

The Exam

Dave Carley





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THE EXAM

by

Dave Carley

CAST

RALPH: A man in his 60s

A GOWNED DOCTOR: Non-speaking and optional

Setting: An examination room in a doctors office. All that is needed is a metal table with a scared man on top.

At Rise: The light comes up on Ralph, in a hospital gown, lying on his side on an examination table. He's facing the audience. His knees are drawn forward.

Production Notes:

In an alternate version, the lights come up with foreboding music. A masked, doctor in a lab coat wheels Ralph onto stage. Ralph is in his examination position, lying on his side, knees forward, eyes wide open in terror. The doctor brakes the table and steps behind Ralph. With a flourish he snaps on a glove. He pulls out a giant bottle of lube and tests it by squirting it in the air. And then a phone rings off stage. The Doctor goes to answer the call, leaving Ralph in position, facing the audience.

RALPH: I wouldn't be here except Junie cut me off beer. On account of my weight. So I began hiding a little reserve supply in the garage. That I'd sneak into at night. Which woke me up once or twice in the night. Junie had no way of knowing I was getting up because of illicit beer. Junie, bless her caring little heart, went on the internet and discovered that peeing in the night can be a warning sign of prostate cancer. Still, things might have ended there, except for my cousin Irwin. He came over for dinner the other night and told us that he had a run-in with it. A serious run-in. They removed his prostate.

Okay, the prostate props up the penis. So when Irwin lost his prostate, his penis collapsed inward. Irwin told us over rhubarb pie he lost a full two inches. Too much information, Irwin. Oh, I'm not worried about losing. No, no. I'm from the

enhanced side of the family. I can spare a couple of inches off The Hindenburg. That's what I call it. The Hindenburg. Junie calls it The Hindrance. Anyway, now Junie had my nocturnal peeing as evidence of a prostate problem. Plus family history. Thanks to Irwin the Short. Plus my age. Plus I've never been checked. I should've had my first exam twenty years ago.

Irwin's case is extreme. We'll likely die from all sorts of other things before prostate cancer ever gets us. It's enough for most fellas to be kept under observation. But I agreed to get an exam. I promised Junie I'd phone my doctor. Soon. Junie doesn't understand soon. She phoned my doctor right away. Some idiot had just chickened out of his test. So here I am, four days later. Too soon. The doc's been called away for a phone call. Probably setting up an emergency golf game.

I was brave until I found out what the test entails. I thought it was a blood test. Uh, no. The good doctor does an investigation of the digital kind. Problem is the orifice in question is generally used for exits. Something going in? Might not that be a bit painful?

(Pause.) Oh, Lord, he's coming back.

(In the monologue version, RALPH watches the Doctor enter and walk behind him. In the second version, The DOCTOR returns.)

Hi, doc. Well. Heh, heh. What do you want me to do? Bend my knees more? Sure. Is that lube? Use the whole tube. *(shutting eyes)* I'm just going to lie here with my eyes shut and think about The Badlands. Hey listen. After this is over, could you call up my wife and tell Junie you were looking up my ass, and there was no sign of my head?"

Yeah, yeah, I know, old joke.

(The DOCTOR steps closer. RALPH's eyes widen in terror. BLACK OUT while Doctor carries out exam. Music. Could be Dan Hill's "Sometimes When We Touch" or maybe the triumphant opening chords of "2001 A Space Odyssey." Music and light change should last about ten seconds, and then out. When the lights come up again, Ralph looks surprised.)

That's it? You're done? You've really...? Hey, if we lived in Canada, we could get married now. Yeah, I know, old joke. So was it as good for you as it was...*(pause; really wanting to know)* Is it... is everything okay? *(listens)* Yeah? Smooth, not

enlarged, that's good right. I'll take that. Good. Good. *(listens)* Naw, I wasn't worried. Piece of cake. Yeah, yeah, totally glad I did it. I'll be telling all my friends. To get checked. *(To the audience; really breaking the fourth wall.)* Because, friends, you can never actually have too much information.

(BLACKOUT. Or, if the DOCTOR is used, he can wheel RALPH out, twirling the table around and, just as it looks like audience is to be treated to a view of the plundered backside of RALPH...)

BLACKOUT

CURTAIN