



Opening Night

DYLAN is about to make a stage debut and is standing in the wings of the stage waiting.

DYLAN: This is it! Opening night! The moment I have been waiting for. The moment I have been working towards for months. My debut as a performer. I'm about to tread the boards! To become a thespian! It may only be a small role, but I'm beginning the journey of my dreams. And one day, who knows? I could be playing the lead!

Any minute now... wait for my cue line... wait for it... oh! I need the toilet. Is there time? No, of course there isn't. Just ignore it- it's only first night nerves. Okay, here it comes... cue line... entrance!

(Walks out onto the stage with a flourish. There is a pause. Opens mouth and then closes it again)

Oh no. I've gone blank, What's my first line? My first line! Oh, come on!... I know it, for goodness sake, I've been rehearsing it for long enough! It's... it's... *(Holds head and starts to panic)* nothing! Nothing! I can't remember a thing! Oh no, this can't be happening. Okay, just say something - anything - *(Getting cross)* anything at all from this scene! As long as I say something it will be alright — get things moving — give the other actors something to work with.

(Looks around the stage fearfully) They're all staring at me! Do they think that's going to help? Don't they realize that's just going to make it worse? Ooh, my head is starting to swim. Oh no, I might faint. No! I've got to hold it together! Breathe... Something will come to me in a minute. Just give it time...

Hey, what's happening? They're carrying on without me! They've skipped my lines and they're carrying on... as if I'm not even here. How dare they! They didn't even give me a chance! Don't they realize this is my big moment?

I have to take back control of this situation. It's not too late. I'll just have a quick look at my script - I left it just over there in the wings. All I have to do is casually move - over - to... *(Starts edging slowly sideways)* Hey! Who turned the lights out? Blackout? You

mean it's all over? But I didn't even...

Wait a minute — the audience is clapping. They want to show their appreciation. Well, I'd better give them what they want. After all, it would be rude not to!

(Bows lavishly)

By Caroline Petherbridge