

*Chippewa Publishing Romance*

*Paging  
Dr. Jones*

*Ginger Simpson*



[www.chippewapublishing.com](http://www.chippewapublishing.com)

# Paging Dr. Jones

by

Ginger Simpson

## **PAGING DR. JONES**

A Chippewa Publishing Publication, March 2005

Chippewa Publishing, LLC.  
678 Dutchman Drive, Suite 3  
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729

Adobe Acrobat (PDF) ISBN 1-933400-12-9  
Other available Formats: Palm Doc (PDB),  
Rocket/REB1100 (RB) , Microsoft Reader (LIT) , PocketPC  
1.0+ Compatible, Franklin eBookMan (FUB), hiebook  
(KML) , iSilo (PDB) , Mobipocket (PRC) , OEBFF Format  
(IMP)

Paging Dr. Jones Copyright © 2005 Ginger Simpson  
Edited by Kimberly Burton  
Cover Art by Beckie Pack  
Proofed by Kristine Esterly

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.** This book may not be reproduced in whole, or in part, by any means, without the written consent of the publisher.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are products of the author's imagination, or are fictitiously used. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

### **“Code blue, code blue!”**

Catherine McGuire heard the paging system calling out the strange announcement. She heard it on TV programs often enough to know that it meant someone was in terrible trouble. Was she the one?

The sensation of pain was so intense; she wracked her foggy mind, trying to remember what had happened. She recalled starting to back the car out of the driveway and that was it.

Her mind cleared long enough for her to remember. There had been another terrible argument with Stan, her ex-husband. His angry words echoed in her mind. *I'll make sure that no man will ever look at you.* She gasped at the clarity of the vision in her head, one of him dragging her from the car. *Oh Stan, what have you done this time?*

The speed with which her gurney moved down the long hospital corridor blurred the holes in the acoustical ceiling tiles and made her dizzy. The rapid pace was evident by the sound of scuffling feet echoing as she was whisked along.

Her head lolled to the side, and she vaguely noticed someone holding an IV bag. Was the infusing liquid traveling down the tube going to save her? She could only

ask the one who knew. *Dear God, am I going to die? I feel like it. Please save me, I'm only thirty.*

The movement ceased and the prodding and poking began. Her clothing, quickly stripped away, left her body exposed and prickled with goose bumps. Was it her unshed tears that clouded her vision? She wondered.

She tried, to no avail, to stop the painful chattering of her teeth. Finally, a nurse covered Catherine with a warmed blanket. The chill passed, but now her temples pounded in rhythm to the fearful beat of her heart. She silently prayed. *Lord, please let me be okay. I am so scared.*

The chorus of shouted directions in the examining room eventually molded into one loud voice, but none of it made sense anyhow. Her eyelashes fluttered as she fought to stay conscious, but the din grew muffled as darkness beckoned to her. The last thing she heard was someone yelling, "Quick, get the code cart."

\*\*\*

"Mrs. McGuire?" A deep, yet soft resonating voice called out to her. "Can you hear me? If you can, please squeeze my finger."

She mustered her strength and squeezed, and almost immediately, unspoken questions flooded her mind. *I can hear you...but where am I? What happened?*

She struggled to open her eyes only to find she could not see. Something covered her face, and when she raised a hand

to investigate, a piercing pain stabbed at her side. A warm hand enveloped hers and lowered it to the bed.

“Now, now, don’t touch.” The voice was strange, but friendly.

“I’m Dr. Jones, your attending physician. You’re...you’re badly injured. You’ve been severely beaten and your face took the brunt of it. You can’t see because we’ve bandaged your eyes, and it’s best if you don’t disturb the dressings.”

She shifted her position slightly and moaned.

“There’s going to be pain, so we’ve connected you to a morphine pump. Whenever you need an infusion, all you need do is press this button and the medication will pass directly into your IV.”

He placed the control in her hand.

