

BEST FRIENDS

by Randal Stephens

CHARACTERS

Chuck Faver, *best friend*

Robert Clark, *best friend*

SYNOPSIS

This is a short skit about the blessing of forgiveness.

THE ACT

This skit is designed for the characters to speak to the camera in the form of an invisible "person"; the person is "us", the audience. They speak to "us" as if we are interviewing them. During the course of the skit, we move from one man to another, as each one tells "us" his own part of the story. The hook is that the audience is seeing both men in different places, unaware that both men are in different rooms of the same house. Though the audience does not know it, reconciliation has already taken place.

We open the scene in the kitchen of Chuck Faver, who is dressed in a pair of athletic shorts and a tank top. His hat is on backwards and he is toting a couple of water bottles. When we first see him, he is not looking at the camera. We follow him as he moves from the kitchen to the living room where he puts his foot up on the ottoman and looks directly into the camera.

Chuck: So you want to know the story with Bobby and me. Well, I don't have a lot of time; [*picks up a basketball from the couch*] the game starts in about an hour. You know, when we started this church league, I thought we'd win it for sure, at least once. But this team from Trinity, they've beaten us three years straight. This year though, we've got a different team, gonna win it all. Now I can probably talk for a minute, but I am *not* going to be late for this game. [*Chuck looks at his watch and back down the hallway.*]

Robert [*Robert is also dressed in a pair of athletic shorts and, as we enter a bedroom, he finishes putting a shirt on over his head and sits down on the edge of the bed.*]: Well, I guess I can tell you, if you really want to know. That's us right there.

[Robert nods his head toward the dresser, where a photograph of the two men sits on top. In the photo, they are dressed in basketball jerseys; they are arm in arm and smiling from ear to ear.]

Robert: That was 2001, right after we won the 3 on 3. I know what you're thinking, college intramurals—not such a big deal—but it was for us. We'd been playing together since we were kids—in the same schools, on the same teams—we were good together, too, just couldn't win the big one. Our senior year in high school, we came close, came this close to winning it all. This [*picks up the photo from the dresser and looks at it*], this was our year though. Man I loved that guy—best friend I ever had.

Chuck: So what do you want to know? [*Chuck sits down on the couch.*] Me and Chuck, we were best friends, as far back as I can remember. Heck, he lived right down the street, like two houses down. I don't even know when we first met, but by the time we were in fifth grade, you couldn't find one of us without finding the other. We did everything together. But sports was what we really loved, especially basketball. Bobby's dad was a coach, so we played from the time we were little. Man, we were so good. But as good as we were, we were even better together.

Robert [*Robert is putting on his socks and shoes.*]: So there we were, just a couple of college boys on top of the world, summer just around the corner. I don't know what possessed us, but for some reason, we decided to start our own business. We quit school and sank everything we had into this sporting goods store. We tried to make it work but it was a dud right from the start. We never really made any money.

Chuck: To tell you the truth, I don't really know what happened. I guess running a business turned out to be harder than we thought. At first, we fought through it together, like we had everything else. But it started taking its toll on us and the pressure just got too much. It was more than our friendship could sustain [*shakes his head*]. I don't how long we'd been fighting, months maybe, but on the night we decided to shut it down and declare bankruptcy, everything just blew.

Robert [*finishes putting on his socks and shoes*]: Our money was gone. We were done. So what did we do? We blamed each other. We brought up just about everything bad each of us knew about the other. And we knew everything, so nothing was off limits. [*looks down; thoughtfully and slowly*] The things we said to one another. [*looks back up to the camera*] We almost came to blows.

Chuck: And then it was over; we'd said all there was to say. I'll never forget the way he looked at me that night. He took his keys to the store, tossed them on the counter, and just walked out the door without another word. And just like that, he was gone. I think he just got tired of fighting. [*Chuck pauses for just a moment, in thought and then begins to speak again.*] That was what, eleven years ago? It was the last time I saw him. Eleven years. It goes by so fast.

