

# SHOPPING FOR MY WIFE

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By **Bradley Walton**

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## **SHOPPING FOR MY WIFE**

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**SYNOPSIS:** A man is on an errand that makes him rather uncomfortable. He's looking for tampons, and the overeager, well-meaning sales associate who speaks limited English is only making things worse. When he finally finds what he's looking for, the man is overwhelmed by the variety of product and is forced into some unorthodox decision making, which leaves the awed sales associate spewing his praises a little too enthusiastically for comfort.

### **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

(2 MEN)

CUSTOMER (m).....A guy who's on an errand to buy something for his wife, and he's not comfortable with it.

SALES ASSOCIATE (m).....In his teens, he has recently immigrated to the U.S. with his parents. He tries very hard at his job. Once he gets it into his mind to assist a customer, he will not be deterred. Unfortunately, his English is bad, he's not very smart, and he gets spastic when excited. His nationality and accent are up to the actor and director.

### **SETTING**

Bare stage. Setting and onstage properties are mimed. The CUSTOMER may have a cell phone or this can be mimed, too.

**AT RISE:**

*The CUSTOMER is shopping in a large store. HE is nervous. Really nervous. HE wanders around the stage, whistling nonchalantly and trying to be cool, but nonetheless radiating extreme discomfort.*

**ASSOCIATE:** *(The SALES ASSOCIATE enters.)* May I help you, sir?

**CUSTOMER:** Huh? Uh...no. No. Just looking. I'm fine. Thanks.

Lovely store you have here. Just checking it out.

**ASSOCIATE:** Oh. Okay. *(The CUSTOMER keeps searching. The SALES ASSOCIATE follows him.)*

**ASSOCIATE:** You really look like you're looking for something.

**CUSTOMER:** Um, I'm good. Really.

**ASSOCIATE:** Please let me help you. I know store very well. I work here since my sixteenth birthday. Almost three weeks now.

**CUSTOMER:** No. I can find what I need on my own. Thanks.

**ASSOCIATE:** But I save you so much time!

**CUSTOMER:** That's okay. I'm not in any hurry to get home.

**ASSOCIATE:** You acting really funny. You feel okay?

**CUSTOMER:** I feel fine. Great. Never better.

**ASSOCIATE:** *(Pause.)* You lying.

**CUSTOMER:** I'm not lying.

**ASSOCIATE:** Yes. You lying. Why you lie?

**CUSTOMER:** Would you please leave me alone?

**ASSOCIATE:** But I worried about you! You not okay. You customer. Want customers be happy. Shop here again. Me help. What wrong?

**CUSTOMER:** Oh, for— I'm shopping for my wife. I'm looking for something for her, okay? I'm just not sure what aisle it's in, but I'll manage.

**ASSOCIATE:** Oh, you looking for girly stuff. I understand!

**CUSTOMER:** Right. Will you leave me alone now?

**ASSOCIATE:** What kind of girly stuff you looking for?

**CUSTOMER:** Just...stuff, okay?

**ASSOCIATE:** Like underwear? Maybe pantyhose? I show you!

**CUSTOMER:** No. No. Not pantyhose.

**ASSOCIATE:** Um—uh—what the word—fishnets—you looking for fishnets? My cousin, he like fishnets. Very sexy.

**CUSTOMER:** No. Feminine products!

**ASSOCIATE:** Feminine?

**CUSTOMER:** For women only.

**ASSOCIATE:** Make up. You looking for make up!

**CUSTOMER:** No, not—

**ASSOCIATE:** Lipstick? Make the lips nice and red like—like Mrs. Potato Head, yes?

**CUSTOMER:** No.

**ASSOCIATE:** Mascara? Make eyes big like pretty Disney girls!

**CUSTOMER:** No.

**ASSOCIATE:** No mascara?

**CUSTOMER:** No. No makeup!

**ASSOCIATE:** Perfume?

**CUSTOMER:** No! Will you just let me...do what I need to do?

**ASSOCIATE:** Is your wife okay?

**CUSTOMER:** Why would my wife not be okay?

**ASSOCIATE:** She not shop. You shop for her. She okay?

**CUSTOMER:** She's fine! But it's really none of your business.

**ASSOCIATE:** Oh, but we want her be okay. Because we care.

**CUSTOMER:** Who is "we"?

**ASSOCIATE:** The store. It on all the signs and on TV— that we care.

**CUSTOMER:** No, they don't. They just say that in the advertising.

**ASSOCIATE:** Advertising no lie. Big truth. Yes?

**CUSTOMER:** No.

**ASSOCIATE:** But no make lies in advertising. No legal. Yes?

**CUSTOMER:** No, it's not legal to lie in advertisements, but—

**ASSOCIATE:** Then we care. How your wife?

**CUSTOMER:** Caring is not measurable or quantifiable or—

**ASSOCIATE:** What is "quantifiable"?

**CUSTOMER:** It's—never mind. Yes. You care. Thank you. Care all you want.

**ASSOCIATE:** Then I help you!

**CUSTOMER:** No!

**ASSOCIATE:** But I care!

**CUSTOMER:** Look, I think it's great that you take your job so seriously. I do. But have you ever heard of too much of a good thing?

