



OPENING NIGHT

by John Busser

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Cast of Characters

JACQUIE: Female, 30's - 40's, aspiring actress  
DR. CARRIE: Female, 30's - 40's, her Doctor  
LITTLE DOUG: Male, any age (playing a 3-year old), Dr. Carrie's son  
JEFF: Male, 30's - 40's, Jacquie's husband

Place

Over Zoom

Time

Early Evening

**OPENING NIGHT**

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*At start, two women face off on ZOOM. One is nervous and apprehensive. This is JACQUIE. The other is patient but no nonsense. This is DR. CARRIE.*

**JACQUIE**

Are you sure there's no other way?

**DR. CARRIE**

It'll be fine, Jacquie.

**JACQUIE**

I don't mind coming in to your office.

**DR. CARRIE**

I'm working from home these days.

**JACQUIE**

I'll wear a mask.

**DR. CARRIE**

I'm sure you would.

**JACQUIE**

This seems so... so invasive.

**DR. CARRIE**

Far from it. This is less invasive than face to---

**JACQUIE**

I know you say that, but---

**DR. CARRIE**

This is much safer for both of us, believe me.

**JACQUIE**

Maybe I should reschedule. This just seems... weird.

**DR. CARRIE**

This is the new norm Jacquie. We all have to make adjustments.

**JACQUIE**

How many times have you done this?

**DR. CARRIE**

You're actually my first. Since shutting down my office, I've been looking for alternatives.

**JACQUIE**

And this is it?

**DR. CARRIE**

I hope so. If this works with you, it's how I'll continue for the foreseeable future.

**JACQUIE**

You know, I'm not nearly so nervous when I'm on stage than I am right now.

**DR. CARRIE**

Well, think of me as an audience of one, if that helps.

**JACQUIE**

You know how they say actors are always freaking out with stage fright? Like we're about to go onstage but all the lines go right out of your head? And we have to picture the audience without clothes on just to put us on the same level emotionally? That's supposed to calm us down. To make us realize we're all the same and it'll be okay. Well, that's not working here.

**DR. CARRIE**

Really? Jacquie, you've been coming to me for years now. You've revealed yourself to me countless times. Isn't that what actors do? Reveal themselves through their performances?

**JACQUIE**

I've never felt so... naked.

**DR. CARRIE**

If you're not comfortable, we don't have to do this now, this way. I'm sure I can recommend another--

**JACQUIE**

NO! I'm okay. You're right. I've known you for years. I'd rather do this with you.

**DR. CARRIE**

Great! Think of it as an acting exercise and it'll be over before you know it.

**JACQUIE**

Okay, but... it seems strange seeing inside your house rather than your office.

**DR. CARRIE**

Tell you what, I'll change my background to something more appropriate for our session.

**JACQUIE**

*(Relieved)* Thank you Doctor. It really would help.

**DR. CARRIE**

We're all making adjustments here. Hold on, let me...

*She fiddles with her computer and changes her background, but instead of a doctor's office, the picture has changed to a shot of sexy half-naked firemen.*

**JACQUIE**

Oooh! Oh my! That's... interesting.

**DR. CARRIE**

Are you ready?

**JACQUIE**

Maybe not for the same thing you are...

**DR. CARRIE**

What are you...? Oh shit.

*On the screen, she now sees she is surrounded by the firemen. This surprises her to the extent that she looks behind her for a moment to make sure no one is there. Then realizes it was a silly thing to do and turns back embarrassed.*

**DR. CARRIE**

That was on my desktop. Someone sent it to me as a joke. I am sooo sorry.

**JACQUIE**

I'm not.

**DR. CARRIE**

I made a mistake. *(She fiddles some more with the computer)* What's wrong with this...?

**JACQUIE**

Not much from what I can see.

**DR. CARRIE**

That wasn't supposed to be... *(Still trying to change the picture)*

**JACQUIE**

If that was supposed to put me at ease? Mission accomplished. Ooh baby!

**DR. CARRIE**

No no no. That's not... hold on... *(Selects something with the mouse)* There we go.

*This time the picture changes to a doctor's office, but picture is that of a male doctor standing in front of what appears to be women's legs in stirrups about to be given a pelvic exam. (NOTE: The point of view is from the patient's perspective so there is no nudity)*

**JACQUIE**

This is really not going the way I thought it would.

**DR. CARRIE**

*(Mortified)* Oh my God! I am so sorry!

**JACQUIE**

*(Veeery intrigued)* Who is that? Does he work there too?

**DR. CARRIE**

*(Blurring it out)* I'm putting together a Power point presentation! That picture was for a meeting.

**JACQUIE**

*(Almost purring)* I'd love to have a meeting with him...