

# JANE

(Begin at top of scene)

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO - JANE and  
SAL's bedroom at Paradise Lagoon,  
early October

SAL

*Walks into bedroom with a cup of coffee for JANE as JANE is writing in her journal*

Good morning babe.

JANE

Morning...Hey Sal, I have a great idea.

SAL

Uh-oh.

JANE

No, just listen. We've only been here at Paradise Lagoon a few months, but I'm telling you, some of the women here are very cool. What if we gathered a group together and put on a show about aging?

SAL

We???

JANE

Well, hopefully, "we." Just hear me out...  
I imagine these women on stage singing, dancing, sharing their stories.

SAL

(amused)

Uh-huh?

JANE

No, really. I've seen women in their 70's,80's, even 90's, jogging down the road, riding bikes, dancing. —a play with music, a show that breaks the stereotype ...you know: "old"-- meaning used up, invisible, non-sexual. Let's show the whole of our lives... Isn't that a great idea?

SAL

I see you're on a roll.

JANE

But, really, there are some talented people here. I met this woman on the elevator. Her name is Ms D. I asked her what the D stood for and she looked at me like I was stupid, “Divine, of course.” She used to be a show girl.

SAL

Where?

JANE

I dunno, Chicago maybe? And I ran into two women taking a walk around the reservoir so I joined them. One is kind of a southern belle and she talked about how she used to do shows all the time when she was younger. The other was a tap dance teacher.

I just know we can pull this off.

SAL

I thought we came to the Lagoon to slow down.

JANE

Sure, but not to wither up and die! To tell the truth, I am kinda missing the excitement of theatre: directing, bringing stories to life, feeling the energy of an audience.

SAL

I get it. Sometimes I miss being on the road, singing my heart out. But mostly I’m relieved to have left that life behind. I moved here with you so we could have more time together. Now you’re asking me to do a show

JANE

Just help write a few songs Sal, no big deal.

SAL

It is a big deal. I don’t want to lose touch with you or myself again.

(JANE’s phone rings)

JANE

Hold that thought. It’s Aunt Beulah.

Aunt Beulah, how are you?... That’s good. Did you make your decision yet? Yea...Yea...I do understand, but I’m disappointed. I’ll call you later I love you too. Bye

(makes a kissing sound)



[REDACTED]

DIANE

**(Begin Here)**

Somebody get some ice. Ms D's injured.

(to herself)

Oh, wait...I have an ice pack in my bag...

*begins unloading oversized dance bag, muttering under her breath, she names each item as she pulls it out*

Tap shoes...tissues...snacks...towel...sweat pants...Where is that stupid ice pack? Oh, look, I have a frozen chicken we can use!

LOUISE

And why do you have a chicken in your bag?

DIANE

For supper!

**(STOP)**



LOUISE     **(Begin)**

Diane's tap costume is cute.

DIANE

*holds up a statement costume with matching tiara*

It is cute AND it looks good on me, I must say. I wanted to do a dance about the parade they had for me on my 80th birthday but I needed 99 other tap dancers to really do it right...See:

(she gestures for them to see)

they closed down Main Street...it was a whole day tribute to ME/

MS D

(interrupts DIANE, to PAM)

/Who wants to hear about lousy schtupping? That is not entertaining material.

PAM

You and I both know what it takes to entertain and I guarantee you, if we tell some of your jiggery pokery stories- perhaps in song, it will be entertaining— maybe even what Jane wanted in the first place.

DIANE

What did you say, Anne?

PAM

It's Pam. And I said "Jiggery Pokery."

MS D

(to DIANE)

You know, the old in and out, hide the salami...



(Begin at top of scene)

ACT ONE, SCENE 11 - The Clubhouse at  
Paradise Lagoon, December, next day

*The next day, on stage, before rehearsal. Cast is arriving, they're chattering away*

LOUISE

Ladies.

(they pay no attention)

Dancers!

(they're still chattering)

LA-DIES!!!

(all stop chattering and stare at LOUISE who rolls her eyes)

Pam's running late so I'm doing warm-up... this is the one I do with my Parkinson's group. ...Just follow along...we'll have fun!



LOUISE

Arms out front. To the side. Up above. And down below. Got it?



And repeat



Okay, now the shoulders



Arms!



Okay ladies! This next bit we use our chairs, so go ahead and grab a chair.

Okay - the right, the left, the right, together. And paddle. Paddle. Got it?

(CON'T)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

And repeat

[REDACTED]

Lifts!

[REDACTED]

Once more with feeling!

