

FIERCE

BY

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An office in a psychiatric clinic. A couch, a couple of comfortable chairs. Psychiatrist Maggie Delaney and her new patient Jayne French, sit opposite each other in the chairs. Jayne is wearing a faded dark green sweat suit, and she has her arm in a sling. Maggie has a note pad in her lap.

MAGGIE

Is that what they gave you to wear in jail?

JAYNE

Yeah.

MAGGIE

You didn't feel like getting into your own clothes when they let you out?

JAYNE

No this is fine. Besides, my clothes got pretty messed up when I got a little playful the other night.

MAGGIE

Playful? That was a very reckless thing you did, Jayne.

JAYNE

Yeah. So I'm told.

MAGGIE

Reckless and extremely dangerous.

JAYNE

Reckless okay. But "dangerous"... I don't know. I mean I'm alive, aren't I?

MAGGIE

Well that's as close to a miracle as I've ever encountered.

(off a file on her desk)

Not only did you survive being hit by a large truck, you seem to have suffered no ill effects from that epic drug cocktail they found in your system. Cocaine, heroin, extremely potent pain killers...

JAYNE

And I think I may have smoked a few joints too.

(off her look)

It was the weekend.

MAGGIE

You were walking in traffic.

JAYNE

I meant I don't have a "drug problem."

MAGGIE

Well that judge certainly thinks you do.

JAYNE

That judge is used to dealing with hard-core addicts. I tried explaining to her that I didn't fit the mould, but everything I said just seemed to baffle her.

MAGGIE

For example?

JAYNE

I told her I only used when I didn't have anything better to do.

MAGGIE

She didn't buy that, eh.

JAYNE

Actually she said "So what?"

MAGGIE

Well exactly. It doesn't matter how often you get completely wasted, Jayne... The point is, that when you do, you're obviously a serious danger to yourself and to everyone else.

JAYNE

You're talking about that man who drove his car off the road.

MAGGIE

To avoid *you*, yes.

JAYNE

Well obviously I feel bad about that.

MAGGIE

Do you?

JAYNE

Kind of.

MAGGIE

Kind of?

JAYNE

Well what do I really know about the guy? He could be a total jerk.

MAGGIE

You mean he might have had it coming. Did you say that to the judge?

JAYNE

Am I an idiot? I told her I felt like crap about it.

MAGGIE

And she bought that?

JAYNE

Not completely. But I think it softened her enough to keep me out of jail... I mean as long as I came here for awhile to... "get my life together."

MAGGIE

And you think that's amusing?

JAYNE

Well come on. Getting your life together. Is there a model for that? The together life? You know, that judge looked like she had a few issues herself. Way too much makeup for one thing. Still doing herself up at that age? Kind of sad.

MAGGIE

Sadder than being a junkie?

JAYNE

There's that word.

MAGGIE

You don't like it?

JAYNE

Not when it's used to make me feel bad. Look, try to pay attention. It's just fun. I made decent money for quite awhile, and I can easily support a little recreational indulgence.

MAGGIE

Heroin isn't a recreational--

JAYNE

Put me in a room.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry?

JAYNE

Lock me up. Keep me under observation. You'll see. No withdrawal symptoms. No shaking. No throwing up. I've got it under control.

MAGGIE

I'm pretty sure you're wrong about that.

JAYNE

Well then we'll just have to agree to disagree.

MAGGIE

No. Sorry. How it works here is that you have to acknowledge that I'm almost certainly right and you're definitely not.

Maggie smiles. Jayne smiles back.

JAYNE

That sounds a little arrogant to me. Do you tell that to all your patients?

MAGGIE

No.

JAYNE

So I'm special then.

MAGGIE

You might not be special, but you're definitely unique.

They look at each other.

JAYNE

Okay... I'll stay indoors when I over indulge from now on. The public will no longer be at risk.

MAGGIE

And what about you?

JAYNE

Well that's my business, isn't it. You know, I don't see what the big deal is. I don't have any dependants, no lives other than my own to be responsible for.

MAGGIE

No husband?

JAYNE

No. Poor me, eh? I was married, but I lost him.

MAGGIE

Lost him... to illness? Another woman?

JAYNE

No we went for a walk in a very dense forest, and I just lost him.

MAGGIE

Is that an allegory of some kind?

JAYNE

I don't think so.

MAGGIE

Okay. So no family at all then?

JAYNE

Besides my brother, his wife and their three kids? No. Well there was my mother. But she died last year.

MAGGIE

Did you start using after she passed?

JAYNE

You think I turned to drugs to numb the pain, eh?

MAGGIE

I was just--

JAYNE

I missed her. The old girl was fun to be around. But no I've been doing this for awhile now.

MAGGIE

And you started just because...?

JAYNE

I was bored.

MAGGIE

Bored.

JAYNE

What, you've never heard that before?

(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

Okay maybe more restless than bored. Or *just* as restless as bored. I took a very early retirement and--

MAGGIE

A retirement from what?

JAYNE

Teaching.

MAGGIE

Oh.

JAYNE

"Oh" what?

MAGGIE

Maybe you were burned out.

JAYNE

Burned out. Sure, that's it. I knew there was something. Okay well now that we've figured that out, I'll just take it a little easy until I get my passion for education back. Can I go now?

MAGGIE

No. And does sarcasm actually help?

JAYNE

Don't know how I'd manage without it.

MAGGIE

You should probably try though.

They just look at each other.

JAYNE

Listen, I just thought... why not do something that makes me feel good in the moment, and if something goes wrong, well at least I go out happy, right? I started with cocaine... only came to heroin a few months ago. Fantastic stuff.

MAGGIE

Until it kills you.

JAYNE

Well in the words of our friend the judge, "So what?" Why are you looking at me like that?

MAGGIE

I'm just wondering what I'm supposed to do with you.

JAYNE

You mean where to start.

MAGGIE

Where to start. How to continue. If it's even worth the effort.

JAYNE

Wow. Do you mean that? You're wondering if I'm even worth the effort.

MAGGIE

Absolutely. I have a lot of patients who actually *want* my help.

JAYNE

All right. So why not tell that judge that I got the message, and then I can get the hell out of here.

MAGGIE

Let's not rush it. Maybe you've just annoyed me. And it might be possible that the drug use *is* actually to dull some kind of deep pain.

JAYNE

Deep pain. Not just pain. Deep pain.

MAGGIE

Possibly. And we should try to find out what that's about. I mean talking as a professional and not someone who--

JAYNE

I've annoyed.

MAGGIE

Yes. As professional I have an obligation to get to the bottom of that and then determine the appropriate therapy for you.

JAYNE

You mean if you can convince me that's what I want.

MAGGIE

Perhaps you're not in any state to know what you actually want.

JAYNE

Oh. You think I might be in denial.

MAGGIE

Big time.

JAYNE

"Big time." Aren't you supposed to avoid judgments like that?

MAGGIE

I've found it's better if I just speak my mind.

JAYNE

Better for whom?

MAGGIE

Me. And for you as well, if you're up to it.

JAYNE

Wow. Okay. This could get interesting then.

MAGGIE

Because I'll be speaking my mind?

JAYNE

Because we both will. And what's wrong with denial by the way?

MAGGIE

Well it could be preventing you from seeing how you actually want to live the rest of your life.

JAYNE

Or even if I do.

MAGGIE

Do you have serious thoughts about suicide?

JAYNE

Are there any other kind? What about your other patients? You know, the ones who really need your help.

MAGGIE

Well obviously I think *you* really need my help as well.

Jayne just looks at her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Something wrong?

JAYNE
You were a user, right.

MAGGIE
I'm sorry?

JAYNE
You had a serious drug "problem."
That's why you're having such a
hard time coming to grips with what
I do.

MAGGIE
That's quite an assumption.

JAYNE
Is it?

MAGGIE
Listen we're not here to talk about
me or what you think you know about
me.

JAYNE
I'm just pointing out that there's
no way a person with that kind of
history could understand how
something *she, i.e. you*, painfully
grappled with could have so little
impact on *me*.

Maggie stands.

MAGGIE
Maybe we should take a little
break. Can I get you a coffee?

JAYNE
Never touch the stuff.

Maggie smiles and leaves.

Jayne stands. Stretches. Looks around the office. Takes a
joint out of her pocket. Lights it up. Takes a deep drag or
two.

Maggie comes in with a coffee.

JAYNE (CONT'D)
Oh-oh. Caught in the act...

MAGGIE
(sitting)
Put that out, okay.

JAYNE
Sure...

She does.

MAGGIE
Where'd you get that?

JAYNE
I smuggled it in. Do you believe me?

MAGGIE
No. How about sitting down again.

Jayne just looks at her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Come on. Sit.

Jayne smiles. Sits.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
So...

JAYNE
So... what?

MAGGIE
Are you ready to tell me what actually happened to your husband?

JAYNE
Are you ready to tell me why you want to know?

MAGGIE
Well we have to start somewhere.

JAYNE
Do we?

MAGGIE
Maybe you weren't listening closely enough when the judge sentenced you.

JAYNE
That's possible. I was pretty distracted. That courtroom was a very colourful place. Full of gang bangers and crack whores. And that judge all made up like she was going on a date.

MAGGIE
I don't like that term.

JAYNE
What? Date?

MAGGIE
(off her look)
Crack whores.

JAYNE
Oh. Well that's how they describe themselves.

MAGGIE
All the more reason why no one else should. Anyway, the court ordered you to stay here until I said you were fit to leave. If you decide to ignore that order, I'm almost certain they'll put you in jail.

