

ELLEN

It's like floating, to talk here, where my son once ate a sandwich, with you, his friend, his colleague.

NICKY

I feel I should tell you -

ELLEN

It's wonderful what you're doing.

NICKY

Oh, well -

ELLEN

It's admirable. That's the word.

NICKY

I wanted to tell you, but, it didn't seem appropriate unless we were able to sit and be, in person. I had been seeing Jared for a little while. Before he... passed away...

ELLEN

It's okay, you can say he killed himself.

NICKY

I was trying to be / sensitive.

ELLEN

Well DON'T.

NICKY

(taken aback)

Okay.

ELLEN

Why should we pussyfoot around it like it's some sleeping baby we're trying not to wake up. Shh shh, don't say suicide.

NICKY

We weren't seeing each other any more. But we had been a few months before. And I just. It felt strange, not to tell you. I thought you should know.

ELLEN

He never said anything. I mean he never mentioned.

NICKY

It wasn't, like a, serious.

ELLEN

I would think he would have mentioned - someone as - beautiful - and calm
- and -

NICKY

It was not a long - it wasn't really. The right. Fit.

ELLEN

I see.

NICKY

I hope I'm not. I don't want this to be - painful, or or. It feels a little
awkward now.

ELLEN

Oh no.

NICKY

Like you see me in a different - a

ELLEN

Yes, yes I suppose I do see you. / Differently.

NICKY

a strange -

ELLEN

Well, nothing is strange when everything is strange.

NICKY

Yeah.

ELLEN

(maybe if she says it, it will be true)

I'm glad you feel - comfortable telling - because I feel, so comfortable, talking to you.

NICKY

Thank you. I'm glad I told you. It didn't feel right, now that he's gone, not to sort of have everything be - open.

ELLEN

Yes. Yes. Everything's out in the open now, whether we like it or not. I talk to the dry cleaners, the postal workers, anyone anyone who will lis - no not just anyone who will listen because I sometimes talk to people who don't, they don't listen, I mean who wants to hear this stuff, but out I come with it anyway so yes, open open. The least we can be the only thing we can do is open open open. I'll bring you a check, or mail you, I'll bring you, just tell me where and when and I'll come to your meetings I'll march and you know, input input, I AM wiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiide open.

Beat.

ELLEN (cont'd)

I didn't know he dated women - of your background.

NICKY

Oh, I uh, yeah, I grew up in Connecticut.

ELLEN

I mean your heritage honey.

NICKY

Uh *huh?*

ELLEN

And I can say that because I'm MARRIED to an INDIAN, an Indian-Indian, not a woowoo Indian, and I can say that because -- again I run a non-profit, I give money to like I said I burned bras at Vassar, I thought we WEREN'T supposed to pretend to be colorblind anymore. Oh I give up. Desh understands, he knows I'm joking. Jared. Jared. He had some different ideas, he was always embarrassed by my, but we all know where that...maybe if he'd had a thicker skin. But he had my pale complexion. Well not so pale, Jewish. So he was Jewishish.

My husband is a person from India and my son is person of color who can pass as simply Jewishish. Ha- "IS". Was was was was was was was!

NICKY

Okay, uh -

ELLEN

And I don't mean, I mean, you're beautiful, you're gorgeous, even in that get up anyone can tell. But as you said I was trying to be sensitive and anyway - I didn't know - all I'm saying is I didn't know he dated black women. He never did before.

NICKY

How do you know?

ELLEN

I would have known if that was - his - proclivity. So. And look at me, I mean, I definitely have a thing for dark men, but of course that's hard when you've been with one man for so long, it's just you seeing him in other men so. Or maybe it was in my DNA, what do I know.

NICKY

If he's gone there's no use in pretending right? Keeping things. And I wanted you to know because I'd like to be open, with you. I thought if you had any questions. Because we were seeing each other, and then.... Well then it was like it would be better to just be friends so we stopped. And it's like then he - passed - he did that to himself so - it's it's hard.

ELLEN

When?

NICKY

What?

ELLEN

When did you break up, stop seeing each other?

NICKY

The - that that was um, it was a while / before.

ELLEN

A while as in a week, a month?

NICKY

No, no, like it was, it's / not a a a

ELLEN

You said if I had any questions.

NICKY

It was a few, several days before.

ELLEN

You saw him, talked to him?

NICKY

We. It was a text. We - it was on the phone, a text message. Three - no no, I'm sure, I think it was a while a week / maybe

ELLEN

A week or several days?

NICKY

4 days before.

ELLEN

That he sent you? He sent you a message?

NICKY

That I sent.

Beat.

ELLEN

So you - you - broke it off with him then?

NICKY

Yes.

ELLEN

In that way, on a text?

NICKY

Yes.