

GOING BARE

A Comedy by Mary Jane Taegel

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PUBLISHED BY
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Dedication

For my son Paul

In gratitude to Ann Farthing, Sam Havens, Steve McCurdy and Blake Newman for their advice and support and for so freely sharing their own amazing talents.

The Playwright, Mary Jane Taegel

STORY OF THE PLAY

Dr. Jack Ramsay, an obstetrician/gynecologist, is "going bare," that is, he has dropped his insurance coverage to avoid paying outrageous malpractice premiums. When he is hit with a frivolous lawsuit to the tune of \$4.2 million, Jack and his devoted wife, Barbara, conspire to get a divorce that puts all their assets into her name. "You'll be too poor to sue because I'll have all your money," she chirps. Possibly a destitute doctor will discourage the plaintiff's attorney from pursuing a large settlement.

Jack loves the idea and so the divorce plans proceed over the howling protests of their boozy friend and lawyer, Elliot Strauss, just fresh from his own divorce. "Sign over all your assets to your wife? When you don't have to?" Elliot goes for another martini. When Barbara moves out, Jack becomes easy prey for Claire Hoffman, a sexy, neighborhood Realtor who innocently believes the good doctor is fair game.

How can this marriage survive a divorce, two foot-shuffling lawyers, outrageous lies and deceptions, and the hot-to-trot pursuit of Jack by another woman? And what about the \$4.2 million? "Going Bare" takes a hilarious look at love in the time of liability and lawyers, lust and lies.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 2 w)

JACK RAMSAY, M.D.: In his mid-thirties, he is a handsome, well-dressed obstetrician/gynecologist dedicated to medicine. Maybe overly-dedicated?

BARBARA RAMSAY: In her mid-thirties, she is attractive, witty, intelligent and adventurous. She is dedicated to Jack.

ELLIOT STRAUSS: Sharp-witted lawyer in his thirties or early forties. He has all the answers even when there are no questions.

CLAIRE HOFFMAN: Friendly, neighborhood Realtor. Mid to late thirties, flashy, gorgeous and sexy. It is easy to see why men find her attractive and women find her threatening.

TOM O'HERN: Clueless security guard of indeterminate age who does odd jobs when he's not guarding the neighborhood. He wears khakis, a security guard's badge and understands little of what's going on in the world around him.

SETTING

The entire action of the play takes place in the Ramsay living room. There are a staircase and landing, a sofa, bar, dining table, a couple of chairs and a ficus tree.

TIME: The present.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: A July evening.

Scene 2: Three days later.

Scene 3: A Sunday, three months later.

ACT II

Scene 1: The following Tuesday evening.

Scene 2: The next afternoon.

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Actor's Notes

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: BARBARA RAMSAY is dressed for evening in a little black dress and pearls. SHE puts two stemmed glasses on the bar, then pops the cork on a bottle of champagne. The PHONE RINGS.)

BARBARA: *(Answering.)* Hello ... I'm sorry, Dr. Ramsay's not here. Have you tried the hospital? ... No, I don't. I haven't seen him in three days. ... Sure. I'll tell him just as soon as I see him. *(SHE starts to head back to the bar. The phone RINGS again.)* Hello ... I'm sorry, he's not here. ... Yes, I will. Just as soon as I see him. *(SHE takes two steps away from the phone. It RINGS again. With a moan, she answers it, this time using the voice of a recorded message. JACK RAMSAY ENTERS in time to catch the act.)* I'm sorry, the number you have reached has been disconnected. *(Hangs up.)*

JACK: *(Admonishing.)* Barbara....

BARBARA: *(Big smile.)* I'll stop doing that. I promise. Hi!

(THEY kiss.)

JACK: I can't tell you how many people have called the office asking for my new home number.

BARBARA: *(Hands HIM phone messages.)* Want some champagne?

JACK: In a minute. You look nice.

BARBARA: You should have seen me an hour ago. I've been cleaning house like mad all day long.

JACK: Are we having a party?

BARBARA: Realtor's open house first thing in the morning. Don't touch, move, use or eat anything.

JACK: A what?

BARBARA: We're selling the house, Jack.

JACK: Oh, that's right.

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BARBARA: *(As a Realtor talking to a client.)* Please observe the highly-polished floors, fresh-cut flowers, crystal decanters artfully arranged at the bar, the very latest issues of *Architectural Digest* and *The Wine Spectator* casually tossed across the coffee table.

JACK: I kind of hate to sell it. Why don't we just stay here and keep it clean all the time? *(HE grabs an apple from an arrangement on the coffee table.)*

BARBARA: Honey, please don't eat the apples. And I've put a roll of paper towels in the bathroom, so don't use the frilly ones. They're strictly for show. *(SHE grabs a gift-wrapped box.)*

JACK: God, I hope we sell soon. I don't know how long we can keep up this facade of cleanliness.

BARBARA: *(Handing HIM the gift.)* Hey, happy anniversary.

JACK: Damn it. I really meant to pick up a card. I even thought about flowers.

BARBARA: You get A-plus for meaning and thinking.

JACK: Happy anniversary.

(THEY kiss.)

BARBARA: I love you so much.

(Kiss again.)

JACK: I love you too. My God, has it been ten years already?

BARBARA: An entire decade since that glorious moment you turned to me and said ...

JACK: "You wanna get married next weekend? I have a day off." *(THEY laugh.)* Not easy years, were they? Let's face it, you've put up with a lot.

BARBARA: I've loved every minute. And we did it, Jack. We worked hard, we survived ...

JACK: And got outta debt.

BARBARA: They've been wonderful years. Open your present.

End of Freeview

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