Due Date

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Inspired by Last Minute Adjustments by Rich Orloff

"In the beginning of his life man was in the world of the womb, wherein he developed the capacity and worthiness to advance to this world. The powers necessary for this world he acquired in that world. He needed eyes in this world; he obtained them in the world of the womb. He needed ears in this world; he obtained them there. All the powers that were needed in this world he acquired in the world of the womb. In that world he became prepared for this world, and when he entered this world he saw that he possessed all the requisite powers and had acquired all the limbs and organs necessary for this life, in that world. It followeth that in this world too he must prepare for the world beyond. That which he needeth in the world of the Kingdom he must obtain and prepare here. Just as he acquired the powers necessary for this world in the world of the womb, so, likewise, he must obtain that which he will need in the world of the Kingdom—that is to say, all the heavenly powers—in this world." – From a talk of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Characters:

1. Baby
2. Spiritual Guide
3. Scientist
4. Ancestor

(Roles can be played by any gender)

Props:

Stool
Stethoscope
Tablet or computer
Box
Two flashlights

View the original production of "Due Date" by Poznań English Theatre at the following link: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/15VBsuVgkz/

Baby is already on stage, sitting on a stool. Baby is dressed in neutral colors, no jewelry, glasses, or etc. The stage can be empty or decorated pink/red like the inside of a womb. The Scientist has a tablet or desktop computer and a stethoscope. On the front left of the stage is a table with a beautiful box on top; inside are two flashlights.

The Spiritual Guide leads the Ancestor and Scientist in.

Spiritual Guide: The time has come my friends! Today is the birthdate.

Scientist: Actually, the birthdate was two days ago. According to my charts, yes, 40 weeks was two days ago and s/he's late.

Baby: I'm late?

Spiritual Guide (peacefully): Remember now, we've gone over this. That was the due date. The birthdate is when it is.

Scientist (frustrated): But why can't it be exact, accurate?

Spiritual Guide (cheerfully): Because her/his life won't be that way. It's better for the parents to start learning that now.

Ancestor (leaning toward baby): Your mother came on her due date.

Baby: You know my mother?

Ancestor: I sure do.

Baby: And what about you?

Ancestor: I was early. A real go-getter, even then.

Spiritual Guide (putting hand on Ancestor's shoulder): Come now, we really must focus. It's time for the checks.

Scientist (examining each part of Baby): Eyes, ears, mouth, nose…head, shoulders, knees and toes.

Ancestor: Hey, that could be a song. Head, shoulders, knees and toes.

Ancestor and Baby (singing the song): Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes. And eyes and ears and mouth and nose. Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes. (Baby claps excitedly)

Scientist: Excuse me, I'm trying to concentrate.

Ancestor (giggling): Yes, we wouldn't want to have an extra appendix again.

Scientist: Hmmpf!! Brain, check. Lungs, check. Digestive system, check. And (lift's baby's arm) that new baby smell…

Baby: Hey. That tickles.

Scientist: Check. External and internal organs, all checked.

Ancestor (closes eyes and inhales): The new baby smell, there's nothing like it…oh, I almost forgot to ask, the ancestors would like to give her/him something cute.

Scientist: Something…cute?

Baby: Oh yes, please.

Ancestor: Something cute, to make her/him different.

Scientist: S/he's already different. S/he's not an identical twin. S/he's not a twin at all, which means s/he's already distinct from her/his DNA. 50% from the mother, 50% from the father – but not the same combination as any other and s/he's their first.

Baby: Oh please, can I have something cute?

Spiritual Guide: Really, I see no harm.

Scientist: Fine. What will it be?

Ancestor: What about a dimple here and birthmark on her/his right arm.

Baby: A birthmark? Will I like that?

Scientist: You'll either like it or you'll obsess over it relentlessly.

Ancestor and Spiritual Guide: True.

Spiritual Guide: Either way, you'll learn to accept it as a part of you.

Baby: Can I ask a question?

Spiritual Guide: Of course, dear.

(Lights flash, ALL start to wobble as if the ground is moving.)

Scientist: Contractions have started.

Spiritual Guide: A quick question that is.

Baby: What kind of earth creature am I?

Ancestor: Oh, you're the most advanced creature. A human like me.

Baby: You are a human?

Ancestor: I was, your great-grandfather/mother to be exact. I left that world not long ago and stopped by here to see our new little one. Just look at those big, bright eyes, definitely one of ours.

Baby: One of yours…My great-grandfather/mother…(turning to Scientist) Are humans really the most advanced creatures?

Scientist: Well on Earth at least, from what we can gather from what we've researched of air, land, and sea. You know science is an evolving…

Baby (jumping up excitedly): So that means I'll be able to fly through the air.

Scientist: Well, not in the natural sense.

Baby: I won't have wings?

Scientist: I'm afraid not.

Baby: Okay, well at least I'll be able to change colors to camouflage to the land and I'll breathe underwater.

Scientist: Ummm…well…(Lights flash. ALL slide a little as if they floor is slippery.) Oh look, the mother's water broke.

Baby: Do you mean I can't live in the sky, the land, and the sea? The most advanced creature, you said.

Spiritual Guide: Advancement isn't only about the physical.

Scientist: You have a large brain and the genius power of creation, innovation.

Baby (sitting back down): I think I'd rather have wings.

Spiritual Guide: Better than wings, you'll a have a soul. A soul!!! Oh a soul, did it get delivered?

