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BEAUTY ADVENTURE  
**THE ONE  
 AND DONE**

Holly Millea has long been our cosmetic astronaut. For her eightieth Beauty Adventure, she goes where none in her orbit have gone before: She gets a facelift. Along the risk/reward curve, there's no procedure more daring. Here's what happened.

Whenever my editor Liesl calls me into the office, I know she's going to ask me to do something I won't want to do. It's much easier to twist my arm when my arm is in the room. Failing that, her headlock is very persuasive.

"The May issue is all about transformation," she begins, circling my chair. "Megan is wearing colored contacts; Cotton is getting hair extensions; April is undergoing eyebrow tattoos; and Keziah is cleansing with dirt."

For real? That's a thing? (Yes. And it is.)

"But you...you are a Beauty Adventuress. And you always want to do something *big*." Liesl snaps her fingers, points at me, and commands: "Say the first thing that comes to mind!"

"Run for the elevator!"

"The second thing that comes to mind!"

Shave my head? Pierce my nose? Lose

10 pounds? Stop procrastinating? I'd never make that deadline.

But what really comes to mind is a facelift.

I mean, I've been contemplating that leap for a while (as has Liesl, among other friends), for both professional and personal reasons. I earn my living in an industry where youth is the greatest currency, and I live in a city where women outnumber men. Need I say more? Yeah, I do want a facelift, in the same way I really do want a man in my life—like last night, when I woke up alone in my bed and the smoke-alarm battery needed changing. *Chirp...chirp...chirp...*

But then I think, What if I get what I want, and it ends in disaster? I'm not commitment-phobic, but I *am* life-altering-mistake averse. The wrong man, a bad facelift—there would be nothing worse than having to look in the mirror every day knowing I could have pret-

ty much lived happily ever after without one.

In the midst of the indecision and vacillation, my iPhone rings. I pull it out, pausing at my reflection in the black-screen glass. I send the caller to voice mail and turn to Liesl: "Count me in."

**A few weeks later**, the girls are abuzz with holiday plans over dinner at Freds at Barneys in New York. Virginia is visiting family in Philly, Betsy is finishing a documentary in Phoenix, and Renata is delivering Meals on Wheels in Manhattan. I announce I'll be hiding out in my apartment recovering from plastic surgery. It goes over like a lead fruitcake.

"Please tell me you're joking," Renata says. "What kind of plastic surgery?"

A brow lift, I tell them (*not* telling them that I'm actually going full Monty). I'm finally fixing my Frankenforehead, which is so heavy that I have a headache from lifting it all day. Having inherited this brow from my dad—a ringer for Marlon Brando—I ooze masculinity. What's worse, when my brow is relaxed, I look beady-eyed, shifty...guilty. I can't get away with anything anymore.

Virginia's not buying it. "If you lift your forehead, you'll end up with a five-head, and then you'll have to wear bangs. You might as well get bangs now and skip the surgery."

"I, for one, am excited to see if it works," Betsy says. "What's the big diff between Botox four times a year and a brow lift? And you won't have that wonky look everybody has the first week Botox settles in. It's not a big deal...not like a facelift."

Reflexively, I start pulling at the loose skin around my jowls, stretching it away from my face like Silly Putty. This is what I do when I get anxious.

"What are you doing?" Betsy asks.

"And why are you looking at *me* and doing that?" Virginia says. "You think I need a facelift?"

"No," Renata says, turning to me, narrowing her eyes. "*Holly* is getting one. Only—she wasn't going to tell us."

Betsy: "You are? This is *very* exciting!"

"Oh, stop already," Virginia says, holding her hand up. "Are you crazy? You're going to end up with your head in a jar!"

Over the last two decades, I've gone on 79 Beauty Adventures, many of which have informed my resolve. I've tried and tested all sorts of sundry youth-preserving methods.

# I am going to do this. I'm not going to feel ashamed or guilty or say sorry to anyone for saying yes to myself.

The stopgap measures work—for a while. Then it's out with the credit card, back for more. And more. And more often.

I see the surgery as an investment—and for me, it is a major investment. (The national average price for forehead, face, and neck is \$14,429: anesthesiologist, operating room, postoperative care, and batteries sold separately. The bigger the city, the bigger the price tags.) But nothing can dissuade me. I've done my homework, all the research. I've even watched the YouTube surgery videos. (Trust me, you do not want to see how the sausage is made.) I am going to do this. I want the mythic “one and done.” And I'm not going to feel ashamed or guilty or say sorry to anyone for saying yes to myself. Got it?

