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# **Checking In** **(One-Act Version)**

By  
TRACY WELLS

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# Checking In

## (One-Act Version)

### CHARACTERS

**BERNARD (m):** Bellhop who gets drawn into the lives of the hotel guests and who is falling for Natasha.

**NATASHA (w):** Housekeeper and love interest of Bernard.

**MRS./MR. HUMPHRIES\* (a):** Hotel manager who is strict with the staff but ingratiating with the guests.

**JENNY/JEREMY\* (a):** High energy, often annoying Kids Club Captain.

**MARTHA\* (w):** Hotel concierge who has a zest for life.

**HELGA/HANS\* (a):** Grumpy hotel masseuse.

**MOM-TO-BE\* (w):** Extremely pregnant woman who just wants to enjoy her babymoon.

**DAD-TO-BE\* (m):** Her concerned husband.

**DAUGHTER/SON\* (a):** Teenager who spends all his/her time online and now fears life in the real world.

**MOTHER/FATHER\* (a):** Parent of daughter/son who wants to show how great the world is outside of a screen.

**JOHN SPENCER\* (m):** Man on a business trip who needs help remembering that there's more to life than work.

**MOM\* (w):** Frazzled mother who needs a break.

**DAD\* (m):** Her equally frazzled husband.

**KIDS 1-3\* (a):** Their children, ages 5-12, with a lot of energy.

**MABEL\* (w):** Empty nester ready to enjoy all that life has to offer.

**CHUCK\* (m):** Empty nester who just wants to relax and spend time with his wife.

**WIDOW/WIDOWER\* (a):** A recent widow who is ready to

embark on the trip she and her husband had always planned to take together.

GUESTS/STAFF\* (a): Extras as desired to work in the hotel, walk through the lobby, check in, etc.

TIME: Modern day.

PLACE: Interior of the Regency Arms Hotel. The Regency Arms can be located in whatever city in the world you choose or may be in an undisclosed location near the ocean or in the mountains or anywhere picturesque.

## SCENES

Prologue: A Room With a View

Scene 1: Fresh Squeezed

Scene 2: In Room Safe

Scene 3: Guest Relations

Scene 4: Wake-Up Call

Scene 5: Room Service

Scene 6: Trip of a Lifetime

Epilogue: Turndown

## PRODUCTION NOTES

Production notes, including information on casting, cutting, setting, costumes and props, can be found in the back of the book.

# Checking In

## (One-Act Version)

### Prologue: A Room With a View

AT RISE: NATASHA is C, absentmindedly dusting the table while also looking out the window. Her cleaning cart is nearby. BERNARD enters, unseen by NATASHA.

NATASHA (to herself). The view from here is beautiful.

BERNARD (to himself, while looking at NATASHA, although louder than he intended). It sure is.

(NATASHA jumps, startled. BERNARD jumps, realizing she heard him.)

NATASHA (turning quickly). Oh! Sorry, I didn't see you there. Did you say something?

BERNARD (nervously). Um, no. I don't think so.

NATASHA. I could've sworn you said something.

BERNARD. Out loud?

NATASHA (chuckling). Pretty sure it was out loud.

BERNARD (walking backward, toward the door). Oh, well, it was nothing, really. (Turns and starts to exit.) I'll just be going then. Lots of work to do—

NATASHA (calling out to him). Wait!

(BERNARD stops and turns back.)

BERNARD. Yes?



NATASHA (*holds out her hand and crosses to BERNARD*).

My name is Natasha. I'm the new housekeeper.

BERNARD (*taking her hand*). I'm Bernard—the bellhop.

NATASHA (*smiling as she shakes his hand*). Nice to meet you, Bernard.

BERNARD (*smiling at her, maybe a little too much, continuing to shake her hand, now excessive*). Nice to meet you, Natasha.

*(He continues to look at her with a big smile on his face, shaking her hand. NATASHA looks at him, at first confused as to why they are still shaking hands, and then a little concerned. After a moment, she extricates her hand from his and wipes it on the leg of her uniform as BERNARD stares in wonder at his own hand that was just shaking hers. When she looks at him, he quickly puts his hand behind his back.)*

NATASHA (*crosses to her cart, picks up a spray bottle and starts cleaning*). So, what are you doing here, Bernard?

BERNARD. Well, I always wanted to travel the world, but I don't have the money. So I figured, what's a better way to make the money I need to travel than by working in a world-class hotel?