JAYNE
Why did you ask me if it was an allegory? You know, when I told you I'd lost my husband in a forest. Did you think I was going to tell you he was taken away by elves?
(off her look)
I'm just saying, you should have asked if it was a metaphor... The dense forest representing his dark and troubled soul.

MAGGIE
Does it?

JAYNE
Yes. He had a very difficult but occasionally inspiring relationship with the world.

MAGGIE
Had. So he is dead then.

JAYNE
Yes. Like I said.

MAGGIE
You said lost.

Jayne takes her arm out of the sling. Stretches it.

JAYNE
And you took that to mean...?

MAGGIE
Something more abstract, I think.

JAYNE

Seriously? All that training dulled your appreciation for the obvious, did it. Where were you trained, by the way?

MAGGIE

All over the place. But most of what I learned, I learned right here. From dealing with people like you.

JAYNE

People like me. You mean I'm not unique?

MAGGIE

I meant people with serious problems. What did your husband do?

JAYNE

You mean to me?

MAGGIE

No... well unless--

JAYNE

Oh you mean for a living. I was worried I might have let slip that he was an abusive drunk.

MAGGIE

Was he?

JAYNE

If only. That would explain everything, wouldn't it? You must have standard responses for women who've been through that kind of hell.

MAGGIE

I used to. Before my appreciation for the obvious got dulled.

JAYNE

He was a writer. A "Novelist." Not as well known as he thought he should be, but he had his fans. There's a lot of overwrought emotional crap in his work, but they appeal to--

MAGGIE

People who like emotional crap.

JAYNE

Well that's my take.

MAGGIE

(nods)

Your brother and his family... Are you close to them?

JAYNE

Not anymore.

MAGGIE

Something happened?

JAYNE

Yes.

MAGGIE

Do you want to talk about it?

JAYNE

I don't know yet. I think I'd like to ask you a few questions first. It'll be easier for me to talk to someone I know.

MAGGIE

So these questions are personal.

JAYNE

Relax. I'll make them simple. How old are you?

MAGGIE

Why does that matter?

JAYNE

Are you married?

MAGGIE

No. But so what?

JAYNE

Were you ever?

MAGGIE

Same answer.

JAYNE

Friends?

(off her look)

You have to start giving me straight answers or I'm never going to stop. So... do you have any friends?

MAGGIE

A few.

JAYNE

Other shrinks?

MAGGIE

One of them.

JAYNE

Man or woman?

MAGGIE

Woman.

JAYNE

Is she your lover?

MAGGIE

No.

JAYNE

Do you have a lover?

MAGGIE

Do you?

JAYNE

I'm still asking the questions.

MAGGIE

How about we take turns. What happened between you and your brother's family?

JAYNE

They kept trying to get involved in my life. I got really mad at them about it. Said and did some nasty stuff. What about *your* family?

MAGGIE

I was an orphan.

JAYNE

No shit?

MAGGIE

Absolutely no shit. What did you mean by them trying to get involved?

JAYNE

Trying to keep me close. Trying to make me care more than I wanted to care. Trying to make me happier than I felt like being. Do you understand what I mean by "happier than I felt like being"?

MAGGIE

Yes. And that might be something I can help you with.

JAYNE

You mean if I wanted your help.

MAGGIE

You don't want to experience happiness?

JAYNE

Not if it's forced on me. I'd rather just stumble upon it if it's out there somewhere. How long were you on heroin?

Maggie just looks at her.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

I had a day to get my affairs in order before I had to report here. I did some research. You were busted when you were in your teens.

MAGGIE

Those court records are sealed.

JAYNE

Yes. But some of the newspaper stories contained clues to who you were. You and your boyfriend... not just using but dealing to half your high school. Impressive.

MAGGIE

That's an exaggeration.

JAYNE

So you just had a select clientele then? And there's some stuff about a number of break-ins...

MAGGIE

And you got all this on-line?

JAYNE

I did a fair amount of research for my husband's over-heated novels. I got good at picking through garbage.

MAGGIE

Okay. And now that you know that I was a teenage druggie and a criminal, you feel justified in ignoring any advice I might give you.

JAYNE

Not necessarily. I just think it's time to get real.

(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

By the way, nice work in getting all the way from that to...

(gesturing around)

...this. I spent the last few years of my teaching career as a guidance counsellor, and none of the kids I saw, at least none of the ones who were in roughly the same state as you were at that age, got themselves anywhere close to where you are now.

MAGGIE

You can't know that for sure.

JAYNE

But I do. I used my researching skills to keep track of them. With some it was very easy. You just had to watch the news. That young fellow who killed his ex-girlfriend because his current girlfriend told him to... he was one of mine. I was trying to arrange a study programme for him at the time. I should have just told him to be careful who he dated.

MAGGIE

Good advice for everyone that age.

JAYNE

Is that your way of telling me it was some guy who got you into drugs and crime?

MAGGIE

Yeah.

JAYNE

Some guy you loved.

MAGGIE

Absolutely. Loved him more than anything. He was my world.

JAYNE

And he was an asshole.

MAGGIE

He was a troubled young man.

JAYNE

And an asshole. I came across a lot of troubled young men. Most of them didn't try to drag anyone else down with them. Where is he now?

(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

If you don't know, I could maybe find out what happened to him for you?

MAGGIE

I'm more interested in finding out what happened to your husband.

(off her look)

You said you wanted to get real. I'm up for that.

JAYNE

You mean it might help.

MAGGIE

Well maybe you'd benefit by telling--

JAYNE

I meant it might help you.

MAGGIE

We're not here to help me. You have to get that straight or--

JAYNE

I think it will work best if these little chats we're having are mutually beneficial. That's really all I'm getting at.

(off her look)

I killed him.

(off her look)

I pushed him into a quarry. They still haven't found his body.

(off her look)

I mean that water is pretty deep. I know that because I used to swim there when I was teenager. I liked to swim a lot when I was in my teens. You know, instead of shooting heroin.

MAGGIE

Why?

JAYNE

It just made me feel good.

MAGGIE

I meant why did you kill him?

JAYNE

Oh. Same answer.

MAGGIE

You thought it would make you feel good.

JAYNE

Yes.

MAGGIE

And did it?

JAYNE

For awhile.

MAGGIE

And then?

JAYNE

Well they weren't all bad times.
Some of the good things about him
started to come back to me.

MAGGIE

And you began to feel... guilty?

JAYNE

Well guilty is probably too strong
a word. He had it coming.

MAGGIE

Because?

JAYNE

He did a very bad thing.

MAGGIE

Do you want to tell me what that
was?

JAYNE

Not without getting a little wasted
first.

Jayne takes out a pill bottle. Pops a few.

MAGGIE

Where'd you get those?

JAYNE

I can't remember.

MAGGIE

Jayne. You can't get high in here
every time you feel like it.

JAYNE

Well that's obviously not true.

MAGGIE

I'll find your source.

JAYNE

Maybe. But in the meantime...

She leans back. Closes her eyes. Jayne just looks at her for a moment, then approaches.

MAGGIE

Hey!

(gives Jayne a nudge)

I need to know where you're getting this stuff. A little cannabis is one thing but--

JAYNE

Cannabis? I can't talk to you if you're going to use words like that. It makes you sound fake.

MAGGIE

Oh knock it off.

JAYNE

Is that what you called it when you were smoking it?

MAGGIE

What does that have to do with anything? And I want you to stop referring to my past like you know what you're talking about.

JAYNE

Well I know you were a heroin addict, a dealer, and a thief. Although that last thing probably goes without saying.

MAGGIE

What I was, or what I did has nothing to do with what I'm doing to help you.

JAYNE

Except that your personal history with drugs has coloured your--

MAGGIE

They don't help! They only disguise.

JAYNE

You mean except for prescription drugs...

MAGGIE

As a last resort. And under supervision.

JAYNE

Look what you did when you were sixteen is not what I'm doing now, okay. All that stuff really messed you up. And you're still fighting it. That's okay. That's what you have to do, I guess. But you shouldn't let it close your mind to how it might help others. And if you can't get your head around the possibility that narcotics are sometimes the only thing that--

MAGGIE

Listen, why don't we just step back and--

JAYNE

What? And *what*?

MAGGIE

Leave the drug issue aside for awhile.

JAYNE

Why? Do you feel like you're losing control of our...

Jayne stands. Wobbles. Sits on the couch.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

Sorry. That might have been a little too much.

MAGGIE

Of what?

JAYNE

Of whatever I was given.

MAGGIE

Given by whom.

JAYNE

Come on. Drop it, okay. I'm not a snitch. Plus I'm not about to cut off my source.

MAGGIE

(sits next to her)

Jayne. You can't think I'm just going to let this--

JAYNE

My husband killed our dog.

(off her look)

(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

He took him out on the lake with a storm approaching and waited too long before he started in. The waves got to be too much before they reached shore, and the boat capsized. He hadn't bothered to put the life jacket I'd bought for Casey on and my precious little guy drowned. He drowned, but my husband "miraculously" made it ashore. That's what they said. But he had a life jacket on so where's the miracle in that, eh. It was really just another case of him putting himself first.

MAGGIE

You mean ahead of the dog.

JAYNE

Exactly. "The dog." Like my husband was so much more important than him. Well not to me he wasn't.

MAGGIE

He wasn't?

JAYNE

For twenty years I tried to forgive his arrogance and selfishness... And then one day I got tired of trying and pushed him into that quarry. I'm pretty sure I heard him break his neck as he bounced off the rocks on his way down, but I could have just been imagining that. You know, like I was looking for something to feel extra good about.