Yes, it's scary. It's my damn face. As we wait for a cab after dinner, Renata, my philosopher king-of-a-friend, says, “Facelifting is the anti-aging mother lode of courage and risk. I don't believe that you think you really *need* it. I think you really *want* to do it.”

I feel like a beauty astronaut, and this adventure? It's a moon shot. And my mission is to go there and back, to return safely—and, I hope, recognizable—and to report every detail.

Herewith, the story I wish I could have read before I decided to go for it.

**I meet Liesl at** the office of David Rosenberg, MD, the facial plastic surgeon I interviewed on my last adventure, whose scalpel has worked wonders on several of my industry acquaintances.

“First off, let's focus on the brow,” Rosenberg says, steering me to the floor-length mirror in his exam room. “It's hard to see the upper half of your eyeball when your brows are this heavy. And your outer lids are actually impeding your peripheral vision. An endoscopic brow lift softly elevates the entire brow in a way that the outer third is a bit more elegant.”

“The inner third comes up in a subtle way—there's no ‘deer in the headlights’

look. It just allows you to look rested.”

He stands behind me, lifting my forehead with his fingers, opening up my eyes. “*This is you,*” he says, looking at my reflection. “This is pretty. I would say that where you are right now is *not* you. It's not communicating a sense of vitality. It just makes you look exhausted and angry.”

Rosenberg gets down to the nuts and bolts of the procedure, or, in the case of an endoscopic brow lift, the Endotine absorbable fixation device—a triangular piece of what looks like plastic, the size of a thumbnail; it's flat on one side, with sharp barbs on the other. He pulls one out of the drawer.

“There are surgeons doing very beautiful coronal brow lifts,” Rosenberg says, referring

to the classic, old-school lift, wherein a single incision is made from one ear to the other across the top of the head, like a headband, and a strip of skin and tissue is removed. (Some consider it the gold standard, prized for its precision and permanence.) “You could do it, but you're buying a 16- or 18-inch scar with the potential for permanent hair loss. Endoscopic, there's no hair loss. The [four]



The author 10 days before her surgery (above), and two months post-op (right)



incisions are [each] the length of a pinkie nail. It's the easiest recovery of any operation I do.”

As with the coronal, in this lift the muscle and fat are released from the skull and elevated to a higher position. Rosenberg then attaches two Endotines, securing them via two tiny holes he drills into the skull, aligning them, in my case, with the middle of each eyebrow arch. Placement of the Endotines varies depending on the issues you're trying to correct; mine were placed a bit farther out than is typical, for maximum lift in the area of my forehead with the most droop. The five barbs evenly distribute the weight of and tension on the brow. “Think of it like hanging from a jungle gym,” Rosenberg says. “It's easier to hang using all of your fingers than just hanging by one.” He holds the device up to the light. “This is dissolvable sugar. It stays for five months, and the brow heals in the new position.”

Rosenberg estimates he does 200 of the 30-minute procedures a year. “Best-case scenario, three days you're perfect. If there were any recovery issues, there might be swelling here around the eyes. Maybe one in 50 will get a bruise.”

He addresses the rest of my mug. “Your jawline and cheeks have fallen,” he says, manipulating the soft clay of my skin. “A deep-plane facelift will restore the architecture of your face to reveal beautiful bone structure. The cheek will be highlighted, the jawline defined; no sense of pull.”

Pinching the slack skin of my neck, he gives it a wiggle. “This loose skin in the central neck will be gone.” Rosenberg hands me a mirror and, with his hand flat, irons everything slightly up. “This is a beautiful, elegant, soft change. Can you live with that?”

Liesl erupts, “I can!” We look at her.

I can live with it, too. Houston, I'm ready for lift-up in T-minus 10 days.

But first things first, and the first thing is Botox. “You have a very, very expressive face,” he says, injecting the muscles atop and between my eyebrows to prep me for surgery. “I can lift your forehead, but when you wake up and start frowning, you're going to pull the brow back down. Get Botox twice a year, and the lift will last a decade.”

**The day comes,** December 15, and I'm ready for launch. I wake up at 6 A.M.,

undergo caffeine withdrawal (no foods or liquids after midnight), exercise, vacuum, shower, do laundry, respond to a slew of well-wishers, pop an Ativan (prescribed by Rosenberg to prevent presurgical hysteria), and wait for Liesl to pick me up, as promised. Then she calls; she's stuck in traffic. So I walk alone the three blocks to his office. I know, only three blocks. I just wanted someone I love to hug me before I went under.

