

Act 3, Scene 1

Scene opens to Janice and Barb at the doorstep of Janice's adoptive parents, with Janice's mind booming with questions that only her adoptive parents can answer.

Janice:

Will I regret this?

Barb:

You'll probably regret it more if you don't go.

Janice hesitates, then takes a deep breath and rings the doorbell. The ring cuts through the cold silence. The door carefully opens, revealing a tall, wrinkled white man. He stares at Janice, his face a mix of surprise and confusion.

Albert:

Janice? Is that you? What are you doing all the way here in London?

Janice: *(nervous)*

I had questions, dad.

Albert steps aside, holding the door open. The inside of the house is warm, with semi-old furniture and walls lined with family photos. Janice steps in hesitantly, followed by Barb. Janice's adoptive mother comes from the kitchen, wiping her hands on a towel. Her face taking a puzzled look at the sight of Janice.

Margaret: *Janice! I thought you weren't going to come until Christmas.*

Janice: *Change of plans, mother.*

Janice: *(her eyes land on a dreamcatcher hanging on the wall) I always thought it was just decoration... I never realized it was part of her gift to me. How many more pieces of her did I miss because of your silence?*

Albert: *It was a gift... from your birth mother. She wanted you to have something to connect you to where you came from.*

Janice: *(pauses, emotional) You kept this, but not the truth about her?*

Janice:

I don't have time for small talk. I want to know why.

Margaret: *Why what, dear?*

Janice: *(voice rising)*

Why didn't you tell me anything? About my culture. My heritage. Why did you let me grow up without knowing anything about being Indigenous?

Margaret exchanges a stressed look with Albert. He clears his throat, stepping forward with a slight bit of confidence.

Albert:

We thought we were protecting you.

Janice: *(voice rising) Protecting me from what? From knowing who I am? From my own blood? You didn't just protect me—you erased me. My identity. My culture. Do you have any idea how it feels to grow up not knowing who you really are?*

Margaret: *(struggling to explain) We thought it would make things easier for you... we didn't want you to feel different.*

Janice: *(interrupting Margaret) Different? I've always felt different. And it's your fault I never understood why.*

Albert: *(firmly)*

We didn't want you to feel different. The world can be cruel to people who don't fit in. We thought it'd be better to be fully normal than half.

There's a beat of silence as Janice absorbs their words. Her voice softens, but her anger is still palpable.

Janice:

Normal? What do you mean normal?

Margaret:

We thought we were doing what was best for you. You were so little, and we were so scared of... losing you.

Janice:

Losing me? You already lost me the moment you decided I didn't need to know where I came from.

The room grows tense. Barb watches silently from the doorway, her arms crossed. Finally, Margaret takes a deep breath and steps forward.

Margaret: *You're right. We failed you, Janice. I can't go back and change that, but I want to move forward. I want to learn.*

Albert nods solemnly.

Albert: *We're proud of you, Janice. For finding your roots, even if it meant questioning us.*

Janice: *I'm still angry, but... I want to believe you're ready to change.*

Janice looks at her parents for a long moment, the weight of their words settling in. Slowly, she lets out a sigh.

Janice: *Maybe we can start over. But we did it right this time.*

Margaret reaches for a hug, and after a hesitation, Janice accepts her hug. Albert joins in, the family holding onto each other in a moment of reconciliation.

Barb: *(from the doorway) Well, this is a start.*

Janice: *(wiping her eyes) Yeah, it is.*