

there is a woman I see almost every saturday at the v de p the saint vincent de paul thriftshop in cotuit where I shop for treasure each week after my class she is old a volunteer let's call her phyllis she still calls me blondie and tells me that my haircut and color are not very feminine *it's a shame* she says *such a pretty face that gray hair makes you look so old* she's a talker and mostly deaf and mistakenly takes me for a kindred spirit she often launches right in when I see her as if she has been saving up the topic all week her ex son-in-law turned out to be a homo-sexual didn't you know everybody was very surprised they got her daughter a good jew lawyer who will make sure that the homo ex doesn't get to see his kids she says she always asks herself *what would jesus do* and in fact wears a little pin on her lapel the enameled initials WWJD and can you believe that they want to change columbus day to indigenous peoples day isn't that ridiculous the indians oh I mean the native americans she says in air quotes are behind it almost as ridiculous as martin luther king day like that should be a holiday some people *of color* she is fond of air quotes just wanted an extra day off I don't celebrate it believe you me sometimes Julia is with me and phyllis tells her how pretty she is and looks at me and tells me I will have to lock her up when she is older she looks back at Julia and says with what sounds like malice *you'll have to beat them off with a stick they are gonna go go go for you girlie* and that poor awful boy who shot up that school in florida was a mentally ill orphan brainwashed by video games she feels for those families but what are you going to do mental illness is such a problem *what would jesus do* I ask she says and isn't it terrible that a slut of a whore of porn star who isn't even that attractive is suing the president of the united states of america she says *me too* in air quotes again *it has come to this* she says *people are despicable* she says and I say loud enough for her to hear or perhaps read my lips: *yes, phyllis people are despicable* there is no point really in responding 1. she is deaf and 2. I cannot change her and frankly I look forward to seeing her the material is too good but I am careful to explain to Julia on the ride home that phyllis is wrong that most of the folks at the v de p do not think and certainly do not speak like phyllis I tell her that phyllis is in her late 80s which is a very good thing I tell her it is our job to compensate for people like phyllis that we must be extra kind to folks in the world because of people like her julia asks *what would jesus do*

what would jesus do? who would jesus cage?
 who would jesus shoot? what war would jesus wage?

whose pussy would jesus grab? what would jesus sneer at?
 who would jesus mock? who would jesus leer at?

who would jesus catcall? what would jesus tweet?
 who would jesus gaslight? who would jesus cheat?

who would jesus hate? what lies would jesus tell?
 who would jesus bully? what snake oil would jesus sell

who would jesus scam? who would jesus frame?
 who would jesus rape? who would jesus blame?

who would jesus threaten? who would jesus screw
what would jesus steal? what would jesus do?

make kindness great again
make racism wrong again
make the truth true again
we shall overcome
amen