(a look to Maggie)

So? Do you think we should talk about that? Or maybe I should just be allowed to leave and get on with my life.

Maggie is thinking.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

So?

MAGGIE

You killed your husband because he was responsible for the death of your dog.

JAYNE

That was the core reason, I think. But his personality didn't help.

(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

And then there was all that crap he wrote.

MAGGIE

In his novels...

JAYNE

In his novels. His letters to the editors. The notes he left on the fridge about what he wanted for dinner... I don't know why you're looking at me like that, and I'm not going to bother asking. No actually I get it. What kind of man could cause his wife to have such disdain for him? Okay, here he is in a nutshell. He was from a wealthy family. He went to private school. No one there liked him. Not even the other self-absorbed assholes. His novels were all juvenile sex fantasies with him as a powerful but sensitive alpha male and all the women he encountered as adoring love toys. He tried very hard to live like he was in one of those novels and for a time so did I.

MAGGIE

You were a love toy?

JAYNE

An *adoring* love toy. But time destroys fantasy, thank God. And we were together long enough for the adoration to fade and eventually rot. Probably like it happened with you and your criminal boyfriend. He was older, right.

MAGGIE

Yes.

JAYNE

How much older.

MAGGIE

Look I really don't want to--

JAYNE

Just tell me for godsake!

MAGGIE

Six years. Okay? He was twenty and I was-

JAYNE

Fourteen? Jesus. What were you thinking? What was wrong with you?

MAGGIE

I was thinking about survival. Because just about *everything* was wrong with me. But... this isn't about me so-

JAYNE

No no. Friends share.

MAGGIE

Friends?

JAYNE

You think it's going to be enough to keep treating me like a patient? You want to get to me, I have to get to you.

MAGGIE

(smiles)
Really?

JAYNE

Yeah...

MAGGIE

Okay. Well maybe when we've spent more time--

JAYNE

Now.
(looks at her)
Now.

Maggie is thinking. Jayne is just watching her. Then...

MAGGIE

I'd run away from every foster home they'd put me in. I'd done a lot of illegal things while I was on the street, and I'd spent six months in detention where I was beaten twice pretty severely. Robbie was a shithead, but I was a match for him.

JAYNE

Really.

MAGGIE

Oh yeah. I was a hard case for sure. Well that's what can happen to you when...

JAYNE

When what?

MAGGIE

When you just get discarded... I had no one to answer to. And no one to please. No mother at home expecting and hoping that I'd had a good day at school, that I'd learned something useful, that I was on my way to having a useful life.

JAYNE

None of the foster parents did that?

MAGGIE

One did. And she changed my life. There were few who were decent enough. They fed me and clothed me, but I needed more. A lot more. Did you really kill your husband?

JAYNE

Yes. How did that one foster mother change your life?

MAGGIE

She made an effort. Was it really because he didn't save your dog?

JAYNE

Like I said, it was a combination of things. What's it mean, when you say she made an effort.

MAGGIE

She talked to me.

JAYNE

Just talked.

MAGGIE

Well no one had ever done much of that before. And she taught me music. Piano. And we danced. I was with her until I finished high school. And every day there was music.

JAYNE

Do you still see her?

MAGGIE

She died just after I finished med school.

JAYNE

She got to see that though.

MAGGIE

Yeah. She was...

JAYNE

Proud.

MAGGIE

Happy. I missed her a lot. A year or so after she died, I relapsed.

JAYNE

You started using again...

MAGGIE

It cost me my residency. And when I got clean it wasn't easy convincing the medical board to let me back in.

JAYNE

Do you still think about her?

MAGGIE

Of course. She was the only person in my childhood who...

JAYNE

Cared?

MAGGIE

Really and truly cared, yes. Listen, none of this is going to help us get to your...

(noticing that Jayne has drifted off)

Jayne? Try to stay with me here, okay.

JAYNE

Sorry I was just thinking... Okay! Okay...

MAGGIE

What?

JAYNE

Let's do acid.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry?

JAYNE

LSD. It's just about the only thing I haven't tried. And we need to do something besides talk.

MAGGIE

No.

JAYNE

Why not?

MAGGIE

Well first of all--

JAYNE

I've got some. It's supposed to be pretty good stuff.

She produces a blotter from her pocket.

MAGGIE

Jesus Christ!

JAYNE

You have to stop being shocked by this.

MAGGIE

Well that's a lot easier said than done. Someone in the clinic is pushing--

JAYNE

Think of it as alternative therapy. He's just trying to fill the gaps in your knowledge.

MAGGIE

So it's a man.

JAYNE

Unless I was trying to throw you off the trail. I think LSD might be the right thing for us both. I've done some research and you're supposed to do it with a friend. I choose you.

MAGGIE

I'm honoured, but--

JAYNE

That laptop on the table. Can I use it?

MAGGIE

For what?

JAYNE

Google. What else?

Jayne gets up, with a little difficulty, and goes to the table. Picks up laptop. Returns to couch. Turns it on.

MAGGIE

What are you looking for?

JAYNE

Information. Just enough to prepare us for what to expect. Unless you already know.

MAGGIE

Just what I've read. And I don't think you're in any shape to--

Jayne is working the keyboard.

JAYNE

Both of us. It has to be both of us. You know, it would have been a lot better if you'd been honest right from the beginning.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry?

JAYNE

If you hadn't tried to fool me into thinking that you're basically well... healthy.

MAGGIE

Healthy. Healthy as in...?

JAYNE

As in no longer in need of chemical assistance.

MAGGIE

I don't take drugs, Jayne.

JAYNE

I'm not saying you take them. I'm saying you need them.

MAGGIE

If I needed them, I'd take them.

JAYNE

Would you?

MAGGIE

I'd at least acknowledge that I needed them.

JAYNE

Sure you would.

MAGGIE

I'm trained to recognize the warning signs.

JAYNE

Trained. Please. You're talking to your pal here, Maggie. You can just drop that shit now.

MAGGIE

What shit is that?

JAYNE

Doctor/patient shit. We're on the verge of the real thing here, Mags. A human to human dialogue about the horrors of daily living... Look, I bet *no one* I saw when I was counselling, who was in a situation even close to what you were in, ever became totally healthy.

MAGGIE

Well... I got help.

JAYNE

Not enough. But that's okay because I'm here now. Okay here we go. It's as long article but...

MAGGIE

You'll just find the useful bits?

JAYNE

Right... So... This sounds important.

(reading)

"The best way to avoid a bad trip is to have a good set. The "set" is your mind state at the time of ingesting. You want to be in a happy state of mind, with no major life problems to deal with."

(shrugs)

Well there goes that idea.

MAGGIE

I thought your life was going along just fine.

JAYNE

I was thinking about you.

(reading)

"If you're relaxed about going into the trip then you're halfway to having a good one.

(to Maggie)

Still not that good. You look pretty tense. Does that mean you're struggling with idea? It does, doesn't it? You're thinking, what the hell, it might work.

MAGGIE

Who knows what will work for you?
You might actually be beyond--

JAYNE

Again, that was a reference to you.

MAGGIE

Just keep reading, okay.

JAYNE

(reading)

"And a good trip is much more likely to occur if you're somewhere you feel safe and with people you trust..."

(to Maggie)

That's probably all relative, right.

Maggie gestures firmly for her to continue.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

(reading)

Blah blah, feel safe, people you trust... "Feeling safe can go a long way to neutralizing anxiety. If, during the trip something negative happens, or you think unwanted thoughts, just remember that you need to take the good and the bad without letting the bad overwhelm you... A change of lighting is a good way to change the mood and is usually enough to put your mind onto a different path..." Okay?

MAGGIE

They're on a dimmer.

JAYNE

So?

Maggie hesitates then goes to the light switch on the wall.

MAGGIE

Where did you get that blotter?

JAYNE

You still want to ask questions like that?

MAGGIE

I'm just saying I could have gotten some that was medically tested.

JAYNE
Tested on whom?

MAGGIE
I mean clean. Not tampered with. I could have gotten us some if you'd asked.

JAYNE
Well how was I to know that? You said us, by the way.

MAGGIE
I know.

JAYNE
You said us!

MAGGIE
I know!!

She dims the lights

JAYNE
Okay. Good. Why do you suppose the writer of this article even mentioned bad trips if they're so rare?

MAGGIE
To prepare you to deal with it, if it happens, of course.

JAYNE
Do you feel prepared?

MAGGIE
No. I don't. I never did acid.

JAYNE
Right. You weren't a hippie. You were a criminal. Do you want to bail?

MAGGIE
I'm not sure.

JAYNE
To be clear, You're not proving anything to me by doing this.

MAGGIE
Meaning?

JAYNE
I don't believe it's a
"professional" decision.
(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

I think you're just itching to get high again. And it would be good if you'd admit that.

MAGGIE

Actually I'm a little scared about how you'll react. And I'm thinking it might help you to know that someone is going through the same thing you are. I mean the same... loss of control.

JAYNE

Plus you believe it'll bring us closer. In a doctor and patient way.

MAGGIE

It could. And it might be your only hope.

JAYNE

You mean *you* might be my only hope.

MAGGIE

Yes. I suppose I do.

JAYNE

Well I guess that's a way of thinking you're going to hold onto for awhile. But speaking of loss of control, they'll probably take away your licence for doing this.

MAGGIE

It could happen, yes.

JAYNE

You trust me not to tell anyone?

MAGGIE

Who'd believe you? You're a dope addict.

JAYNE

So are you.

Jayne takes the tabs off the blotter. Two each.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

(handing Jayne hers)

Under the tongue.

MAGGIE

Both of them?