Ancestor: Right over here. (Goes to get the box of flashlights)

Baby: Can I see it?

Spiritual Guide: It's not something to be seen dear, it's something to be felt.

Ancestor: I do hope it's a warm soul - like my sister's. (Hands out the flashlights)

Spiritual Guide: Prepare to transmit soul.

Lights off. Spiritual Guide and Ancestor shine flashlights toward Baby and walk in a circular motion. Music "Ya Baha'u'l Abha" plays for 30 seconds as they circle around with the flashlights. Baby moves around gracefully.

Baby (voice shaking): That was strange. Umm, I feel like I'm going to cry.

Spiritual Guide: Soul transmitted successfully.

Scientist: (Lights flashing) Contractions are growing stronger. Mother is 5 centimeters dilated.

Baby: Wait a minute, I feel worried. Can we slow this down? Suddenly I'm concerned about the unknown.

Spiritual Guide: That's perfectly natural dear. That's part of being human. Less than 1% of creatures on earth are human and you are one of those. The unknown can challenge you, but it can also motivate you.

Baby: But what if something bad happens when I get out there. What if human life is not fun, and I'm disappointed.

Spiritual Guide: You will be disappointed.

Baby: What if I feel pain?

Scientist: You'll definitely feel pain.

Baby: Then I'm not going.

Spiritual Guide: You have to go.

Scientist: You're due.

Baby: I can't do it. I can't. Grandfather/mother, you wouldn't really send me out there to experience pain, would you?

Ancestor: Pain is a part of life dear, but you will be strong. You come from a long line of warriors.

Baby: Warriors? Will I have to fight, like an animal?

Ancestor: Thankfully, there's less of that in your generation. Warriors of heart, mind, and spirit. Seekers of justice and promoters of love.

Baby: Love?

Ancestor: It's the most powerful force in life.

Baby: Is it really the strongest?

Scientist: Well, nuclear force is technically the strongest, but I have to agree. For us humans, love is more powerful.

Spiritual Guide: It can change everything. But you need to experience pain to truly understand and appreciate love.

Baby: Okay, love. Somehow that feels just right. Love. Looove. Love. When I get out there, I'm going to focus on love. Thanks everyone. I promise to remember!!

Scientist: Sorry to burst your amniotic sac, but you're not going to remember.

Baby: I won't have memories?

Scientist: You won't be able to recall them.

Spiritual Guide: You'll have to learn about love over and over again.

Baby: From who?

Ancestor: From those that love you, out there…

Baby (stage whisper): But are you sure anyone will love me? I don't even have wings.

Ancestor: Dear, I can guarantee it.

Baby (pointing to the audience): And they'll teach me what love is.

Ancestor: They'll teach you what is and they'll also teach you what it isn't.

Spiritual Guide: And most importantly, your soul will help you learn to love yourself, to remember that *you* are love.

Scientist: (Lights flashing) Dilated to 8 centimeters!

Baby: Wait, wait. You haven't told me what I'm supposed to do when I'm out there.

Spiritual Guide: You're right, we haven't. And we won't.

Baby: But I'm a human. A most advanced creature. Don't I have a job to do on earth?

Spiritual Guide: You do, and figuring that out is the adventure of a lifetime!

Baby: Okay, so I have a lifetime to figure it out. A lifetime, great. I have a whole lifetime…. How long is a lifetime?

Scientist: It varies. The average life expectancy for your time period and geographical location is approximately 72 years. Based on your family history, it could be 91 years…but it could be…umm…a lot less.

Ancestor: When you die from this world, whenever that is, you will enter the others. Just like me.

Baby: But when, I mean when is my due date for death?

Ancestor: No one knows.

Scientist: It's not certain.

Spiritual Guide: I can't answer that.

Baby: You said I could ask questions.

Spiritual Guide: And you can. And you have. But some of the answers don't depend on just us. Some answers depend on you and the other humans.

Baby: I don't like this. I'm not interested in this so called "life". I'd rather stay here. It's warm and safe, and I have everything I need right here. What kind of crazy person would want to be out in that chaos?

Scientist: (Lights flashing) Nine centimeters!

Ancestor: Try to center yourself, dear. Remember head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes.

Baby (unenthusiastically): And eyes, and ears, and mouth, and nose.

Scientist: Look, you might feel comfortable now but you're growing and you will only grow more.

Spiritual Guide: Just like you've grown what your body needs here, you will grow what your soul needs out there.

Baby: You really expect me to choose to go out there with no memories of who I am and no clue what I'm doing?

Scientist: Of course not. You won't choose to. We're going to push you out.

Baby: I can't do it.

Spiritual Guide: You can, really you can.

Baby: Well, I won't do it. What if I stay?

Scientist: Then they will come in here and get you. A vacuum, forceps, a big hand in a glove…they have their ways.

Ancestor: If it makes you feel any better, think of all the humans here who have done it before.

Baby: Oddly, it doesn't.

Ancestor: There's been over 100 billion like us.

Baby: And yet, no one can answer my questions.

Scientist: Ten centimeters, it's time to push.

(ALL place hands on the Baby and rock forward and backward)

Baby: But is it really worth it, this living a life?

Spiritual Guide: My dear, there's only one way to find out.

ALL: Three…
Baby: What?
ALL: Two….
Baby: Whaaaattt?
ALL: One…
Baby: Waaaaaaaaa *(Baby runs into audience)*

Lights out.