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## THE SECOND TIME AROUND Henry Denker

*Comedy / 4m, 4f / Interior*

Senior citizens Samuel Jonas and Laura Curtis, a widower and a widow, strike up a love affair. When they announce plans to live together without marrying so they can keep social security benefits they'd otherwise lose, their children hit the ceiling even though they were never close to their deceased parent and their own marriages leave a lot to be desired. Sam's daughter is married to her ex analyst, a stuffy neurotic, and Laura's son has a wife who is paranoid about food additives and their sexual performance. All ends well for the elderly twosome, but not before the entire second generation is in nervous fits.

"A winner ... with lots of topical, pertinent cracks."  
— *Atlanta Constitution*

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ISBN 978-0-573-61614-3



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978-0-573-61614-3  
\$11.99  
END TIME AROUND  
THE SECOND TIME AROUND

—RE-SAMUEL

## The Second Time Around

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

by Henry Denker

SAMUEL FRENCH

## CAST

THE SECOND TIME AROUND, a comedy by Henry Denker. Directed by Robert H. Livingston; H. Yeargan; lighting by Lawrence King and Michael stage manager, Martha Knight Presented by Adela Holzer. Opening night was January 1, 1977 at the Morosco Theater, 217 West 45th Street.

CYNTHIA MORSE ..... *Holland Taylor*  
 MIKE CURTIS ..... *Dick Patterson*  
 SAMUEL JONAS ..... *Hans Conried*  
 LAURA CURTIS ..... *Molly Picon*  
 ELEANOR CURTIS ..... *Lois Markle*  
 DR. ARTHUR MORSE ..... *Matthew Tobin*  
 BRUCE MORSE ..... *Abvi Spindell*  
 ANGELA ..... *Cynthia Bostick*

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

SAMUEL JONAS, a widower just past sixty-five, alert, spritely, attractive, a nice human being.

LAURA CURTIS, in her mid-sixties, a pleasant, neat, devoted widow, modestly dressed; pleasing to the eye.

MIKE CURTIS, son of Laura, a mid-thirties, hard-driving young businessman, with a nervous stomach.

CYNTHIA MORSE, daughter of Samuel, a suburban matron, neurotic, well-dressed, good-looking.

ELEANOR, Mike's wife, the face and smile of an angel, the soul and strength of a tyrant.

DR. ARTHUR MORSE, psychiatrist, husband of Cynthia, son-in-law of Samuel. Himself a bit of a neurotic.

BRUCE MORSE, grandson of Samuel, son of Cynthia and Arthur, sophomore at Columbia, a nice young man with active libido.

ANGELA, a Barnard sophomore, with an angelic look and a relationship with Bruce.

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till his eight o'clock appointment the next morning. He was either in that God-damned chair or else he was in some closet. *Where does one meet an analyst?*

CYNTHIA. *(Impatience makes her blurt out.)* He was my analyst!

MIKE. *(With inordinate significance.)* Oh, I seeeee.

CYNTHIA. You seeeee what?

MIKE. Just a chance remark. If I may suggest, before you make up your mind about this, talk it over with Arthur.

CYNTHIA. Arthur is no longer my analyst. Now he is my husband. So I don't want any of his damned advice! *(She realizes she has blurted out a bit of private information.)*

MIKE. *(To break the moment, he picks up two magazines from the coffee table.)* Hmmm! Atlantic. Harpers Hea-vy. *(He picks up a small bound volume.)* What's this . . . "Verses by Samuel W. Jonas."

CYNTHIA. What's that doing out?

MIKE. 1937 Hey, that's very impressive.

CYNTHIA. For a man who never got beyond the

second year of high school, my father is extremely literate and knowledgeable.

MIKE. *(Broadly.)* Yes, I think I will give them my consent.

CYNTHIA. *(Icily.)* Mr. Curtis, your consent is not even involved. I will see my father. We will discuss it. And we will let you know.

MIKE. Would you send a Xerox copy to my mother?

*(The sound at the door alerts her.)*

CYNTHIA. Thank God! Dad! *(She goes to the door to open it. SAMUEL JONAS enters, carrying a pastry box. CYNTHIA greets him so effusively he is taken*

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aback, touching the place on his cheek where she kisses him. He stands aside to let LAURA CURTIS enter.)

MIKE. Mother!

