

STACY. Do you know what this means? It means that I have reached the top of the sibling food chain in this family.

MOM. (To STACY.) Ya know, honey, I think some advice might help right now.

GRANDMA. Everybody's lookin' for advice and help these days. We never asked for help. When I was growin' up on the farm, I got thrown from a horse when I was twelve and broke my leg. Set it myself, then walked home.

UNCLE BOB. Why didn't ya ride the horse home?

GRANDMA. The horse had an unfortunate "accident."

UNCLE BOB. Ya killed it?

GRANDMA. No. But he never reproduced again.

UNCLE BOB. (Impressed.) Whoa, that is hot. I tell ya, if you were twenty years younger...

GRANDMA. You couldn't handle me *today*.

MICHAEL. Okay, back to us. I'm just looking for clues to work this out, honey.

CARL. It sounds to me like Jill is testing Michael, to see if he's worth staying with.

JILL. Well, if we don't have trust and respect, and don't love each other then why stay together?

CARL. Why do people get married? It's just a bunch of pain and suffering.

STACY. Because love is worth waiting for even if it takes a lifetime. Then, in return, a lifetime of love will be waiting for you.

MOM. Amen.

CARL. You get that on a Hallmark card?

STACY. Shoebox.

UNCLE BOB. I say that love is not letting people spy on you.

(He closes CARL's computer.)

CARL. And you did that because...?

UNCLE BOB. The government is watching our every move. They can see us through your computer. Not to mention the Chinese hackers.

CARL. Chinese hackers?

UNCLE BOB. I told ya not to mention it.

CARL. I think you're a little paranoid, Uncle Bob.

UNCLE BOB. Am I? Right now, the Chinese are loading up all the public storage units in the U.S. with guns and ammo. At a certain time, their government will call every Chinese restaurant, give 'em a code, and they'll get all the guns out of storage and attack us.

JILL. I knew it.

STACY. What's the code?

CARL. Crouching Tiger, Hidden Mushu.

(CARL holds out his fist. STACY pounds it.)

UNCLE BOB. You can laugh, but who's got the underground bunker with a year's supply of beef gerbils?

JILL. *(Whimpers.)* Ohhh.

UNCLE BOB. *(Correcting himself.)* I mean, jerky.

(Holds a stick of beef jerky out to CARL.)

Want some?

CARL. NO!

UNCLE BOB. *(Putting it away.)* I have a confession to make.

MICHAEL. Oh, I think you've said enough.

CARL. No, let him speak.

(He takes out the notepad and pen.)

UNCLE BOB. It's to someone I care for, in case we're keepin' score in our contest.

STACY. This should be good.

UNCLE BOB. Helen, there's something I've wanted to say to you for a long time.

MOM. And I'm sure it's good. Is anybody hungry?

UNCLE BOB. There's a reason I haven't called or been around for a few years.

MOM. Oh, you don't need a reason not to be around.

UNCLE BOB. The reason is, I wanted to give you a little time to mourn before making my intentions known.

CARL. What now? What's happening?

STACY. This is awesome.

UNCLE BOB. I've always had a little thing for Helen... Who knows what would have happened if my brother didn't win her over.

MICHAEL. Are you talking about our dad, who was married to Mom for thirty-five years?

UNCLE BOB. May he rest in peace.

CARL. Is this uncomfortable for anyone else other than me?

MICHAEL. Yes.

MOM. (*Uncomfortable.*) Who wants a drink?

(GRANDMA raises her hand.)

UNCLE BOB. I don't know if you knew this, but your mom and I dated before she met your dad.

CARL. Whoa.

JILL. Oh, my gosh.

STACY. I didn't know that.

MICHAEL. Crap in a basket.

GRANDMA. That was my prison name.

MOM. Ya know, we really don't have to go into this.

STACY. Yes, we do.

UNCLE BOB. I actually introduced your mom to your dad.

STACY. Wow.

MICHAEL. There's nothing good that's coming outta this story.

UNCLE BOB. He stole her from me.

MOM. Oh, it wasn't exactly like that.

UNCLE BOB. Your mom was so gentle.

MICHAEL. *(He closes his eyes and puts his fingers in his ears so he can't hear.)* La la la la la la.

UNCLE BOB. Oh, yeah, she used to hold me like a baby chick.

MICHAEL. Is this happening?

UNCLE BOB. She used to wash my hair on Thursdays. Scrub a dub dub.

MICHAEL. Please stop.

MOM. They don't wanna hear about that.

MICHAEL. Nope.

STACY. I do.

UNCLE BOB. Your mom almost didn't marry your dad.

CARL. She what?

MOM. We don't need to go into this.

UNCLE BOB. She had doubts right up to the wedding day.

CARL. Is that true?

UNCLE BOB. Oh, yeah. She was conflicted.

CARL. Conflicted. What does that mean?

GRANDMA. Having feelings that disagree with one another.

CARL. No, I mean...

UNCLE BOB. *(To MOM.)* Would you like to tell 'em?

MOM. No, I would not.

STACY. Tell us.

MOM. *(Holds up the plate of little wieners to the others.)* Wieners?

UNCLE BOB. All I can say is, Michael, you have a lot of my characteristics.

JILL. Whoa.

CARL. Wait, so Michael is your...

MICHAEL. NOOOOOOOOOO!

End of Act I