

# **Four-Hour Limit**

**A Short One-Act Comedy By Stafford Krause**

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### CAST OF CHARACTERS

**Announcer**

**Receptionist:** in a doctor's office

**Man:** a new patient

### TIME AND PLACE

A doctor's office reception area at the present time.

## *Four Hour Limit*

*(ANNOUNCER appears in front of the curtain)*

### **ANNOUNCER**

While Viagra, Cialis and other drugs competing for a share of the E.D. market proclaim their outstanding benefits... at the same time they issue a warning to seek immediate medical help should the drug's effect last four or more hours. They do not point out where to seek this medical care ... and we can only imagine what it would be like for an anxious patient seeking relief from this condition.

*(The CURTAIN RISES on the reception area of a doctor's office. A RECEPTIONIST is seated at the reception desk as a MAN in a raincoat, broad-rim hat and sunglasses backs into the office through the front door, sidesteps to a corner and continues facing the back wall. )*

### **RECEPTIONIST**

May I help you Sir?

### **MAN**

Yes, I'm here to see Dr. Taylor Barnes.

### **RECEPTIONIST**

Wouldn't you like to turn around Sir, so that we can converse normally?

### **MAN**

*(... over his shoulder)*

No, I'm really quite comfortable like this.

### **RECEPTIONIST**

But Sir, you look so uncomfortable facing the corner like that ... and you must be dying with that heavy raincoat on. I mean, it has to be 95 degrees outside and even with the air on, it's not that cool in here.

**MAN**

*(... nervously)*

No, I think I'll just keep my raincoat on for now. I'm really not uncomfortable ... and do you know, you have very attractive wallpaper. Have you ever looked at it up close?

**RECEPTIONIST**

No, I can't say that I have.  
Are you one of Dr. Barnes regular patients?

**MAN**

*(... still facing the corner)*

No, I was referred over the phone by my family doctor, Dr. Ernest Wilson, because Dr. Barnes is an urologist.

**RECEPTIONIST**

Well then since you're a new patient, we'll have to get some medical history on you.

Now if you would just come over here, I'll give you clipboard with a medical questionnaire and release forms to fill out.

**MAN**

No, I like it here just fine.  
Could you just hand me the clipboard. I'll complete the forms right here.

**RECEPTIONIST**

*(...sliding a chair over against the back of the man's legs and giving him a clipboard and pen)*

OK. Suit yourself. Just sit here facing the wall and fill out the forms. Here is the clipboard.

*(MAN places the clipboard on his lap and starts to fill it out, but it falls to the floor. HE tries again, and the same thing happens.)*

**RECEPTIONIST**

Is something wrong Sir?

**MAN**

*(... timidly)*

I can't seem to keep the clipboard on my lap.

*(pause)*

Wait a minute. I think I've got it.

*(MAN holds the clipboard high in front of him with his left hand and writes on the various forms ... then holds the clipboard and pen back over his head for the receptionist to retrieve)*

**RECEPTIONIST**

*(... retrieving the clipboard)*

Well, then Sir. What was it you wished to see Dr. Barnes about?

**MAN**

E.D.

**RECEPTIONIST**

Eddie? Eddie who?

**MAN**

Not Eddie, Miss! E.D. ... E.period ... D.period.

**RECEPTIONIST**

Oh I'm sorry Sir. This is my first day on the job. I'm not familiar with all the medical acronyms.

**MAN**

You know... E.D. ... E.... dysfunction.

**RECEPTIONIST**

I really am new to all this Sir. I still don't understand.

**MAN**

E.D. ... dysfunction ...

*(... straining to say it)*

Erect....tile! Dysfunction!

**RECEPTIONIST**

Oh! Erectile dysfunction!

That's where a man has trouble doing it because ...

**MAN**

*(... interrupting her in mid-sentence)*

OK! OK! Please Miss. Please skip the biology lecture.

**RECEPTIONIST**

Sorry, Sir.

But I hear that Dr. Barnes is very good with that.

I'm sure the doctor will improve your relationship 100 percent.

**MAN**

If you don't mind, I don't want to improve my relationship any more than it is.

My problem is not really E.D. ... it's E.O.

**RECEPTIONIST**

E. O.?

**MAN**

Yes, E.....over- function

**RECEPTIONIST**

E.....over- function.

Now I'm afraid that you really have lost me.

**MAN**

Well let me put it this way ... My dose of Viagra got rid of my E.D. ... but now, four hours later, it's still working.

**RECEPTIONIST**

Oh! That is a sticky wicket!

**MAN**

What?

**RECEPTIONIST**

Oops! Sorry Sir! My English heritage I'm afraid!

*(pause)*

But I'm sure that Dr. Barnes will be able to help you.

She's really very good with that sort of thing.

**MAN**

She?

I thought that Dr. Taylor Barnes was a man.

**RECEPTIONIST**

Oh no Sir ... Dr. Barnes is very much a woman.

*(MAN sidesteps toward the door and starts to leave)*

**RECEPTIONIST**

Where are you going Sir?

**MAN**

I'm leaving.

**RECEPTIONIST**

But Sir. What about your E. O.?

**MAN**

For some reason it's suddenly cured!

*(MAN exits)*

**CURTAIN**