



CARL. (*Backing away.*) No, no, of course, you're still married.

MICHAEL. I knew it. You still have a thing for Jill.

CARL. I don't have a thing for Jill.

MICHAEL. You hugged her. I saw it. And you don't hug people without intent.

CARL. It was a hug. You should try it. Okay, so, what happened? When did you and Jill separate?

MICHAEL. Three weeks ago.

CARL. Okay, hold on a second. You're giving me crap for Rita leaving me at the same time that Jill left you?

MICHAEL. I never said she left me. Maybe I left her.

CARL. Did you leave her?

MICHAEL. (*Cries.*) Nooo.

CARL. I'm surprised it took this long.

MICHAEL. Why would you say that?

CARL. I just figured she was with you for your money.

MICHAEL. You think she was with me for my money?

CARL. Well, why else would she be with you? I mean, come on.

(*He gestures to MICHAEL.*)

MICHAEL. I have good qualities.

CARL. Yeah, sure, you do. Okay, so, what happened?

MICHAEL. Well, when I got back from rehab, things were -

CARL. (*Interrupting him.*) Whoa, whoa, whoa, you went to rehab?

MICHAEL. Yeah.

CARL. Like "Betty Ford" rehab?

MICHAEL. Hazelden. I thought you knew.

CARL. No. When?

MICHAEL. The first time or the second time?

CARL. You went there twice?!

MICHAEL. I thought you knew.

CARL. Why would I know that? You never told me.

MICHAEL. Well, if we talked more than once a year.

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CARL. Why would we do *that*?

MICHAEL. I was there for a month both times. Charlie Sheen was there. I'm not supposed to tell you that.

CARL. What were you in for? Is that how you say it, or is that for prison?

MICHAEL. Mostly alcohol.

CARL. "Mostly"? Oh, jeez, I don't even wanna know.

MICHAEL. Thanks for the support.

CARL. How did it get to this?

MICHAEL. I don't know, the pressure of not having a baby, the fear of losing Jill, pressure at work, take your pick.

CARL. You can't go to rehab.

MICHAEL. Why not?

CARL. You're my older brother. You're supposed to be the squared away one.

MICHAEL. I couldn't help it. It's a disease.

CARL. Cancer is a disease.

MICHAEL. Look, I'm fine now.

CARL. You know what kind of pressure this puts on me to be the responsible one? I don't wanna be responsible. I don't wanna have to step up to the plate. I like being second most squared away. I'm comfortable with it. There's no pressure.

MICHAEL. "Second most squared away"? I think you just gave yourself a promotion.

CARL. You mean I'm third?

CARL. Oh

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CARL. Oh, for crap sake.

MICHAEL. Seriously, are you happy?

CARL. Well, yeah, I mean, not *now*.

MICHAEL. When are you happy?

CARL. Well...when I write an article that people like.

MICHAEL. Any other time?

CARL. Alright, when I'm with Rita, okay. I'm happy then. Is that what you wanted to hear?

MICHAEL. Yeah. Good for you, you figured it out. Happiness is not real unless it's shared.

CARL. Says the guy who's separated from his wife.

MICHAEL. She left me for no reason.

CARL. 'Cause you're a jerk.

MICHAEL. Not helping.

CARL. Ya know, we're kinda in the same boat, okay.

MICHAEL. (*Emotional.*) I can't lose Jill. She makes me wanna be human.

CARL. Well, it's good that you can dream.

MICHAEL. (*Holding back tears.*) If I lose Jill, I will fall into the dark abyss, and I will never come out.

(*He cries.*)

CARL. See? There is a bright side.

Stop

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(MOM, GRANDMA, and STACY come out of the kitchen. STACY is carrying a plate with a cheese ball and crackers. She sets it on the coffee table.)

MICHAEL. (*Whispers to CARL.*) Don't tell anyone about Jill.

MOM. Is everyone okay out here?

CARL. Jill left Michael.

MOM. Oh, no.

MICHAEL. Thanks.

CARL. And he was in rehab.

STACY. What?

MOM. Well, I knew that.