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I record all of my sessions for posterity, to enable me to provide my patients with the highest level of care. This is a transcript of my session with Ronette Pulaski, on April 4th, 1989. These transcripts are never shared with other parties without express permission from the patient.

Dr. Jacoby: Make yourself comfortable, Ronette. Thank you for coming in to see me.

Ronette: Uh-huh.

Dr. Jacoby: I'm very glad that you've decided to consider therapy. You've had a rough couple months, and I really do believe you'll benefit from having this free space to discuss your feelings and what you've been going through. If I might ask, what is it that made you decide to schedule a session?

Ronette: My dad thought it was a good idea.

Dr. Jacoby: Do you disagree?

Ronette: I just don't see what the point is, really. Talking about everything that's happened is just going to make me think about it all over again. How does that do me any good?

Dr. Jacoby: There is no denying that re-living past trauma is a difficult thing to do, but for better or worse it is the healthy thing to do. If you keep it all bottled up inside, trying to ignore it or suppress it, it will eventually make its way to the surface in a way that is destructive. If you open up and share what you've gone through, you have the opportunity to control those memories. The pain will never go away, but with some work you can make it less palpable.

Ronette: What if I deserve to feel that pain?

Dr. Jacoby: No one deserves to experience what you have, Ronette.

Ronette: Laura and I weren't exactly girl scouts, Dr. Jacoby. We could have chosen to avoid the dangerous situations we got ourselves into. But we didn't.

Dr. Jacoby: Blaming yourself won't do anyone any good, and it isn't fair to yourself to think that way. You didn't consent to any assault, nor have you done anything that would justify an attempt on your life. The only people responsible are the ones who have wronged you.

Ronette: No offense, but that sounds like a cop out. If I blame everyone else for the bad things they did to me, then I bear no responsibility for the bad decisions I've made.

Dr. Jacoby: Bad decisions are meant to be learned from, not punished. You were in vulnerable positions, and bad men took advantage of that. It was not their right to do so. They are solely to blame for the abuse you've suffered.

Ronette: You make it sound like those men are unusual. But it seems to me everyone has that in them. That everyone is a bad person.

Dr. Jacoby: That's a rather dire conclusion, don't you think?

Ronette: Maybe I've spent too much time with the wrong side of humanity.

Dr. Jacoby: Then maybe we just need to find the way for you to make your way back.

Ronette: My dad thinks I should get myself a job. Put myself out there.

Dr. Jacoby: If you are comfortable with that, I think that would be an excellent idea. Focus your energy into something external to yourself and your thoughts. Surround yourself with positive energy, try to make connections with people who want to help you. Does that sound like something you'd like to try?

Ronette: Not really. But I guess I ought to, huh?

Dr. Jacoby: Unfortunately I'm not here to give you the answers, Ronette. It's up to you to decide.

Ronette: Then let's see if I make a good decision, this time around.