[REDACTED]

*LOUISE is warm and stops to remove her sweater, gesturing for the others to keep moving, Her trembling fingers make it difficult for her to unbutton her sweater*

MS D

(impatiently muttering to herself but everyone hears except DIANE)

Why can't she just use velcro?

VALERIE

Are you okay Louise? Let me help you.  
(to MS D)

She has Parkinson's, for God's sake!

MS D

Okay, I know! Now, can we please get on with the warm-up?

DIANE

Sal has Parkinson's too? (STOP)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MS D

(Begin)

(to VALERIE)

You're very brave to wear those pants.

VALERIE

Well, bless your little heart which, by the way, is southern for fuck you.

MS D

In my neighborhood, we just say "fuck you."

VALERIE

You are always so prickly, Ms D.

MS D

Hmph

VALERIE

You know, I'm in therapy - first time in my entire life. It is revelatory. I'm actually starting to believe that I don't need a man in my life to feel whole.

MS D

Hallelujah!

VALERIE

Anyway, I am learning that most of our behaviors are buried in our unconscious mind. Maybe I could give you my counselor's number.

(Val takes out her therapist's card and tries to hand it to MS D)

MS D

I do not want your counselor's number!

VALERIE

I understand. I resisted therapy, too. In the South, we just go to the club and play bridge or tennis. We don't talk about anything real. But it has changed my life. I don't have to act like a southern belle, or anything I am not anymore, I don't have to do what I'm told and look pretty doin' it.

MS D

You coulda fooled me. AND just because you like therapy doesn't mean I would.

VALERIE

But you would Ms D. I just know it.

MS D

I am done with this conversation, which is Brooklyn for mind your own business!

VALERIE

Well, alright then.

*VALERIE surreptitiously slips her therapist's card into MS D's pocket*

MS D

I'm not hangin' out any more dirty laundry with this group or Jane and Pam will decide to put it in the show. Besides which, I need to know what Pam is really doing here.

VALERIE

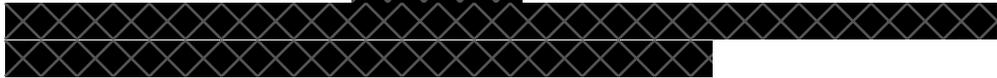
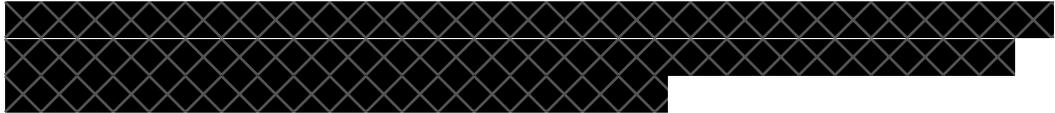
Well, you could always just ask her. I am learning that in therapy, too. Ask for what you want.

MS. D.

What I want is for this conversation to be over.

VAL

Bless your little heart. (STOP)



(Begin at top of scene)

ACT ONE, SCENE 12 - SAL and JANE'S house, late December

*That evening, JANE & SAL's living room, fully equipped with exercise equipment including an inversion table, a shake-omatic, and large exercise ball*

SAL

Janie, there's a message from Aunt Beulah on your phone.

[REDACTED]

JANE

I really want her to come, but drive 1800 miles alone? That's crazy.

SAL

No, that's Aunt Beulah.

JANE

But she can't see and she's 94.

SAL

And if she's made up her 94 year old mind, she's gonna come.

JANE

I don't need her to risk her life to get here.

SAL

Well, let's talk about that. She's like a mother to you. It would be good for her to come. I could go up and fly back with her. And maybe she'll love it here and decide to stay.

JANE

What did you tell her anyway?

SAL

I just told her you were seeing your doctor and that the doctor has ordered tests.

JANE

Well, it would be a relief to have her here. You're really willing to go up there and get her?

SAL

Sure. It'll give me a chance to spend time with her. Let's call her tomorrow.

Here, have a toke.

*hands JANE a joint. JANE lights it and takes a toke*

I need to tell you something else...

JANE

You mean about the group you and Louise are in? I wondered when you'd fess up.

SAL

I'm sorry. I just figured you had enough going on without worrying about me. And I'm finally dealing with my own shit.

JANE

Oh, really? Go on...

SAL

I don't wanna to talk about it

(takes deep breath)

but here goes... When you broke up with me, I had a one night stand. I was pissed and I was still drinking.

JANE

Well, we were broken up, so it wasn't technically cheating.

SAL

But I was still in love with you. I was afraid to tell you, afraid that it would be the end of everything. It was right after that, that I wrote our song.

JANE

Maybe it would have been the end of us....but I doubt it.

Meanwhile, I need to talk to you about what's happening now

SAL

I'm listening...

