

NEIL. That's my girl.

JEANNETTE. I wanted my treasure.

DINAH. And then she would throw the eggs at the boys. She used to make me laugh so hard I'd wet my pants.

NEIL. She still does the same thing to me.

JEANNETTE. Keeps you young, Babe.

DINAH. Oh, here's a nice picture of your mom and dad.

JEANNETTE. Ah, Sunday supper at the country club.

NEIL. And where's little Jeannette?

JEANNETTE. I'm just to the right of Mother wearing my gloves and Mary Janes. I was framed out because I was scowling.

DINAH. They were such an elegant couple. I always wished my parents were like them.

JEANNETTE. You're kidding.

DINAH. Your father was always well-dressed and Aunt Dolores was so cosmopolitan.

JEANNETTE. Yes, she thought she was. Her world-view was pretty provincial.

DINAH. Mom used to say that your parents were too much in love with each other which I always thought was a strange thing to say.

JEANNETTE. No, it's true. They were romantic narcissists. They just never should've had me. I was the intrusion.

DINAH. Oh no, I think they loved you very much.

JEANNETTE. In their own way. They were a unit unto themselves. Neil's parents were exactly the same way, only much crazier.

DINAH. Really.

NEIL. They only spoke French in the house.

DINAH. Oh. Were they from France?

NEIL. Detroit. And their French was outrageously bad. But they said it lubricated their relationship. Which it did. According to the old man they made love every day, twice a day for fifty years.

DINAH. Oh gosh.

JEANNETTE. And his mother had emphysema for the last ten years of her life so they'd hole up in their bedroom, smoking cigarettes next to the oxygen tank. It's a fucking miracle they didn't blow themselves up.

NEIL. It would have been a great way to go. BOOM.

DINAH. Oh dear.

JEANNETTE. It would have been a blessing for both of them.

Lois had a miserable death.

DINAH. What happened?

JEANNETTE. She was starting to really deteriorate – she had lost the use of her legs. And then she fell off the bed and broke a hip but Frank refused to take her to the hospital.

DINAH. Why?

NEIL. He didn't want the male interns touching her.

JEANNETTE. This is an eighty-three year-old woman who's had three strokes, her kidneys are shot, she's breathing from half a lung –

NEIL. Well, he still thought she was hot.

JEANNETTE. Bless his horny heart.

DINAH. Oh, for goodness sake.

JEANNETTE. So we finally convinced him to check her in at the hospital and now he turns into a lunatic. He'll only speak to the staff in French –

NEIL. And of course they had no idea what the fuck he was saying.

JEANNETTE. And he refused to leave her side. He wouldn't even get up to go to the bathroom. He'd urinate in a bed pan which we had to empty because the nurses wouldn't touch it.

DINAH. Oh yuck.

NEIL. What was worse, the nurses stopped coming into the room because the old man drove them away.

DINAH. How awful.

JEANNETTE. He wouldn't even let her sleep. Every time she closed her eyes he would grab her face in his hands and scream at her to wake up.

NEIL. "Lois! S'veiller! S'veiller!"

JEANNETTE. And her poor little jaundiced eyes would pop open and she'd start wheezing and gasping for air. He scared her so badly he kept giving her heart attacks. Then he'd run into the hall yelling for help -

NEIL. "Code Bleu! Code Bleu!"

JEANNETTE. She was legally dead three times before the doctors finally let her go.

DINAH. Oh my gosh.

NEIL. And even when she was dead, he wouldn't leave her alone. He grabbed her shrunken body and hugged it so hard we could hear the ribs crack. We had to have him medicated, just to pry him away.

JEANNETTE. It was awful, it was just obscene.

DINAH. I guess he just loved her so much.

NEIL. No, it wasn't love. It was possession.

DINAH. Well I just know that if there had been anything I could have done to bring Cindy back - if they had let me see her body I probably would have held on so tight...

JEANNETTE. No, we understand.

DINAH. Bill was the one who saw her, to make the identification. He was able to be very objective about it. He said that what he saw had nothing to do with Cindy. What he saw was just an empty, broken vessel.

JEANNETTE. That's the only way to see it.

DINAH. But, as I said before, we both comfort ourselves with the knowledge that Cindy is now safe with her Lord and someday, when it's our time, we'll be with our girl again.

JEANNETTE. Well...I'm glad that you have that, Hon.

(a beat)

(to NEIL, the vaporizer) Are you done there, Babe?

NEIL. I'm good for now, yeah.

JEANNETTE. Dinah, we're keeping this plugged in but I'll move it back here where Bill won't see it.

DINAH. Oh, thank you.

JEANNETTE. We're ready for lunch.

DINAH. Alrighty. I'll go get him.

(DINAH exits.)

JEANNETTE. Shit, I didn't know they were Born-Again.

NEIL. I'm not surprised. Anyone who's been through a horror like that.

JEANNETTE. No, I get it. But she's really into the dogma.

NEIL. A little dogma doesn't hurt anyone as long as it's between consenting adults.

JEANNETTE. You're only saying that because you're stoned.

NEIL. I'm just trying to be tolerant.

JEANNETTE. I know, you're a saint, Babe.

(DINAH comes back with BILL.)

Hey, Bill. How's your game?

BILL. My game?

JEANNETTE. On the radio.

BILL. Oh. The Tigers are ahead four to two.

NEIL. Go Tigers.

JEANNETTE. So are you ready for some lunch?

BILL. That would be fine.

DINAH. Tell me what I can do.

JEANNETTE. Nothing. Everything's all set. Just grab a plate.

(JEANNETTE goes to the kitchen area and uncovers the food which is laid out in mismatched bowls and platters donated by friends. There are chopsticks instead of forks.)

DINAH. This all looks so delicious. Neil, can I fix you a plate?

NEIL. No thank you, Dinah, I'm a little limited in what I can eat.