Wearing green scrubs, Rosenberg enters the exam room upbeat, tousle-haired, with the energetic confidence of a *Grey's Anatomy* star: "This is going to be fun!" I find his certainty comforting. Staring at me intently, he uses a fine marker, drawing incision guidelines on my scalp and around my ears.

I ask questions: Is he sure I won't lose any hair? "Positive." Will he take a decade off my face? "Trust me, you will not be underdone." But will I look like I had work? "Making your face more beautiful is an art form. I try to perfect doing living art, really individualizing it. You'll look like you."

"I'm not going to wake up with a five-head?"

"No!" he says. "Now you're going to have to stop talking, and let me go into my zone."

The anesthesiologist, Connie Ding, checks in, confirms my medical history, and takes me next door to the operating room, where I lie down and suddenly panic. Ding is all business. "This won't hurt," she says, sticking a catheter in my vein, leaving me just enough time to utter what could be my famous last words: "That *did* hurt."

Okay, I'm way beyond asleep. Where I am, right now, only God and maybe Vladimir Putin know. Meanwhile, here's what's happening as I'm traveling without a passport across conscious borders....

Van Morrison is playing on Pandora. Rosenberg, scalpel in hand, starts at my left temple first, careful to work beneath the frontal branch of the facial nerve (one slip of the knife and no more frowning, no more look of surprise, no more knitting of the brow).

Through a total of four small incisions just behind the hairline (one above each eyebrow and one in each temple), he inserts an endoscope—a fiber-optic camera the size of a straw. With the lighted endoscope in one hand, his cutting instrument in the other, and his eyes on the monitor, he releases the muscle fibers and underlying tissues from the skull and debulks the fibers—weakens them—leaving the forehead with "some expression—less harsh than what you had, but enough to keep you looking vibrant and

## No one will even suspect. Unless you tell everyone.

normal," Rosenberg says. (It used to be that the standard was to remove the muscle completely...which left you with a flat facial expression, not unlike a lobotomy.)

He then lifts my brow into an aesthetically pleasing position—overcorrecting by 10 percent to accommodate a slight drop that will happen once the postsurgical swelling recedes—and attaches it to the Endotines. Raising the operating table, he sees how gravity impacts the placement and, pleased with the result, lowers me back down. This has all taken 30 minutes.

Moving on to my neck, Rosenberg makes a one-and-a-half-inch incision just under my chin to access the platysma muscle—two thin sheets of muscle that extend from the collarbone all the way up to the midface, overlapping under the chin.

Like the elastic in a pair of tights, the platysma loosens with age, spreading out. The skin loses elasticity, too. The fix is removing an inch-wide vertical strip of the muscle where it overlaps, and endoscopically sewing the sides back together with eight internal stitches. Fifteen minutes' work.

Now Rosenberg turns to the right side of my face to begin tightening my jawline and redefining my cheek. Using his scalpel, he traces the curve where my ear meets my face, continuing down to the earlobe, up behind the ear, and into the hairline behind my ear for an inch and a half.

He peels back the skin of my cheek, locates the top of the platysma muscle, and goes under it into the deep plane, but above the facial nerve branches, and releases the muscle. A slip here, and sayonara to smiling, whistling, kissing....

Using a pair of \$500 porcelain scissors—"so, so sharp they require complete accuracy"—Rosenberg works above the muscle, freeing it from the skin. With the muscle suspended, he slides it back up onto the cheekbone, anchoring it in place using permanent internal stitches. He then moves on to the left cheek.

Redraping the skin, he trims the overage—an inch and a half on each side of my face and neck—and begins closing up all the incisions with such precision that suturing accounts for half the operation time.

Four hours, 100 itchy stitches, 10 staples, and two big Novocain injections later, my hair is washed, my head is wrapped, and I'm lying on a gurney floating back to earth.

I wake and feel so good (thanks to the pain-killing Novocain and Percocet) that before I even leave Rosenberg's office, I'm taking selfies with my home-care nurse, Melissa, and sending them out to my peeps—the postoperative equivalent of drunk-dialing.

Back in my apartment, I fall into a deep sleep, sitting up with my head wrapped in ice to keep the swelling down. The next morning, Melissa removes the bandages, and I look in the mirror. Relief doesn't begin to describe it. I feel the kind of euphoria one must feel after dodging a bullet or a malfunctioning guillotine. I've gotten away with a crime against nature.

