put the kids to bed early and it would be just like old times.

Allison: Good for you.

Becky: That sounds so nice!

Ginny: It did sound nice. And it would have been, but...my youngest was a newborn, so I was already exhausted, and then the other three decided to gang up on me that day. My 3-year-old poured an entire box of cereal on the kitchen floor, and as I was cleaning that up. My 5- and 6-year-olds flushed our 3 goldfish down the toilet and painted the bathroom walls with toothpaste. I scrubbed bathroom walls to the wails of a needy newborn and a 3-year-old who was carrying around her empty fishbowl.

Becky and Allison react with laughter and disbelief.

Ginny: *(continuing)* I was exhausted and I was seriously grumpy. All I wanted was to go to bed and sleep for about 36 hours. *(Resolutely)* But I had promised myself I would make that dumb special dinner and by-Jove, I was going to make that dumb special dinner!

Allison: Wow. You're amazing. You still cooked him a special dinner and had a romantic evening after all that?

Ginny: Not quite. I did cook a special dinner. I even lit some candles. But it took me so long to get the kids to stay in bed that I burned the dinner. Completely. And then, as we ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches by candlelight...

Becky: *(interrupting)* Still romantic!

Ginny: I fell asleep. At the table. No joke. My face, right in the jelly...drool mixed with peanut butter. I was a sight to behold!

Becky and Allison giggle.

Becky: Was Ben upset?

Ginny: You know, that was the first night Ben ever got up and took care of the kids for me? I slept the entire night and when I woke up, Ben looked me in the eyes and told me how much it meant to him that I had put him first, even in my exhaustion. Every morning since that day he has gotten up early and made me a cup of tea. Then I find a sticky note by my

breakfast plate with one thing he loves about me written in his beautiful chicken scratch.

Becky/Allison: Awwww!

Ginny: Our marriage did change that day, but you know what changed the most? Me! I started seeing how much he did for me every day that I was taking for granted. He was quietly but faithfully going to work year after year, to take care of ME. Fixing squeaky cabinets and mowing the lawn. Making sure my oil was changed and my tires were good. *(Short pause)* Cleaning up drool infused PB&J without so much as a grimace!

All three ladies laugh.

Ginny: It's the little things, the everyday things, that make a marriage last. We ALL want to be noticed.

Becky and Allison look at each other, wide-eyed. The dialogue from this point will bounce back and forth from men's to women's. Make movements "big" so the audience can follow who is speaking and on what side of the stage it is happening. Neither side will "freeze" from this point on.

Tyler: *(quickly standing)* Hey Troy, it was great to see you but we are going to have to run.

Becky: Ginny, would you mind keeping the boys the rest of the night?

Ginny: I was hoping you'd ask!

The men begin throwing away their garbage as they speak.

The women put teacups on the table and stand as they speak.

Jordan: *(standing)* I have dinner reservations to make!

Becky: I have a new dress to buy!

Allison: I have some apologies to make.

Tyler: I have some humble pie to eat.

Tyler and Jordan look at each other. Becky and Allison look at each other.

Tyler, Jordan, Becky and Allison: *(simultaneously)* And a Valentine card to buy!

Tyler and Jordan, rush offstage. Becky and Allison quickly hug Ginny, and then hurry offstage.

Ginny: *(smiling)* Wonderful!

"Was it Something I Said?"

Troy: Well, that was sudden.
Troy, confused, speaking loudly in the direction Tyler and Jordan just left. Ginny, smiles knowingly, looks at the audience, sweetly sarcastic...

Both: Was it something I said?
Lights out or freeze

SCRIPT

TO

REMOVE

WATERMARK

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