

Impatience and Her Brother Invention  
By  
Wayne Peter Liebman

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**IMPATIENCE AND HER BROTHER INVENTION**

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**COLORFORMS:**

**FURNITURE:**

**COSTUMES:** INVENTION outer costume with baby clothes underneath, IMPATIENCE basketball uniform.

**PROPS:** Basketball, Rose bud

**SLIDE #1: Interior, house**

Scene 1

**SETTING:** IMPATIENCE'S house.

**AT RISE:** INVENTION standing. A ball rolls rapidly across the stage.

INVENTION

(to audience)

Once there was a girl named Impatience. She never had time for anything.

(IMPATIENCE runs across stage after the ball.)

IMPATIENCE

Homework? I hate homework.

(exits opposite)

INVENTION

(to audience)

All she wanted to do was run. She never stopped.

(IMPATIENCE runs across the stage the other way.)

IMPATIENCE

Stop sign? What stop sign?

INVENTION

(to audience)

She played a mean game of basketball.

(IMPATIENCE crosses running again.)

IMPATIENCE

I'm so fast I put you in the past.

INVENTION

(to audience)

But she really wasn't very good in school.

(IMPATIENCE runs to a stop.)

IMPATIENCE

Hey! Nobody's perfect!

(MOM enters.)

MOM

Impatience. There you are. Where are you going?

IMPATIENCE

To the park. It's the first day of basketball practice.

MOM

I'm sorry, young lady. Miss Flagellate called. Your science project is due tomorrow.

IMPATIENCE

That means I have a whole 24 hours.

MOM

It means no basketball practice until you finish that project.

IMPATIENCE

Mom, no! I have to be there for the team!

MOM

The team can wait. No project, no basketball.

IMPATIENCE

That's not fair!

MOM

But it is what's required. Not for nothing is my name Necessity.

IMPATIENCE

Misery! Suffering! Pain! Arrgh!

MOM

Now I'm going out. I need you to watch your little brother.

IMPATIENCE

My little what?

INVENTION

(to audience)

It was true. Impatience was always in such a hurry, she hadn't even noticed she had a little brother.

MOM

Your brother.

(INVENTION removes his outer costume, revealing his little-boy costume.)

Really, Impatience. Sometimes you amaze me.

IMPATIENCE

I have a brother? That's a novel idea. What's his name?

MOM

We haven't decided yet.

IMPATIENCE

He doesn't look like me.

MOM

He's adopted.

IMPATIENCE

How long have we had him?

MOM

Since he was born. Two years and six months.

IMPATIENCE

He's two and a half? Does he say anything?

MOM

He's not talking yet.

IMPATIENCE

Maybe that's why I didn't notice him.

MOM

Could be. Well, I'll be back in an hour. Milk and cookies in the fridge.

(exits)

IMPATIENCE

(calling after)

How am I supposed to think of a science thingie if I have to watch him?

(beat)

Great. Now I'll never get to play ball this year. What is science, anyway?

INVENTION

A branch of study which is concerned either with a connected body of demonstrated truths or with observed facts systematically classified and bound under general laws.

IMPATIENCE

Say what?

INVENTION

A branch--

IMPATIENCE

You talk!

INVENTION

Guess so.

IMPATIENCE

Why haven't you said anything until now?

INVENTION

Guess I've been biding my time.

IMPATIENCE

How do you know what science is?

INVENTION

I know lots of things. I have lots of science projects.

IMPATIENCE

You do? Like what?

**SLIDE #2: A right triangle with sides labelled "A," "B," "C." The mathematical equation  $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$  squared underneath.**

INVENTION

Like my geometry project. I've discovered that the square of the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the two sides.

IMPATIENCE

Uh, what else?

**SLIDE #3: Cross section of an ant farm.**

INVENTION

There's my ant farm. We have a colony right under the house.

IMPATIENCE

That's cool. Anything else?

**SLIDE #4: Outer space. Stars, galaxies, comets.**

INVENTION

There's my astronomy project. I've discovered a new planet between the orbits of Venus and Mercury.

IMPATIENCE

Omigod! You've got a million new ideas. How do you figure all this stuff out?

INVENTION

I have lots of time to watch stuff and think.

IMPATIENCE

If I can't think of a science thingie, I'll never get on the basketball team.

INVENTION

Sure you will. Come on.

**SLIDE #5: Back yard garden.**

(MUSIC: 59th St. Bridge Song  
by Simon and Garfunkel, to a  
hip hop beat.)