JAYNE

I'm told that just one probably
won't make the trip intense enough.

MAGGIE

Told. So your supplier is an expert
then?

JAYNE

That's definitely a trick question.
(puts her tabs in her
mouth)
Coming or not?

Maggie puts the tabs under her tongue.

MAGGIE

Try to just let go.

JAYNE

You too.

MAGGIE

I'll be right here.

JAYNE

Unless you're somewhere else.

They sit back.

Slowly to almost black. The lights flickering.

Music. Slow and hazy then becoming psychedelic. This goes on
for awhile. We can barely make them out as they move around
the room. Jayne languidly, silently. Maggie more intensely.
She is groaning, yelling, shrinking away from something and
finally collapsing onto the floor in tears.

Lights fade up.

Jayne is on the floor with Maggie. Cradling Maggie's head in
her lap.

Maggie is gently crying.

MAGGIE

That was awful. All of it. Really
awful. So much of it actually
painful. I could feel the pain.

JAYNE

You were being beaten. You were
yelling for it to stop.

MAGGIE

But it didn't. It... never stopped.

JAYNE

Who was it?

MAGGIE

Some man I didn't know. He was in the house and no one would tell me why.

JAYNE

How old were you?

MAGGIE

Nine or ten. I'd forgotten all about it.

JAYNE

Not really.

MAGGIE

I made myself.

JAYNE

Yes. But not really.

MAGGIE

Okay... not really. But I got over it.

JAYNE

No you didn't. How could you?

MAGGIE

People do. I did.

(sitting up)

What was it like for you?

JAYNE

Floral. It was just a lot of floral... wallpaper, I think. Pretty. But boring.

MAGGIE

And that's it? Just wallpaper?

JAYNE

Floral wallpaper. Some of it fairly intricate. I mean the patterns.

MAGGIE

So... a very calm experience then. And no sense of regret or fear of... any consequences for what you are.

JAYNE

Which is?

MAGGIE

A murderer. You're a murderer.

JAYNE

Not on any deep level.

MAGGIE

Meaning what?

JAYNE

His death might have been the result of my murderous thoughts but--

MAGGIE

You pushed him into a quarry.

JAYNE

Not exactly. I led him to a quarry. Actually I led him into a forest that more or less surrounded a quarry. It got dark. We got separated. He came out of the forest and fell.

MAGGIE

You got separated.

JAYNE

I separated myself... from him. But I didn't push him.

MAGGIE

You might as well have.

JAYNE

Clearly I don't believe that. Hence the floral nature of my acid trip.

MAGGIE

I need a drink.

Maggie leaves.

JAYNE

Where are you going?

MAGGIE

(off)

Well I don't leave alcohol in my office.

JAYNE

Of course not.

MAGGIE

(returning)

I keep it in the bathroom.

She has a bottle of vodka. She removes the cap. Takes a long drink.

JAYNE
May I join you?

MAGGIE
Sure. What the hell.

Maggie hands the bottle over. Jayne takes a longer drink.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Careful.

JAYNE
You too.

Hands the bottle back to Maggie.

MAGGIE
Absolutely.

Maggie takes another long drink.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
(checking her watch)
It's been seven hours.

JAYNE
No kidding. When can we do it again?

MAGGIE
Never.
(sitting)
So you didn't actually kill your husband. You just--

JAYNE
Left it to fate. But I don't know what I would have done if he'd survived.

MAGGIE
Probably tried again.

JAYNE
I don't know if I could have pulled that off. People were already pretty suspicious about his death.

MAGGIE
You mean your involvement in his death.

JAYNE
Right. And that was obviously an accident.

MAGGIE

A well planned accident. What people?

JAYNE

Sorry?

MAGGIE

What people were suspicious?

JAYNE

Everyone who knew us probably. Everyone who'd witnessed the pathetic condition of our marriage. My whole family.

MAGGIE

You brother and his wife,

JAYNE

And my mother. She was still alive at the time.

MAGGIE

Your mother thought you might have arranged for his death.

JAYNE

No, she was sure I did.

MAGGIE

She told you that?

JAYNE

Yes. As she was uncorking the champagne.

MAGGIE

So she loved your dog a lot too, I guess.

JAYNE

Oh, absolutely. Plus she was a little tired of seeing me weep like a child about my husband's ridiculous affairs. And she really despised his writing. "It's all bullshit," she'd say. "All total sleight of hand bullshit" She asked him once, "Why doesn't anyone ever call you on your bullshit?" She was talking about literary critics.

MAGGIE

What did he say to that?

JAYNE

He launched into a long defence of bullshit. He was one of them, right.

MAGGIE

A literary critic?

JAYNE

Yeah. A lot of them are. Novelists, I mean. And they review each other's work. You must have noticed that.

MAGGIE)

I have, yes. A bit--

JAYNE

Too cozy? Yes. Great reviews for their friends. And all the rest get patronized or destroyed. My mother wouldn't allow any quotes from other writers on her book jackets. Even great ones.

MAGGIE

She was a novelist as well?

JAYNE

A poet. Mary Price MacDonald.

MAGGIE

Oh. Really. I love her work.

JAYNE

You don't have to say that.

MAGGIE

It's the truth. A friend gave me a collection of her poems a few years ago and I--

JAYNE

Which one?

MAGGIE

Winter at Night.

JAYNE

Yeah. Lovely. She could be lovely about things when she was in the mood.

MAGGIE

I remember a few of them being quite fierce.

JAYNE
She could be that too.

MAGGIE
Like you.

JAYNE
And you.

MAGGIE
I'm not fierce.

JAYNE
I don't buy that. You wouldn't be here if you weren't.

MAGGIE
You mean here in this office or... here in this world?

JAYNE
Both.

MAGGIE
I told you, I had help.

JAYNE
And that's it? A woman taught you how to play the piano and that was all it took to get your very damaged young self through, what... how many years in school is it to become a shrink?

MAGGIE
Post secondary? Ten or so.

JAYNE
Yeah and just any former junkie can pull that off. Plus all this stuff you've got still simmering inside you.

MAGGIE
It was the hallucinogenic. Usually it stays where it is.

JAYNE
In your subconscious.

MAGGIE
My unconscious.

JAYNE
Whatever.

MAGGIE
There's a difference.

JAYNE

Well just pick the one most appropriate to your condition. The point is, you're obviously still in pain.

MAGGIE

So are you.

JAYNE

I saw wallpaper. You got beaten.

MAGGIE

It might be better if we just let that go.

JAYNE

Better for...?

MAGGIE

Our professional relationship.

JAYNE

Which means almost nothing to me. You're my friend.

MAGGIE

Yeah, you've said. Since when?

JAYNE

Almost from the beginning. Didn't you feel the connection?

MAGGIE

No. Not at all.

JAYNE

Liar.

MAGGIE

All I got from you was resistance and a certain amount of resentment.

JAYNE

Well that's just how I am. Friends have to take the bad as well as the good.

MAGGIE

Is this the good? Your obsessive need to dwell on my problems instead of your own.

JAYNE

Are you suggesting we can just go on without you admitting you have serious issues.

MAGGIE

Issues. I hate that fucking word.

JAYNE

Tough. You've got them. And who better than a trusted friend to help you work through them.

MAGGIE

I'm already in therapy.

JAYNE

Who with?

MAGGIE

Someone who doesn't use the word issues.

JAYNE

A colleague?

MAGGIE

Not one I work with. A person who was highly recomm--

JAYNE

Doesn't matter. It's not working. I think I can help you more, and I'm willing to try.

MAGGIE

Thanks but--

JAYNE

I'm sure you'd do the same for me.

MAGGIE

If you'd let me.

JAYNE

I would if I needed you to. Wallpaper, remember. I'm at one with the universe.

MAGGIE

A universe in which you feel required to take revenge on someone for causing a pet to die.

JAYNE

You have a problem with the fact that it was a dog.

MAGGIE

I'm thinking that maybe it was an over-reaction.

JAYNE

Don't you like dogs?

MAGGIE

I love dogs. But I don't think I'd--

JAYNE

Do you have one?

MAGGIE

Not at the moment. But I've had them in the past, and--

JAYNE

Don't you think that when you have a dog you're totally responsible for the care of that dog. For its shelter, its food, all the love and attention the dog requires? In short, for the dog's life. It's a kind of contract you make with the dog. And when that contract is breached, don't you think there should be consequences. I do. When a dog or any kind of animal is abused, I think the abuser should be put in prison. And if the animal dies from abuse or callous indifference to its well being then...

Maggie is just looking at her.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

Suppose I told you it wasn't a dog. Suppose I told you it was a little boy. Suppose I told you it was my little boy.

Maggie just looks at her.

MAGGIE

Was it?

JAYNE

Suppose I told you it was. Would it make a difference? Would you still think I'd over-reacted?

MAGGIE

We can't do this.

JAYNE

Do what?

MAGGIE

Talk about one thing when it might be another thing.

JAYNE

Okay. Then let's not talk about it at all.

MAGGIE

If it... if it was your son, then all this self-destructive behaviour would make a certain kind of sense.

JAYNE

Self-destructive. How'd we get back on that?

MAGGIE

I guess I can't get the image out of my head of you strolling down the road, causing cars to suddenly veer away to avoid hitting you. One of them even crashing.

JAYNE

Okay. That's fair. That's something to be considered and corrected. How about I cut back? And when I feel like I need to go on a bender, I'll just come here. You can make sure I don't leave, and we'll get stoned together.

(reaching)

Can I have another drink of your stash.

MAGGIE

No.

JAYNE

Worried you'll need it all later?

