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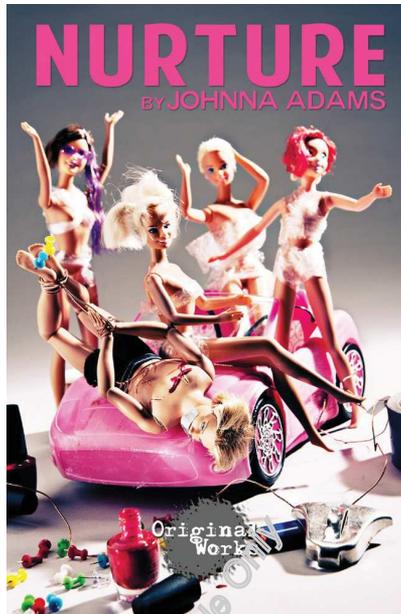
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*Nine Months: inside out*  
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**NURTURE by Johnna Adams**

**Synopsis:** Doug and Cheryl are horrible single parents drawn together by their equally horrible daughters. The star-crossed parental units journey from first meeting to first date, to first time, to first joint parent-teacher meeting, to proposal and more. They attempt to form a modern nuclear family while living in perpetual fear of the fruit of their loins and someone abducting young girls in their town.

**Cast Size:** 1 Male, 1 Female



**9 MONTHS: INSIDE OUT**  
**(NINE RELATED SHORT PLAYS**  
**FOR EACH MONTH OF PREGNANCY)**

**by S.W. Senek**

Sample Only

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*NINE MONTHS: inside out* was the 2005 Winner of the New Jersey Playwrights Contest produced by William Paterson University, NJ, 2005.

Co-coordinators - Ed Matthews and Shari Selke

Directed by Phillip Sprayberry

*Outcome* was the 2003 **Winner of the Circle Choice Award**

World Premiere by Playwrights Circle, Palm Springs, 2003.

*Making Room* was part of the Seventh Annual Festival of One-Act Plays

World Premiere by Theatre Three, Port Jefferson, NY, March, 2004.

Artistic Director Jeffrey Sanzel

**to my lovely Googles  
you are a wonderful mommy**

*Sample Only*

## **NINE MONTHS: inside out**

THE VOICE: Are you feeling fatigued? Are you experiencing heartburn, nausea, or flatulence? Do you crave food? Are you emotionally unstable? Irritable? Have you gone through irrational mood swings? Are you overwhelmed with fear or joy? Is that driver in front of you a complete idiot? Do you feel that your spouse is also an idiot? If you have answered “yes” to all of these questions, you might be pregnant. Drop everything and have a physician examine you *immediately*. You might already be *in* your first month of pregnancy. However, if you already know you’re pregnant please proceed to page thirty of *What You Don’t Expect When Expecting*. You have much planning ahead.

### **FIRST MONTH: Outcome**

*(Time: Morning. Setting: In a bathroom somewhere in Northern New Jersey. Lisa and Bob stand in front of the sink. Lisa clutches the results of a home-pregnancy test in her hand. Neither Bob nor Lisa has looked. They give each other an assuring smile.)*

LISA: Ready?

BOB: Ready. *(Beat. Snap change: he begins to speak his conscience to the audience.)* Oh my God.

LISA: *(Snap change: she begins to speak her conscience to the audience.)* Oh my God.

BOB: This is it.

LISA: The moment—

BOB: A—

LISA: Our life could change.

BOB: A—

LISA: He can't say it.

BOB: (*Encouraging himself.*) I can say it.

LISA: He *thinks* he can say it.

BOB: I *know* I can say it.

LISA: He can't.

BOB: Of course I can (*Deep breath. He tries to say it. Dejected exhale.*) I can't say it.

LISA: *I* can say it.

BOB: Look at her beaming, *she* can say it.

LISA: Pregnancy test—

BOB: She's just waiting to see the results.

LISA: (*Starts to bring the test up to see but stops.*) I can't look yet—

BOB: Is she? Isn't she? I can't take suspense. Suspense makes my skin itch. (*He itches.*)

LISA: God, he's itching—he's full of suspense.

BOB: Suspense has filled me.

LISA: He's suspenseful.