INVENTION (cont'd)

SLOW DOWN, YOU MOVE TOO FAST.  
YOU GOT TO MAKE THE MOMENT LAST.

IMPATIENCE

BUT DON'T YOU SEE MY RHYTHM'S FLOWING  
I CAN'T STOP, I JUST GOT GOING!

INVENTION

HEY THERE, SISTER! LOOK AROUND YOU.  
LIFE'S A GROOVE, IT WILL ASTOUND YOU.  
HERE'S A ROSEBUD, TAKE A WHIFF.

IMPATIENCE

IT'S KIND OF NICE, BUT I CAN'T STAY.

INVENTION

BA DA DA DA, WE'VE GOT ALL DAY.  
(bridge)  
SO MUCH TO SEE SO MUCH BEAUTY TO NOTICE.  
GARDENS AND SEASONS WITH COLORS TO SHOW US.  
IF ONLY WE'D WATCH ALL OF LIFE WANTS TO KNOW US.

IMPATIENCE

(spoken)  
REALLY? JUST BY SLOWING?

INVENTION

BA DA DA DA DA DA DA. LIFE IS FLOWING.

IMPATIENCE

That's pretty cool. But you can't take time to think when you play basketball. You've got to take your shot.

INVENTION

I bet if you slowed down, you'd play even better.

IMPATIENCE

No way!

INVENTION

Here, I'll show you! Steal the ball.

(HE holds the ball for HER to grab. IMPATIENCE moves away to get a running start.)

IMPATIENCE

Here I come!

(Time slows down. SHE runs in slow motion. As SHE passes HIM he pulls the ball away. SHE has no time to react as SHE sails past. Time returns to normal.)

That's not fair! You tricked me!

INVENTION

You were going too fast!

IMPATIENCE

I guess you're right. Maybe I do need to slow down.

INVENTION

How's it feel?

IMPATIENCE

Different.

(She undulates. SOUND: musical phrase.)

Hey! I just had a thought!

INVENTION

What?

IMPATIENCE

I'm going to name you Invention because of all your discoveries.

INVENTION

I never had a name before. Invention, the little brother of Impatience.

IMPATIENCE

Impatience, the big sister of Invention! I can't wait to tell mom.

INVENTION

Uh oh.

IMPATIENCE

And to think, you're only two. Just imagine what you'll invent when you're three!

INVENTION

Let's think about this. We don't want to be hasty.

IMPATIENCE

What do you mean? Don't you want to tell mom you can talk?

INVENTION

I don't know. I can't decide.

IMPATIENCE

Invention, don't you get it? You've got to take your shot. You can't only sit and think.

(MOM enters.)

MOM

There you two are! Impatience, how sweet of you to take your little brother out to play.

IMPATIENCE

Mom! Guess what? He's got a name! Invention!

MOM

Hmm. Invention, son of Necessity. Works for me.

IMPATIENCE

Not only that, he can talk!

MOM

Invention, did you say your first word? That's wonderful!

IMPATIENCE

Go on, Invention. Show her!

INVENTION

Mmm... Mmm...

IMPATIENCE

Come on! You've got to take your shot!

INVENTION

Mmm... Mmm... MAMA!

MOM

My sweet boy! His first word! Impatience, do you realize what a red letter day this is?

INVENTION

Novel!

MOM

Another word!

IMPATIENCE

Mom, he knows ten words!

MOM

Really? Which ones?

IMPATIENCE

Go on!

INVENTION

(slowly, with beats between)

Basketball. Science. Flagellate.

IMPATIENCE

That's five.

INVENTION

(as before)

Frigerator. Triangle. Planet. Ant.

IMPATIENCE

Come on, Invention. One more.

INVENTION

Impatience!

MOM

Amazing.

IMPATIENCE

And I just thought of a science project! I'm going to keep track of his vocabulary!

MOM

Impatience, what a truly novel idea!

IMPATIENCE

Well, I am the sister of Invention.

MOM

Children, Necessity is proud to be the mother of you both!

IMPATIENCE

Come on, Invention. Let's go practice our basketball moves!

(IMPATIENCE and INVENTION  
dance off. MUSIC: reprise.)

INVENTION

SLOW DOWN, AND PICK A SPOT.

IMPATIENCE

IT'S A GROOVE, JUST TAKE YOUR SHOT.

BOTH

SO MUCH TO DO, WE JUST GOT GOING,  
BA DA DA DA, LIFE IS FLOWING.  
BA DA DA DA DA, LIFE IS FLOWING.

END OF PLAY