Robert: Eleven years is a long time to go without seeing your best friend. You'd think at least one of us would have picked up the phone. [*He gives the camera a wry smile.*] Anyway, is there anything else you want to know? I have a game.

Chuck: I'd love to stay and chat, but I've gotta go. This game isn't gonna win itself. [*looks down the hallway toward the bedroom*] Hey man, are you ready yet?

Robert [*Robert comes out the door and walks up the hallway toward the living room. This is the audience's first indication that the men have actually reconciled and are in the same house.*]: Be patient. You can't rush perfection.

Chuck: You can't slow it down either. Now c'mon, I don't want to be late for the first game of the season.

Robert: Relax. That's our court. They can't play without us.

[Robert puts his hand out and they do their "handshake".]

Chuck [*smiles*]: That *is* our court, but we can't win the game if we don't hit it. Now, let's go.

[Chuck starts to leave but is jerked back as Robert holds his hand fast.]

Robert [*looks Chuck in the eye*]: Hey.

Chuck [*impatiently*]: What?

Robert [*looking Chuck in the eye; after a long pause*]: I'm glad you called.

Chuck [*relaxes*]: Me, too. C'mon.

[The two men begin to leave. The camera stays put and watches as the men open the door. After Robert exits, Chuck turns back around and looks at "us" as we are still standing in the middle of the room.]

Robert: Hey. [*He holds his hands out to his side in impatience.*] You coming?

[The skit ends as "we" follow Chuck and Robert out the door.]

THE END

NOTES

THE RUNDOWN

Best Friends is intended to be filmed, not performed live. The “catch” to this skit is that these men had a deep friendship once, long before, and are now reconciled. Robert has travelled from his home to visit Chuck and both men are in different rooms of his house, but the audience does not know it. In fact, it is intended that the audience may believe the men have not yet reconciled and are commenting on a friendship lost, rather than telling us of the blessing of forgiveness. It can potentially be performed live, but it will be very difficult to maintain that illusion.

CHARACTERS

Chuck is generally serious; he speaks in a very matter-of-factly to the camera. It is apparent he still feels the years lost from their friendship.

Robert rather, is a laid-back and lighthearted person. Throughout the course of the skit, he displays an “I know something you don’t know” attitude toward the camera.

Both men should be fairly athletic, even in the present; it should be believable they are still playing basketball on a regular basis.

SETUP

There are a few things you’ll need. The men need to be dressed in athletic gear, appropriate for a basketball game. Of course, Robert will be in the bedroom, still getting dressed for the game, so he’ll be wrestling with a shirt, and socks and shoes while still telling his story. Chuck starts in the kitchen filling water bottles and puts them in his athletic bag. He will also need to have a basketball.

The most important component to this is the photo of the guys in the guest bedroom. It should be like a snapshot from a game that happened years before, so it should be grainy. This effect is easy to accomplish with an online photo editor, such as foto flexer, which is free to download.

PRODUCTION

The best setting for this production is a house in which the living area is just down the hall from the bedrooms. Chuck is in the living area and Robert is in the guest bedroom. As the skit begins, the cameraman is with Chuck, who moves gradually from the kitchen to the living area during the skit. Robert doesn’t move from his bedroom until Chuck calls down the hallway to him.

While filming, you can use a nice digital camera with video capabilities. Film each segment independently. The last segment will be the toughest, but still not difficult. Each segment becomes a file and each file can be edited together. Most computers, whether PC or Mac, have good editing software that is easy to use and has many different effects for putting segments together, such as blurring or page-turning effects. This will make it very easy to put your film together.

Once complete, play with your editing software to put music, credits and even bloopers to your production. If you film in HD, the finished file will be large, so keep this in mind.

Don’t worry about staying true to the script or notes. Trust yourself and if you have a great idea to improve the skit, go for it! God Bless your efforts!