

MONIQUE AND ME

by

Jill 2 ¶ + D O O R U D Q

CARA, (PRESENT) THIRTIES/ FORTIES, NORTHERN.

THE EFFECTS OF A

RECENT STROKE and (THE EIGHTIES), THIRTIES, RP ACCENT
DEREK, FORTIES.

CHILD CARA. ELEVEN, TWELVE, THIRTEEN, FIFTEEN.

YOUNG GIRL, ELEVEN.

OT, FORTIES

PARAMEDIC, TWENTIES

CARER, FEMALE, THIRTIES

THE NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND

SCENE 1.

**A SMALL COUNCIL HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF A SPRAWLING COUNCIL ESTATE, WHERE
MONIQUE LIVES ALONE.**

PRESENT

0 2 1 , 4 8 (~~1~~ BATHROOM

SFX: SOUND OF SPLASHING WATER IN A BATHTUB

MONIQUE: Ö[} q look at me while ^ [~ q doing it.

CARA: Q {not looking.

MONIQUE: I can see that you are. Q ç asked you not to.

CARA: Q q hard to do it without looking.

MONIQUE: I å[} q like you seeing me like this.

CARA: You • @ ~ |å} q think about it.

MONIQUE: Close your eyes.

CARA: I &ç} q do it with my eyes closed.

MONIQUE: Of course you can.

CARA: (to us) She used to have a beautiful voice. Clear as cut glass. And she used to be independent.

(beat)

The stroke changed that.

SCENE 2.

0 2 1 , 4 8 (LIVING ROOM

SFX: THE TELEVISION IS ON VERY LOW

CARA: Are you warmer now or shall I put the fire on?

MONIQUE: Q He fine with just a

MONIQUE: Hello.

SILENCE

MONIQUE: How long have I been asleep?

CARA: I don't know. I only just arrived.

MONIQUE: You should have woken me up.

CARA: I don't like to. You looked comfortable.

MONIQUE: I probably won't sleep tonight.

~~CARA~~ Do you need the toilet?

~~MONIQUE THINKS~~

CARA: (to us

SCENE 5.

0 2 1 , 4 8 (~~1~~ LIVING ROOM

MONIQUE:

Here u8a./Type/Pagination>> BDC BT /F2 12 Tf 820.091.69 648.46 Tm [(u8a./Type/P

MONIQUE: You are such a darling.

(beat)

Cara. Come here.

CARA/ CHILD CARA: (**to us**) I move closer towards him. Looking for traces of me in his face.

DEREK: Have you been playing out, Cara?

CARA/CHILD CARA (to us) I nod. Too afraid to speak.

MONIQUE: I try to keep her occupied indoors but she does tend to get under the feet.

Q a nuisance, not knowing what to do for the best.

DEREK: Best place for them. Out there. In the fresh air.

MONIQUE: Of course, Y[~ q !night.

SILENCE.

MONIQUE: Well do as he says, Cara. Go and play.

DEREK: I hope we meet again, Cara.

CARA: (**to us**) I learned later that my mother and Derek had met weeks earlier on a train station platform. The train had been delayed for twenty

SCENE 6.

PRESENT

0 2 1 , 4 8 (~~1~~ BATHROOM

SFX: SOUND OF THE TOILET

(beat)

V@ca great Mum.

(beat)

Right. On three. Try to push upwards.

(beat)

One, two, three.

SFX: SOUND OF CARA LIFTING MONIQUE FROM THE TOILET

CARA: There we go.

MONIQUE: I just need to wash my hands.

CARA: Q Help you.

MONIQUE: No. You can wait outside until Q finished.

CARA: Q fine here.

MONIQUE: Cara.

CARA: You could fall again.

MONIQUE: Please. I just want a little] |ãæ: õ

LANDING

SFX: CARA LEAVES THE BATHROOM AND WAITS ON THE LANDING

CARA: the landing.

SFX: SOUND OF DOOR BELL RINGING : \$ 7 (5 «

SCENE 7.

THE EIGHTIES

0 2 1 , 4 8 (LIVING ROOM

« 6) ; CARA QUICKLY RUNS DOWN THE STAIRS

CHILD CARA: (coming down the stairs) Q {ready Mum.

MONIQUE: What do you think you are wearing? Honestly Cara. Derek is very high up in the firm. Do you want to embarrass him turning up looking like some urchin when he has been kind enough to invite us to the barbecue. Go and put on something else.

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS

MONIQUE: Since when?

CHILD CARA: I don't know.

MONIQUE: Q Have to get the door.

0 2 1 , 4 8 (~~THE~~ HALLWAY

SFX: SOUND OF THE FRONT DOOR OPENING

MONIQUE: Hello, Derek.

MONIQUE: Ù@q not feeling too well. Y ^q Hhave to go without her.