NATASHA (*chuckling*). I meant, what are you doing in this room? The next guest doesn't arrive until later this afternoon. Isn't a bellhop supposed to help the guests with their baggage?

BERNARD. Baggage? You could say that— (*Smirks.*) in more ways than one.

NATASHA. So if there are no guests in this room, then why are you here?

BERNARD. I heard we had a new housekeeper, so I just wanted to check in on you.

NATASHA (*Smiling to herself, but not looking at him*). Do you check in on all the new housekeepers?

BERNARD (*to himself, but louder than he intended*). Only the pretty ones.

NATASHA (*looking up*). What was that?

BERNARD (*flustered*). Nothing!

NATASHA. I could've sworn you said something.

BERNARD. Out loud?

NATASHA (*chuckling*). Pretty sure it was out loud.

BERNARD. What I meant to say was that I was just passing this room and wanted to see if there was anything you needed.

NATASHA (*crossing to the cart and putting away the spray bottle*). The housekeeping cart is pretty well stocked. (*Pats the cart.*) I think I have everything I need right here.

BERNARD (*walking backward, toward the door*). OK great. Well then I guess I'll just let you get your cleaning done. (*Turns around, toward the exit.*)

NATASHA. Bernard?

BERNARD (*stops and turns back to her*). Yes?

NATASHA (*smiling*). Someday I want to travel the world, too.

BERNARD (*smiling*). Better get back to work then. There's lots of rooms to clean at the Regency Arms Hotel.

NATASHA. And lots of guests with baggage.

BERNARD (*smirks*). You have no idea. (*Starts to cross to the door again.*)

NATASHA (*picks up a stack of towels and crosses to the window*). Not a bad view to look at while we wait, is it?

BERNARD (*turning back to look at NATASHA. To himself, but louder than he intends, smiling*). Not bad at all.

NATASHA (*turning quickly*). Did you say something?

BERNARD (*flustered, starts to walk backward*). No. Nothing at all. Have a great day, Natasha. Nice to meet you.

*(BERNARD bumps into the plant by the door on his way out, nearly knocking it over. He turns, rights it, then hurries quickly through the door.)*

NATASHA. Nice to meet you too, Bernard.

*(She smiles, takes one last look out the window, then walks into the bathroom, exiting as lights fade to black.)*

### Scene 1: Fresh Squeezed

*(As lights rise, BERNARD enters, pushing a luggage rack with suitcases on it. DAD-TO-BE follows closely behind. There are two white bathrobes folded on the bed.)*

BERNARD. Here we are—your room. *(Crosses to the window and opens the curtain wider.)* And might I say, you have a spectacular view.

DAD-TO-BE *(looking out the window)*. Wow! You're not kidding! *(Calling back out the door, loudly.)* Honey, you should see the view we have in our room!

MOM-TO-BE *(offstage, calling out loudly)*. Can't wait!

BERNARD *(crossing to the bathroom door)*. Your bathroom is fully stocked with soaps, shampoos and lotions from France.

DAD-TO-BE *(calling back out the door, loudly)*. Honey, we've got French soaps in the bathroom!

MOM-TO-BE *(offstage, calling out loudly)*. Ooh-la-la!

BERNARD *(leans toward the door, trying to see MOM-TO-BE, then crosses to the bed and picks up one of the robes)*. During your stay, feel free to enjoy these complimentary bathrobes. *(Hands one to DAD-TO-BE.)* They are the softest robes you'll find in any hotel, guaranteed.

DAD-TO-BE (*holding the sleeve of the robe up to his face and nuzzling it*). It's as soft as a cloud. (*Calling back out the door, loudly.*) Honey, you've gotta feel these bathrobes!

MOM-TO-BE (*offstage, calling out loudly*). I'm coming! I'm coming!

BERNARD (*leaning to look out the door, concerned*). Is she OK?

DAD-TO-BE. She's all right— (*Suddenly a little worried himself.*) I think.

(*MOM-TO-BE enters through the door, sideways and slowly, as she is very, very pregnant.*)

MOM-TO-BE. I made it! Finally. (*Crosses to the bed and sits down, exhausted, and wipes her brow.*) You didn't tell me the walk from the elevator would be so far, Bernard.

BERNARD. It's only about twenty feet.

MOM-TO-BE (*holds up her feet*). Yeah well when your feet are *this* swollen, twenty feet is pretty far, Bernard.

BERNARD (*unconvinced*). If you say so.

