

PLAYWRIGHT'S EMAIL ADDRESS

Molly Rhodes

PLAYWRIGHT'S PHONE NUMBER

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Three Divided Into One

JANICE – Female, late 40s/ early 50s, any race

Dr. FALON – female, late 30s/ early 40s, any race

Note: Dr. Falon's movements should suggest activities of a doctor's office until the last third of the play. If there are other ideas about what Dr. Falon should do as Janice prattles on, by all means, feel free to add them and adjust them. They also do not have to be realistic or naturalistic, especially the closer to the end.

*JANICE sits in DR. FALON'S office, on the doctor's table, a table with wheels. She fidgets a lot. DR. FALON enters. Dr. FALON busies preparing herself around the office.*

Janice:

Oh, Dr. Falon, thank you for seeing me so last minute. I know, you said the tests shouldn't wait, and I really have been meaning to come in, but if you knew what this week has been like, my kids are just, you would not believe all the things they have been doing. It's incredible. I actually have to leave in half an hour, it's Janey's championship today, she has been practicing so hard, I'm sure all the girl's practice hard, but my Janey, if you saw her out there, you would just know, she is a natural.

*Dr. FALON takes Janice's wrist, checks her pulse.*

Janice:

I know, I've been running all over – Tuesdays are practice for Janey and theatre rehearsal for Jess, not to mention that extra hour of piano when the recitals are coming up. Insane, right? But my kids deserve it. Just the thought of wasting off their — I mean, my Janey — I'm not an expert, but I know when someone has talent, real, undeniable talent, and she has it. Not like my middle one. Well, no – I know, no mother should say that – of course Jake has talent, but I agree with his coach, he just doesn't know how to apply himself. Or doesn't want to, not that you heard that from me. Always an excuse that one, and I tell him, one day, there will be no more excuses, and what are you going to do then? Are you going to come running to me? Because as much as I love you – and I do love Jake, of course, I love all of them, I can't help myself – but as much as I love you I won't be able to help, no one will.

*DR. FALON feels around JANICE's neck and glands.*

Janice:

And of course Jake just rolls his eyes and says “mummy, you're so humorless.” He'll say it like that too, mummy, I think it's some class thing he's going through, a way to be tough, when I'll say, Jake, you don't have to be tough around me. I know you. I know how sweet you are. I remember – oh, he would hate to have me tell you this – I remember

when his pet hamster Choco died – I know, isn't that just the funniest name? – when he died and Jake would not stop crying. And the only way he would stop crying was this silly story his father made up about how Choco wasn't dead, he had only come for a visit anyway and now he had to return to some far off land where he was king.

*DR. FALON puts her hand to JANICE's forehead for a moment. Then she writes something down on her clipboard.*

Janice:

The story was really a bit, you know – I don't want my kids to grow up dumb – but you should have seen Jake, how his eyes lit up, like this was the answer to everything. And I am watching this child perform this elaborate ceremony for his hamster – I mean, there was a crown, you know, because he's this king, I feel so silly telling this to you – and I realized he should be in theatre. He's the one with the real imagination. Jess is well – Jess is good at dramatics, Oh yes. You remember, all those years ago, the fake flu case. Couldn't go camping with the rest of the family. She even had you fooled. And then, what a surprise, we come home to find her and that boy from next door.

*DR. FALON unbuttons JANICE's blouse, and takes it off; She feels more of JANICE's glands.*

Janice:

But there's always been a boy with that one. Always lots of dramatics. The latest one, I can see how this one will end. Well, I shouldn't say that, she wouldn't say that she would go "mo-om!" you know, that way that teenagers do, "mo-om!" But I can sense these things, and although she might not want to talk about it now, it's important for her to know that I'm here, right? So I let her know. And she had to get to the theatre, and this boyfriend – this guy she's seeing, really, he certainly doesn't seem to take it seriously enough to call him her boyfriend, but that's the word she uses, so, who am I – he called, at the last moment, and said he had this thing and could she take the bus. I mean, *the bus*.

*DR. FALON points a light into JANICE's ears. Then she writes down something more on her clipboard.*

Janice:

So Jess is near tears, I mean, who wouldn't be, and I thought, well, what's more important than my kids? So of course I drove her to the theatre, and we had this heart to heart – well, she cried and I cried and I felt that was real progress. You know, because they might not want to say it, they might only say "mo-om!", though Jake doesn't really like to say anything, but whatever they say, it might not be exactly what they mean, but I know.