\*\*\*

She tried to speak but her words came in an inaudible whisper. “Thank you.”

Dr. Jones gently patted her arm. “Your larynx was injured, so speaking is going to be difficult for a while. I’d prefer if you don’t try right now—give your body time to heal.”

“Eyes?” she questioned softly, disobeying his order because she had to know. The possibility of going blind scared her to death. Her throat constricted waiting for his answer.

“Your eyes are quite swollen, and I’m concerned about possible vision loss, but I’ve added some medicated drops

and we'll have an ophthalmologist check them out thoroughly."

She had a million questions, and she could not ask them. *Swollen eyes...cannot talk. Am I going to be blind? What day is it?*

A sense of frustration welled inside her then subsided in a haze of drowsiness. She dozed off.

\*\*\*

Dr. Jones' conversation with Catherine's roommate, Cassandra, left him pondering the fact that even after a year of being divorced; Catherine's ex still harassed her when he drank. During their five-year marriage, he had beaten her on a regular basis, but when he caused her to miscarry their child, that was the final straw. Cassandra encouraged Catherine to move in, share her home, and file for divorce and a restraining order. It didn't do much good, it appeared.

With raised brows, he stood next to the door and studied her sleeping form. *What in the world would have driven a man to beat a woman so badly?* Her poor face would be unrecognizable to someone who knew her; it was so bruised and swollen. She looked so frail, her eyes swathed in bandages and her small stature dwarfed by the hospital bed. Even in slumber, she whimpered in fear.

*I wonder what she looked like before the beating.* His curiosity peaked, but he could not imagine her face prior to the assault.

The thin blanket molded perfectly to the outline of her body and revealed a nice figure, firm, jutting breasts, and curves in all the right places.

The doctor rubbed his brow and sighed. *The woman is a victim of assault and you are admiring her body. Get a grip, man.*

It had been a very long day; he ran a hand through his dark hair and yawned. This was his sixteen-hour rotation as the ER doctor on call. He'd been catching a nap between patients when she arrived. He worked with one of the best trauma teams in the state and they had seen it all, but personally, he would never get used to senseless beatings.

The preliminary examination revealed hairline fractures of her cheekbone, nose, and two ribs, but what did not require surgery would heal on its own. Unfortunately, her recovery would be painful and slow. Her vision was his greatest worry. Any damage to the optic nerve, retina, or cornea could impair her sight, and that wasn't his domain. He practiced general medicine.

Besides the looming threat of vision loss, he hoped she would not need reconstructive surgery. That decision wouldn't be made until the swelling subsided. Despite what people thought about money-hungry doctors, he prayed she did not have to face anything else. Evidently, she had been through enough.

With curled fists, he rubbed the tiredness from his eyes. He was just about to leave when Catherine stirred. "Is someone there?" she hoarsely whispered.

He walked closer to the bed. "Yes, Ms. McGuire, I'm here...Dr. Jones, remember?"



“Am I going to die?” Her voice trembled.

He was unprepared for that question. “Ah...of course not. You’re going to be fine. You might need a few minor surgical procedures, but you’re going to make a complete recovery.” He crossed his fingers hoping what he said wasn’t a lie. “You just have to trust me...and rest your voice. I have another patient to look in on, but I will be back in the morning. Get some rest.”

\*\*\*

Catherine awoke to pain. The surrounding darkness frightened her for a moment, but then she remembered that her face was in bandages. Sporadic memories dotted her mind, among them, the doctor’s description of her injuries. She hesitated to move, recalling the searing pain that resulted from just raising her arm, but her head throbbed and she needed something to help.

*Medication!* She remembered the morphine, and blindly searched the surrounding area on the bed for the control she dropped during sleep. Her fingertips grazed the smooth flesh of another hand, and that same soothing voice sliced through the silence.

“Are you looking for this?” he asked as he placed the button in her palm.