BOB: I'm itching with suspense.

LISA: It's all about symbols on a little stick.

BOB: I wonder what they used before the stick. Leaves?  
Leaves are very important in some cultures. Some people still choose leaves over toilet paper.

LISA: A line through a circle represents a baby.

BOB: What do the symbols mean?

LISA: *(Trying to let it sink in.)* "Baby."

BOB: Circles, lines, squares, dots—the big dipper! I could never find the big dipper.

LISA: "Baby." *(Assuring.)* Saying it makes it real.

BOB: "Baby." *(Worried.)* Sounds too real.

LISA: *(Tries to believe the possibility of it.)* "Baby."

BOB and LISA: Oh God.

BOB: What were we thinking?

LISA: It was so right at the time.

BOB: I mean, there she was saying "I want it." It was my obligation.

LISA: He wanted it—he begged me. “Please!” I hate to see him beg.

BOB: She could have used the old—“I’m feeling sick” line. I wouldn’t have touched her.

LISA: I should’ve told him I was sick. He has this thing about germs.

BOB: Doorknobs. (*He pulls out a hanky.*) I can’t touch doorknobs without my hanky.

LISA: The hanky. He takes it *everywhere*—to restaurants to hold his utensils. Our wedding, to put my ring on. Is that how he’ll hold the baby?

BOB: At our wedding, the whole family kept telling us, “have children!” Children. How does one think with children around?

LISA: “Baby.” We just moved in. I haven’t found an appropriate place for my antique ceramic thimble collection gathered from Finland.

BOB: We moved here less than a year ago. I don’t even have my piano set up exactly where I want it. I’m very particular. It can take up to three years to find the right spot. There has to be just enough light.

LISA: I’m a real estate agent, not a mother.

BOB: Definitely not enough light—I’ve spent hours not playing but sitting.

LISA: How will I juggle a career *and* a baby?

BOB: How will I compose? I must have complete silence. There won't be silence—that and the light. Did I mention I get very tense with poor lighting?

LISA: “Oh, this is a perfect three bedroom, one and a half bath house complete with a—whoop—time to breast feed. Excuse me while I whip my left breast out. So do you like it? (*Beat.*) The house, not my breast.”

BOB: I'll have to play children's songs. I hate children's songs. It'll be hours of “play it again, Daddy—again—again!”

LISA: It'll be countless arguments of (*Looks at Bob.*) “You take the kid.”

BOB: (*To Lisa.*) No.

LISA: Yes, you take it.

BOB: No.

LISA: I can't—(*To the audience.*) I can't do this!

BOB: (*To the audience.*) I know this sounds a little selfish but...what about sex?

LISA: Look at him. He's thinking about sex.

BOB: Oh, damn, I can see her thinking about me thinking about sex. I'll think of other things.

LISA: I can see right though him.

BOB: I will put my *shield* up! (*Pantomimes pulling up his large shield. Stands proud like a superhero.*) She'll have no idea what I'm thinking now!

LISA: He's going into his "shield" phase. (*Bob stares at her.*) He's staring at me.

BOB: Oh god.

LISA: He's imagining me being huge.

BOB: She'll be huge.

LISA: He's thinking about sex again.

BOB: (*The thought of having sex with a very pregnant wife. Look of distaste.*) Ughh.

LISA: It's a beautiful thing.

BOB: If it were so beautiful, all adult magazines would go pregnant. It's an acquired taste.

LISA: It's natural. From the second you put on weight, you glow and—oh, no—this can't be. I spent countless hours on the exercise machines, doing weights, aerobics. He sabotaged me!

BOB: I read somewhere this is when women want sex the most.

LISA: We'll see if he'll like sex with me now!

BOB: I mean the kid will be right there.

LISA: We can still be intimate.

BOB: All three of us?

LISA: It's normal.

BOB: I have enough trouble being naked alone.

LISA: Of course Bob isn't normal. Take texture and food.

BOB: I'm particular—really.

LISA: If it doesn't feel right in his mouth, forget it.

BOB: Example, last night, Lisa made a Reuben casserole.

LISA: I made Reuben casserole. He took one bite.

BOB: I made an effort. I took several bites.

LISA: One bite.

BOB: We have unusually large forks.