*DR. FALON puts a stethoscope to JANICE's chest.*

JANICE:

Deep breaths, right? Deep breaths. Just like I told Janey last month, when she had that fall – no, I don't say fall, I say slip. I mean, yes, the judges noticed, but I told her, that's what judges do, they notice, they are *judgmental people*. But those people in the crowd, those people who are cheering her on, they know what a wonderful person she is, because she radiates it, she really does. She might not be as pretty as Jess or have as many friends as Jake, but she is just as lovely inside and people can see that when she performs. I've had other parents come up to me after the meets – parents who don't even know me, they just know I'm Janey's mother, they just see the sweater, Janey's mother – no, I'm kidding it's just a button – they see the button and they come up to me, and they say, I wish my daughter was as powerful as yours. As powerful? How many 14-year-olds get called powerful?

*DR. FALON gestures for JANICE to remove her skirt.*

*JANICE does so, and is left in a slip.*

Not that many, I tell her, not that many at all. Not even teenagers, all of us. Were the people in that supermarket today calling me powerful when I fell – oh, sorry, slipped – were they calling me powerful then? No, they weren't. I plan to tell her that as soon as I get home. I was even considering going straight home myself – really capitalize on this moment to show her, see?, your mom gets it – but your secretary was so stern this morning, all those scheduled tests she keeps having to reschedule. I know, you don't even have to give me the look, I know, my family history, those couple episodes I had last fall,

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all that stuff you doctors keep going on about, but with all the things my kids are into, my days are just as crazy as they come. You should be impressed I even found the time to come in today.

*DR. FALON stands back and gestures for JANICE to stand up.*

Janice:

Aside from Tuesdays, Wednesdays are just impossible, every other Thursdays are family night – when we're together just *being* together - and Friday nights we're off for our weekends at the house. Oh, that reminds me, I know your secretary said you should have the results by Friday, but I was thinking we would leave early for the house, so I can come get them next week. It's Jake's birthday this weekend – 16, can you believe it? Where does the time go? – and I wanted to do something special for him.

*DR. FALON produces a brightly colored dress. It should glitter and twinkle, if possible, and maybe even be more than one color. Dr. FALON holds the dress out for JANICE to step into and helps JANICE on with the dress.*

Janice:

I bought him the most wonderful surprise, at the supermarket – I know, I was already running late to get here, but Jess needed, I mean apparently *needed* a new bottle of

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shampoo, and I thought I would run in and get it and there were these smurf cakes, no, really, blue cakes in the shapes of smurfs, right in the bakery section. And I remembered how much Jake loved the smurfs when he was little, bedspread and t-shirts and everything, and I thought, well, in honor of him growing older, I would get him one. I know, I know, he's not a kid anymore, but sometimes, I think it's nice to let our kids know that we do think of them, even if they don't think we do.

*Dr. FALON helps JANICE back onto the bed. JANICE kneels on top of the bed.*

Janice:

I mean, when I slipped, right there, in front of the smurf cakes – god, you should have seen the mess I made, everything crashing down around me – and those nice people started asking me questions like was I okay and did I want them to call an ambulance or call someone at home, do you know the only thing I thought of was my kids. The expression that would be on Jake's face when he saw the smurf cake. Those are the looks every mother lives for. Huh. What did I do with that smurf cake?

*DR. FALON produced a crown and places it on JANICE's head.*

Janice:

Isn't that funny. I can't remember even buying the thing. But just the thought of the look on Jake's face, the look that would say to me – even if Jake would never say it, too cool to say it – that look of, I know how much you give me mummy, I know how much you love me, and I know my years of slaving away will all be worth it.

*DR. FALON wheels JANICE towards a side of the stage,  
leading her off.*

Janice:

Not that I have any doubts. No true mother does. If you're not willing to give everything, well, I know this might sound a little harsh to other mothers who try to, you know, have their own life, to focus on themselves a little more, but it really won't work that way. There is only some much in the end, and if you start hoarding it for yourself, well, what happens to your kids, huh? What will happen to them?

*As DR. FALON and JANICE reach the edge of the stage,  
there is a bright light from where they are heading.*

Janice:

But listen to me go on. Let's take those tests, shall we?

*End of Play*