

from his mother. It was so sad! She was there! You could see her! But there was like a dune and they couldn't find each other. The poor little guy was so lost and so scared . . . You *know* he'll never survive out there without his mother. But the movie people did nothing! They just kept filming!

SARAH: That's what they were there to do: the camera's there to *record* life. Not change it. Animals perish in the wild. That's life. And it's really sad, and unfair—but there's nothing we can do about it. The elephant was meant to die.

MANDY: How do *you* know? Are you God?

RICHARD: Honey . . .

MANDY: They could've saved him! A whole crew was *standing* there watching!

SARAH: The *camera* was there. You can't expect photographers to step into the frame and fix things they don't like. We're supposed to capture truth, not stage it.

MANDY: Couldn't they have made an exception, just this once?

RICHARD (*Tenderly*): Oh, sweetie . . .

MANDY: They could've just brought him closer so she could *sniff* him! That's all it would take! She could have found him! They could have saved his life!

(Mandy breaks down in tears. Richard comforts her.)

RICHARD (*Soothing*): Oh, baby . . .

(Pause.)

SARAH: I wish I could cry like that. But I can't; I can't let it get to me. If I let it get to me . . . How could I do my job? I couldn't. I'd want to take away the guns and rescue all the children. But I can't. That's not why I'm there.

(Pause.)

I'm there to take pictures.

3.

A few minutes later. Richard and Mandy are gone. James gathers bowls and mugs and rinses them at the sink. Mid-conversation:

SARAH: When did he tell you?

JAMES: When we went down for ice cream.

SARAH: He didn't want me to know?!

JAMES: He said I could tell you, he just didn't want to get into it while they were here.

SARAH: Why not?

JAMES: He was protecting Mandy.

SARAH: From what?

JAMES: From you.

SARAH: Was I really so horrible?

JAMES: You were pretty bad.

SARAH: We were buddies by the time they left . . .

JAMES: He was afraid of what you might say.

SARAH: What, that having a child at his age is the most ridiculous, irresponsible thing I've ever heard?

JAMES: *Something* like that, yeah.

SARAH: Did he talk about the morality of depriving a kid of a father?

JAMES: How is he depriving a kid of a father?

SARAH: He's too old! He'll be lucky if he lives to see the kid go off to college.

JAMES: What, young men don't die? Come on, Sarah, you know better than *that* . . .

SARAH (*Abashed*): You're right.

JAMES: Anything could happen, to anyone, any time. You're living proof of that. A crane could come crashing down on us right now. If he's up for it, at this stage of his life, more power to him.

SARAH: So what are they going to do?

JAMES: He's going to marry her . . .

SARAH: Oh, my God.

JAMES: And they're going to have this baby.

SARAH: Poor Richard.

JAMES: Why "poor Richard"? The man is ecstatic; I've never seen him like this. He can't believe his good luck. To tell you the truth . . . When he told me . . . (*A beat*) I was jealous.

SARAH: Why, *you* wanted to get Mandy pregnant?

JAMES: Ha ha. No. (*A beat*) I wished *we* were getting married.

(*Pause.*)

SARAH: Seriously? (*He nods. A beat*) Oh, honey . . .

JAMES: Why not?

SARAH: I thought we didn't *need* marriage.

JAMES: We didn't.

SARAH: I thought we agreed.

JAMES: We did.

SARAH: It wasn't our thing.

JAMES: But things are different now.

SARAH: Why, because I almost died?

JAMES: Yes. (*Pause*) When you were in the hospital, I had no legal relationship to you whatsoever. Every catheter, every procedure, permission had to come from your ass-

hole father. Do you realize how frustrating that was? I was right there! They had to get him on the phone from Palm Springs! (*A beat*) We've been putting ourselves in dangerous situations for years and never stopped to think what would happen if one of us got hurt. We didn't have a plan.

SARAH: So being married would've made medical management a lot easier.

JAMES: Yes.

SARAH: That's got to be the most romantic proposal I've ever heard.

(*James laughs. Pause. He gets down on one knee.*)

JAMES: Sarah . . .

SARAH (*Outraged*): Get up. Get up! You're changing the rules on me!

JAMES: I'm not changing the rules, the playing field changed.

SARAH: You know how I feel about this! You can't lay this on me all at once! It isn't fair!

JAMES: I didn't mean to.

SARAH: What do you expect me to say, "Sure, honey, let's do it"?

JAMES: Of course not. (*A beat*) I had a lot of time to think while you were in the hospital, you know. I got to play out your death almost every single day. You were out for most of it, so you have no idea how close you came.

(*A beat.*)

When a couple gets to be our age, and has been together as long as we have, and witnessed what we have, and *survived* what we have, it's time to call this what it is: a marriage. (*A beat*) We are not your parents.

(*Pause.*)