

Is This Seat Taken?

By Michael Leathers

CAST: 2 males, 2 females

Ryan: Brash husband, mid-20s, visiting church for first time as an adult.

Ashley: Married to Ryan, mid-20s, a bit clueless, attending church for first time.

Barry: Longtime church member, early 50s.

Wanda: Wife of Barry, early 50s.

RUN TIME: 11 minutes

PROPS

- Large purse
- Junior Mints box
- Popcorn box
- Two stacks of visitors' packets
- Twizzlers package
- Thermos
- Goobers box

STORY

Ryan and Ashley are making their first visit to church as a young married couple. However, they've chosen the two seats that Barry and Wanda Barker have sat in for the last seven years. Now the Barkers have to find a way to make the couple move without seeming inhospitable.

THEMES

Hospitality. Visitors. Covetousness. Deception.

Is This Seat Taken?

(We're in a church before the Sunday-morning service starts. Eight chairs face the audience. RYAN and ASHLEY, a young married couple, enter. ASHLEY carries a large purse)

RYAN

Ash, wait up. We're way too close.

ASHLEY

I want to see the whole show.

(ASHLEY moves to the two center chairs as she speaks. RYAN follows. They sit down)

These are perfect.

RYAN

It's not the movies. It's church.

ASHLEY

I just want good seats, honey.

(Rummaging through her purse)

I know perfectly well it's not like the movies.

(Retrieves a box of candy and offers it to RYAN)

Junior Mints?

(BARRY and WANDA enter. All smiles until they notice RYAN and ASHLEY. They stop dead in their tracks, upset to see their seats taken)

RYAN

No thanks. And it is way different. At the movies, people rush the crowd for the best seats. In church, people aren't that territorial.

BARRY

(To WANDA)

Who are the punks in our seats?

WANDA

They must be new. No one else would sit in our spots.

ASHLEY

(To RYAN)

This is all so new.

RYAN

I'll walk you through it. After all, I did attend church all the way up to second grade. One thing's for sure. The people are so nice.

BARRY

(To WANDA)

All right, let's tell Ken and Barbie to move their rumps.

WANDA

You can't do that.

BARRY

Why not?

WANDA

They're visitors. We're supposed to act friendly.

BARRY

Right. We'll need another plan. Divide and conquer.

(BARRY and WANDA split up and approach RYAN and ASHLEY from each side of the row of chairs. BARRY is next to RYAN, and WANDA next to ASHLEY)

BARRY

Good morning. I'm Barry Barker, and this is my wife, Wanda. Welcome.

RYAN

(Stands)

Good to meet you. We're Ryan and Ashley Montgomery.

WANDA

(Sits down next to ASHLEY)

So, you're visitors?

ASHLEY

It's my first time in church. My family never went.

WANDA

Agnostic?

ASHLEY

No, I can see fine.

(She reaches into her purse and removes a box)

Popcorn?

(WANDA declines. ASHLEY returns the box to her purse)

BARRY

Do you have a visitor packet? Perhaps I can locate one for you.

RYAN

Awesome.

BARRY

(Looking around)

Yes, let's see. Ah, right over there at the end of the row. There's a stack.

(He gestures past RYAN)

Just walk right on over and pick one up.

RYAN

Isn't that a stack right behind you?

BARRY

(Turns and sees the stack)

You don't want those.

RYAN

Why not?

BARRY

They're not for visitors.

RYAN

They look the same.

BARRY

They're not.

RYAN

Well, what are they?

BARRY

They're the ... Wednesday-night things ... for Wednesdays. ... You know.

RYAN

Oh, well, I'd like to get one of those, too.

BARRY

You can't.

RYAN

Why not?

END OF SAMPLE

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