“Thanks,” she whispered, as she quickly released morphine into her IV. She swallowed then breathed a sigh of relief. *At least my throat feels much better this morning.*

“I hope you slept well,” he said amidst the clicking of metal. “I just wanted to check your chart and let you know the ophthalmologist will be here today.”

His voice came from an entirely different direction. “In ten words or less, tell me how you’re feeling.”

His chuckle created an air of comfort.

She turned her head toward where she thought he might be.

“I can actually talk without pain today.”

From the other side of the bed he responded. “That’s good, but don’t overdo it.”

Darn it! Why did he not stay in one place?

His soft fingers touched her cheek. “Once this swelling goes down a bit, we’ll see what we’re dealing with and plan from there.”

*Swelling?* Her mind traveled backwards...*Stan! Oh my God, how could you have done this to me again? Why can’t you just go away and leave me alone?* The hair on the back of her neck bristled with fear. Was this going to be how her life would always be?

“Mrs. McGuire...are you okay?”

She took a big breath and lied. “Yes...I’m fine.”

“Do you want to talk about *it*? It might help if you spoke to a counselor.”

Tears trickled from beneath her bandaged eyes and her voice cracked. “I don’t want to talk to anyone. It’s too embarrassing.”

“There’s no need to be embarrassed. You didn’t do anything.”

“Except be stupid and stay with someone who beat me, and never make him pay...”

She heard a chair moving.

“Then how about talking to me?” he offered.

\*\*\*

Counseling was not his forte, but something bade him to stay. He pulled a chair closer to her bed and sat, wanting to put her troubled mind at ease. “Is there anyone we can contact for you...parents, friends?”

She tensed and tried to sit up. “No,” she attempted a scream.

He jumped to his feet and gently pushed her back against the mattress. “Whoa, careful there. I didn’t mean to upset you.” She trembled beneath his hands.

“I’m sorry. I just don’t want anyone to know,” she begged. “I haven’t had contact with my parents for many years and...well, I’m sure you know who did this to me.”

“You are aware that we had to contact the police?” How he hated to tell her that. He waited for another outburst.

“Police? Oh my God! Why?”

“It’s standard procedure. Anytime there’s an assault, we have to report it. Surely, you don’t want him to get away with this?”

“It’ll just make him madder,” she argued. “I’ve been through this already. I call, they arrest him, he makes bail, and then he’s even angrier than before. He drinks, gets irate,

and comes looking for me to be his punching bag. I can't take it anymore."

She started to sob. He felt terrible for upsetting her and smoothed her disheveled, blonde hair. "There has to be a way for the law to protect you. Next time—if there is a next time—he could kill you."

She shook her head. "That's exactly what he wants to do. No one can protect me. He's already told me that if he can't have me, no one else can."

"You're wrong, you can be protected, but you have to start the process. The first thing you need to do is follow through with your complaint against him. By allowing him to get away with this time and time again, you're telling him you're okay with his behavior. You need to show him you're not! I know it's not easy, but you need to take a stand here or prepare to spend your life going through this."

For some strange reason, the need to protect her was stronger than it should be; she was a stranger after all. Had he said too much? Regardless, he meant it.

"I hope you'll think about what I've said," he added.

Dr. Jones turned to leave, but Catherine grasped blindly at his sleeve. "No, please don't go; I'm so afraid."

How could he refuse her? Even beneath the bruises and swollen features, he could see her beauty...hear it in her voice. "Well...I've finished my rounds, so I can stay for a little while, but you're really very safe here." He sat back down.

"Do you like...er...poetry?" he asked, while reaching into his lab coat pocket. He brought out a small book.

“I love it,” she said. “Are you going to recite some?” The little chuckle in her voice was a nice change.

“No, I carry some of my favorites with me. It’s my way to relax when things get hectic. Some people do yoga; I do poetry...sonnets actually.”

