

thESource

Skit

Short Dramas for Lent

By Tom Rogers

Week Three: Passion

A young man and woman enter the chancel from the center aisle. They see a sign that reads "Emergency Room." The drama begins when the two begin to speak.

Jennifer: How long have you been feeling bad?

Steven: Months!

Jennifer: Come on, Steven, that's not true. Up until today you looked fine. Be serious; how long have you been hurting?

Steven: Physically?

Jennifer: *(nodding)* Yes.

Steven: A couple of days—stomach, head, general achiness.

Jennifer: Let's get you to a doctor.

Steven: No way! It won't do any good; in fact, it may make matters worse.

Jennifer: Don't be silly! Come along.

(Jennifer and Steven move over to the emergency room area. A woman sits at a desk, talking on the telephone. She acknowledges their presence but continues her phone conversation.)

Receptionist: Things have been so busy lately. Timothy has gymnastics and Rebecca has Girl Scouts so I run all over the city dropping kids off at activities. It's awful! By the way, how was that movie you went to see the other night?

Steven: Should I tell her that this is an emergency?

Jennifer: She knows, Steve.

Steven: That makes it worse.

Receptionist: You're right, you never really know. Well, look, I'm real busy here; I've got to go. I'll talk to you soon. Uh huh...you bet...bye. *(She turns her attention to Steven and Jennifer, speaking in an irritated voice.)* Can I help you?

Steven: I really doubt it.

Jennifer: Steven; don't!

Steven: Alright, alright. I'm sorry, it's just that I feel real bad and have for three days. My head and stomach are killing me and I haven't slept or eaten in two days.

Receptionist: *(Putting her fingers on her computer keyboard)* I see. What is your name?

Steven: Steven.

Receptionist: Address?

Steven: 9301 Bundy Road.

Receptionist: Insurance?

Steven: I don't feel well. Could I just see a doctor, please?

Receptionist: *(tersely)* Not until I get the proper information. Insurance?

Steven: Here is my insurance card—everything you should need to know is on it. I'm gonna sit down, okay? How long do you think it'll be before I can see a doctor?

Receptionist: There's no way of knowing. We're very busy.

Steven: But I'm the only one here!

Receptionist: *(She glares at Steven, then picks up the telephone. As she begins to speak into the phone Jennifer and Steven walk to waiting room chairs set up in the chancel and sit down.)* The nerve of some people! He expected me to drop everything and help him. I can't be two people, you know.

Jennifer: Steven, what has gotten into you? You're so cynical all of a sudden.

Steven: I'm sick—sick of being in the way.

Jennifer: What? What do you mean by that?

Steven: Don't you ever get the feeling that no one really cares about what's going on in your life, like that woman *(gestures toward the receptionist)*. I got in the way between her and her phone. I'm in other people's way when I drive down the street! I get the feeling I'm in the clerk's way at the grocery store; all she wants

is for her shift to be over. There just doesn't seem to be any passion for life anymore.

(A man wearing a suit and a huge smile enters.)

Chaplain Nelson: Good morning. I'm Chaplain Nelson. How's it going today?

Steven: *(smiling, looking genuinely glad to see a chaplain)* Well, sort of rough. I was just telling Jennifer here, I've been in pain for a while now.

Chaplain: Well, you know what they say, "When the going gets tough, the tough gets going." Have our little pamphlet here, "Prayers for the waiting room." *(Gives Steven a pamphlet.)* If you're admitted to the hospital, we'd love to see you at Sunday services in the chapel. Have a good day and God bless!

Jennifer: *(as Steven is about to open his mouth)* I know, you felt like you were in his way, too.

Steven: It seems no one waits around here but me.

Nurse: *(smiling and irritatingly cheerful)* But no longer! The doctor will see you now in room four. Go down the corridor, then turn left at the first hall, go to the water fountain, and turn right. It's the third door on the left.

Jennifer: Do you have a map?

Steven: You're beginning to sound like me.