**ASSOCIATE:** No.

**CUSTOMER:** It's like cake. You eat cake?

**ASSOCIATE:** Yes. Cake good.

**CUSTOMER:** But if you eat too much of it, you get a stomachache.

**ASSOCIATE:** Uh...

**CUSTOMER:** (*Pointing to his stomach.*) Pain. Here.

**ASSOCIATE:** Ah. Pain. Pain bad.

**CUSTOMER:** Right. Bad pain from too much good cake.

**ASSOCIATE:** Good cake.

**CUSTOMER:** You are the cake. You are good.

**ASSOCIATE:** Thank you. Thank you very much.

**CUSTOMER:** But you trying too hard to help me is bad.

**ASSOCIATE:** Bad.

**CUSTOMER:** You're giving me too much cake.

**ASSOCIATE:** You want to eat me?

**CUSTOMER:** No! Your help. Your help is like too much cake. Good, but too much.

**ASSOCIATE:** I so sorry. Let me help you. We find thing for wife, I stop helping you and no more pain. Yes?

**CUSTOMER:** I'm not going to win this, am I?

**ASSOCIATE:** Win? Is there...contest?

**CUSTOMER:** No. Never mind. I just...where are the feminine products?

**ASSOCIATE:** Like pantyhose?

**CUSTOMER:** No! Feminine...feminine hygiene products.

**ASSOCIATE:** Hi gene?

**CUSTOMER:** Uh...clean. Fresh.

**ASSOCIATE:** Like fruit?

**CUSTOMER:** Kind of. Not exactly.

**ASSOCIATE:** You want soap?

**CUSTOMER:** No.

**ASSOCIATE:** Clean, but no soap?

**CUSTOMER:** Yeah, but—

**ASSOCIATE:** Toilet paper?

**CUSTOMER:** (*Looking around to make sure no one else is nearby, then whispering loudly.*) Tampons! Okay? Where are the tampons?!

**ASSOCIATE:** “Tampons”? I don’t know this word. What is “tampons”?

**CUSTOMER:** They’re...they’re long and white and made out of cotton or something. And like, you can put one up your nose to stop a nosebleed.

**ASSOCIATE:** Your wife has a nosebleed?

**CUSTOMER:** No...

**ASSOCIATE:** I so sorry!

**CUSTOMER:** That’s not what I—

**ASSOCIATE:** I help you fast. Get your wife tampon and stop bleeding. (*Yells offstage.*) Hey, Bob! Bob! This guy need tampons! We need hurry! His wife bleeding!

**CUSTOMER:** Don’t yell!

**ASSOCIATE:** (*Yelling offstage.*) On back wall? Thank you, Bob! (*To CUSTOMER.*) Tampons on back wall.

**CUSTOMER:** Great. Thank you. I can find them now.

**ASSOCIATE:** Me help you find.

**CUSTOMER:** I find.

**ASSOCIATE:** Me help. Move fast. Stop bleeding.

**CUSTOMER:** It’s not like that, it’s—it’s—never mind.

**ASSOCIATE:** Here the wall.

**CUSTOMER:** Oh. No.

**ASSOCIATE:** So many. Women’s nose bleeds big business in America.

**CUSTOMER:** How many different kinds of these things are there? O.B. Kotex. Playtex. Tampax.

**ASSOCIATE:** So much use of letter “X.” Very mysterious...

**CUSTOMER:** Applicators? These things have applicators?

**ASSOCIATE:** What is “applicator”?

**CUSTOMER:** Don’t worry about it.

**ASSOCIATE:** Me want learn more English. Please tell.

**CUSTOMER:** It’s the thing that a woman uses to put the tampon in her...in her nose.

**ASSOCIATE:** Oh.

**CUSTOMER:** Oh, good grief. There are different levels of absorbency?

**ASSOCIATE:** Absorbency?

**CUSTOMER:** For uh...for different size nosebleeds.

**ASSOCIATE:** How bad your wife's nosebleed?

**CUSTOMER:** I have no idea, and I hope I never find out. Now, let me think. Junior. Regular. Super. Super plus. Ultra. They've got to be kidding. Super plus? Who makes these distinctions? I know I'm in trouble if I get regular and she needs super, but will she be offended if I buy ultra and she only needs super plus?

