

BECCA. I'll get you a basket of Mustela lotions instead. They prevent stretch marks. *(Becca tries to take the bathroom set back. She and Izzy struggle over it for a beat.)*

IZZY. Becca, *let go*. I like the bathroom set. You can get the lotions another time. *(Becca lets go, a little embarrassed.)*

BECCA. Okay.

IZZY. Thank you.

NAT. It's a nice set. I like the colors.

HOWIE. More juice, Izzy?

IZZY. No, I'm good. *(They sit in silence for a couple beats.)*

NAT. So can anyone use those stretch-mark lotions, or just pregnant ladies?

HOWIE. Hey, how's Taz? ←————— Start

NAT. He's good. The vet says he needs to lose some weight though.

HOWIE. Really?

NAT. Yeah, he eats like a trouper.

HOWIE. What are you feeding him?

NAT. Just regular dog food. Whatever's on sale.

HOWIE. Oh. Because I wrote down the name of what he usually eats on that printout I gave you. Do you still have that printout?

NAT. Yeah.

HOWIE. We were feeding him Science Diet. They have this special low-fat mix.

NAT. Oh, that stuff's so expensive though. He likes what I've been giving him.

HOWIE. Except it makes him fat.

BECCA. Howie —

NAT. He's not fat. He's just a little chubbier.

IZZY. I think the weight suits him.

NAT. Maybe he eats too much because he feels punished. That's what *I* do. *(Beat.)* I think he misses you.

IZZY. Remember Pickles? Now *she* was fat. *(To Howie.)* That was our dog growing up. She was this enormous ... I don't even *know* what. *(To Becca.)* What breed was Pickles?

BECCA. She was a mutt.

IZZY. No, I know, but she was mostly collie I think, with some German shepherd mixed in. Remember how fat she was?

HOWIE. Probably because of what you fed her.

IZZY. Well, yeah, probably.

NAT. Now I remember what it was. What I was gonna say about Aristotle Onassis.

IZZY. Mom, do you have to — ?

NAT. It was about his son, the one who died in the plane crash.

BECCA. I'm gonna wrap up the cake for you. (*She does.*)

NAT. I know — another rich kid in a plane crash — but this was my whole point. You should've stopped me from going off on that Kennedy tangent, because my point was about Onassis, and how when his son died, he was so distraught by the senselessness of it all, that he put up this big reward to anyone who could prove that someone had sabotaged the plane. Have you read this, Howie?

HOWIE. I'm not sure.

NAT. He just couldn't accept that what had happened was an accident, so he offered all this money to anyone who could give him a reasonable explanation. He needed someone to blame.

BECCA. (*To herself, while wrapping the cake.*) Aw, Jesus. Here we go.

NAT. He needed a *reason* for losing his son. But it didn't come of course. And it killed him. The grief did. He only lasted a couple years after that. Because he never came to terms with it. There was nothing to give him comfort, and so he died. You see? (*Becca turns to face her.*) He would rather his son have been killed by some kind of secret assassination than by bad luck. It's like the Kennedy curse, isn't it? People want things to make sense.

BECCA. We don't think Danny died because of a curse, Mom.

NAT. Of course not.

BECCA. Or because someone sabotaged us, or was out to get us. We know there's no sensible explanation.

NAT. I know you do.

BECCA. Then why are you telling this story?

NAT. I'm just talking. I can't talk?

BECCA. You never *just talk*. It *sounds* like you're just talking but it's always so much more, isn't it.

NAT. I don't even know what that means.

IZZY. Hey, here's an idea, let's change the subject.

BECCA. (*To Howie.*) Didn't I say no wine?

HOWIE. She brought it herself, what was I supposed to do?

NAT. What'd I say?

IZZY. Mom, you promised.

NAT. Promised what? It's not my fault she missed my point.

BECCA. What point? That Aristotle Onassis died of grief because he couldn't find someone to *blame*?

NAT. I'm not talking about blame, I'm talking about comfort.

BECCA. Ohhh, comfort. Well then.

IZZY. You guys, this is supposed to be my party.  
NAT. Where are you getting it?  
BECCA. Comfort?  
NAT. Yes, if I may ask.  
BECCA. I'm not.  
NAT. Well.  
BECCA. Well what?  
NAT. Well, I think you should.  
BECCA. Okay. I'll get right on that then. See what I can dig up on eBay.  
NAT. Don't get flip, Becca. I'm just trying to talk to you.  
IZZY. I'm gonna clean up, because I think we're just about done here.  
NAT. Howie says you won't go to the support group. *(Beat.)*  
BECCA. Oh. Howie said.  
HOWIE. She was asking how you were doing.  
BECCA. Why didn't you just say fine? You know she's gonna run with whatever you give her.  
NAT. I always thought talk was healthy. Isn't that what all the books say, Howie?  
BECCA. So this is what exactly, an intervention?  
IZZY. If it is, then I'm really pissed.  
HOWIE. It's not an intervention.  
NAT. We're just having a discussion.  
IZZY. You couldn't wait until tomorrow? It had to happen on my birthday?  
HOWIE. Izzy, please.  
NAT. I remember when Arthur died, I found the support group very helpful.  
BECCA. Well, that's you. It isn't me. And Arthur isn't Danny.  
NAT. I'm not saying he is. I'm just saying it was helpful.  
HOWIE. She doesn't like the people.  
BECCA. Howie —  
HOWIE. What? You *don't*. I was just explaining.  
NAT. What's wrong with the people? They've lost children, too. They understand what you're going through.  
BECCA. No, they don't. They understand what *they're* going through.  
NAT. Still, you must have things in common.  
BECCA. You would think so, Mother, but actually we don't. Other than that dead kid thing, of course. ← End