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This new dilemma is original. Nobody has ever lived it before. It's mine. I hold it close to my heart wherever I go. I walk with it, talk with it. I'm wrapped in it, warmed by it, smothered in it to the point of union. Where do I end and where does it begin? The two of us merge like a perfect pair of goatskin gloves. I feel my way in the world through it. I know the shape of things through it. The heft and weight and smell and sound of things through it.

Sometimes on Sundays, I take it out with me. On tables around us people raise their voices and glasses at each other, shouting niceties and nodding with fat benign approval at everything that happens. They share lemon meringue pies, drink Italian hot chocolate, swap brow-raising stories and make the shape of a lower case 'o' with their mouths before inserting teaspoons of frothed milk from the tops of cappuccinos. Meanwhile, waiters in satin vests dodge and trot, and mothers with prams stare blankly into space, stealing moments of empty nothing amidst the public buzz.

Excuse me Madam? Is this seat taken? Can I take this? Hello? Would you like another drink? Madam?

Being called Madam reminds me of India.

In India, all dilemmas are referred to the gods, with the help of incense and a lump of ghee. Alternatively, there are men who will read your palm for 100 rupees. They advertise in bright, cursive script and sometimes offer additional services such as removing 'black magic' and blessing new babies, brides and businesses. I once asked a gangly man sitting by the roadside next to such a sign to read my palm. He took my open hand, stared at it without a word for five minutes. At that time I was in a long-lingering dilemma, which I was savouring, rolling it around in my mind like a boiled sweet on the tongue. As I watched him reviewing my palm I wanted this little roadside pundit to have the answers. Then, shrugging, he let go of my hand, turned away and without a word, waved to a passing chai wallah. The tea arrived. I paid and waited. But this silent palmistry vendor just sat and sat under the midday sun. Perhaps he didn't speak English, I thought. Or perhaps I was supposed to give him the 100 rupees before he would give me his words. I raced to conclusions: I was going to die of a rare terminal disease

and he just didn't want to tell me! But just then my bus arrived and I reluctantly left the pundit, the chai and one version of my future there by the roadside.

How much do we really need to say out loud?

Hello Madam, coming from? What county?
Whatcountrycomingfrom? Hello?

Sometimes I reminisce about other dilemmas that I have known, always more beautiful in retrospect. They all end in the same way. It's always me. I realise that I am not very faithful. Life's far too long to have just one, surely, I reason. Can't I just sample a few until I decide on the very one?

I think I know how this one is going to end. We will walk and we will talk. But we won't talk much, only about little things. We'll notice the first sun of springtime. People walking with bare arms, scarves unpeeled from necks for the first time in dark months. A kind and tender sun that invites an afternoon nap. As we walk we'll see tiny buds tip-toeing on the ends of winter stems and then, kicking the damp leaves under our feet we will start to run. I'll be hoping to outrun it. But I know I'll become breathless while it pushes on and on, tireless and unrelenting. I will see it reach the top of the hill. And then it will stop too, eventually. We'll look at each other for quite a time like that. It looking down at me, me looking up at it.

A man on his afternoon walk might nod a simple grey kind of nod at me then, having no idea that he has just broken a delicate tension. His dog will pause beside me, raising its wet nose to my hand.

And everything will be bathed in that electric light that happens at the end of day, when the trees and grass seem to be lit from within. The last light from the first sun. As light fades and the night reveals itself, part of me will stay right there in that spot, merging with the gentle shadows. Comfortable in the arriving darkness. And the seasons will stumble over me one into the next in slow, looping circles around me. And it will all go on around me, and on and on, around me. Forever.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Lucy Broome.