He opened the book and started to read. “She dwells within my dreams, there always within my reach, but not. Her memory haunts my nights, for she is the pattern after which forms true love. I despise the darkness, for on moonless nights, my dreams betray my heart and bring forth her misty image. I sense her face and reach to touch her silky skin. She is not there, and I wake and cry, cry for love lost and not found again in this lifetime. Cruel is the night.”

“That’s beautiful,” she said, sleepily. “Who wrote...?” She winced when she reached to stifle her yawn.

“How about you take a nap and I come back and read more of it later?”

“It’s a deal,” she agreed. “I’m suddenly very drowsy and I don’t want to miss a line.”

\*\*\*

He paused outside her door and puzzled over his strange behavior, his fingers played with the pages of the book he tucked into his lab coat pocket. *Why would you read your personal thoughts to a complete stranger?*

His habit of jotting down his feelings had produced his own little sonnet collection. He always loved to write and during a psych class, the teacher had mentioned the healing

properties of keeping a journal. Sometimes his written words soothed his soul.

He suffered from incredible loneliness. Medical school, interning...it all took time and left none for personal relationships. He hadn't been serious with anyone since his high school sweetheart, and losing her had been the impetus behind the verses he just read. Oh, he dated, but he had not found his soul mate again. He wondered where life had taken Angela, his first and only true love. Hopefully to places much happier than Catherine McGuire.

\*\*\*

Catherine could barely believe she'd been hospitalized for five days. Dr. Jones' evening appearances had certainly made the time more enjoyable. He managed to stop by after visiting hours and treat her to more of his poetic readings. She was stunned to learn he was the author. He definitely had a way with words, and there was something very special about him. He was comfortable and kind. She never met a doctor like him before, and luckily, he seemed to enjoy her company as well, if his voluntary visits were any indication.

Her soreness eased a little more with each passing day, and her facial swelling was beginning to diminish. The ophthalmologist had given her a clean bill of eye health, but re-bandaged them for a few more days as a precaution. The police arrested Stan, and this time, assured her that because of his past record of assaults and her testimony, he would be serving a lengthy sentence. Marrying him had been a mistake,

but she did not know it at the time. It was not long after the wedding that she realized he was just someone she hoped could fill the void in her life. Her high school sweetheart, Wes, would always be her true love.

She rued the day that her father moved the family to another state. Despite Catherine's anguish, her parents downplayed her romance with Wes as nothing more than puppy love. They forbade her to re-establish contact with Wes, and threatened to take away all of her privileges if she tried. Now she wished she had disobeyed them and followed her young heart. It could not have turned out any worse than her relationship with Stan.

Stan was a drinker, and a mean one at that. It took her five years to get up the courage to leave him, and now he wouldn't be able to bother her again. Her heart felt light and carefree for the first time in a long while. Now all she had to face was possible surgery to repair her fractured cheek.

Her thoughts turned to Wes and she pondered what life might have been like if she completed school in Moreno Valley and married him. The football quarterback, he was her hero—handsome, with dark hair, chocolate eyes, and a killer smile.

She still remembered the first time he kissed her—the tummy butterflies he gave her. She touched her fingertips to her lips as if trying to recapture the feeling. Sadly, she pushed the thoughts aside and chastised herself. *No use pining for someone you won't see again.*

Her reverie came to an end at the perfect time.

“Mrs. McGuire...it’s time for your vitals.” The nurse wrapped the blood pressure cuff carefully around Catherine’s arm. “Tell me if I hurt you.”

“That doesn’t hurt at all,” Catherine assured.

The nurse finished and removed the cuff, while making small talk. “Your face is looking much better. I can already see yellow hues replacing the angry purple that was there yesterday.”

“That’s good, purple was never my favorite color.” Catherine knew she had a long way to go, but felt encouraged. “But, I’m almost glad I can’t see myself...and speaking of seeing...Dr. Jones hasn’t been in to see me since yesterday. Is he around?”

