

RING

by

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A woman is arranging and rearranging a small charcuterie platter. She is working at a small table set near the front door to her house. She is wearing gloves. We see her in a Zoom box on a large laptop. Just her, she is waiting for someone to join a meeting.

LYNETTE: Better on this side maybe, yes the red peppers inbetween.

She looks out a window, checking both ways.

LYNETTE: Hmm. I don't know why I keep trusting tracking information. Still, you have to trust something, don't you? Yipes! the olives, where is my brain?

She runs out of frame. Another Zoom box pops on holding another woman, she is not looking at the screen but reaching for something.

SHARON: Hey, Lynette, sorry I'm a bit late. I have just been having a day. (She looks at the screen and we see her mascara has run. She has been crying.) Lynette? Lynette! I'm here!

Lynette scurries back with olives.

LYNETTE: Here I am! Hi, Sharon. How are you? Oh, you look...how are you?

SHARON: Oh, dandy. (She wipes away the dripping mascara)

LYNETTE: Okaaay.

SHARON: Nothing is actually wrong. Except everything. It's Tom's and my anniversary today and we can't go anywhere or see anybody. I am sick of cooking. We ordered each other gifts but...

LYNETTE: And they didn't arrive?

SHARON: What?

LYNETTE: They didn't arrive?

SHARON: No, they arrived, but what I bought didn't fit him and what he bought didn't fit me.

Lynette gets up to check out the window again. She returns to her charcuterie platter.

SHARON: I think we'll just throw them in the trash. Perfect for this completely trash year. What are you doing?

LYNETTE: Oh, uhm just practicing. Keeping my hand in. At some point, Sharon, we will be planning events again.

SHARON: But that's so wasteful. Who's going to eat all that? Lynette you can't live on deli meat and pickles.

Sound of a truck stopping in front of the house. Lynette checks the window. She returns to face her computer. She takes off the gloves.

LYNETTE: How do I look?

SHARON: What?

LYNETTE: How do I look? The back of my hair, is it okay?

SHARON: Yes. You look fine. Did you cut your hair? Actually it looks really good. Mine is a nightmare. I tried to cut Tom's and he tried to cut mine. I had made him first practice on Bandit, he needed a trim anyway, it was hysterical, let me....

Lynette has left the conversation and has opened the front door. She has put on a mask. She waves at someone.

LYNETTE: Hello, George! Good to see you again.

SHARON: Wait, who's George?

LYNETTE: Oh, you're wearing the mask I made you. Is it all right? Not too small?

SHARON: You made someone a mask?

LYNETTE: Oooh, what is it this time, I wonder.

GEORGE: Not too heavy.

We see through the open door a UPS delivery man, wearing a mask and carrying a box. He sets the box down and pushes it towards the doorway with his foot. Lynette picks up some spray that is by the door and gives the box a good misting.

LYNETTE: Thank you, George. And how are you today?

GEORGE: Oh, same as yesterday Ms Fyette. Please sign here.

George offers his device for Lynette to sign. She sprays it. George quickly wipes it dry with his sleeve.

GEORGE: Ms Fyette, I have wipes in the truck. I told you, I wipe the machine after each signing.

LYNETTE: I'm sure you do, but people pass by here, walking their dogs, talking on their phones, and you never know what is hovering in the air. You are very brave, George. AND...I have a surprise for you.

GEORGE: It's not a surprise.

She presents the charcuterie platter.

LYNETTE: Surprise! You could probably use a snack.

She hands him a nice paper plate, a napkin, and a pair of small tongs.

LYNETTE: Help yourself. Go ahead. I assure you everything is safe.

GEORGE: I must continue my route, thank you but...

LYNETTE: You can take a few minutes for a snack. You had the time yesterday. Am I to understand you prefer sweet instead of savory?

Lynette begins to pile items onto George's plate.

GEORGE: Very good cookies, thank you. And the cake the day before.

LYNETTE: How did you like the smoothie? On Saturday? I left out the banana. Still good?

GEORGE: Yes, yes, very good.

LYNETTE: George, I want a true answer. I'm a professional, not just your friend, and I can take constructive feedback.

GEORGE: I did not like the smoothie.

LYNETTE: Oh.

SHARON: I also prefer it with banana!

LYNETTE: Oh, sorry. Sharon, I'm sorry. Let me introduce you.