**ASSOCIATE:** You have cell phone?

**CUSTOMER:** Of course I have a cell phone.

**ASSOCIATE:** Why you not call and ask?

**CUSTOMER:** She's not in the mood for me to ask questions.

**ASSOCIATE:** Because her nose is bleeding?

**CUSTOMER:** Exactly. I don't believe this. And how many does she want? Eighteen? Thirty-six? I don't know how to deal with this. Okay. Pretend it's not tampons. What is this like? Come on... Come on... What's something else that has totally overwhelming variety?

**ASSOCIATE:** Uh...cola?

**CUSTOMER:** Cola! Yes! That's a great idea! Okay. It's like, Kotex is Coke and Playtex is Pepsi. Right. Just pretend it's Coke and Pepsi. That's so much easier to deal with. Tampax is probably like Dr. Pepper, and I'll bet O.B. is R.C. Then there's the store brand. The plastic applicator is regular. Cardboard applicator is diet. No applicator is the semi-diet stuff with half the calories.

**ASSOCIATE:** Wow. Tampons so much like soda.

**CUSTOMER:** All right, there's junior, regular, super, super plus, and ultra. That would be kind of like lime flavor, vanilla flavor, cherry flavor, cherry vanilla flavor, or any of the above in caffeine free. And then how many does she want? A small box. That's like a six-pack. The box of 46 would be a two-liter bottle.

**ASSOCIATE:** Two liters very many tampons. Much nosebleeds.

**CUSTOMER:** So she drinks Diet Cherry Coke in two-liter bottles. That would be Kotex super absorbency with a cardboard applicator in a pack of 46.

**ASSOCIATE:** Wow. You brilliant.

**CUSTOMER:** Thanks.

**ASSOCIATE:** I find manager. I tell him we need put tampons in aisle with soda.

**CUSTOMER:** That probably wouldn't be a good idea.

**ASSOCIATE:** But they so much alike!

**CUSTOMER:** Um, not *really*...

**ASSOCIATE:** You the tampon king.

**CUSTOMER:** I wouldn't go that far.

**ASSOCIATE:** You the tampon cola master.

**CUSTOMER:** You can stop now.

**ASSOCIATE:** Super cola tampon master man!

**CUSTOMER:** Goodbye.

**ASSOCIATE:** Go now! Go and put two liter bottle of Diet Cherry Coke in wife's nose! She will give you big love forever! What great man you are. Come back soon!

**CUSTOMER:** You can leave me alone now.

**ASSOCIATE:** Go! Go to cash register with your treasure of absorbent, fizzy love. *(The CUSTOMER looks down at his pocket. HE pulls out a cell phone and puts it to his ear.)*

**CUSTOMER:** Hello? Oh, hi dear. No, I'm still at the store. I'm just ready to check out now. Uh, it took me a while to find them. *(Nervously.)* Um, diet— I mean, Kotex super absorbent with a cardboard applicator in a pack of 46. *(Hunches his shoulders and clenches his teeth, fearing the response, then smiles and shakes his fist in the air.)* Yes! I mean, yes. Of course I pay attention to your things in the bathroom closet.

**ASSOCIATE:** Enjoy Diet Cherry Coke in nose, wife!

**CUSTOMER:** Will you shut up?! No, I have no idea who that was, or what he was talking about, but I'm walking away from him right now. *(Pause.)* Your mom needs what? Uh huh. Just get more of what was in the closet beside your tampons. Right. Sure. I love you, too. Bye. *(HE stands there, looking stunned.)*

**ASSOCIATE:** What the matter?

**CUSTOMER:** Will you please go away?

**ASSOCIATE:** But I care. What your wife's mom need?

**CUSTOMER:** *(With enormous difficulty.)* Diapers.

**ASSOCIATE:** Your wife's mom have a baby?

**CUSTOMER:** No. They're for...my wife's mom. She lives with us.

**ASSOCIATE:** Ooh. Hm...where would adult diapers be? *(Looks around, then points in pleasant surprise.)* Ah! Right here!



**CUSTOMER:** Oh no.

**ASSOCIATE:** Wow. There very many.

**CUSTOMER:** Serenity. Depend. Abi-form. Abr-San. Abi-Wing.  
Regular. Super. I'm doomed.

**ASSOCIATE:** No. Work your magic. Be super cola diaper master  
man!

**CUSTOMER:** My mother-in-law doesn't drink cola.

*CURTAIN.*

**THE END**

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