DEREK: V@q a shame. Are you sure you still want to come?

MONIQUE: Of course! Ù@q He fine. Ù@q a very sensible girl.

DEREK: Right then.

0 2 1 , 4 8 (LIVING ROOM

S 350 1 122.9sD9B-4<0036>] TJ ET BT /F3 11.04 Tf 1

CHILD CARA: (to us) I think about eating a third bag, but decide against it.

(beat)

Is this what it feels like to be a grown up?

SCENE 8.

& \$ 5 \$ ~~1~~ ED

DEREK: Is she asleep?

MONIQUE: Probably.

DEREK: Are you going to check her?

MONIQUE: Ú@q fine.

CHILD CARA: (whispers) I am fine.

DEREK: You really should check her.

MONIQUE: I told you • @q fine.

DEREK: You get the drinks. Q go up.

SFX: SOUND OF THE & \$ 5 \$ 136 BEDROOM DOOR BEING OPENED BY DEREK

DEREK: Hello.

CHILD CARA: Hello.

SILENCE

SCENE 9.

CARA: (to us) I think about the times I have guided her slowly and carefully down the stairs. Making sure her feet are steady on the steps. Watching to see that V K H ~~hip~~ing on tight to the handrail. I have these images of how a push, no, not even a push, a nudge, the slightest of effort, would send her tumbling down.

CARA: I mean it. The stairs are dangerous on your own.

MONIQUE: Ö[} q keep going on.

CARA: I will

MONIQUE: Do you mind trying to be quiet? Mummy has a dreadful headache.

SFX: CARA TRIES TO EAT HER CEREAL AS QUIETLY AS SHE POSSIBLY CAN

MONIQUE: What did youyou

MONIQUE:

Derek

MONIQUE:

SILENCE.

MONIQUE: If there is a problem. I want to know.

SILENCE.

CARA: (to us) I G L G r o t | W a n t to tell her. I just F R X O b i c k | W the right words.

MONIQUE: I know the thought of things changing is frightening but all I want is a better life than this one for me and for you.

CHILD CARA: Ôæ } q i t j u s t be you and me, Mummy?

MONIQUE: Ö[} q y o u understand?

(beat)

Derek is a wonderful man. He could change our lives forever.

(beat)

All you have to do is be nice to him.

(beat)

Please.

CHILD CARA: Q t | y harder, Mummy.

SCENE 14.

PRESENT

HOSPITAL WARD

OT: Hi there. Are you the daughter?

CARA: Yes. I am.

OT: Hi. Q {Jane Sanford, the Occupational Therapist attached to

CARA: She did.

OT: So the stroke, ~~æ~~ ð { ~ | months ago?

CARA: Yes.

OT: ~~Q~~ good news she ~~Q~~ broken anything.

CARA: I know. I was convinced.

OT: So the plan is to discharge her later today.

CARA: Oh.

(beat)

OK.

OT: You thought ~~Q~~ q å

CARA: No, not twenty-four hours, but as much as I can.

OT: You á[} q lǒve with your Mum?

CARA: It is. It was.

OT: So I need to give you advice on accessing well in the know.

CARA: I should know things we can do, but not keen on anybody but me being there.

OT: So what made you go into social work?

CARA: The old story. I wanted to give something back.

OT: Look. Would it be OK for me to pop some time? Just to talk things through and maybe get things on track?

CARA: Yes. Please. That would be great. Thank you.

SCENE 15.

THE EIGHTIES

0 2 1 , 4 8 (CAR

SFX: CAR ENGINE

CARA:

(**to us**) My Mother loved to visit 'H U H N~~o~~ise. To pretend for a few short hours that she lived there. She was so happy, sitting with him on his plush green sofa, watching her favourite programmes on a television we could only dream of owning. But then, we had to go home. My Mother and I were only ever visitors.

(beat)

It was always the same in the car on the way home. She was upset at having to leave. I barely said a word. She always had to have some explanation why

MONIQUE: I can't hear those hospitals.

CARA: Can you stay here with you tonight.

MONIQUE: No, you can't.

CARA: I can't leave you like this.

MONIQUE: You're annoyed with me.

CARA: Maybe if you had done as Cara said and stayed in bed you wouldn't have fallen.

MONIQUE: I don't know where you were.

CARA: You knew I was on my way.

MONIQUE: I just wanted a drink. I was thirsty.

SILENCE

MONIQUE: It would have been easier if Cara kept me in.

CARA: Well they can't.

MONIQUE: What about the girls?

CARA: Don't worry about it. They're there now. It's not a problem for him to stay over.

MONIQUE: I expect you stay here. It's fair.

CARA: Everything is sorted.

MONIQUE: Well, your old room you can sleep in?

CARA: I can sleep on the sofa.

SCENE 17.