MOM-TO-BE (*agitated*). Have you ever been nine months pregnant, Bernard?

BERNARD. Can't say that I have, ma'am.

MOM-TO-BE. Then maybe you should take my word for it.

BERNARD (*holding up his hands, as if saying he doesn't mean any harm*). I think that's a good idea.

DAD-TO-BE (*aside to BERNARD*). Trust me—it is.

BERNARD (*unloading their suitcases from the luggage cart*).

Where would you like me to put these?

MOM-TO-BE (*points to one side*). Over there will be fine.

BERNARD. Very well. (*As he takes luggage to the designated location.*) So you guys just wanted to take one last trip before the baby arrives?

MOM-TO-BE (*excitedly*). It's our babymoon!

BERNARD. Babymoon?

MOM-TO-BE. It's like a honeymoon for a couple, but instead of celebrating your marriage, you're celebrating your pregnancy.

DAD-TO-BE (*less excited*). Most people don't wait until they are nine months pregnant to take their babymoons. (*Points with his thumb at MOM-TO-BE.*) But *this one* couldn't drag herself away from her job.

MOM-TO-BE (*agitated*). You know I had to save up my vacation time for when the baby comes.

DAD-TO-BE. We didn't have to take such an extravagant trip. We could've just gone for a long weekend.

MOM-TO-BE (*more agitated*). You know how long I've been looking forward to this trip. I was not going to miss it for anything! I don't know why you're insisting on starting an argument the second we arrive, especially in front of Bernard.

BERNARD (*speeding up*). Don't mind me. I'll be out of your hair in a jiffy. Let me quickly get these last few bags—*very* quickly.

DAD-TO-BE (*crossing to put his hand soothingly on MOM-TO-BE's shoulder*). I'm not starting an argument, honey. I'm just pointing out that it's a little close to the due date for a trip like this.

MOM-TO-BE (*crossing her arms and narrowing her eyes*). You know the due date isn't for another eight days.

BERNARD (*looking up from his work, nervously*). Eight days?

MOM-TO-BE. We have plenty of time to enjoy our vacation.

DAD-TO-BE. Maybe it'd be a good idea if I keep my mouth shut for now.

BERNARD (*aside to DAD-TO-BE*). Trust me—it is. (*Puts the last bag in its location.*) That's the last of them. Is there anything else you need before I leave you?

MOM-TO-BE. That's not where I told you to put the bags.

BERNARD. I'm pretty sure it was, ma'am.

MOM-TO-BE (*agitated*). No it's not! I told you to put them over there. (*Points to the opposite side of the room. She stands and crosses to the bags.*) I guess I have to do it myself. (*Starts to tug on the heaviest bag to move it.*) I probably should get used to it. Once this baby comes, I'll never have another moment's peace again.

BERNARD (*rushing over to try and help MOM-TO-BE*). Why don't you let me take care of the bags, ma'am?

MOM-TO-BE (*angrily*). Will you stop calling me ma'am? I'm not that old! Ma'am is what you call somebody's mother!

BERNARD. What would you like me to call you?

MOM-TO-BE (*suddenly clutches the lower part of her belly*). Holy mother of mercy!

BERNARD (*confused*). Holy mother of mercy? I thought you didn't want to be called somebody's mother.

MOM-TO-BE (*clutching the lower part of her belly and exclaiming*). John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt!

BERNARD. That's my name too! (*Laughs.*) I see what's going on. We're playing a name game. (*Thinks.*) Maybe I should call you—

DAD-TO-BE (*interrupts*). I don't think she's playing a game. (*Crossing to MOM-TO-BE, concerned.*) Honey, are you OK?

BERNARD (*unaware*). Rumpelstiltskin! (*Thinking.*) No, then you wouldn't want me to guess your name. Or maybe it's—

MOM-TO-BE (*clutching the lower part of her belly and yelling*). Bernard!

BERNARD. No, that's my name.

MOM-TO-BE. I'm in labor!

BERNARD. Labor? (*Looks at MOM-TO-BE, who is now huffing and puffing, trying to control the pain. Realization dawns.*) Oh, labor! (*Starts running around the room frantically.*) We need towels, hot water, something to put the baby in when it comes out, and a knife. (*Looks around.*) Where can I get a knife sharp enough. (*Puts his forefinger up as he has an idea.*) The kitchen! Let me just call down to the kitchen. (*Rushes to the phone.*)

DAD-TO-BE (*helping MOM-TO-BE over to the bed*). Why don't you just call an ambulance instead?