LISA: He shoved it aside. I mean, he likes Rueben sandwiches.

BOB: Rueben sandwiches were not meant to be mashed into a pile known as a casserole. (*Ponder.*) God—no sex for nine months.

LISA: Maybe this will bring us closer.

BOB: This will put distance between us. She'll want to talk more.

LISA: Bob and I should talk more.

BOB: I'll take up a hobby—something to get me out of talking.

LISA: I remember when we met.

BOB: I remember meeting her—after one of my gigs.

LISA: We talked all night.

BOB: She would not shut up. All she could talk about was the house she showed that day.

LISA: So he kissed me.

BOB: I kissed her to shut her up. Oh, God, what if it runs in the genes. I like a good night's sleep.

LISA: I'll never sleep again.

BOB: Did I mention anything about my piano and lighting? It has to be perfect—like my sleep.

LISA: I must have at least ten hours sleep.

BOB: Is she going to expect me to get up in the middle of the night? What the hell can I do? I don't have any milk. Do I? *(He looks at himself in a mirror.)*

LISA: I knew it, he has breast envy.

BOB: *(Freezes.)* I should stop. *(Stops looking at himself.)* She'll think I have breast envy. *(Beat.)* Okay, a little—but how can *I* contribute in the middle of the night?

LISA: He thinks he won't get up in the middle of the night.

BOB: I won't wake up. I'll block it all out.

LISA: It's hard enough now. When there's a noise in the house—or the dogs throw up, who wakes up? I do.

BOB: *(Chuckles to himself.)* It took me many nights to master this. I lie perfectly still and act as though I'm deep sleep mode—like this...*(Asleep beside her, he begins to snore.)*

LISA: I lay there yelling for him—"BOB! *(No answer.)* BOB!" *(No answer.)*

BOB: One more time and she'll get up.

LISA: BOB! And there you have it—I get up. And—OUCH! I trip over his shoes that he kicks in the middle of the room.

BOB: Every night I place my shoes in the same place, but she manages to trip over them.

LISA: The only reason he'd get up is if *he* smells smoke—and that's to save himself.

BOB: Smells—I hate smells. Liver, spoiled milk, Rubeen casserole, and now we can add dirty diapers to the list. Don't look at me to change the diapers.

LISA: He thinks he'll never change a diaper.

BOB: I'll hand the baby to her—then act as though the baby just did it. See? Here's my surprise look.

*(He puts his hand on his face—looking surprised.)*

THE VOICE: The news of becoming a parent can bring out unexpected emotions in both parents-to-be. This is completely normal. Talk openly about your concerns. You may find yourselves discussing issues that were not important until this very moment. Think back to your own childhood—of course *because* of your own childhood, you currently might be *in* therapy. *If* this is the case, it could be helpful to seek advice from a friend, maybe a family member that has not emotionally wrecked your life, or perhaps try a neighbor that has gone through pregnancy. Also, as a side note, heartburn, nausea, and flatulence may continue. The second month should be an exciting time!

## SECOND MONTH: Don't Worry

*(Lights up on Bob and Lisa's next-door neighbor, Doria, a Jewish mother in her early forties. She is standing in Lisa's living room.)*

DORIA: *(Overjoyed)* Oh. *(Tilts her head adoringly to one side.)* Oh. *(Head tilts to the other side.)*

Oh—I can't contain myself. YOU'RE PREGNANT! AHHH! I'm so thrilled for you. If there's anything I can help you with, our door is *always* open. That's what neighbors are for, right? Of course. I told Karen next door the same thing, but she *never* called. I said "fine, do it all yourself." And now, she's *always* struggling. Always. *(Beat.)*

Do your feet ache? Well, sit, sit. *(Doria sits.)*

Mine did. And Matthew was no help. I told him—"give me a foot massage—rub my bunions." He'd complain, "It hurts my fingers, I'm too tired—what about the vibrator I got you?" Let's just say there was no vibrator *before* I got pregnant. *(Beat.)* I'm sorry, did I say that out loud? *(Beat.)*

Anyway, I wish I looked like you my second month.