THE EIGHTIES

~~THE~~ BEDROOM

SFX: A TRANSISTOR RADIO PLAYS A POP TRACK FROM THE EIGHTIES. THE SOUND IS MUFFLED AS SHE LISTENS TO IT FROM BENEATH THE BEDCOVERS.

CHILD

MONIQUE: Q {a grown woman. I å[} q need to be told how much I should drink.

DEREK: You do when you drink so much you embarrass me.

CHILD CARA SOFTLY SINGS ALONG TO KATE BUSH ± ÜWPQÖP THAT POSSq TRYING
STUMBLING HERE AND THERE, TRYING NOT TO HEAR THEM FROM DOWNSTAIRS BUT
MONIQUE AND ÖÖÜÒSq VOICES ARE HEARD.

MONIQUE: I åã} q embarrass anybody.

DEREK: You most certainly did.

CHILD CARA: (from underneath the bedclothes, stifled) They always argue.

MONIQUE: You are so ± à' œ } ^ã] Æ

CHILD CARA tries to keep singing along to KATE BUSH again but gets too upset to continue.

DEREK: I å[} q expect any friend of mine to behave in public like you just did.

MONIQUE: Friend?

DEREK: Not this again.

CHILD CARA: (from underneath the bedclothes, stifled) Tell him to go.

MONIQUE: Yes. This again. And again and again and again until ^ [~ q straight with me.

CARA: Did you manage to open the door?

MONIQUE: You gave her a key.

CARA: Oh yes. So I did.

MONIQUE: She was here a while. She sorted out my tablets for me.

CARA: They were all laid out for you ready.

MONIQUE: You know what I mean.

CARA: No. I don't.

MONIQUE: They were on the table and she passed them to me.

(beat)

It was very good of her.

CARA: You're a living saint.

MONIQUE: You don't need for sarcasm.

CARA: Was she here long?

MONIQUE: We watched some television together.

CARA: Well actually B5(l)5(y)11(,1 56.64 319.61 Tm -0.0509 Tc17 1172.664 117.14 Tm [()]

MONIQUE: Why, [~ |â} q lðe?

CARA: You barely spoke to her for twenty years.

MONIQUE: Ù@q e easy company.

CARA: So if you were OK with her, coming in here, sitting with ^ [~ õ @]] ã *you/

MONIQUE: /She hardly did that. As you just pointed out.

CARA: Hear me out.

(beat)

Would you think æà[~ õ @]] Ñ

SILENCE

CARA: From someone other than me?

SILENCE

CARA: Not all the time, but some of the time.

MONIQUE: No.

CARA: Mum?

MONIQUE: (sharp) No Cara.

CHILD CARA: (to us) , ¶ P5

MONIQUE: Oh for Ó[áq sake. This really suits you. Picking me up, taking me out, no responsibilities, no strings.

MONIQUE: Why do you bother, Derek?

DEREK: Why do I bother? What sort of a question is that?

DEREK: So you should be.

SILENCE.

DEREK: Y ~~ea~~ the point of carrying on with this, if you could think something
æ ð ç || ã | ^ as that?

MONIQUE: I á [} q know what I was thinking.

DEREK: I &æ } q be with someone who á [^• } q trust me.

MONIQUE: I do trust you.

DEREK: I need to be sure of that.

MONIQUE: I trust you.

SCENE 20.

MONIQUE:

MONIQUE: ÿ[~ q ! enormous. How did I not notice before today?
 (beat)
 Whoq the boy?

CARA: (

MONIQUE: Derek?

 (beat)

 My Derek?

CHILD CARA: Your Derek. Darling Derek.

MONIQUE: No.

CHILD CARA: Yes.

MONIQUE: That ~~is~~ q ~~is~~ true.

CHILD CARA: Q true.

SILENCE

MONIQUE: How long?

SILENCE

MONIQUE: How long?

CHILD CARA: Since the beginning.

SILENCE

CHILD CARA: But you knew.

MONIQUE: I had no idea.

CHILD CARA: You had enough of an idea!

SFX: CARA SLAMS THE DOOR AS SHE EXITS

MONIQUE: Cara is looking after me.

OT: And how are you finding things, Cara?

CARA: Q hard.

(beat)

But Q {trying my best.

SCENE 22.

THE EIGHTIES

0 2 1 , 4 8 (THE HOUSE. KITCHEN

MONIQUE: Q finished it. You , [] q see him again.

SILENCE.

MONIQUE: Cara?

CHILD CARA: What do you want me to say?

MONIQUE: I thought you would want to know.

CHILD CARA: Q nothing to do with me.

MONIQUE: If he contacts { ^õ [; you, Q çsaid Q ðall the Police.

CHILD CARA: And say what?

MONIQUE: Q tell them what he did.

SILENCE

MONIQUE: Do you know what an abortion is?

SILENCE.