LAURA. Mickey!

MIKE. *(Reprovingly.)* Mother!

LAURA. I'm sorry. Mike. Mike I know how Eleanor feels about my calling a grown man Mickey. So how is Eleanor? Still smiling, hmm?

SAMUEL. Cynthia, I want you to meet Laura. Laura Curtis Laura, Cynthia.

LAURA. My dear . . . *(Her natural impulse makes her move to CYNTHIA and embrace her but CYNTHIA's attitude forbids it. To cover, SAMUEL says.)*

SAMUEL. You and Mike. . . I guess you two have already met.

MIKE. I feel like we've known each other for years.

CYNTHIA. Decades.

SAMUEL. *(As if starting the meeting.)* Good! We thought as long as we were going to be at the doctor today getting our blood tests and our shots, we might as well all meet and . . .

CYNTHIA. *(So it's gone that far.)* Blood tests! Shots!

SAMUEL. Cynthia, please, there's no reason to be upset. After all, these things are only as complicated as people choose to make them. I always used to say to your mother, nine-tenths of the trouble people have is of their own making. *(He crosses to LAURA.)* I'm sorry, my dear But that's one habit you'll have to learn to put up with Almost everything of any consequence I ever said, I said to her mother. She was the only one who would listen

CYNTHIA. *(Coolly.)* So you were both at the doctor LAURA. You know, your father and I met in a doctor's office.

SAMUEL. *(Glowingly.)* A radiologist.

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LAURA. We were both there for X-Rays.

CYNTHIA (*To Samuel*). You never told me

SAMUEL. It turned out to be nothing. At first the doctor was concerned. He found a dark spot. But it turned out to be a nurse's finger.

LAURA. I was there for a complete G.I. series. Which takes practically all morning. All that barium. Uch! I was sitting in the waiting room between X-Rays looking through a magazine.

SAMUEL. TIME. Two months old

LAURA. Your father was sitting across the room. Also looking at TIME.

SAMUEL. The latest issue

LAURA. He noticed I wasn't interested in my magazine. So he came over and said, very respectfully, "My dear lady, this is the latest TIME. You might find it more engrossing."

SAMUEL. And she said, "No, thank you. Unless you're completely finished with it."

LAURA. And he said, "Frankly, I prefer the monthly magazines. They have a much higher percentage of accuracy. They're only wrong once a month." Well, I knew right away he was a man with a sense of humor.

(*Looking to see if she has softened Cynthia.*)

CYNTHIA. (*As stubborn as only a woman can be.*) So you've already had your blood tests

LAURA. (*Still trying to divert her.*) That's the way we started talking. Then he asked me what I was there for. And I told him

SAMUEL. Duodenal ulcer. Not uncommon among widows, I discovered.

CYNTHIA. Did you?

SAMUEL. Well, I looked it up at the Academy of Medicine Library up on Fifth Avenue. You know why

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widows get ulcers? Because they worry. They worry because they no longer have anyone to worry about. But Laura's doctor told me that if she stays on a diet, there's absolutely nothing to worry about.

CYNTHIA (*Indignantly*). Her doctor told you?

SAMUEL. (*A reproach to Mike*). Who else was he going to tell? (*They ALL turn to accuse Mike*)

MIKE. (*Guiltily*). Look, I think we ought to get to the matter which brought us all together.

LAURA. Yes, the matter which brought us all together. (*She moves to Samuel as if taking a stand against the other two and possible resistance*)

CYNTHIA. Dad, I would rather you and I discussed this first!

SAMUEL. Cynthia, there is nothing to discuss. We are mature human beings who have made a decision. We choose this time and this place to announce it.

MIKE. Right on, Man! Groovy!

LAURA. Mickey, when you say things like that you don't sound like my son. You sound like your son.

SAMUEL. Everyone will please take a seat.

MIKE. I don't think she's going to take this sitting down. (*To spite Mike, Cynthia does sit down. But tensely, on the edge of her chair. She is a perfect suburban neurotic*)

SAMUEL. All right, now. It seems we may have miscalculated.

CYNTHIA. You certainly did.

LAURA. You see, my dear, we thought we'd meet and tell you our news over coffee and cake. We just got some fresh Danish. And we hoped by the time it was over you two would understand, wish us luck and the whole thing would be settled. Peacefully. And pleasantly.