MAGGIE

You mean when I'm finished with you? Maybe.

JAYNE

Who gave you my mother's poems?

MAGGIE

I told you. A friend.

JAYNE

It came out a long time ago. Twenty-five years ago maybe. Was it your foster mother?

MAGGIE

No.

JAYNE

So who then? Oh. It was your
boyfriend the dealer, wasn't it?

MAGGIE

He was more than just a dealer.

JAYNE

Obviously. He was a poetry lover.
And he had good taste too. What the
hell was really going on between
you two? I mean when you weren't
selling dope and breaking into
houses...

MAGGIE

He took care of me.

JAYNE

He loved you.

MAGGIE

Yes.

JAYNE

And you loved him.

MAGGIE

And needed him. I had no one else
at the time. So he was special.

JAYNE

Okay... But you don't know where he
is now.

(off her look)

Or do you?

MAGGIE

He's up north.

JAYNE

Okay. Up north... working?

MAGGIE

In jail. He's been charged with
second degree murder.

JAYNE

Jesus...

MAGGIE

He beat some guy to death with a
shovel.

JAYNE

Jesus. Because?

MAGGIE

The guy was screwing with his wife.
But Robbie says it was self
defence.

JAYNE

What, the guy had a *bigger* shovel?

MAGGIE

A tire iron. He called me and wants
me to come see him.

JAYNE

And you're thinking about it.

MAGGIE

I'm trying not to.

JAYNE

How'd he get your number? I mean
after all these years.

MAGGIE

He knows what I do. How hard would
it have been to--

JAYNE

You stayed connected?

MAGGIE

For quite awhile, yeah. I haven't
seen him in years though. When he
was still in the city and still
getting into trouble, I bailed him
out a few times. He stayed with me
off and on... But when I was in med
school I just--

JAYNE

Cut him loose?
(off her look)
Anyone else know about this?

MAGGIE

That he's been charged with murder?

JAYNE

That he even exists.

MAGGIE

No.

JAYNE

Not even your therapist.

MAGGIE

No just you. My new best friend.
But...

JAYNE

What?

MAGGIE

It's him. He's the one in trouble.
Not me. I feel for him, but I'm
not... He's not one of my "issues."

JAYNE

Are you sure?

MAGGIE

I need another drink.

Maggie lifts the bottle.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

All those kids you failed. Or think
you failed when you were
counselling them... you had to let
them go, right. You couldn't keep
feeling responsible for them
forever.

Maggie drinks.

JAYNE

(reaches out for the
bottle)

No. But it wasn't always easy. And
I wasn't in a relationship with any
of them.

Maggie hands her the bottle.

MAGGIE

Well thank God for that, at least.

Jayne drinks.

JAYNE

Not that I wasn't tempted a couple
of times. I mean my husband was
fucking all these pretty young
things, so why couldn't I, right.

MAGGIE

Right. So why couldn't you?

JAYNE

Well they already had enough
complications in their lives.

MAGGIE

Yeah... Robbie is... He's just a
part of my past.

JAYNE

A big part.

MAGGIE

I'm a different person. It's upsetting but--

JAYNE

It was my dog.
(off her look)
Not my son.

Maggie just looks at her. Jayne takes another drink.

MAGGIE

Are you sure?

JAYNE

I think I could tell the difference.

MAGGIE

I mean are you sure that's what you want me to think.

JAYNE

Well even if it was my son you're in no shape to deal with that information.
(off her look)
But it wasn't. Honest.

MAGGIE

Why would you lie to me about that?

JAYNE

You mean now. Or then?

MAGGIE

Both. I don't know.

JAYNE

Why wouldn't I lie about it? How was I to know what you'd do.

MAGGIE

You mean you thought I might call the police. I couldn't do that. It's not--

JAYNE

It wasn't about the police. It was about sharing the information before I trusted you to hear it... like just another human being.

MAGGIE

And not a doctor.

JAYNE

Right. Not someone who'd only hear it as something that needed to be... fixed.

MAGGIE

But you do now? You trust me as just another human being.

JAYNE

We're getting there.

Maggie takes the bottle back. Drinks.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

Are you going to go see him?

MAGGIE

I don't know.

JAYNE

What's stopping you?

MAGGIE

I'm not sure. Maybe it's the... overwhelming sadness of the whole thing.

JAYNE

You deal with sadness every day, don't you.

MAGGIE

Not my own. I feel like I've deserted him. But there was too much difference between the new life and the one with him in it. He knew that too. But the thing is...

JAYNE

He rescued you.

MAGGIE

Right.

JAYNE

And turned you into a drug dealer.

MAGGIE

But before that he rescued me. I was on the street and very vulnerable. He was in a rooming house, and he let me sleep on his floor.

JAYNE

And how long did that last? I mean the sleeping on the floor part.

MAGGIE

Not long. But I'm the one who changed it.

JAYNE

You probably just got into his bed to stay warm. You were only fourteen for godsake.

MAGGIE

Fourteen going on thirty. And I'd slept with quite few guys before him. A couple of them when it wasn't even against my will. Why are you looking at me like that?

JAYNE

I'm just wondering why, other than *maybe* your therapist, you don't have anyone in your life to talk about this stuff with.

MAGGIE

Orphans often don't. It's about distrust. That's my issue by the way.

JAYNE

Distrust?

MAGGIE

Yes.

JAYNE

Of everyone.

MAGGIE

Pretty much. But mostly myself. You see, I'm not all that sure who I really am. Maybe I'm the woman who works here. Maybe I'm actually still that scared little girl, and the person you're looking at now is just... someone who's pretending. It's what my therapist and I are working on. My distrust, my uncertainty about that. It's a very big core issue, and there's no room for dealing with Robbie or anyone else once I leave this office.

Maggie takes another drink.

JAYNE

Maybe you've had enough of that.

MAGGIE

Gimme a break.

JAYNE

I mean without sharing. You think I just want to sit here and watch you get hammered?

Maggie passes the bottle. Jayne drinks. They are both getting fairly drunk.

MAGGIE

I don't get hammered.

JAYNE

Okay.

MAGGIE

No. I mean it. Just like you don't get addicted. I don't get drunk. Not even if I drank this whole thing. I built up a tolerance.

JAYNE

In your teens?

MAGGIE

Yeah, I was legendary. I could drink all night.

(looks at her)

I shouldn't be treating you.

JAYNE

Exactly what I've been trying to tell you.

MAGGIE

No you've been telling me you don't need to be treated. I'm saying you do, but it shouldn't be me who does it.

JAYNE

Well if I did need treatment, which I still maintain I don't--

MAGGIE

But you do.

JAYNE

I don't. But if I did, I would definitely *want* someone as fucked up as you to give it to me.

MAGGIE

But I might be too fucked up to do it.

JAYNE

Which would be all right with me too.

They look at each other.

MAGGIE
There's something wrong.

JAYNE
Yeah. You look kinda unsteady
there.

MAGGIE
And the way you're mouth is working
is...

JAYNE
Is what?

MAGGIE
Wrong. It's wrong. Maybe we
shouldn't have started to drink
with the LSD still in our
systems...

JAYNE
Fuck it.

MAGGIE
Okay but maybe--

JAYNE
Fuck it.

MAGGIE
Okay, but it could be very... No,
you're right. Fuck it.

She takes the bottle. Drinks until it's empty.

JAYNE
Well that was kind of selfish.

MAGGIE
Don't worry about it.

She leaves.

JAYNE
Where you going?

MAGGIE
(off)
Guess.

She returns with another bottle.

JAYNE
Hey, good for you.

MAGGIE

Yeah it is. I mean good for me.

JAYNE

I think you might be an alcoholic.

MAGGIE

Whatya talking about, you judgemental bitch? Here.

Hands Jayne the bottle.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Sorry. I didn't mean to call you that.

JAYNE

That's okay. I think I am a judgemental bitch.

MAGGIE

Of course you are. How else could someone kill her husband for letting her dog drown.

JAYNE

You mean my son.

MAGGIE

Right. What?

JAYNE

And I didn't kill him. It was an accident.

MAGGIE

Not really.

JAYNE

No. Not really.

MAGGIE

I mean not really your son.

JAYNE

Yes. I mean no.

MAGGIE

It's just so sad.

JAYNE

About my son?

MAGGIE

About Robbie. His life and the way it's turned out.

JAYNE

Sad but no surprise. I knew a lot of Timmys.

MAGGIE

Who's Timmy?

JAYNE

He was a-- Did I say Timmy? Yeah. Right. He was a totally messed up kid from when I... Yeah messed up and dangerous just like...

MAGGIE

Robbie.

JAYNE

Yeah. Robbie. I knew a lot of Timmys and Robbies.

MAGGIE

There was only one Robbie.

JAYNE

There were dozens. I saw dozens. And I failed them all. The prisons and shelters and graveyards are full of people I failed.

MAGGIE

Me too. I've got a few in those places too. Well maybe not graveyards. Or shelters. But prisons, yeah. And not a lot. Not full. Just one. Maybe two or three more. Just two. And just one for now. Robbie. And maybe, probably you in the future

JAYNE

I'll be fine.

MAGGIE

Not thinking like that, you won't.

JAYNE

Thinking like what?

MAGGIE

Thinking like you think.

(she takes a drink)

You keep thinking like that and you are fucked.

JAYNE

Is that your professional opinion.

MAGGIE

My private/personal/professional opinion.

JAYNE

You have a lot of those.

MAGGIE

Oh yeah. I have a private/personal/professional opinion for a lot of my patients. And one, the same one, for *all* of them.

JAYNE

Which is?

