

MAN. Yesssss!

JAMIE. You said that before but I don't get it.

WOMAN. *(To herself.)* Why am I explaining this? *(Back to JAMIE.)* Look, it's something that you can't take back; that changes things forever. Our lives have a kind of . . . velocity . . . a . . . momentum. It takes something big to change that. And even then . . .

MAN. It has to be big.

JAMIE. Well, I . . . disagree! I'm going to do it my way. *(To ABBY.)* I'm not giving us up! That's my decision.

*(Pause.)*

ABBY. No, it's not.

JAMIE. What?

ABBY. This is not just your decision.

JAMIE. Well, I thought . . . I mean, I thought, I assumed—

ABBY. Yeah. That's a thing of yours, assuming how I feel.

WOMAN. It gets worse.

*(Pause.)*

ABBY. I can't Jamie.

JAMIE. What?

ABBY. I can't do this to you, to us.

JAMIE. Do what?

ABBY. I can't . . . I can't be the person who brings them here.

*(ABBY gets up and puts on her coat.)*

JAMIE. Where are you going?

ABBY. Jamie. Jamie . . . All of those, those things that she said we'll do together? I know that sounded like . . . Jamie, what's a nightmare to you is a dream to me. That's what I want.

JAMIE. I do, too!

*(He picks up the ring box and presents it to her on one knee. She looks at it but doesn't take it.)*

ABBY. But. But, I never want you to see me as the "ol' ball and chain," the old "brood mare." I do not.

JAMIE. I'd never see you that way.

ABBY. Apparently you do . . . you will . . . something . . .

MAN. Wait. That's not it. I don't want you to think it was just about us having kids. It's not. I love those kids very much. They're my life. *(He looks at WOMAN.)* And it wasn't you.

WOMAN. Right . . .

ABBY. Jamie, I think we should . . . uhm . . . take some time off. We should think about this. We should really think. I'm not sure . . . Maybe I'll go finish my degree and then—

JAMIE. Abby!

ABBY. —and then, later, we can see. But I'm not going to be the villain of this piece. Not me.

*(JAMIE sits, stunned. ABBY starts to exit.)*

I'll call you.

*(ABBY exits. Everyone sits there stunned. JAMIE puts the ring box in his pocket. WOMAN is a bit gob-smacked.)*

WOMAN. OK . . .

MAN. It's the best thing.

*(He gets up to leave.)*

I suppose we should head out.

WOMAN. *(Stunned. Pause.)* You know, when we leave here, when we get back there, everything might have changed. We might not even know each other anymore.

MAN. I don't know, maybe. I don't know.

WOMAN. All of it. If we don't get married. All of it . . .

MAN. I know. I'm sorry. Shall we . . . ?

WOMAN. Oh, well, you're sorry. That's good then.

MAN. Let's go.

*(Long pause. She looks at him.)*

WOMAN. Yeah.

*(They both stand up, look at their watches and head for the door. JAMIE is still stunned.)*

MAN. Have a nice life, kid.

*(Just as they're walking out, ABBY bursts back in between them.)*

ABBY. WAIT A DAMN SECOND!

JAMIE. Abby?