BERNARD. I think that's a great idea.

MOM-TO-BE. Trust me—it is.

(*BERNARD picks up the phone as MOM-TO-BE laughs.*)

MOM-TO-BE (*cont'd*). I'm so sorry I got us into this mess, sweetheart. If I hadn't insisted on taking this silly babymoon—

DAD-TO-BE (*stopping her*). It's all right, honey. (*Rubbing her belly.*) Who would've thought this little stinker would show up eight whole days early?

BERNARD (*with the phone to his ear, leaning toward DAD-TO-BE*). Um, pretty sure anyone could've guessed that. You know those due dates are only guidelines, right?

DAD-TO-BE (*with a pointed look*). The ambulance?

BERNARD. Right! (*Turns back to his phone call.*) We need an ambulance at the Regency Arms Hotel right away. (*Listens for a moment.*) We have a mother who has gone into labor.

MOM-TO-BE (*sweetly, smiling*). Did you hear that, sweetheart? I'm going to be somebody's mother. I like the sound of that.

DAD-TO-BE (*smiling*). So do I.

*(He rubs her shoulders or kisses her forehead as BERNARD puts the phone down.)*

BERNARD. The ambulance will be here any minute.

DAD-TO-BE. Great. Thanks, Bernard.

BERNARD (*crossing to MOM-TO-BE*). So do you know if it's going to be a boy or a girl?

DAD-TO-BE. No. We wanted it to be a surprise.

*(MOM-TO-BE clutches the lower part of her belly, in pain.)*

BERNARD. Do you have a name picked out yet?

MOM-TO-BE (*exclaiming in pain*). Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!

BERNARD. Twins! That *is* a surprise!

*(MOM-TO BE cries out in pain again as DAD-TO-BE and BERNARD draw closer to soothe her as lights fade to black.)*

## Scene 2: In Room Safe

*(As lights rise, DAUGHTER is laying on the bed on her stomach, looking at her phone. Next to her on the bed is an open laptop. MOTHER stands C, looking at her.)*

MOTHER. What about the beach?

DAUGHTER (*without looking up*). Too hot.

MOTHER (*crossing to the window and looking outside*). It's not too hot. It's beautiful outside!

DAUGHTER (*holding up her phone without looking at MOTHER*). Weather says heat index will be ninety-six degrees today.



MOTHER. How about a museum then? They'll have air conditioning.

DAUGHTER (*starting to type into her laptop*). Too crowded and there's air conditioning here at the hotel. I can get a better look at the exhibits from a virtual tour. See? (*Turns her laptop around for MOTHER to see.*)

MOTHER. OK. Maybe some shopping then? You used to love going shopping with me.

DAUGHTER (*turning the laptop back around to face her and starts typing on the keyboard*). That was before I knew there was a better selection online.

MOTHER. Online shopping isn't very fun. Besides, you have to wait for your packages to arrive.

DAUGHTER. Not with same-day shipping.

*(A knock on the door is heard.)*

DAUGHTER (*cont'd*). Come in!

*(BERNARD enters, carrying a package.)*

BERNARD. Your package arrived, miss.

DAUGHTER. Thanks, Bernard!

*(She stands and crosses to retrieve package from BERNARD. She opens it. Inside are a pair of sunglasses. She puts them on and turns to MOTHER.)*

DAUGHTER (*cont'd*). See? They fit perfectly.

MOTHER (*exasperated*). Why did you bother buying sunglasses online? It's not as if you ever step foot outdoors.

DAUGHTER (*shrugging her shoulders*). What can I say? They look cool.

BERNARD (*to DAUGHTER*). You don't go outside? How is that possible? You're on vacation!

MOTHER (*indicating DAUGHTER*). This is all she does! The second she comes home from school, she runs upstairs to her room, fires up her laptop and checks her Instagram.

DAUGHTER (*to BERNARD*). I have over four thousand followers on Insta.

BERNARD. Wow! That's impressive. I only have three.

DAUGHTER. Three thousand? That's pretty good.

BERNARD. No. Three—my mom, my grandmother and my barber.

DAUGHTER. Your grandmother's on Instagram?

BERNARD. Have you ever heard of the Globetrotting Grannie?

DAUGHTER (*excitedly*). Oh yeah! That lady's cool. Last week she bungee jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge. It was epic!

BERNARD (*proudly*). That's Grannie.

