

## SIDE D - ZOE MONOLOGUE

**ZOE.** The thing is – I think someone else could do more with this platform. I think someone else could do more to support students of color.

**JANINE.** That actually isn't most of what this job is.

**ZOE.** I mean – let's say I sign your statement.

Let's say you go back to teaching.

And then – what?

Maybe you give an extra handout on the black experience during the revolution. Maybe, before you discuss our miraculous democracy, you talk just a little about how American opportunity was fertilized by oppression. If I'm really optimistic, maybe you even remember to give me credit for those ideas. Maybe you show up for a couple protests.

I mean I don't feel like I can count on that. But maybe you do.

Even if you do all the right things.

What are you really teaching?

You're teaching 100 future leaders a year, to say, "Yes, there are some *horrible* elements of the American past," asterisk, "There are still things to fix," and as long as they do that, they can go off into the world and become guilt-free corporate lawyers, or investment bankers, or senators, or artists, and send their kids guilt-free to great schools, and help them get good jobs, they don't actually have to give up a single bit of their money or their power.

Because they're the *good* white people.

I don't think I can be complicit in one more generation of American leaders learning that if they get five percent better than their parents, then they can keep running the world.

I can't sign that piece of paper.

Because I think you should be fired. I think you should be done.

*(Beat.)*

*(JANINE starts laughing.)*

**JANINE.** Why me?

Why couldn't you have wanted to study microeconomics. Or cognitive psychology. Or art history – oh, you would have loved them. Them and their Dutch Masters.

I mean have you met the other people on this faculty?

I could give you a list of professors who've slept with undergraduates.

There are multiple people in this department who told me to quit when I had a kid. There is a person in the math department who voted for George Wallace. And you go after me?

**ZOE.** It takes work to not be a bad person.

You know that right?

You can't just be the least bad person in a lineup and call yourself good.

**JANINE.** I did everything that was ever asked of me.

I did the best that I possibly could.

If you had been born who I was, when I was, you would have the same opinions, you would have made all the same mistakes. You cannot say I am a bad person if there was no way for me to be better.

**ZOE.** Someone else can be better. That's why I want you out / of the way.

**JANINE.** I have won teaching awards. I have mentored accomplished people who have done wonderful things.

**ZOE.** You are an inherently oppressive and uninspiring figure for the students who matter most.

**JANINE.** That's unfair.

*(ZOE laughs.)*

Don't laugh – that's not – that's not funny. You are describing a world where I am not right for a job because of my age and my skin color that's not funny that's – that's awful.