The next few days are a Percocet blur of ice packs and sleeping upright, eating applesauce and tapioca pudding and popping arnica tablets, friends coming and going and calling and texting, and me taking progress pictures and shooting them out.

"Not smart to mass-text pics," Renata texts back.

**I should have locked** my phone away. I couldn't tell you whom I exposed myself to, or who in turn exposed me, bruised, swollen, my bright red ears looking like they've been removed and reattached, my deep purple neck matching my purple pajamas. I know firsthand the fascination that accompanies plastic-surgery procedures. Friends have sent me their pictures, and I've had to delete them—stat!—to save myself from being awful and showing them to other people. Don't ask me what the temptation is. All I know is that a close friend sent me a picture of her breast implants, and I would have flashed it a hundred times if I hadn't deleted it as promised on the life of my dog, Truman.

Day four, off the pain meds, out of the fog—and, I must say, looking relatively good—I call Liesl and scold her for not visiting me. "I did!" she says. "I brought a bottle of wine. Your second cousin was staying the weekend with you. She was visiting from Yale. Don't you remember?" I have a second cousin?

(Apparently Joanna and Germaine came by with a bottle of champagne "and we put the lights on your Christmas tree," Joanna says. "How do you think they got there?" Elves!)

The first thing Renata says seeing me is, "Holy shit. Good for you! Don't take this the wrong way. It's not that you look younger—it's that he made you prettier. Honestly, you've

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## THE ONE AND DONE

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never looked this feminine. It's the eyes. They're more open. And your eyebrows are higher—and arched."

She asks whom I've seen, heard from, but it's whom I *haven't* seen or heard from that hurts. They number both family and friends.

Renata distills it: "When one of us goes for it, it gives anxiety to the others, no matter the outcome. If it looks good, we're torn between elation that we too can take the plunge, and resentment that the voices pushing us to do it just got louder: *Look, Holly did it*. Or if it looks bad, now we're totally panicked because we can't get off the assembly line of aging, and we have to stick with our bags and sags. So chances are, no one is really happy to see your facelift because it triggers too many selfish emotions. But I'm happy for you, truly."

And she truly is. Renata picks up her iPhone and finds two pictures she snapped on the sly. One was of me at the pre-op dinner, the other taken earlier tonight, when I thought she was sending a text. The first photo is unkind; my mouth is awkwardly open, my forehead pushed up into Shar-Pei creases, my facial wrinkles amplified by the overhead lighting. The second is a bad angle, but even so, you can see the wave of Rosenberg's wand. I look like me—photo-shopped. Renata says, "You're a lucky girl."

### THE OFT-ASKED QUESTION: "Does it hurt?"

On a pain scale of 1 to 10, I register whiny. I keep a recovery journal, most of which will read like a litany of bratty, spoiled, high-end complaints: *Must sleep on doughnut-hole pillow as ears ache inside and outside...scalp numb yet still weirdly itchy...neck feels like it's in a choke hold, major bruising...hurts to open mouth and floss teeth...mood swinging way up, way down...cheeks, neck numb...great day, UPS guy called me "miss"...can feel Endotines beneath my scalp like budding horns...totally anxious...brushing hair feels like brushing doll's head...sparks flying through face as nerves reconnect...lumps under jaw...ears sticking out, HUGE...what's this line still doing around my mouth?...me so pretty...earlobes hot, swollen...hurts neck to talk too much...forehead*

*falling down?...stretching neck back out talking too much?...eyes uneven?...did he do enough???*

Of course, it would not be a Beauty Adventure if there weren't complications. I was the one in 50 who got bruising. And two weeks in, I wake up to a bald spot the size of a quarter right near the front of my hairline. The vanity gods are punishing me! Panicked, I call Rosenberg's office. He's in surgery, his patient coordinator, Janie Indursky, says. "But come in; Dr. Paul's here."

That would be Dr. Benjamin Paul, Rosenberg's very tall, dark colleague, professorially handsome and spectacled in rectangular frames. Married. One child. I had to ask. He saw me last week when I had my stitches and staples removed, and again when I was convinced I'd gone forever cockeyed. (Diagnosis: uneven swelling. Absolutely normal.)

Paul enters the examining room, smiling, "Who are you?" (That's a joke—an "I'm so pretty now he doesn't recognize me" joke.) I tell him we have to stop meeting like this and point to the bald patch.

"I see that," he says, confirming I'm not crazy. "There's nothing long-term to be worried about. It's root shock. It happens. It could be the anesthesia alone—you could go in for bariatric surgery and, just from the anesthesia, get these little patches. And honestly, if you operate on the scalp, sometimes the neighboring hair follicles feel stress from the event and they can shed.