MAGGIE

Just stop.

JAYNE

Stop what?

MAGGIE

Stop being so fucking crazy. Stop thinking all those crazy thoughts and doing all those crazy things. I mean Jesus Christ, how are we ever going to get ahead, you know evolve, with all that crap swirling around in our heads. I mean okay, I've got "issues," but I was fucking abandoned and tossed around like garbage for years. You don't recover from that. Not really. Not totally. But if you weren't abandoned or abused or otherwise seriously traumatized, get over yourselves. Not you. I don't mean you. You were traumatized by the death of your beloved dog, so all the lunatic shit you do with drugs and highway strolling is completely understandable.

JAYNE

Really?

MAGGIE

No of course not. I'm just humouring you. It was a dog, for chrissake. And all this other stuff has to stop too.

JAYNE

The other stuff being?

MAGGIE

Feeling responsible for all those kids you think you failed, for one thing. That's bullshit. I mean were you even trained to be a school counsellor, or were you just thrown into a little office and told to do your best? And you were in a rough school, I bet. Sounds like you were. So there's a lot of blame to go around over how some of those kids turned out. What are you, some kind of fucking martyr? What about the parents, the other teachers, the government, and most of the people in the fucking world. Maybe take their failures to help in any real way into consideration when you think about those kids.

JAYNE

I try. Doesn't help. I was the last line of defence.

MAGGIE

Crazy talk.

JAYNE

No. I know that for sure.

MAGGIE

No you don't.

JAYNE

Yes. I do. Not just because of the ones I didn't help. Because of the few I did. Why couldn't I help them all if I was able to help some of them?

MAGGIE

What are you, a fucking idiot?

JAYNE

I know that's not rational, but--

MAGGIE

"Why couldn't I help them all?" Jesus. Look just concentrate on those few. Because maybe the others were beyond it.

JAYNE

Beyond what? Help?

MAGGIE

Yes.

JAYNE

No. No I just gave up.

MAGGIE

You quit?

JAYNE

I stropped. Then I quit.

MAGGIE

Well you better "strop" drinking.
Because you're starting to...

JAYNE

I stropped. Stopped.

MAGGIE

Stropped/stopped what?

JAYNE

Caring. And then I didn't...
listen. Because it was too hard.
And confusing. And scary. All the
things they were going through. At
school at home. Everywhere. It was
sometimes very scary.

MAGGIE

I know.

JAYNE

No you don't. Oh right. You do. You
must hear some scary things.
But I saw stuff. It's worse. One
day I saw a kid I was counselling
carrying a machete into a park.

MAGGIE

A machete like...

She swings the invisible machete violently.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

...a machete?

JAYNE

That's the one. Next day I called
him in and asked him what he was
doing with a weapon like that.

MAGGIE

What did he say?

JAYNE

He said, "You got no business
asking me a question like that,
Miss."

MAGGIE

What did *you* say?

JAYNE

I said, "But it was a fucking machete!"

MAGGIE

Which it was, right.

JAYNE

Yeah, but apparently that wasn't an issue for him. Because he just looked at me like I was some kind of fool and handed me a note from the soccer coach asking me to okay him for the last game of the season.

MAGGIE

Lots of luck with that, I bet.

JAYNE

No I cleared him to play. The kid had a C minus average and didn't qualify for any extra curriculars. But really what difference was it going to make in his life.

MAGGIE

Taking the machete into account.

JAYNE

Yeah. Definitely.

(reaches for the bottle)

I scoured the internet for days looking for any attacks involving one. Didn't find any, but I resigned a month later.

MAGGIE

Okay. So I was right.

JAYNE

About what?

MAGGIE

Burnout.

JAYNE

I guess.

MAGGIE

Was this before or after your dog died?

JAYNE

Before.

MAGGIE

Before or after your mum died?

JAYNE

Before. Why are you asking?

MAGGIE

Beats me why I ask most of things I do. Could just be habit.

JAYNE

Or a fear of silence.

MAGGIE

Yeah well the silence of some of my patients is a little terrifying.

JAYNE

You mean what are they thinking?

MAGGIE

Or planning.

JAYNE

I'm hungry.

MAGGIE

You eat?

JAYNE

Well I have to keep up my strength, or I won't be able to get the drugs into my mouth.

MAGGIE

Or you arm. Or your groin. Or between your toes.

JAYNE

Okay. Cool it. I haven't reached that stage yet.

MAGGIE

Well that's good then. I mean that you're hungry. Because that's something I can definitely help you with.

She takes out her cell phone. Speed dials a number.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Hi, Tony. It's Maggie... Yeah, can I get a large special?

(to Jayne)

You okay with onions?

JAYNE

Sure. Unless you're planning to make out later.

MAGGIE

I don't plan those things. It's the one area where I'm still fairly spontaneous.

(into phone)

It's all locked up here, so have your guy just call when he gets here, and I'll come get it... Yeah, my cell... Thanks...

(disconnects)

Won't be long. They're fast.

JAYNE

So you're on a first name basis with the pizza man.

MAGGIE

I knew him from before. He used to feed me when I was on the street.

JAYNE

And now he delivers to your workplace. He must have been blown away when you reconnected.

MAGGIE

We never *dis*connected.

JAYNE

Really. I thought you left all the people from that life behind.

MAGGIE

Not the people who fed me.

JAYNE

And he fed you for how long?

MAGGIE

All the way through school. Plus he paid my tuition.

JAYNE

An angel.

MAGGIE

A very kind human being. They all are.

JAYNE

I'm sorry?

MAGGIE

His family. I spend all the holidays with them.

JAYNE

Wow. So you're not alone. Okay that's a surprise.

MAGGIE

Why?

JAYNE

Because that's not what you put out.

MAGGIE

So what *do* I "put out?"

JAYNE

Despair. The whimpering despair of a very lonely person.

MAGGIE

Whimpering?

JAYNE

Silent whimpering. But I can still hear it.

MAGGIE

You can hear my despair.

JAYNE

Oh yeah...

MAGGIE

Well big deal. Everyone despairs. You can't live a full life without sometimes despairing. Camus said that.

(of her look)

Albert Camus?

JAYNE

I know what his first name is. And so what? You don't have to quote fucking Albert Camus to make me understand that despair is part of--

MAGGIE

You were making it sound like my despair was worse than normal despair, and I was--

JAYNE

No I wasn't.

MAGGIE

Yes you fucking were.

JAYNE

No I fucking wasn't. But it is.
It's worse. It's not normal. And I
know because I know the difference
between normal and extra normal
despair.

MAGGIE

You're drunk.

JAYNE

So are you.

MAGGIE

Not like you. You're drunk in the
way an addict gets.

JAYNE

You mean in the way a drunk gets.

MAGGIE

A drunk who's also an addict.

JAYNE

A drug addict.

MAGGIE

Yeah...

JAYNE

And how's that?

MAGGIE

Too personal. Too wrong about
things for it not to be personal.
Your judgement is impaired. And
when a judgmental person like
yourself has impaired...
judgement... well, you see what I'm
getting at.

JAYNE

Sorry. Maybe if you stopped trying
to use words and just whimpered.

MAGGIE

I'm not in despair. I mean not
abnormally.

JAYNE

You mean not abnormally in the
Camusistic sense.

MAGGIE

Camus-like. Yes.

JAYNE

No you are more... much more in despair than the average Camustian example of despair would be. Trust me.

MAGGIE

I trust no one.

JAYNE

Right. But trust me. Your despair is the achingly soundless sound of the orphan. Bless all the orphans for enduring that kind of despair.

MAGGIE

Which is?

JAYNE

Being alone, what else. Always having been alone. Alone in this immense fucking indifferent world. Oh not now of course. Because you have this nice Italian family who takes you in at the holidays.

MAGGIE

And no one takes you in at the holidays?

JAYNE

I don't want to be taken in.

MAGGIE

That means there's no one, right.

JAYNE

I could make calls. There are still people out there I'm on a first name basis with.

MAGGIE

Who are they.

JAYNE

Teachers, neighbours I had, friends I made.

MAGGIE

Were they close friends?

JAYNE

Not as close as we are.
(off her look)
At school.

MAGGIE

You mean other parents?

Jayne just looks at her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I assume you're talking about your son's school. You know, when you were dropping him off or picking him up, you probably had conversations with some of the other...

JAYNE

No...

MAGGIE

No what?

JAYNE

Just no.

Maggie's cell goes off.

MAGGIE

He's almost here.
(starting out.)
Just be a minute.

Jayne just nods. Maggie looks at her, leaves.

Jayne lowers her head. Is thinking. Lifts her head. Shudders.

JAYNE

All right...

She takes out her pill bottle. Pops a few. Sits back. Closes her eyes.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

All right...

Maggie returns with a large pizza. Puts the box and the napkins that came with it, on the couch. .

MAGGIE

Let's eat.

JAYNE

In awhile.

MAGGIE

It's better when it's hot.

JAYNE

I said in awhile. Do you really want to do this? Talk about my son?

MAGGIE

If you do.

JAYNE

Well that's quite a choice. Eat Tony's special pizza, or turn myself inside out, and let my guts spill out all over your floor.

MAGGIE

I spilled mine.

JAYNE

A few anecdotes about the hardships of being an orphan. Please.

MAGGIE

I did it for you. So that you'd trust me.

JAYNE

The woman who doesn't trust herself wants *other* people to trust her.

MAGGIE

That's probably not an uncommon thing.

JAYNE

You told me about your past because you don't have any friends you could tell. And also because you were high. Or maybe you think it's good for me to "interact" with someone who has more problems than I do.