Lynette sets the platter down on the box and gets the laptop and carries it over to the door. Now in the two Zoom boxes we see George and Sharon. George removes his mask to say hello and to take a bite from the food on his plate.

LYNETTE: Sharon this is George, delivery person extraordinaire. George this is Sharon, my event planning partner, her specialty is balloons.

GEORGE: Hello.

SHARON: Hi, George. How's it goin'?

GEORGE: Fine.

SHARON: Uh-huh. So you like the smoothie with banana?

GEORGE: Yes, I like the smoothie with banana.

We hear another truck stop. Lynette turns the computer around and as she does so we get a better look at her house. Boxes of many shapes and sizes, some opened, some still taped closed, some flattened. Objects here and there, some still in tissue paper. Lynette puts the laptop back in its place and returns to the door.

LYNETTE: Well, George, I mustn't keep you. Take that with you, take more. See you soon.

George leaves. Lynette pushes the box inside and out of the way, the platter still on it. She sits in front of the computer.

LYNETTE: He is such a nice man.

SHARON: Lynette, what are you doing?

LYNETTE: What did I do? (She looks around to see if she left the platter outside.) I thought the platter looked nice.

SHARON: All those boxes.

Lynette looks blankly at the screen. Long pause. As long as can hold. She may be close to crying.

Off screen we hear:

MADDY: Hey, George. What is it today? Ah, charcuterie.

GEORGE: Meat and pickles.

MADDY: That's what I said.

LYNETTE: Did you hear that?

SHARON: Hear what?

LYNETTE: Nothing.

Short silence.

LYNETTE: Sorry about your anniversary.

SHARON: Yeah. What a mess it all is.

LYNETTE: I think someone is coming to the door.

SHARON: Lynette, not more

LYNETTE: (Pretending to look out the window) I think it's that man who comes around to paint addresses on the curb.

SHARON: Ok, you go take care of that, I'm going to make myself a cup of coffee and then I'll be back.

Lynette rearranges the platter, dons her mask, and opens the door to a FedEx delivery person.

LYNETTE: Maddy! Good to see you. Missed you yesterday.

MADDY: Hi, there, Lynette. I've got two for you today. Do you want them both?

LYNETTE: Oh, one is enough excitement for one day. Save the other for tomorrow. Would you like a snack?

MADDY: I could use a snack, thank you.

Repeat business of setting down the box, Lynette sprays it. She sprays the signing machine, Maddy wipes it off. Lynette puts the platter down on the box. Maddy helps herself.

LYNETTE: And how is little Stevie doing? Oh, I have something for him.

Lynette looks at a couple of unopened boxes, finds the right one and sprays it and hands it to Maddy.

MADDY: Thank you! That is so nice. Uhm, this is good, I like these pickles.

LYNETTE: Cornichons. It's big crayons for little hands. Triangular shaped so they don't roll away. Set of 24, bright colors. I sent some to my little niece (or granddaughter, depending on the age of the actress.). They are in Connecticut. (She pulls out her phone) I have a picture. Lots of pictures.

Lynette finds the photo and shows Maddy.

MADDY: Aww.

SHARON: Lynette, I'm back.

MADDY: I gotta get goin'.

LYNETTE: Of course, see you.....wait! Wait, can you wait a minute?

MADDY: Uhm, a minute.

Lynette hurries to the computer.

LYNETTE: Sharon, remind me of your address again? Just the numbers.

SHARON: 614

LYNETTE: 614.

Lynette picks two unopened boxes from her stash and with a sharpie changes the address on the boxes to 614. She hands them to Maddy.

LYNETTE: Do you mind? (She whispers) Please. Take these up the street to my friend? (Then loudly) These came to the wrong house.

MADDY: Okay. But I expect something sweet tomorrow. And your mail carrier is about 10 minutes away.

Lynette smiles and waves as Maddy leaves. She goes back to the computer. Lynette and Sharon stare at each other. Sharon doesn't know if she should intervene. Lynette has a sparkle in her eye.

LYNETTE: So, do you want to talk about creating the Zoom bat mitzvah? They are keeping the list to 30 households in the city, more nationwide, so we have to coordinate the time zones.

Sharon's doorbell rings. Sharon looks over at the door, looks around for Tom.

SHARON: Sorry, Lynette. Be right back.

LYNETTE: Could be the number painting guy. Or maybe a surprise! Ach, turn your computer around so I can see!

Lynette's attention is caught by movement outside. She quickly rearranges the platter and prepares to open the door.

The End