

RUE: Ali what have you done that's so terrible?

ALI: A lot.

RUE: But what? For real.

ALI: A lot.

RUE: You're not just saying that?

ALI: Naaaah

RUE: You promise?

ALI: Why do you wanna know?

RUE: Because I think you're like a good person and I just couldn't imagine you like doing something terrible.

ALI: I grew up in a house where my dad used to beat my momma. He was a drunken, cold son of a bitch. And every night, I lay in bed dreaming of every which way to kill him. But eventually my momma up and left him and took me and my sister with her and life goes on. But I always said to myself that no matter how bad shit got whether I was shooting dope or smoking crack I would never ever be like my dad. And then I got married I had two girls and it was chaos. I was using and my wife wasn't having it. We were fighting every night and it got physical. And one night I looked over and I see my two little girls watching and I thought, here I am a grown man with two girls and they just watched me hit their mum in the face. I spent 30 years of my life thinking of how to kill my dad for the same shit I just did to their mum. That's rock bottom. It doesn't get any worse than that. But hey, it took me another 5 years to clean up because for some people there is no rock bottom. it's bottomless. and the truth is drugs will fundamentally change who you are as a human being. Every moral. Every principle. Everything you hold close to your heart. And believe in will go out the window or down the drain. Cause there is no force stronger on planet earth than that next fix. Now, you may be functioning. Maybe things go well. Maybe they last. Maybe they don't. But the one thing I know is true is that the longer you do drugs, the more you're gonna lose. And not just in terms of the things you love, but the things you value about yourself. And

every compromise you make, every moral line that you cross, you'll go further, and further until you don't recognize who the fuck you are. And that list of racing thoughts that list of unforgivable things. It grows longer. It gets uglier. You still think I'm a good person?

RUE: yeah

ALI: The thought of maybe being a good person, is what keeps me trying to be a good person. Although some people may disagree with you. My youngest daughter for one.

RUE: What's her name?

ALI: Marie.

RUE: Ali?

ALI: Yeah?

RUE: I just don't really plan on being here that long. And that's, umm... that's the tough part about all of this, you know? Because I love talking to you. I do. And I agree with almost everything you're saying. And I understand it. But, uh... I just don't plan on being here that long.

ALI: I get it. We're living in dark times. Not a lot of hope out there. The thing I miss about doing drugs... is the beauty. No matter what's going on in the world, no matter what's going on in your life, everything is gonna be okay.

RUE: Yeah. The world's just really fucking ugly you know. It's really fucking ugly and everybody seems to be okay with it you know. The anger. The level of anger. Everyone is just out to make everyone else not seem human. And I don't really wanna be a part of it. I don't even wanna witness it. Sure, it's not like the root of all my problems, but I definitely think about it a lot.

ALI: Because thinking about those questions, those ideas, they're a large part of uh... what makes this part worth living. Right? That's what I was talking about earlier. You gotta believe in the poetry. The value of two people sitting in a diner on Christmas Eve, talking about life, addiction, loss. You don't wanna be a part of it Rue, because you care about the big things in life.

RUE: I don't know if I care about the big things in life.

ALI: Common now of course you do. You obviously don't care about the small things. Like being right, or being angry. All the things that kill curiosity and keeps us from... keeps us all from looking deeper. You said it earlier. I love talking to you because we talk about the real shit. Shit that matters. Like who do you wanna be when you leave this earth?

RUE: I'm not really sure I follow.

ALI: You said you weren't gonna be here much longer. Then...? How do you want your mum and sister to remember you?

RUE: (long pause) As someone who tried really hard to be someone I couldn't.

ALI: I got faith in you.

RUE: Why?

ALI: I don't know. I just do. Granted I was a Christian before I became a Muslim, so I've been wrong before.