“Actually, he is, but he’s been assisting in surgery all day. I’m sure he’ll stop by when he’s finished, if it’s not too late. He wanted me to ask you for a recent photograph. He’s scheduling your facial surgery consult and wanted it for comparison. Do you have one?”

Catherine thought for a minute. She still had the proof from the picture on her telephone company ID badge. She hated that they made her have a photo taken, but all employees had to wear their pictures, even operators. “Yes, I do, as a matter of fact. My new job required one. I’ll have my friend bring it in.”

\*\*\*

Catherine was bored to tears and tired of not being able to see. Listening to TV somehow just was not the same. She



switched it off, punched her pillow in frustration, and rolled to her side.

“Hi! How are you feeling?” The voice behind her lit up the room and raised her spirits.

“I’m fine, thanks,” she said as she rolled over and raised her bed to a sitting position. “According to Dr. Corday, I get this dumb bandage off tomorrow.” She found it funny how just Dr. Jones’ presence changed her demeanor. “I’m dying to see if you look like you sound.” *A handsome hunk, I’ll bet.*

He laughed and patted her arm. “I was hoping I’d get a chance to see how you look when you aren’t black and blue.”

“Well, you will,” she said. “Tonight, my roomie is bringing in the picture you requested. I’m sure you’ll find I look a hundred times better without the swelling and my gauze headband.”

“I’m sure...I know it isn’t the fashion statement you wanted to make, but I won’t need the picture after all. The specialist rechecked the x-ray of your cheek. As it turns out, all I need do is a little aligning so the bone can heal properly. It’s just a minor procedure and one that won’t leave any scarring. We may as well do it tomorrow so you can get out of here. I’m sure you’re more than ready.”

She apprehensively touched her cheek. “Like one more scar would matter. I shudder to think what I’m going to look like when all this goes away.”

His mention of going home stirred reactions she did not expect. *Sounds silly, but I am going to miss you when I go. I wonder*

*if we could see each other...forget it Cat, he's probably married anyhow.*

His response interrupted her thoughts.

“You might be surprised. The body is a wondrous thing—it heals wounds we never expected it would.” From his warm breath on her face, she knew he leaned closer, and in a secretive tone, he whispered, “Don’t tell anyone, but you have a new friend who has excellent connections to great surgeons, so just in case...”

\*\*\*

He stood outside her room and pondered the feelings she caused in him. He barely knew her, but there was something oddly familiar and comfortable. He could not put his finger on it, but he felt like he knew her from another time and place. *You’ve been watching too many paranormal movies.*

He took his stethoscope from around his neck and tucked it into the pocket of his lab coat, then shaking his head, walked down the corridor. A stanza from one of his first sonnets formed in his mind. It was one he wrote for a high school English assignment and dedicated to his sweet Angela. *With grace and beauty, she walks the earth and warms my very soul.*

He mumbled to himself. “How odd! I haven’t thought of that one in years.”

\*\*\*

Dr. Jones, dressed in his surgical scrubs and ready to repair Catherine's cheek, stood at the nurses' station checking her chart. He turned to the woman seated behind the counter. "Is Ms. McGuire ready?"

"She will be momentarily. Dr. Corday is in removing her bandages right now," the nurse responded. "Oh, by the way...her friend asked me to give you her picture, just in case you still need it."

He shook his head. "I don't..." He changed his mind and took the photo from her hand. "Never mind, I'll take it."

Leaning on the counter, he peered at the photograph. She was beautiful just like he imagined she would be. Blonde hair, beautiful blue eyes, pearly white smile...something tugged at his heart.

"This is just too bizarre," he muttered, studying the picture carefully. *This can't be...it just can't be.*

His heart pounded hard against his chest wall as he hurried into her room.

Catherine stood with her back to him, looking out the window. This was the first time he had seen her out of bed. Her blonde hair cascaded well past her shoulders, and the reflecting sunlight cast a halo-like outline around her. Even in a drab hospital gown, her feminine shape was readily apparent.