Jennifer: That's scary. *(Jennifer and Steven walk in the available space, back and forth, and then at last sit down again in the chairs in the chancel. The physician enters.)*

Dr. Eubanks: Good morning! What can I do for you today?

Steven: Hi, Doc, I'm really glad to see you. My head and my stomach hurt. I just really feel lousy.

Dr. Eubanks: *(puts a thermometer in Steven's mouth, then takes it out and says)* You're normal; it's probably nothing. Go home, have this prescription filled *(hands Steven a prescription)*, and if it doesn't work call me in a couple of days. Have a good day.

Steven: I'm normal? If I'm normal, then we are all in trouble! *(Steve and Jennifer start walking again. They are passed by a person about 12 years old, either in a wheelchair, or on crutches. Soon after passing them, the person turns around and comes back to them.)*

Young person: Mister, are you all right?

Steven: No! But I'm normal.

Young person: *(confused expression)* What?

Jennifer: It's a joke that's not very funny.

Young person: Few things around here are.

Steven: What are you doing here?

Young person: I'm sick. I have cancer, the "Big C." I'm taking treatments. How about you?

Steven: They say it is nothing—at least those who will talk to me do.

Young person: Sounds to me like you're suffering from something pretty serious.

Jennifer: *(defensively)* What do you mean?

Young person: *(to Jennifer)* His heart is broken.

(Jennifer and Steven look at each other in wonder as they realize the young person is right!)

Steven: It's just all getting to me. Life goes on day after day. My life, your life. Kids are born, people die, new diseases are discovered, earthquakes shake the world, and no one cares. There's just no...no...no...

Young person: Passion!

Steven: Exactly! There is no passion for life. No one lives as though life really counts for anything. It's just as if the people in this world aren't worth sweating or going out of your way for.

Young person: You're right. And there is a good reason for it.

Steven: Apathy!

Young person: Not quite. Sin!

Steven: *(turning to Jennifer)* Another chaplain?

Young person: No, just another sufferer.

Steven: I'm sorry, I didn't mean to be nasty.

Young person: I know, but that's sin for you—that's what I'm talking about! You didn't mean to be nasty, but you were. It's your nature to do rebellious things, and most of the time you don't even know it. It's the same with those people *(points in the*

direction of the receptionist). I don't think they knew they were making you think they didn't care, but they were.

Steven: So, what am I supposed to do? Forgive them and go on?

Young person: That's a place to start. Forgive them, love them, ask about their lives, find out what their problems are—see if you can understand how they got this way.

Steven: Isn't that being sort of phony?

Young person: Only if you don't really care...I mean, only if you have no passion for life.

Jennifer: Where does your passion come from?

Young person: From God.

Steven: God is passionate! (*chuckles a little bit*) I'm sorry, I just never thought of God as being filled with passion.

Young person: Are you kidding? God really gets into this world. He cares and cries and loves and gets angry—even jealous—with this world. God always gives us His all. Did you ever see a boring thunderstorm or an ugly sunset? Did you ever taste a bad strawberry? God does everything with a passion.

Steven: I wish He'd rub off on some of these folks.

Young person: He's trying, so much that He came to rub shoulders with us. Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth and passionately helped, healed, taught, forgave, and loved people. He got His hands dirty in our world. He went searching out people who needed Him and made them whole. So hundreds of people came out to see Him, and He cared for their needs for hours, until He was exhausted.

Jennifer: But there has to be a limit to everything. I mean, how far can even God go in caring for people?

Young person: To death. Jesus cared for people to death. His love knows no limit; there is no way people can make Jesus stop loving them. He died on a cross for the sins of the whole world. He passionately cares for you!

Steven: Please don't be offended by what I'm about to say, but you seem to care about me too. You are showing concern about me even though you have so much to worry about yourself.

Young person: I do care, and that's how Jesus works. He gives life even in the face of death. So, Steven, take it from me, regardless of what is wrong with me, you take Jesus and live.

Steven: With a passion.

Jennifer: Amen!

The End.

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