

Suppose  
6

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

CLOSE on Jackie, looking down. She seems to be staring at something in her lap...

JACKIE

(quiet anger)

I don't even know what that means.  
Spread. That is very unclear.

...but there is nothing there. Her lap is empty. Except for her unnaturally still hands.

DR. SWEIKERT (O.S., gently)

I means we found some cells. In your  
lymph nodes. In three of them.

The hands come together. Slowly, deliberately. Stating to anyone who would watch that there is no panic here.

JACKIE

But the other time. You said you got  
it all. So you could be wrong again.  
One time, you say one thing, then...

DR. SWEIKERT (O.S.)

The other time. Was a year ago.

The air comes out of Jackie. In a thin, slow, precise stream. Everything, her very breath. Under complete control.

DR. SWEIKERT (O.S.)

That was a tiny lump in the breast.  
We radiated, we thought we had it  
all. We were hopeful. But there  
were no guarantees.

Silence. Jackie's eyes stay on her folded, still, hands.

JACKIE

But we can beat it.

PULL BACK to see the small, neatly kept office. DR. SWEIKERT is 50, elegant, kind. The doctor you want when you're dying. Jackie looks up to him.

JACKIE

People beat it, don't they? All  
the time.

DR. SWEIKERT

(straight)

Every day. More and more.

Jackie swallows. The confirmation of hope has allowed some of the fear to show.

JACKIE  
So we'll...radiate some more?

DR. SWEIKERT  
At first. Then, after awhile, some  
chemo.

A blow. Jackie absorbs this.

JACKIE  
That's necessary, huh?

DR. SWEIKERT  
Let's take our best shot.

Jackie nods. Staring at the man. Then, to break the spell...

JACKIE  
I guess a no-hair day beats a  
bad-hair day.

The doctor smiles. Jackie looks at her watch...

JACKIE  
I have to get dressed. My ex-husband  
has asked me to dinner. God knows  
why, he was very mysteri...

DR. SWEIKERT  
Have you still not told him?

A flash of the anger flickers.

JACKIE  
Why should I worry worry him? Or my  
children. Or anyone. It won't help the  
sit...

DR. SWEIKERT  
(very soft)  
Sooner than later. You really need  
to.

That brings a silence. A shading of defiance to Jackie's features.

JACKIE  
You don't burden others needlessly.  
That's how I was raised, Doctor.

Hold the look.

MR. SWEIKERT  
Soon.

Pause

Maybe at dinner tonight. Think about it.