

JEANNETTE. Listen, I love my life, I love it fiercely. I wake up every morning thanking my fucking stars that I'm with this beautiful, brilliant man, who even in his sickness continues to astonish me.

DINAH. Honey, I know how much you love Neil and the thought of going on without him must seem inconceivable –

JEANNETTE. Oh no, I've conceived it. I could move into some cozy little bungalow, keep Neil's picture on my bedside table with a stack of pillows to fill his side of the bed. I could keep myself busy with a day-job at a book store and yoga classes twice a day – Namaste, Baby. I could fill my nights with lectures and art films and parking myself at the dinner tables of friends. Or I could take the alternative route – ditch the material world and become one of those nomadic do-gooders – Saint Jeannette showing up at disaster hot spots, doling out aid and comfort to people as addled by grief as me. I can ride that one to the end of my days 'till I'm a sun-dried, crazy old broad shaking my fists at army tanks and giant waves. And then tell me what happens when my mind starts to fail, or I break my hip or some disease starts to slowly take me down. Who will be there to talk me through my death – some over-booked hospice worker who drops by once a day to dole out my pills and heat up my soup? No thank you. The planet will be crowded enough with helpless old boomers like me clogging up the land fill with their soiled diapers. No thank you. I'd rather leave at my peak, than spend the next thirty years with the lights half-dimmed.

DINAH. Honey, you don't know what will happen. Life is full of surprises.

JEANNETTE. I've done surprises. My heart is full, my life complete. I couldn't have asked for a better ride. I've traveled to every part of this world, published my poems, made art, made peace, saved more than my share of orphans and whales. I don't need to add anything more to my resume.

BILL. How can you say that? That's crazy, Jeannette. You have no idea what's in store for you.

DINAH. What we're trying to say, Honey, is that it's impossible to see to the other side right now.

BILL. That's right. You need to wait and let the cloud lift a little. Who knows what you'll be feeling a year from now?

JEANNETTE. Let's be honest here, Bill, you know exactly what I'll be feeling.

BILL. You can't possibly compare yourself to me. The worst kind of evil was done to my daughter – unspeakable things that I will never get out of my head. They sit in there like rot. So why don't I just put myself out of my misery, pick up a gun and blow my brains out. That's what you people would have me do.

JEANNETTE. We people would never tell you people what to do because we don't believe in ramming our values down other people's throats.

BILL. You don't have values. You're completely amoral.

DINAH. Bill, that's not helpful.

BILL. Listen, I might not be the happiest man on earth but I will never give up on the life that God has given me. Never.

JEANNETTE. And I say go for it. You have your journey to take and I have mine.

BILL. But yours is wrong.

JEANNETTE. You're ignorant, Bill. You're narrow-minded and intolerant and I find your Christer talk insufferable.

BILL. You're a foolish, arrogant woman and you'll be going to hell if you don't straighten up and listen to reason.

(*NEIL comes out of the yurt.*)

NEIL. What's going on here?

BILL. I want to know what kind of sick spell you've cast on this woman –

NEIL. Excuse me? What is he talking about?