MONIQUE: Surely you do?

CHILD

SCENE 23.

PRESENT

0 2 1 , 4 8 (LIVING ROOM

MONIQUE: Yes, I can prepare my own food.

CARA: No, you can't.

MONIQUE: Yes I can.

CARA: Mum.

MONIQUE: I could do it if you were here to help me.

CARA: I am here because you can't do it.

OT: You're going to do it.

OT: We do appreciate that people can tend to overestimate their abilities.  •

OT: Shall we have a break?

SCENE 24.

PRESENT

SFX THE TELEVISION IS ON LOW - MONIQUE BREATHS LOW AND HEAVY

CARA: (softly) Mum? Mum?

SILENCE

CARA: (to us). ~~6 K H~~ Sleep and out like a lamp by the look of things. The meeting with the Occupational Therapist tired her right out. ~~, I have~~ to wake her now, brush her teeth, get her onto to the toilet, get her into bed. Then ~~V K H~~ ~~is~~ ~~settled~~ and have a bad night.

(beat)

I look at the cushions and the terrible thoughts come into my head. Again. Pressing them against her face. I sit next to her and watch her breathe.

(beat)

She relies on me to care for her and I cannot be trusted.

(beat)

I want to cry but I ~~G R Q~~ ~~W~~ to wake her.

(beat)

, ~~I~~ going to cry.

(beat)

I have these terrible thoughts all the time,

(beat)

It is different E H F D X V H «

(beat)

Because here I D P « S L F N p @ J X V K L R Q «

SFX: CB460 1 56.64 648.2Rat)

CARA: I wish things had been different for us.
(beat)
I saw him once. At the train station, of all places. Derek. About a year before
he died. He ~~ã~~ q see me.

MONIQUE: You never told me that.

CARA: We never had those conversations.
(beat)
Barely ever.

SCENE 25.

THE EIGHTIES

MATERNITY

MONIQUE:

Look at

MONIQUE: I remember I was scared, every night by myself.

CARA: You , ^!^} q by yourself.

(beat)

You had me.

MONIQUE: A tiny baby who had nothing to do with any of it.

CARA: What happened to

MONIQUE:

You know, my parents were from a different world to this one Cara. Our house was with wisteria covering the whole front. And it was important to be in the loop, to know the right people. So there were parties. Long frocks and heavy perfume, cocktails and the smell of cigar smoke. I thought life would always be like this.

(beat)

Martin and Edna.

(beat)

They had two boys at boarding school. Both clever, both sporty. One, the eldest earmarked, for me.

(beat)

Only Martin had different ideas.

(beat)

It started with a smile. Nothing that anybody who saw it would ever think to worry about. Innocent. He told me everything that I wanted to hear. I was beautiful. He loves his wife and she loves him.

(beat)

There was

I had wanted it to happen. Not then, not that night and not in his car. But it
did because Martin wanted it to.

(beat)

It.

CARA: You were a child.

MONIQUE: I still know how Edna found out that the baby was his. She was always
such a quiet woman. I never knew if it was her, or him, or their friends, their
sons, who threw the paint over my car, who sent the letters, calling
me every name you can think of. My parents were ignored. Mother came
back

CARA: V@^ q !^ēeverything.
(beat)
Do you love me?

MONIQUE: Of course I love you.

CARA: Ÿ[~ q ç never told me.

MONIQUE: I love you.

SCENE 27.

PRESENT

THE CARE HOME

RECEPTION AREA

CARER: We recognise what a hard decision it is. To hand over a loved one into our care but I can honestly say to you • @q #s happy and as safe as she can be with us.

CARA: Q {sure that she will.

CARER: She may be a little unsettled in the first few days but c@q • completely normal and we keep a very close eye on them.

CARA: Thank you.

CARER:

Q easy to get cold feet in the early dea

CARER: Yes, welcome to wait for her here if you like, in the Visitors Room. We can get you some tea.

CARA: No. Get off.
(beat)
Just tell her I was here.

CARER: Of course I will.
(beat)
Yes, see you soon.

CARA: Yes. See you soon.

SCENE 28.

THE CARE HOME CAR PARK

SFX: CARA WALKS ACROSS THE CAR PARK TOWARDS HER CAR.

CARA: (to us): I know what will happen now. Whether here, every day. If, after a few weeks the gaps between my visits get longer and longer until we are both used to the separation.
(beat)
And, when we do see each other, I know if we talk things through. The things that happened to Peter.

SFX: CARA UNLOCKS HER CAR WITH A BLEEP.

CARA: Or maybe, just talk about the weather.

(beat)

I don't know.

(beat)

But I think it's better.

SFX: CARA GETS INTO HER CAR AND STARTS THE ENGINE.

SHE STARTS TO SING RUNNING UP THAT HILL AS SHE DRIVES AWAY, AT SPEED