"It can take anywhere from six weeks to three months before it starts to regrow. So I wouldn't expect next week it's going to be growing. Seriously, it's temporary.

"One thing you can do is change your part one millimeter over," Paul says. "Just take a few hairs from this side and pull them over it." Like a comb-over?

"That's what I would do. Take a few of these hairs..." He re-parts my hair. "And it's gone!" And yet, still there!

Paul crosses his arms and furrows his brow: "Are you a worrier?"

No! I'm a woman with a bald spot in the front of my head! Poor Dr. Paul.

"You're going to be absolutely fine. In a month or two, you'll have forgotten this was even a thing. The eyes are looking better, by the way. The swelling is down 50 percent."

He checks my head for "spit stitches," the dissolvable ones that sometimes work their way out to the surface. They feel like little bristles. He takes a pair of medical tweezers and plucks: Ouch! Ouch! Ouch!

Rosenberg pops his head in the door. "I just finished up, and I heard you were here," he says. "You look great!" I tell him I'm embarrassed to admit that I wish he'd hiked my forehead up a teensy bit more, say, an extra 5 percent.

"In plastic surgery, one centimeter is a lot,"

Rosenberg says. "So you have to balance beauty with risk. Yes, there's a subtle hooding that persists over your eyes. I like to keep that. It's perfectly imperfect. Trying to get rid of everything becomes evident to the layperson. Whereas this..." No one will even suspect. Unless you tell everyone.

The late, great Nora Ephron, who felt bad about her neck, once told me: "Tell one, tell a thousand."

Every time I see my doorman, he circles his face with an index finger and gives me the thumbs-up. Neighbors knock on my door under the auspices of borrowing something, or to ask if my cable's working, or to invite me over or themselves in for a glass of wine, which inevitably leads to a play-by-play and an iPhone slide show. Doris, a beautiful older woman, an actress who makes her living as an extra, stops me in the lobby: "Your facelift is great. Now, don't sit in your apartment. Get out there! Don't waste it."

I swing by Renata's New Year's party, and the heads in the room swivel in unison. A woman I've met once, whose name I can't recall, tells me I look fantastic. I smile, fishing for how much she knows. Renata showed you the pictures, right? "Yes!"

Excuse me, but I have to go strangle her. I find Renata in the kitchen and let her have it. "But you're writing about it!" she says, apologizing, deleting the photos on her iPhone. "You have to decide whether you're a private person or a memoirist. And after everything you've written over the years, I think you know the answer." She's right, but she's still wrong.

Meanwhile, Virginia, one of my oldest, best friends, is MIA. Aside from one text—"How's the face?"—we haven't seen each other since our dinner at Freds. Her absence is more painful to me than the surgery.

By the end of March, three months out, all the feeling has returned to my scalp, and baby hairs are sprouting through my bald spot. My ears are still a little sore; my neck still feels stiff and tight and numb-ish. Rosenberg says it'll take six months before the final results are in. (I promise an update.) But honestly, I don't think about any of it that much. This face has become my new norm. I no longer look in the mirror wondering, wishing, wanting, waiting... no more waiting.

I meet Germaine for a drink at City Hops, the craft-beer pub in our neighborhood where Joel, a handsome hipster bartender with a man-bun, gives us a round of pints, chats us up, and asks if we're sisters. Huge compliment, as Gem is beautiful. (We look nothing alike.) And funny, as we've been here a dozen times pre-op. Joel just doesn't recognize it's me.

Our friend Joanna breezes in, and the place starts filling up. Am I imagining this, or are we

getting lots of attention? I mean, even me.

"I'll tell you what it is," Jo says, leaning in. "Before, you felt better than you looked, and now, you look better than you feel."

Oh, I don't know. I feel pretty great—more lighthearted, more open, more brave. Yes, subtly and majorly—and still transforming.



## THE PROPHET

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degree, shared with other commonwealth nations, whose double remove from the British aristocracy, by class and geography, created a sniffy social MO to put people in their place. Since shame and a rebellion from shame are inherent to the human condition, Munro's and Atwood's familiarity with these psychic twins gives them an excellent vantage point to connect with a vast readership.

