

Scene Eighteen: Margaret's Car

Brenda:  
So, this client of mine's a prostitute...

Margaret:  
So, is that supposed to shock me?

Brenda:  
What? God, not everything is about you. You're such a classic narcissist.

Margaret:  
Brenda, just because your parents are shrinks doesn't mean you know anything about psychology.

Brenda:  
Yeah, and just because you're a shrink doesn't mean that you're not out of your fucking mind.

Margaret:  
You know, I've treated several prostitutes over the years, and they're not as uncommon as you'd th-- (stops mid-sentence when she sees a young, blonde woman exit the spa and go to BERN's car) Oh! That's her? (the girl unlocks the car and gets in) She's your age! I have to talk to her.

Brenda:  
(grabs her mom's arm) Oh, Mom, don't. Please, don't.

Margaret:  
No, no, wait, wait, wait, I'm not angry. I'm not gonna make a scene. I just need to personalize the experience and humanize the situation. It's for all of us. (gets out of the car)

Brenda:  
(calling to her) You'll just regret it!

BRENDA watches MARGARET go up to BERN's car.

Margaret:  
Oh, miss! Oh, missy! (approaches) Hello, I'm Margaret, Bern's wife. You know?, Bern and I have a really open relationship, and I just want you to know that it's okay with me. But you are a slut! I'll see you in Hell! I hope you like herpes! (goes back into her car) You know?, I thought she'd be more evolved.

Brenda:  
Evolved? Mother, you just verbally abused that woman... repeatedly! She could have you thrown in jail!

Margaret:  
I seriously doubt that.  
(lightens up) Are you hungry?

Brenda:  
Why am I here? Why was it necessary for me to be here with you for this? Because you needed a fucking audience!

Margaret:  
Not everything's about you, Brenda.

Brenda:  
(mimics her) Look at Mommy. Isn't Mommy pretty? Isn't Mommy fabulous and free-spirited and uninhibited? Validate Mommy, kids, because she's incapable of doing it herself. No wonder Billy ended up in a psych ward. Not that you care.

Margaret:  
For your information, Miss High-and-Mighty, this is life. People have crises. They push each other's buttons. They inflict pain on one another. And once in a fucking blue moon, they bring out the best in each other. But mostly, they bring out the worst.

Brenda:  
You're pathetic.

Margaret:  
Don't you dare judge me. You think you're the paragon of mental health just because you've been dating a sane man for the past few months? That's real compared to what your father and I have?

Brenda:  
You're just jealous.

Margaret:  
Of what?!

Brenda:  
The fact that I haven't allowed you to totally destroy my life like you have everyone else's!

Margaret:  
What life? You've spent 32 years being your little brother's nursemaid...

Brenda:  
Oh, fuck you!

Margaret:  
...to avoid having any emotional life of your own. And now that he's been put away, you're gonna have to face your own demons, and, sweetheart, they're legion.

BRENDA slaps her across the face, hard. MARGARET is stunned silent.

Margaret:  
Get out of my car.

Brenda:  
I would be happy to. (leaves without closing the door)

MARGARET starts to cry.