Matthew said don't eat so many chicken nuggets. I was fine—until I couldn't fit in my jeans. What I put myself through. I'd take one *very* deep breath and struggle to button those babies up (*Acts as though she's struggling to button her jeans.*)—but I did it. My sister told me “you shouldn't try to force on tight clothes, that can really cause brain damage to a baby.” I love her, but she's not exactly medical material. Just because my little Danny blanks on his name, can't recite the alphabet and runs into walls, I'm not concerned. After all, Danny's only sixteen. I'm sure it's a phase. But the important thing is, I stayed thin as long as I could. You'll be fine, right? Of course. (*Beat.*)

Did you get morning sickness? Mine was horrible. Mrs. Hoolagan's Fish Sticks did it for me. I thought it was the healthy choice. But no, *blahh*—fish sticks in the mall, *blahh*—fish sticks in the car. *Blahh*—fish sticks on my Grandfather, at his own funeral.

Do you know that during my pregnancy I became lactose intolerant? I almost died from ice cream. True story. I made Matthew stop and get me a whole gallon of Polly Panda's Pink Pedal Ice Cream. Half way through it—boom! It became dark and I could feel everything inside of my body shut down. Honest, my heart, my liver, my bowels. I thought it was the end. Do you know what saved me? (*Draws in closer.*)

Now I tell you this *only* because we're good neighbors. All right? All right. (*Closer.*)

I traveled through the darkness of my own body, until I was staring into my baby eyes—like we are now. I asked, “Do you want ice cream? Do you? Do you?” Then, he made this sound (*Said as if calling for help*), “Gurgle, gurgle—gurgle.” He was communicating with me—he was trying to tell me the ice cream was killing him. Then, all of a sudden—now we're still eye-to-eye—he kicks me square in the forehead. WHAM! The next thing I know I'm in the hospital! Saved by my own baby. And do you know, after the birth, I was freed of my lactose intolerance. However, to this day I

THE VOICE: Please note that many people claim to be experts and will give you advice. These people mean well. Consult a licensed physician if you question any of their advice. In the third month, heartburn, indigestion and flatulence will still continue. On top of that you can add constipation. There's no doubt that you are changing. Yes, even your pets might notice. You should get those dogs of yours use to the idea that their lives too will change—dig out that baby doll in the attic—hold it, caress it, kiss it. However, keep an eye on the male spouse when the doll is in *his* hands, he may get the sudden urge to play fetch or tug of war with the dogs. That could give your furry friends the wrong impression.

### THIRD MONTH: Making Room

*(Chaplin, a male Scottish Terrier, is on a doggy bed. Maxie, a female Papillion, is on the sofa playing with a ball. They are in Bob and Lisa's living room. Please note: Chaplin should not have a Scottish accent, nor Maxie a French accent. Chaplin is from the Midwest and has no connection to his Scottish heritage. Maxie is all New Jersey—and loves to dominate. Chaplin is ruled by fear and is mentally one step behind Maxie—except for accidental smarts. They should wear clothes that are suggestive of their characters.)*

MAXIE: What's their position, Chaplin? *(No Answer. Chaplin is asleep.)* Hey!

CHAPLIN: *(Trying to sleep.)* What.

MAXIE: I said, what's their position—Bob and Lisa?

CHAPLIN: I wasn't looking.

MAXIE: It's your watch.

CHAPLIN: I know.

MAXIE: Again, you fall asleep. Why do they use you Scotties for hunting?

CHAPLIN: Chasing you earlier tired me out.

MAXIE: Well, sleep some other time, we've got duties.

CHAPLIN: Sleep when their home and miss all the attention? You're kidding, right?

MAXIE: We have to be aware of everything. *Our* position depends on it.

CHAPLIN: *Our* position, *their* position—Maxie, you got your fur in knots. Everything will work itself out.

MAXIE: You are *so* uninspiring.

CHAPLIN: Hey, look, there are three things I need as a dog: sleep, food, and grass to tinkle on.

MAXIE: You don't get it you thickheaded fur-brain. You think this all comes easy. You know how hard I've had it? Sacrificed—that's what I've done—sacrificed.

CHAPLIN: Again with the "sacrifice."

MAXIE: *I* spent the whole year before *you*, learning senseless tricks, paving the way for your—your laziness.

