

CHARACTER: John – (m) - around 40-50ish

DESCRIPTION: John is a human sunflower. Not a saint. Not a hero. Just the kind of man you'd want in your car when crossing America. When he dies it feels like someone somewhere turned a light off.

John/Annie/Marie

JOHN We'll be fine. We'll walk and sing.

ANNIE We can't do that.

JOHN 'Course we can. Long history isn't there? New Orleans? Jazz and religion?...Gospel! There you go! We'll be "The Knapeley Rhythm and Blues Choir"!

ANNIE We can't.

MARIE We don't have much choice/ Annie-

ANNIE John *can't walk that far*.

JOHN Ohh God. That's it. It knew it'd happen. I've turned into the third person.

MARY (*remembering*) Right. Sorry. (Beat) How's the -?

JOHN My treatment's going fine love. And you know what cheers me up? That WI calendar with your lovely photos of Yorkshire churches. Being able to mark my chemotherapy appointments under images of misty graveyards. Serious. I'd taken it in and one of the guys at the hospital, porter, Lawrence, great lad, great photographer – (*to Annie*) God you should see some of the ones he's done of his parents –

ANNIE (*smiling*) Finish your story.

JOHN (*nodding at Marie*) About your calendar. Very complimentary.....

MARIE Really?

JOHN *(Putting his arm out.)* Lead on, my little elf. *(For ANNIE'S benefit, wryly.)* Remember "he" can't walk that fast.

(Marie can't do anything but lead him out.)

John & Annie

JOHN Come here, you. *(He kisses her)*

ANNIE How was your day?

JOHN Thrill me. Tell me something I didn't know about broccoli.

ANNIE Put it this way. I now know as much about broccoli as Chris knows about t'ai chi.

(John laughs)

(Over this.) The only difference is, I don't try to teach a class on it.

JOHN Hey. Don't knock it. *(He strokes her hair.)* Thirty years ago if that woman hadn't fallen off a table trying to get a whole Chinese restaurant singing *Jumping Jack Flash*, you and I would never have met. *(He holds her face recalling this moment-possibly more heavily than he might normally do.)* I only plucked up courage to ask you to the cinema 'cause I was picking noodles out of your hair.

ANNIE *(After a beat, stroking his hair back.)* You were up Grizedale?

JOHN I was. Overseeing junior rangers putting up forest fences. God, they all look about twelve.

ANNIE I know.

JOHN *(After a beat.)* This afternoon I nipped in to see ol' Doc Morton.

ANNIE *(instantly turning to ice)* Today?

JOHN Now don't – ("get het up")

ANNIE I thought you wanted me with you.

JOHN Mrs Clarke, there isn't a day goes by when I don't. *(Beat)* I just kind of needed to get the results on my own.