MAGGIE

Or maybe *you* do. Or after all the research you did on me, maybe you thought you'd have something over me. Something that would help you get out of here and go about your merry, self-destructive, delusional way.

JAYNE

(looks at her, smiles)
It crossed my mind.

MAGGIE

I bet it did.

JAYNE

(inhales)
Yeah but now... No never mind.

MAGGIE

Nevermind what?

JAYNE

Nevermind that I trust you. It doesn't matter. It's a shambles. My life. It's probably not worth saving.

MAGGIE

Is that what we're talking about? Saving your life?

JAYNE

I guess.

MAGGIE

You thought I was trying to save your life.

JAYNE

That's why I resisted.

MAGGIE

I just wanted you to be honest with me.

JAYNE

That's all?

MAGGIE

Well it was going to be a beginning. And then...

JAYNE

Then you could try to save my life.

MAGGIE

By stopping you from walking in traffic.

JAYNE

Or anything else.

MAGGIE

But specifically from walking in traffic. I wasn't trying to get to your--

JAYNE

Subconscious.

MAGGIE

That takes months. Or years.

JAYNE

Right. So...

MAGGIE

If you need to stop living, you need to stop living.

JAYNE

You believe that?

MAGGIE

Oh yeah. Definitely.

JAYNE

You're probably totally out of step with the rest of your profession then.

MAGGIE

Oh there are a few of us that believe a person of relatively sound mind who's just had enough should be allowed to... say goodbye to it all.

JAYNE

A person of sound mind who's not under the influence.

MAGGIE

I just think, in your case, it's worth talking about the real reason why you're...

JAYNE

Troubled?

MAGGIE

It's not because you think you failed all those students.

JAYNE

Although I am haunted by that.

MAGGIE

Yeah. That sucks. But...

JAYNE

He was seven years old... You can eat pizza while I tell you this. I won't think it's insensitive.

MAGGIE

(sitting)

That's okay.

JAYNE

Actually it might be better. You know, just to dull the drama. The drama, the pain, the whole miserable thing... is pretty hard to get through.

MAGGIE

I'm not eating pizza while you talk about the death of your child, Jayne.

JAYNE

Right. You're a professional at heart. Despite some of your unorthodox opinions.

MAGGIE

Is this going to be the same story you told me before. But not with the dog.

JAYNE

Not exactly. That's troubling isn't it. Saying it was my dog is deeply disturbing.

MAGGIE

To you, you mean.

JAYNE

Not to you?

MAGGIE

Yeah. To me too. But I think I might know why you do it.

JAYNE

Do it? I don't *do* it ever. I only *did* it for you. I couldn't get away with that story out there in the real world. But in here, when I'm already in a very vulnerable state, it was necessary. I had to put some distance on it.

MAGGIE

Why?

JAYNE

Well how would I know that? You're the shrink. You figure it out if you have to. I just know it couldn't be about my son at the time.

MAGGIE

But you wanted to tell me. You did tell me.

JAYNE

Yes and it felt wrong, so I untold you. But then lying again felt even worse. To talk about a dog instead of... It felt cheap and cowardly.

(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

I mean he was my little boy. He was my sweet little boy. We should have gotten very drunk or very high right away. I'm really very hungry. But I don't think I can move. Can you...

Jayne is gesturing towards the pizza.

MAGGIE

You want to eat?

JAYNE

I'm hungry.

Maggie gets her a piece of pizza. Hands it to her.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

What about you?

MAGGIE

That's okay.

JAYNE

No you have to eat. I can't eat alone. Please! It's too upsetting.

MAGGIE

To eat alone...

JAYNE

Yes. It puts distance between us again. We're in this together. I know how sad and miserable you are and most of the reasons why. And you know I'm a coward who can't talk about the most devastating thing that ever happened to me without lying. We've accepted those things about each other, haven't we.

MAGGIE

I...guess so.

JAYNE

Okay. So let's just keep things like they were. Not like they were before. Like they were more... recently.

MAGGIE

Like just a few minutes ago?

JAYNE

Yeah. When we were in sync. Kinda. Let's kind of stay in sync...

MAGGIE
By sharing a pizza.

JAYNE
Yes. And sitting close.

Maggie sits close to her.

MAGGIE
Okay?

JAYNE
Yes.
(takes a bite)
Good pizza. Have a bite.

MAGGIE
No I--

JAYNE
Have a bite!

MAGGIE
Okay. Okay...

Maggie takes a bite.

JAYNE
There. Things are normal. Pizza is
pizza. A friend is sitting near me.
And a tragic loss can be talked
about without feeling like there's
a knife ripping away at the heart.

MAGGIE
I think I should be sober for this.

JAYNE
Why?

MAGGIE
So I can do my job.

JAYNE
Your job isn't important. I
couldn't tell this to a doctor.

MAGGIE
But that's what I am.

JAYNE
No. What you are is a struggling
human mess who has tomato sauce on
her chin... My husband wasn't
responsible for our son's death.
Not really. Not directly. I wanted
him to be. I wanted to be able to
blame him so badly. So I just did.
(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

I made myself remember it like it was him who was totally and directly responsible. Everyone knew the actual truth, so the only person I could tell my version to was me. And I told it to myself over and over again.

MAGGIE

Until you believed it.

JAYNE

I never believed it. I'm not insane. I just preferred my version because in a lot of ways it was closer to the truth. Not the actual truth. The real truth.

MAGGIE

They're different? The actual and real truths?

JAYNE

Yes.

MAGGIE

How?

JAYNE

Well one is what happened and the other is... what it meant that it happened.

(looks at her for a few seconds)

It was me out in the boat with our boy. It was supposed to be my husband, but he was too busy, "way too busy" to go and our little guy had his heart set on it. It had been a shitty vacation for him. His father worked and drank and his mother cried and tried to make the best of it. So I took him out on the boat. But I'd had a couple of rum and Cokes and... I'm not sure why he didn't say anything when I put his father's life jacket on him instead of his own. Probably because he thought I'd never make a mistake about something like that... But I did, and when the boat capsized it came off. And he went under. And... he was gone. Very fast. Just like that. I wanted to go with him. Very badly. I wanted to just sink and fucking drown. And I'm still not sure why I didn't.

Maggie just stares at her for a moment.

MAGGIE
And your husband?

JAYNE
Fuck him. Wherever he is.

MAGGIE
Meaning he isn't dead.

JAYNE
I don't know. He screamed at me for a few months about how shitty a mother I was, and then he took off with one of his little sluts, I assume.

MAGGIE
And that's the actual story?

JAYNE
Actual... but not nearly as satisfying as my version which is still more real to me in some ways. Funny about that, eh. Whenever I think about my dear husband, that's where I see him. At the bottom of that quarry. Bloated and rotting. So are we done now?

MAGGIE
Sorry?

JAYNE
Are you finished peeling away my protective shell?

MAGGIE
You did that all on your own.

JAYNE
Ah come on. Give yourself a little credit. You made a major effort here. Doing drugs with me. Pretending to be my friend. And now here I am. Emotionally exposed and mentally exhausted. Do with me what you will.

Maggie nods. Goes to her and hugs her tight.

JAYNE (CONT'D)
I can't breathe,

MAGGIE

Oh...
 (letting go)
 Sorry.

JAYNE

No... Not from...
 (gasping)
 I actually... can't breathe very
 well.

MAGGIE

Okay. Sit down.
 (helping her down)
 Head between you legs. Slowly
 inhale. Slowly. Now slowly out...
 Better?

JAYNE

No...

She leans forward and falls on the floor.

MAGGIE

(kneeling beside her)
 Jesus. Okay. Okay I'm going to
 call...
 (checks her pocket)
 Where's my goddamn phone?

Sees it on her chair.

JAYNE

Okay. I see it. It's...

She stands, starts forward. Jayne grabs her ankle and Maggie
 stumbles, tries to keep her balance but eventually falls all
 the way down.

MAGGIE

What are you doing.

JAYNE

Do not resuscitate.

MAGGIE

What?

JAYNE

I've got it written down somewhere.
 DO. NOT. RESUSCITATE!
 (slows her breathing)
 You were... going to call 911.
 Don't. I want to die.

MAGGIE

You're not going to die. It's
 probably just a panic attack but...
 (MORE)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(getting up)
...we have to make sure.

JAYNE

No. Let it... play out. I'm okay
either way.

MAGGIE

Jayne.

JAYNE

No no it's... better.

MAGGIE

What's better?

JAYNE

Two things. It's better to just
leave me lying here. Also... I'm
breathing better. Please no 911.
All that fuss. Sirens. People
running in. Stretchers. Questions.

MAGGIE

(kneeling beside her)
Breathe for me.

JAYNE

Sure...

MAGGIE

(hand on her chest and her
back)
Good... I really think it was just
a--

JAYNE

Do you know what you're doing with
all that?

MAGGIE

I'm a physician.

JAYNE

Please. How long has it been since
you saved anyone's life. If ever.

MAGGIE

You're not dying.

JAYNE

If you say so. But just in case I
take a sudden turn for the worse,
remember what I said. Do not
resuscitate. That's my living will.
And you're my witness.
(off her look)
Hey I'm not kidding.

MAGGIE

I don't care. I can't do that. I'm just being honest with you. I won't let you die.

JAYNE

Well then fuck you.

MAGGIE

Sure. But you don't want to die, anyway. Not really. Not just yet.

JAYNE

Like you'd know.

MAGGIE

I would, yes.

Jayne struggles to sit up. Looks at Maggie.

JAYNE

Have you tried?
(off her look)
To kill yourself?