CHAPLIN: Hey, I can do tricks—

MAXIE: Ha!

CHAPLIN: Ha! I can—like the “give me your paw” trick.

MAXIE: With your *back* paw. Chaplin, you can’t even lay down on demand.

CHAPLIN: Can too.

MAXIE: Sure, when you shit on the carpet and get punished. What else can you do you miserable mutt but lay down in shame.

CHAPLIN: That’s my thing, you know? Set the expectations low. They get so excited when I *do* get it right. And you—

MAXIE: Me?

CHAPLIN: Is there anything else you want to bitch about?

MAXIE: My point is, enjoy it because in five months it’s ending. *All* of this.

CHAPLIN: Right. (*Beat.*) What do you mean, “all of this?”

MAXIE: I mean our top-dog days are coming to an end. The end I tell ya! THE END!

CHAPLIN: Can we go a day without the drama?

MAXIE: That’s fine. Say what you want, but I heard it straight from Bob’s mouth.

CHAPLIN: Bob wouldn’t tell you something without telling me.

MAXIE: Well, mama's boy, while Lisa was scolding you for rummaging through the trashcan, *I* was with Bob and he let it slip.

CHAPLIN: You said Lisa put a treat in there for me.

MAXIE: Listen you gullible furbag—I'm telling you, we've got bigger problems coming.

CHAPLIN: We do?

MAXIE: A "baby." (*She dog-sneezes.*)

CHAPLIN: A what?

MAXIE: A "baby." (*She dog-sneezes again.*)

CHAPLIN: You're having a baoy? You're having a baby! That's terrific—that's wonderful! That's—that's impossible. You're—

MAXIE: Fixed.

CHAPLIN: But aren't I—

MAXIE: Neutered? Yes.

CHAPLIN: But how can *we*—

MAXIE: *We're* not dumb-ass, *Lisa* and *Bob* are.

CHAPLIN: A "baby?"

MAXIE: Yes. A "baby." (*She dog-sneezes.*)

CHAPLIN: But they got us.

THE VOICE: By the fourth month the heartburn, indigestion and surprise flatulence should begin to fade into memory. However, feel free to welcome in the symptoms of nosebleeds, mild swelling in your ankles, feet, hands and face; and if that's not enough, clumsiness and hemorrhoids! This is the time you wonder, "How involved will the Grandparents be?" Will they be in the labor room? Will they insist on yellow walls or that old ugly stitched picture barely resembling a duck to be hung in the nursery? Will they insist you name your child after their great-great grandmother Itzelmuddlepop? *(Pause.)* No matter how involved, they will *all* place the same curse on you: May *your* child be as much trouble as you were. This is their only hope for revenge. As a matter of fact, don't be surprised if they bend the rules after your child is born—feeding them a little more sugar than normal, depriving them of sleep—in other words, expect them to spoil your child beyond belief. As you leave their house and your child is screaming hysterically, take note of the smile at the corner of the Grandparents' mouth. In *their* minds, justice has been served.

#### **FOURTH MONTH: Time Capsule**

*(Setting: Somewhere in the southern part of New Jersey. Bob bends forward as if to look at a video recorder in the living room. Betty crosses to the couch. They are both in their sixties.)*

BETTY: Is the recorder on?

BOB, SR.: Yep.

BETTY: Are you sure?

BOB, SR.: Yep.

BETTY: (*Sits.*) The last video you shot, our heads were missing.

BOB, SR.: I checked it.

BETTY: Wires—you're not good with wires.

BOB, SR.: (*He crosses to the couch to sit.*) I'm fine with wires. It's fine—I followed the instructions.

BETTY: Did you wear your glasses? You're probably filming our feet.

BOB, SR.: I'm not filming our feet.

BETTY: You say it's on?

BOB, SR.: I said it was on—

BETTY: Oh—(*Tries to fix her hair. Pause.*) Well, aren't you going to say something, Bob?

BOB, SR.: (*Sits with his arms crossed.*) This was your idea.

BETTY: Bob—say something.

BOB, SR.: (*Not knowing what to say.*) Yep.

BETTY: Hello little one, this is Grandma Betty and Grandpa Bob. Your mother and father wanted us to make something for a time capsule box that you'll open on your eighteenth birthday. Right, Bob?

