

## Slide 1 – Walter & Marjorie

**MARJORIE:** Tell me about the time we got Toni.

**WALTER:** I just told you yesterday.

**MARJORIE:** I like that story.

*(He gathers his wits. Maybe he stands).*

**WALTER:** There was once a couple, a very fine young couple. *(Speaking of himself).* He had a good strong jaw.

**MARJORIE:** He was a little too pleased with himself.

**WALTER:** He had a good strong jaw and was a little too pleased with himself. And she – she was the most beautiful woman in town. It wasn't a very big town, but she was the queen of it.

**MARJORIE:** It sounds like a fairy tale when you tell it.

**WALTER:** It *is* a fairy tale.

*(Beat. The feeling of an uncomfortable truth).*

**MARJORIE:** That's not very nice.

**WALTER:** I didn't mean—it didn't really *happen*—

**MARJORIE:** I thought you were supposed to provide comfort—

**WALTER:** I just mean that's the *way* it happened. Like a fairy tale.

**MARJORIE** *(faintly grumpy):* It was.

**WALTER:** Now this young couple was a bit lonely because they didn't have any children yet. So one day they decided that it was time to get a dog. So they rode the bus down to the city pound and there was a little black dog there, asleep, its tummy going up and down, like a little sleeping shadow. And they named this dog Toni. Toni with an i.

**MARJORIE:** Toni with an i.

**WALTER:** Which was short for Antoinette. She had a French name because she was a French poodle. But not the fussy kind that look like hedges. No, this was a poodle for fetching sticks and running on the beach. So they took her home with them on the bus – she behaved so well – and they loved her, and she loved them back for a long time. *(Still soothing, unemotional).* And then, like everything else, she died.

*(MARJORIE is weeping softly).*

**WALTER:** Do you want me to keep going?

## Slide 1 – Walter & Marjorie

**MAJORIE:** Stay with me a while.

**WALTER** (*playful*): I don't want to get you in trouble.

*(She smiles a little).*

**MARJORIE:** You learn. I like that.

**WALTER.** I told you. What else do you want to talk about?

**MARJORIE:** We don't have to talk. We can just sit. Sometimes I get so tired.

**WALTER:** I'll be right here, Marjorie. Whenever you need me. I have all the time in the world.