DAUGHTER. All my friends follow her.

BERNARD. Yeah, she's really popular. (*Grimaces.*) I had to agree to do her laundry for a month to get her to follow me back.

DAUGHTER. I'll follow you, Bernard. (*Starts typing into her phone.*) What's your Insta?

BERNARD (*crossing to DAUGHTER and looking over her shoulder*). It's @BernardTheBellhopFromTheRegencyArms.

DAUGHTER. That's a little boring.

BERNARD. Maybe that's why I only have three followers.

DAUGHTER (*with a smirk*). Sure. That's why.

MOTHER (*to DAUGHTER, trying to look over her shoulder*). Why? What's your Insta?

DAUGHTER (*moving her phone away from her MOTHER*). Like I'd tell you.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

**THEME:** The play follows the theme of, “Life is a journey, travel it well.” To that end, the hotel guests depict various stages of life, from a birth in the scene “Fresh Squeezed,” to falling in love in “Guest Relations,” to navigating parenthood in “Wake-Up Call,” to the death of a spouse in “Trip of a Lifetime,” as well as other scenes. This theme is told with humor while still keeping the emotion that we experience through every stage of life.

**DOUBLING:** There are many potential options for doubling and tripling of roles. The starred roles on the character listing are the easiest to combine, but any combination is acceptable.

**CASTING:** Feel free to assign genders or races as needed to any character. If you need to change other identifying characteristics, such as names, to better identify with your community, you may do so. Additionally, though certain characters have designated genders, if you would like a certain couple to be the same gender, feel free to make this change.

**SETTING:** The play can be performed with one hotel room set by making minor adjustments from scene to scene to indicate different rooms, or an entire hotel can be constructed with a lobby and multiple rooms where the action takes place.

For a single-room set: You will need to construct three interior walls—one large center wall and two small angled walls on either side, one of which will need a door. The center wall should have a large picture window RC, flanked by luxurious looking curtains. If desired, an image of an iconic landmark or a beautiful scenic view can be visible from the window. L of the window is the doorway to the bathroom, which should

be operational and could depict part of the bathroom inside. Centered on the leftmost wall is a full or queen size bed, covered in luxurious looking bedding. A small table with one chair is under or next to the picture window. A phone is on the table. A small cabinet is also in the room. The entrance to the room is R and should also have an operational door, if possible. There is a tall potted plant near the door. Additional room accessories can be added/changed to indicate different rooms as can the placement of the bed and door.

For a multi-room set: You will need to construct a lobby and at least a couple rooms. Having these multiple rooms could be an opportunity to increase stage time for your actors by bringing characters from individual scenes to interact with other staff members throughout the hotel. This could take place during scene changes to depict typical hotel life. Maybe someone is getting a massage while another is checking in, or maybe John is flirting with Martha at the concierge station. Just make sure that when the action in a scene begins, that the focus shifts to the scene.

**COSTUMES:** Generally modern-day attire. BERNARD should wear a bellhop uniform. NATASHA should wear a housekeeper's uniform. MR./MS. HUMPHRIES should wear a suit. JENNY should wear bright colors with wacky, child-friendly accessories (comically large bow tie, bright knee socks, etc.). MARTHA should wear a skirt and blazer, perhaps with the hotel logo on it. HELGA should wear white pants and a white polo shirt, perhaps with the hotel logo on it. MOM-TO-BE must appear visibly pregnant. JOHN should wear a button-down shirt, unbuttoned at the top with a tie that has been loosened. MABEL and CHUCK should be wearing loud "vacation fashion" such as tropical shirts, cargo shorts and wide-brimmed hats, fedoras or visors.

**PROPERTIES:** Cleaning cart (with spray bottles, dusting cloths, vacuum, trash can, towels and toiletries), luggage cart, suitcases of various styles and sizes (some should have clothes in them), garment bag, 4 white bathrobes, white towels and washcloths, clipboard, mobile phone, laptop, sunglasses inside a shipping box, pamphlets, menu, files, papers, tablets, pens, bottle of wine, 2 glasses, 3 foam dart guns with darts, and an urn.

**TECHNOLOGY:** Feel free to update references to technology or any dated material as needed.

**CUTTING:** As is, the play runs approximately 45 minutes. This run time can be shortened and cast size manipulated as needed with the removal of whole scenes. However, if you would like to maintain the theme, be sure to keep the scenes in order, which will tell a cohesive story of birth to death.