MAGGIE

Not recently.

JAYNE

Well how long ago?

MAGGIE

There were a few times actually.
(sitting next to her on
the floor)
The last one was just after I got certified.

JAYNE

Certified as what?

MAGGIE

Certified to practice psychiatry.

JAYNE

Really? All that success just got you down, eh.

MAGGIE

I felt like a fraud. It was the first time it came to me that I was really still that unwanted child at heart, and all the things I had now didn't mean anything.

JAYNE

Why'd you fail?

MAGGIE

At suicide? I try not to think of it as failure, Jayne.

JAYNE

Except here you are. So it was.

MAGGIE

A friend found me. It shouldn't have mattered, but I'd underestimated the dose.

JAYNE

Or your tolerance.

MAGGIE

Whatever.

JAYNE

What about your other failures?

MAGGIE

Twice when I was in my teens. Once with a razor.

(shows her the scars on her wrist)

And then a heroin overdose. Both times people intervened.

JAYNE

What a drag, eh.

MAGGIE

Yeah. I was really pissed off.

JAYNE

And the last time when your friend found you. How'd you feel then?

MAGGIE

I had mixed emotions.

JAYNE

So you'd gotten a bit sentimental.

MAGGIE

Sentimental?

JAYNE

About life.

MAGGIE

Okay. Sure. Sentimental. How about you?

JAYNE

You mean do I consider doing it... instead of waiting for it to just happen? Of course.

MAGGIE

So what stops you?

JAYNE

I don't know. Why'd you stop trying?

MAGGIE

The need just went away. Listening to other peoples' problems helped. It made me feel less alone. All these other people in the same kind of pain. Abandoned. Or just feeling abandoned. In torment. Or seriously disoriented.

JAYNE

Other orphans.

MAGGIE

Kind of. How are you feeling now?

JAYNE

I suppose it *must* have been a panic attack.

MAGGIE

Have you had them before?

JAYNE

No. I guess telling the truth really takes it out of you. I'm still hungry.

MAGGIE

I could eat a little more too.

They both crawl back to the couch. Sit.

Maggie peels off a couple of slices of pizza

JAYNE

Did you ever look for your birth mother.

MAGGIE

Didn't have to. I knew who she was. I was with her until I was six.

JAYNE

Oh. I figured you were a newborn.

MAGGIE

Wrapped in a blanket? Left in a church at the foot of the altar so Jesus could look out for me?

JAYNE

Yeah. And there was probably music.

MAGGIE

That part's right. I think it was Led Zeppelin. My mother was standing in the middle of our sad little apartment trying to get me to dance with her, but I wasn't in the mood... probably from not having eaten all day. Suddenly she just yelled out. "Well you're no fun, are you. No fun at all. So enough of this shit!" And she threw some of my stuff into a garbage bag, dragged me down the street and dropped me in the foyer at Children's Services. So there I was. Too old and grumpy to be adopted and about to begin my life as a ward of the state.

JAYNE

And your mother?

MAGGIE

Kyla? As far as I know she's still in that apartment. Mary looked her up once. Mary was my last foster mum.

JAYNE

The piano teacher.

MAGGIE

Yeah. They had a meeting.

JAYNE

How'd that go?

MAGGIE

Well there was no violence. But there was no interest in me going back to her either. Not from my mum. And definitely not from Mary after she found out how my mum was living.

JAYNE

Was she--

MAGGIE

A druggie? An alcoholic? A hooker?
I didn't push for an answer. But
I'm betting she was all three at
different times.

JAYNE

(off the pizza)
Yeah. This is a really good pizza.

MAGGIE

Tony knows his stuff.

JAYNE

Not too much sauce.

MAGGIE

Just a very thin layer.

JAYNE

Like they do in Italy.

MAGGIE

Right. Have you been?

JAYNE

Yeah my mother took me when I was
sixteen. Have you?

MAGGIE

No. I'm planning to go when I
retire.

JAYNE

Which will be when?

MAGGIE

Maybe tomorrow.

JAYNE

Good. Do that. We'll go together.
Travel through all of Europe.

MAGGIE

Visit the sites of all the worst
atrocities.

JAYNE

I've actually thought of doing just
that.

MAGGIE

Seriously?

JAYNE

Very. People do that kind of thing
for other less worthy reasons.

(MORE)

JAYNE (CONT'D)

Birth and death places of poets,
politicians. But our trip would be
a trip of enormous sorrow and
recognition.

MAGGIE

Recognition of...?

JAYNE

Well for one thing, our personal
disappointment with the human race.

MAGGIE

And our need to avoid having a good
time at any price.

JAYNE

Well we'd drink, we'd get high...

MAGGIE

We'd cry...

JAYNE

We'd bellow with rage.

MAGGIE

Right. But where to start.

JAYNE

No. I've kind of got it planned.

MAGGIE

Come on...

JAYNE

Well it was one of the things I did
to keep my mind off... other
things. We'd start in Srebrenica.
And end at Belsen.

MAGGIE

Breath-taking. I'd like to visit
some of the more ancient ones too.

JAYNE

History buff, are you? Okay. How
about we stay another few months
and concentrate on The Roman Empire
then.

MAGGIE

Sure. But none of the good stuff.
No plaques or great roads or sewage
systems.

JAYNE

No. Just the battlefields.

MAGGIE

Yeah. Battlefields. Where local people still feel the painful loss of their dead. Oh, so that means we'd have to leave the Roman stuff, and make a trip to Culloden. The Scots are still completely fucked up about that.

JAYNE

Good for them. Did you have to pay him back?

MAGGIE

Who?

JAYNE

Tony the pizza guy. I mean all that money he put out for your education.

MAGGIE

I didn't have to. Just wanted to. And I did.

JAYNE

Money, eh.

MAGGIE

What about it?

JAYNE

Exactly. What about it? It brings out the best and the worst, right.

MAGGIE

It can, yeah.

JAYNE

My husband had taken out a life insurance policy on our son. I didn't know about it until I received a cheque for my half in the mail. I mean what the fuck? Who wants to see something like that coming out of an envelope. What are you supposed to do with it.

MAGGIE

So what *did* you do?

JAYNE

I ate it. I thought of cashing it in for a pile of twenties, then finding my husband and showing them all down his throat.

MAGGIE

But eating the cheque was faster.

JAYNE

Well more spontaneous.

MAGGIE

But probably less satisfying.

JAYNE

Right. But I felt like I was about to was explode from anger. I mean who takes a life insurance policy out on a five-year-old.

MAGGIE

People do. It's not necessarily--

JAYNE

Ghoulis? Well not until the child gets killed. Then it's grotesque. And heartbreaking.

MAGGIE

Are you still okay?

JAYNE

Well breathing's normal if that's what you mean. But what I said still stands. If I suddenly, you know...

MAGGIE

No resuscitation.

JAYNE

Do you want me to sign something for you.

MAGGIE

Wouldn't matter. You keel over again, I call an ambulance. I'm under no obligation to let you die.

JAYNE

Well then fuck you, Mags.

She takes out another joint.

MAGGIE

How many of those do you have?

JAYNE

Enough.

MAGGIE

You should really tell me where you got them.

JAYNE

So you can fire the person?

MAGGIE

Well if it comes out that there's a dealer on our staff... My job at this clinic is all I have.

JAYNE

No it's not. Anyway you're retiring, remember. Unless you were just...

MAGGIE

No I meant it. I mean I meant it when I said it.

Jayne light up. Offers the joint to Maggie

JAYNE

Take a few hits. Maybe you could mean it again. And keep meaning it.

Maggie ponders the joint. Takes it. Inhales deeply.

She passes it back to Jayne. Jayne smiles.

MAGGIE

Bloody Sunday.
(off Jayne's look)
Belfast. We should go there.

JAYNE

There was Bloody Sunday in St. Petersburg too. 1905 or 6, I think.

MAGGIE

Okay. All the Bloody Sundays will be honoured.

JAYNE

Sure. But really they're different. People were slaughtered for protesting. We should start with all the places they were slaughtered for just being who they were. Because that's usually what happens.

MAGGIE

Whatever makes you feel better.

JAYNE

Like that's the issue.
(off her look)
It won't be about trying to feel better.

MAGGIE

No. But it might just happen. You reconcile with the truth of the world and you somehow feel better.

JAYNE

About the world or yourself.

MAGGIE

Maybe both.

JAYNE

Like Camus did?

MAGGIE

Who knows? But there's not going to be anything Camusistic about our trip.

JAYNE

You mean we can't write books about it.

MAGGIE

Right. I mean we could but if we're going to the core of actual despair...

JAYNE

We shouldn't be trying to make money from it.

MAGGIE

It might be too painful anyway.

JAYNE

Too painful to write? Or too painful to read?

MAGGIE

Both.

JAYNE

Yeah. Okay but maybe we should anyway. As a... what?

MAGGIE

A testimony...

JAYNE

Right. A testimony to despair.

MAGGIE

And to all those who are... despairing.

JAYNE

And have despaired.

MAGGIE

Yes. Good...

They exchange the joint a couple of times.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Very good...

JAYNE

You're talking about the dope now.

MAGGIE

Yeah. Where'd you get it again?

JAYNE

(laughs)

That was good. That was a good try.

They exchange the joint one more time.

MAGGIE

(laughs)

Thanks....

They are looking at each other.

Maggie clasps her hands and looks down.

JAYNE

Hey...

Maggie looks up.

JAYNE (CONT'D)

It's okay. You did good.

Maggie smiles. Shrugs.

Jayne shrugs a little as well.

Blackout.

THE END

