

NEXT.

(amended version)

A play for two male characters.

Doctor...middle age

Mr Adams. ....elderly

SETTING Doctor's appointment room.

Mr Adams cautiously enters the room. Doctor is seated.

Doctor; Next.

Mr. Adams: Oh sorry, I thought it was my turn. (Moves to go out again)

Doctor: It is your turn. Come in. Please. Sit down, (Indicates chair. Mr Adams sits )

Doctor: I called you here today, Mr. Adams, to discuss your cognitive capability levels

Mr Adams: Oh, really? It sounds like something you should sort out with my computer.

Doctor: (Laughing). Yes, I suppose it might sound a bit technical. You've just had your 86<sup>th</sup> birthday, I believe. And you live alone,

Mr Adams: Yes, although I'm not entirely alone. I do have visitors sometimes,

Doctor: Quite. I have a few tests I would like you to have Mr. Adams. Which will give me an idea of how you are generally.

Mr Adams: That's fine, Doctor. What do you want me to do ?

Doctor: Well, first I'm going to give you an address in Hawkes Bay.

Mr Adams: I've already got an address, Doctor, and it's not in Hawke's Bay. I didn't expect you to ask me to move!

Doctor: No. No, you don't understand. I want you to remember this address.

Mr Adams: Why?. I don't know anyone in Hawkes Bay.

Doctor: that's not important,

Mr Adams: It is to me. And why do I have to remember it? You've got it written down.

Doctor: please, Mr. Adams, just do as I ask.

Mr Adams: Tell me again,

Doctor: 46 Blue Course Avenue, Hawkes Bay.

Mr Adams: No, sorry. I couldn't, I can only remember special addresses and then not always.... I've got a sister that lives in Wellington. I know her address. I could give you that. If you like, I stay with her sometimes.

Doctor: Well done Mr. Adams, but no, I don't want your sister's address. I want the Hawkes Bay address.

Mr Adams: But I don't understand. Why is it important? We both don't know anyone that lives there and I do know the Wellington address where I have a real sister living!,

Doctor: Mr Adams, I am trying to determine how your memory is

Mr Adams: I can remember my sister's address easily, ask me that

Doctor: That's excellent Mr Adams, OK We will leave the addressing bit for now, I would like you to draw me a clock face....No, Mr Adams, don't look at your watch

Mr Adams: You'll get a better picture Dr: if I have something to copy

Doctor: I don't want a better picture Mr Adams, I just want your version of a clock face and make it say 5.55 please

Mr Adams: Do you want a talking clock Dr:, I don't know how to do that

Doctor: My apologies Mr Adams...that was a little confusing...what I mean is I want the hands of the clock to show 5.55

Mr Adams: But it isn't 5.55 Dr:

Doctor: I know that Mr Adams, I just want the clock face to show that time

Mr Adams: Is that because you close at 6 and you want to go home?

Doctor: No, Mr Adams, it isn't, and we don't ....actually we close at 5.30, which seems to be quite a long way off!....alright Mr Adams, let's forget about the clock and try something else....What 4 numbers come after 88?

Mr Adams: 88 what Doctor?

Doctor: Just the number 88 Mr Adams

Mr Adams: phew, that's a hard one Doctor, millions of numbers come after 88...how far do you want me to go?....there's 97, 114, 560. 27 million!

Doctor: No, Mr Adams, you are missing the point of the question....I meant the next numbers following 88

Mr Adams: You should have made your questions clearer Doctor

Doctor: Yes, indeed Mr Adams, that is now painfully obvious to me now....well, how about taking 3 from 100 then?

Mr Adams: 100 what Doctor?

Doctor: It doesn't matter what they are Mr Adams, it's just a number

Mr Adams: Well it would really help me to know what they are Doctor

Doctor: Never mind, Mr Adams, we'll move along and try something else

Now let's do a spot of shopping, shall we ?

Mr Adams: Shopping in here?

Doctor, Not actually, Mr. Adams. I'm going to give you a little shopping list and you have to remember it,

Mr Adams: Have you got a pen, please? I always write my shopping list on the palm of my hand. then I can't lose it. Not unless I go to the bathroom before I've done my shopping and wash it all off. And then I have to do it all again.

Doctor: Really. I've never heard of that before. No, Mr. Adams, you cannot use a pen. You just have to remember. Now, listen carefully, please.... A loaf of bread, a packet of butter, a small packet of sugar.

Mr Adams: I don't use sugar,

Doctor. That's not important. Mr. Adams, it won't be real sugar,

Mr Adams: I don't use that stuff either.

Doctor: Mr. Adams, please stop digressing, now. Where was I? (Consulting list)

Mr Adams: Hey you should know, you've got it all written down!.

Doctor: thank you, Mr. Adams.... A pot of jam

Mr Adams: What sort? ...I like marmalade, can I get that?

Doctor: It doesn't matter, it won't be real jam or marmalade

Mr Adams: Gosh. You got some surprising ideas about diet, Doctor?

Doctor: Please, Mr. Adams, we're almost there.... Two apples. And No, Mr. Adams, it doesn't matter which sort of apples, and a banana. And a tin of cat food

Mr Adams: But I haven't got a cat or a dog, what will I do with it?.....

Doctor: It's not real cat food Mr Adams

Mr Adams: That doesn't sound very kind...The SPCA would have a lot to say about that....I must say Doctor this is a very strange collection of groceries .

Doctor: That is the point, Mr. Adams. It is a brain exercise. Okay, tell me what you bought at the shops,

Mr Adams: I haven't been yet, I've just been sitting here.

Doctor: I know that. Mister Adams. Tell me what the shopping list was.

Mr Adams: A banana.... Would it be a real one, Doctor?

Doctor: No, Mr. Adams, none of them are real. It's just a pretend list.

Mr Adams: Oh, you should have said.

Doctor: I thought I had made that clear.

Mr Adams: No, I'm finding it all very confusing.

Doctor: I assure you, Mr. Adams, you are not alone.

Mr Adams: Yes, I have told you that already Doctor I do live alone, but sometimes I have visitors.

Doctor: Thank you for reminding me, Mr. Adams,

Mr Adams: Your memory isn't the best today, Doctor. Perhaps you should do one of those tests for invisible shopping,

Doctor: Thank you, Mr. Adams. That will be all for today. You will hear from me in due course.

Mr Adams: Where's that then? Is that the address in Hawke's Bay? .....it sounds a bit like that?, No that was Blue Course, I remember now.....

But Dr: I told you I don't want to move...why are you sending my notes to there? Why are you so keen on Hawkes Bay..... DOCTOR INTERRUPTS AS HE PUSHES HIM OUT THE DOOR AND TALKS OVER HIM

Doctor: GOOD DAY MR ADAMS! GOOD DAY!

MR ADAMS EXITS, The doctor returns to his chair.....we leave him slumped forward at his desk with his head in his hands

THE END.