He swallowed hard, "Mrs. McGu...Catherine?"

\*\*\*

She turned. “Yes...” She felt the color drain from her face. Her knees weakened and she reached back to grab the windowsill to steady herself. *This cannot be happening.*

Her mouth felt like it was full of cotton balls as she struggled to speak. “Oh my God...is it really you? Wes...Wesley Jones? Is that you?”

“Yes,” he answered with raised brows. “But...but I don’t understand.”

She made sure she was steady on her feet then closed the gap between them. Her hand caressed his cheek in disbelief. “I can’t believe it’s really you. Don’t you remember who I am?”

“Angela?” His eyes widened.

“Yes, it’s me.”

“But...?”

“I know, I know, Catherine is my middle name...McGuire is Stan’s last name. I just haven’t had a chance to change it back to Ryan. Angela was the person who loved Wesley Jones, so I had to create a new me. I dropped the Angela, but I never forgot you.” Happy tears trickled down her cheeks. “Oh Wes, I can’t believe I’ve found you again.”

She wanted to throw her arms around him and recapture all those lost years.

Wes brushed a lock of hair from her forehead. “I’m speechless. It’s been so many years, but I never found anyone to take your place. I loved you so much...I still love you, as silly as that might sound.”

“It doesn’t sound silly at all. I feel like I just took a big step back in time. This has been my dream for years.” She suddenly held him at arms length and glanced away. “I must look awful. Oh God, how can you even stand to look at me like this?”

He snared her back and gently cupped her still-swollen chin. “You’re beautiful and don’t you forget it...not just on the outside but the inside, too. I want to kiss you so badly, but I’m afraid I’ll hurt you.”

“I’ll take the risk...just get the morphine back,” she quipped.

He leaned in and brushed her lips with a soft kiss then studied the blueness of eyes no longer masked by a bandage. “I couldn’t imagine why I felt so at ease reading my sonnets to you...now I know why. I wrote them about you, so who better to hear them. I don’t know why I thought about the first one I ever wrote to you...you know, the one when we were in high school. I actually remembered it.”

She gazed up at him and recited it verbatim. “With grace and beauty she walks the earth and warms my very soul...”

A smile spread across his face as he finished the verse. “To hold her near through eternity shall be my heart’s true goal.”

The paging system interrupted their heartwarming moment. “Calling Dr. Jones, calling Dr. Jones, report to the nurses’ station, STAT!”

“Oh no...” he moaned, but continued to hold her close.

“Angela, I’m never going to let you go again, ever,” he said in a hurry. “And right after you heal from surgery, I’m

taking you home with me...forever! I have to go, but I'll be back." He sped out the door.

She stood in the middle of the room—the warmth of his kiss still lingered on her lips and her knees were weak for a different reason this time. She clasped a hand to her abdomen. *Oh, after all these years, he still gives me tummy butterflies.*

How could life take such a wonderful turn? She was not about to question it, and braved a painful smile. As she crawled back into bed, she said goodbye to her bad memories and welcomed new ones. *Catherine McGuire, it's been nice knowing you, but Angela is back where she belongs.*

## About the Author

### **Ginger Simpson**

Ginger lives in Tennessee with her husband of almost ten years, Kelly. The main reason for moving from California after her retirement from the University of California was to be near her grandson, Spencer, but she never expected to become a gun-toting granny working at a local jail. Now that she is semi-retired again, besides spending time with her grandbaby, she hopes to find time to work on her five writing works-in-progress. You can keep informed of her progress by checking her website for new releases.

**<http://www.gingersimpson.com>**

Ginger loves to hear from her readers!  
You can write to Ginger at:

Ginger Simpson  
C/O Chippewa Publishing, LLC.  
678 Dutchman Drive, Suite 3  
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729



**Chippewa Publishing**

Our eBooks are MAGICAL!

<http://www.chippewapublishing.com>