BOB, SR.: Yep.

BETTY: Well, here we are young or younger than we are now which won't be the case then—but you'll be much older than you were now—which will change when you get older. Right, Bob?

BOB, SR.: Uh, Yep.

BETTY: (*Very enthused.*) Right now, you're our youngest. And our first. (*Beat.*) Wow, our first one. This is so exciting. I guess I haven't thought about it until now. Oh, we can't wait to see you. You're going to find out what a great family we are—we're so wonderful and open minded. And your parents—your perfect parents... (*Loses enthusiasm.*) they'll be...they'll be...—oh, dear God, they'll raise you all *wrong!*

BOB, SR.: Betty.

BETTY: I can't help it. I mean, look how long it took Bobby to get married.

BOB, SR.: He had to find the right girl.

BETTY: I prayed for *any* girl. When he went to that *liberal* arts college, I thought—well, you know how a bunch of those *theatre* and *music* people are. He always had his "*male*" *friends* with him. And some of the them, well, I don't think they liked girls—

BOB, SR.: Betty.

BETTY: *You* certainly didn't see it, always out fishing with your buddies.

BOB, SR.: They're my plumbing buddies. We're plumbers. We plumb and fish.

BETTY: Oh—(*Looking into the camera.*) you should know that your Grandpa Bob is a lousy plumber.

BOB, SR.: I'm a good fisherman.

BETTY: He gets called back for every job—"Leaks, pipes on backwards."

BOB, SR.: I catch the biggest fish.

BETTY: The whole neighborhood knows Bob's a lousy plumber—which is why I worried about Bobby Jr.

BOB, SR.: I don't worry.

BETTY: You never worry. I wish you would. He's your namesake. Anyway it's those *liberal* colleges. You know what liberal means—"trouble." (*To the camera.*) Don't let your parents talk you into a liberal college. Oh, Bobby has no idea what he's in for. A child isn't easy.

BOB, SR.: A marriage isn't easy.

BETTY: Bob.

BOB, SR.: How about when we married?

BETTY: *We* were in love.

BOB, SR.: You're family was as Baptist as they come—a hard swallow for my Catholic father.

BETTY: I switched, for you.

BOB, SR.: It took three years for my father to speak to us.

BETTY: The first time he spoke to me, he called me a dumb jackass.

BOB, SR.: You ran over his goat.

BETTY: Oh, it's just a goat.

BOB, SR.: It was the *family* goat.

BETTY: I offered to get him another one.

BOB, SR.: You don't just replace a goat. I'm saying, it takes a lot of work.

BETTY: (*To Bob.*) Oh, it's going to be beautiful—the birth that is.

BOB, SR.: Depends.

BETTY: (*To the camera.*) You see Grandpa Bob was born on the kitchen table.

BOB, SR.: That's what we did back then. Mother had me and got back to making dinner. Dinner was at five o'clock every day.

BETTY: Now when I had Bobby—*that* was difficult.

BOB, SR.: That's before fathers were allowed in the delivery room. I paced around for eighteen hours.

BETTY: Twenty-one hours.

BOB, SR.: I really wanted to help the doctor. I'm a plumber after all. I know about things being stuck. I just as soon take a snake stick it up there and watch that baby

fall out. That's what I'd do. But them doctors, they like to prolong everything. Yep. It's all about waiting.

BETTY: Waiting and pushing. I pushed forever.

BOB, SR.: I don't know—like I said, I wasn't in there.

BETTY: Trust me.

BOB, SR.: Yep. (*Beat.*) I hope it's a boy.

BETTY: I'm not sure if I'm ready for Bob number three. No, she's carrying low, it's a girl.

BOB, SR.: I thought that means it's a boy.

BETTY: No, that means it's a girl.

BOB, SR.: But—

BETTY: I know what I'm talking about—Bobby was high.

BOB, SR.: I thought he was low.

BETTY: It's going to be a girl.

BOB, SR.: Well, there's only two choices, it's not like it could be a boy, girl, or goat—which would make my father happy seeing that you killed his.

BETTY: It's a girl.

BOB, SR.: I think the boy might be less complicated. What do I do with a girl?