Munro, though, never changed course; she just honed her subject and her form to an otherworldly perfection. Munro's talent is the talent of magic, like the Rocky Mountains, or some other sublime natural wonder. Atwood is not sublime—even her magical confidence is made explicable by loving and accepting parents. (The only time Atwood is without a decisive comment or new addition to push our conversation forward is when her mother comes up. "She died at 97," she says, then pauses for a long stretch before adding, in a tone inflected with the unresolved, "Anyway, back to the present.") But in remaining open to the contemporary rather than holing up with her muse, Atwood has produced work that is true to her public role, and her public role is true to her work—an achievement perhaps equal to magic. Atwood has what people used to want, gravitas and depth, but has also grabbed the new golden ring on life's wacked carousel: She's an image-based *influencer*.

"When she came to visit the set for the first time," Bruce Miller says, "everyone got into their costumes, and all the actors who played handmaids lined up in rows and, as he walked through, bowed their heads."



## BRITTANY FEIWELL

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sure everyone has enough."

It takes more than an hour of talking with her before we get to the thing that I couldn't figure out: How is it that a moderate, the Jewish daughter of a father who emigrated from Spain, and a woman who grew up in culturally diverse Miami, voted for Donald Trump? How is it that she supports the travel ban, versions 1.0 and 2.0? She tells me it's because she lived in New York City and worked near the World Trade Center, and September 11, 2001, was her last day of work before she was to move to L.A. She slept in a bit that morning, and that's why she wasn't at her office on Wall Street when the planes hit. When she woke, she could see the smoking Twin Towers out her bedroom window, and all these years later during anniversary remembrances, she can still smell that terrible acrid smell. When Trump talked about Islamic terrorism, it resonated with her; it didn't seem unreasonable to have a 90-day restriction on a few countries, she says, while the government checks people out. "My understanding is that it's temporary—as a way to reset."

She gets her news online, mostly from social media, but she also watches the *Today* show and *The View* religiously, as well as *Meet the Press*. She didn't know about the fascists supporting Trump or the alt-right conference in late November in DC where people *sieg-heiled*. Her right-wing Facebook feeds, of course, hadn't mentioned them; the soft-focus TV shows don't talk about those kinds of things, either; and her liberal friends have gotten so enraged that when they started screaming about Nazis, Feiwell thought it was hyperbole. "I'm Jewish, and I'm the daughter of an immigrant, and I'm a woman—and I wish people could get themselves away from that polarizing view," she says.

We're talking in March, after several weeks in which scores of Jewish cemeteries across the country had been vandalized, and Jewish community centers and synagogues were re-

ceiving bomb threats. Feiwell tells me, "If we had talked last week, I would have been like, 'I'm supernervous.' People really wanted him to speak out against hate. Locally, we've had three bomb threats on our [Jewish community center] in the last two weeks, and I have friends who work closely with the JCC, and we went to temple this morning—so I was like, I feel really sick about this. There was a lot of social media asking, 'Why won't he just come out against hate?'" He did. Eventually.

Feiwell accepted Trump's lateness in commenting on the acts: "My husband sent me two articles: [Trump] came out against hate in the election; he came out against hate [this time]. He can't tackle every issue at exactly the moment that everybody wants him to."

She's preoccupied with the rage she sees on the left and how impossible it's becoming for her to reason with people, because she isn't actually a white nationalist or a gun nut and doesn't see herself as really anything but a moderate who is frequently reminded of the most terrifying day of her life and votes according to her deeply held fears for the safety of her family. Yes, she was cool with the travel bans; what made her unhappy was the way they were rolled out. "I think that these types of policies to protect our country and Americans need to be moderate, like I consider myself to be. So when we talk about the Muslim ban, the way it came out and the way they executed it is not moderate. But I agree with the principle of it.... But then President Trump is so crass and says things exactly as they are in his mind, and in a way, that isolates—so I was off-put by that."

She'd be more inclined to engage with the liberals screaming for impeachment if they'd stop screaming and start talking. When I say that I want Trump impeached—not just because I disagree with nearly all of his policies (and, so far, all of his appointments and all of his executive orders) but because it's the only way that we'll get the information we need on his taxes and foreign entanglements (impeachment would mean months of discovery and documents that Congress would make available to the public) and because I do not believe he can govern under the weight of suspicion that his campaign possibly colluded with Russia—it makes sense to her. "That's not at all what you hear, though," Feiwell says. "You just hear people calling you hateful, and it's hard to engage with that."

She cast a single vote in a system of millions of voters: Why, she wants to know, is she reduced, through willful misunderstanding by half the country, to a single decision in her life, given all the rest of who she is? "I want people to understand," she says, "that some people who voted for Trump really gave consideration and thought and care to it."