

TOO CLOSE TO MOM 1-1

SHERRIE

I love it. I love the sun and I love the attitude.

BETH

You don't miss New York?

SHERRIE

What's to miss? Snow and sleet and congestion and dirt.

BETH

L.A.'s dirty.

SHERRIE

Dusty, not dirty.

BETH

And there's no culture.

SHERRIE

You can have the culture, I'll take open sinuses.

BETH

Well, I'm going back this spring.

SHERRIE

Why not now?

BETH

I've got things to get together.

SHERRIE

You're not going back now because it's zero there and people are walking around in snow up to their armpits.

BETH

I talked to my mother yesterday and she said there was no snow.

TOO CLOSE TO MOM 1-2

SHERRIE

Your mother would tell you there are palm trees on Seventh Avenue to get you home.

BETH

So?

SHERRIE

So don't listen.

BETH

I worry about her all alone back there.

SHERRIE

So have her move out here.

BETH

What? Ida Greenbaum of the Bronx move to California?

SHERRIE

It makes sense.

BETH

You don't uproot the Pyramids, you don't transplant the Grand Canyon and you don't move Ida Greenbaum, sixty-three year old native New Yorker who hasn't been six blocks from her apartment in over twelve years.

SHERRIE

Too bad. Just like my parents, they won't listen to reason. They clam up when you talk sense and look off like you weren't in the room, like you're invisible.

TOO CLOSE TO MOM 1-3

BETH

My mother's all alone now. All alone in a neighborhood where tanks should be patrolling the streets. It's not right for me to be here when she's back there taking her life in her hands just to reach out and grab her paper.

SHERRIE

Guilt.

BETH

Yes.

SHERRIE

It doesn't pay.

BETH

If it paid, half the people on earth would be millionaires. Guilt's real. And I feel it because I'm normal.

SHERRIE

Yes, and Ida's using it.

BETH

I know... but it's her only weapon... and she's blowing me away with it.

SHERRIE

This isn't right, going back there out of guilt. You'll live to regret it and wind up hating yourself and your mother, too. You'll become an embittered person, shrunken and little, sitting by a window watching muggings.

BETH

You're not helping.

TOO CLOSE TO MOM 1-4

SHERRIE

My parents are alone, too. But I'll be damned if I'm going back to Jersey and play nurse and work in retail and only eat out on holidays. Forget it. What's it all worth if you can't be yourself and be free. (beat) You pick up that phone and call Ida and tell her to get her Jewish act together and come on out here and be a person.

BETH

How would that be any different than her demanding that I come back there? What about my mom's freedom?

SHERRIE

Then lay the truth on her. Tell her flat out that you're not coming home. You can't do this to yourself. You've got to break free. Declare your independence. Stand up! Pick up that phone!

BETH

(pause) I can't.

SHERRIE

You can. You can do it.

BETH

I can?

SHERRIE

Sure! It's your life!

BETH

Yeah. You're right. It's my life. I can do what the hell I want. This isn't Russia. (beat) Oh my God! I hope it isn't my mother!

TOO CLOSE TO MOM 1-5

SHERRIE

Well answer it!

BETH

No. You answer it!

SHERRIE

Hello. Who? Yes, she's right here. It's your mother!

BETH

*Ida?* (beat) Hello, Mother? Yes, fine. What?! Well I don't know. In fact, we were just talking about it. Yes. Well... all right... Okay... right. Fine. Right. Good-bye. (beat) Damn.

SHERRIE

Why the hell did you cave in?

BETH

(beat) Huh? Cave in? I didn't cave in..... Ida's decided to move to L.A.