JANE

(deep breath)

I know we didn't consider illness when we promised each other forever...I don't want you to feel like/

SAL

/Oh my God, Janie, you are the love of my life.....through good times and bad.

(They hold each other)

(STOP)





[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Then, one morning, I got a call from the nursing home - an on call doctor I didn't know. "Yes, Mrs. Dixon, we almost lost your husband last night,

(boastful)

BUT I PULLED HIM THROUGH." Two more years...

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(Con't)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

PAM

(shaken from the power of what she had just relived)

I don't know if I can control my emotions enough to perform this. Is it too much?

*MS D suddenly leaps up and gives PAM a huge hug. Then they disengage awkwardly*

MS. D

That's all true?

PAM

Yes, unfortunately, all true. (STOP)

MS D (Begin)

Okay...so...Why didn't you try to find me? Tell me you were in trouble?

PAM

I was ashamed. I had abandoned you. I left you with no notice and ran off to get married. I thought you'd never speak to me again.

MS. D

I was your best friend.

PAM

You were! That's why--we had all those plans to move to New York together and follow our dreams. And I left with no word. I knew I had let you down. But I thought you'd be fine. You were always such a survivor.

MS D

I was not fine.

PAM

I'm so sorry. If it makes you feel any better, I never had another friend. Gerald kept me isolated.

MS. D

I imagined you had this glamorous relationship with this wealthy man. The big job, the money.

PAM

The house was beautiful. The rest of it? Hideous.

MS. D

Well, I wish I'd known. I would have taken care of Gerald, I'll tell you that much.

PAM

I know.

(Beat. Then with intended irony)

So...what have you been up to?

MS. D

I went to New York, the way we planned. I moved into that apartment. I got a job back at that club in Williamsburg - the one I grew up in. There was this man who was always there. Within three months, I married him. He was the first. As you may recall, there have been/three

PAM

/Three. So I've heard.

MS D

The first guy was just a fling, but, and I am not blaming you, I guess I just thought I should get married. Ugh, I didn't even like him. And the second guy--his name was Morrie--he was a mensch, but he died. Heart attack, only 48. Left me with two little boys. And then the third guy? I had to pay him to go away

PAM

I'm sorry?

MS D

Not joking

PAM

You paid him? Why? How much?

MS D

Because the mishuganah didn't have any money to rent an apartment. \$7000.

PAM

\$7000?

(They start howling like schoolgirls)

MS D

It's not/much

PAM

/Sounds like a lot/ to me/

MS D

/But it was everything I had at the time! Stop! Stop it! It's embarrassing!

(They calm down)

Pam, I'm sorry about Gerald. I never saw that coming.

PAM

All these years. I thought I had a monopoly on humiliating marriage stories.

MS D

How did this happen to us?

PAM

I don't know but I'm glad we're here now.

MS D

Let's get a drink.

PAM

Yes, let's.

*They start to gather their things*

MS D

So, how the heck did you get here?

(in her best Bogie)

Of all the fancy retirement places in all of Florida, you walked into this one?

(STOP)

## AUNT BEULAH

*BEULAH enters hesitantly from stage Right, is shocked to see the audience, stops, looks bewildered, searches the audience left to right and front to back, finally composes herself and continues*

(Begin) Good evening. My name is Beulah Frost, Aunt Beulah to my niece Janie. She was the boss of this whole show you're watchin', donchaknow? Now Janie and me, that girl could talk me into anything. One time she called me up, asked do I want to go on a trip to Borneo. Now, I didn't know whea Borneo was so I said Nope. Next thing I know I'm riding on an elephant in the jungle!

Anotha time, she told me she had somebody special she wanted me to meet. About time!

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Well, who was I to object?

And, soon, I saw how much they loved each otha...took good care of each otha and who wouldn't fall in love with Sally? I adowa my Sally...like my own daughta. Now, Janie's gone.....Sally and I will stick togetha. And I've decided to take up a coupla new things: I'm gonna learn to play the auto hahp. I closed my gallery a shot time ago and now I'm writin' a children's book. No, I'm not gonna show it to ya cuz' I don't caya to heah youwa opinion.

I don't much caya to dwell on the hahd times. Oh, I could tell ya about my son Howard, lives next doah, only comes ovah to borrow money to buy more booze but I'm not gonna tell you cuz, like I say, I got no call to talk about that sort of thing. At ninety-fowa (94) I may not have a lot of time left but the time I've got, it's my time...

AS SHE BEGINS TO EXIT L, SHE SINGS TO HERSELF AS IF SHE'S MAKING UP A NEW SONG....

(STOP)



(Con't)