

ROZ. Sure.

ETHEL. I haven't heard a single word you've said.

ROZ. ...Grandma, can I please get you your hearing aid!!!

ETHEL. All right. Fine. One glass. ...Now listen to me, young lady. The theatre may be dying. The glamorous invalid may be crawling through the desert with but a single lung in its feeble chest, but it is still breathing and it is all we've got. It is our lifeline to humanity. Without it, we would all be Republicans. I'm very tired now, dear, and I'm going to lie down. *(At the door.)* It's wonderful having you back.

(ETHEL exits. ROZ runs to the door and shouts:)

ROZ. GRANDMA! I LOVE YOU!

(At which moment, we hear a knock at the street door.)

Come in. (...Knock knock knock.) Come in! (...Knock knock knock; angry:) Would you come in, please, the door's open!!

SECT II

(HOWARD enters. He's in his late 20's, very good-natured and quite good-looking. At the moment, he's rather frightened.)

HOWARD. ...Sweetheart?

ADDITION

ROZ. Hi, honey. Come on in.

(They kiss.)

HOWARD. Are your parents here?

ROZ. I don't think so.

HOWARD. *(Relieved.)* Oh, good.

ROZ. Howard...

HOWARD. Well I'm sorry. You know how I feel about this. "Meeting the in-laws." It makes me nervous.

ROZ. You have nothing to worry about.

HOWARD. I'd be all right if they weren't such...big stars. The glamorous life...

ROZ. Howard, does this look glamorous?

(ROZ indicates the room.)

HOWARD. (*Looking around.*) ... Well, yeah. It does.

ROZ. This is Buffalo, New York. It's like... Scranton without the charm.

HOWARD. I was born here, actually.

ROZ. Oh.

HOWARD. I like Scranton, too.

ROZ. Howard, the point is, it's not Broadway. And they're doing rep!

HOWARD. Right... What's "rep" again?

ROZ. More than one play. In repertory. They alternate. Right now it's *Private Lives*, by Noel Coward, and *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Only they've cut down *Cyrano* for a small company. They do it with five actors.

HOWARD. Aha. The sort of... one-nostril version.

(*He laughs; then sighs with anxiety.*)

ROZ. It's sort of sweet that you're nervous about meeting them.

HOWARD. Nervous? Look at me, I'm a wreck! Do they know that I'm in show business, too?

ROZ. Howard, you're not exactly in show business. I mean, they wouldn't think of it as show business.

HOWARD. Oh. (*Beat.*) I am on television.

ROZ. You're a weatherman.

HOWARD. Right I mean, it's kind of acting, like your parents.

ROZ. Howard, they do Shakespeare. And Chekhov. You do precipitation.

HOWARD. (*Glum.*) Yeah, I know...

ROZ. Howard, I'm very proud of you. It's a wonderful job. We can settle down and have children—

HOWARD. I love children. I want to have six, at least.

ROZ. Let's start with one.

HOWARD. Okay.

ROZ. Now listen to me. I want you to be very, very nice to them. Tell them how much you admire their work.

HOWARD. Well I *do!* I mean, my God, when I was a kid, they were on the cover of *Life* magazine. "Shakespeare on Broadway—"

ROZ. "Look Out Barrymores, Here Come the Hays." They had it reproduced on their china.

HOWARD. Wow.

ROZ. Then they had two big flops in a row and went to Hollywood.

HOWARD. Yeah, I know. I saw every movie they ever made!

ROZ. Good—

HOWARD. "Sergeant Yukon," "Apache Woman—"
(*Suddenly.*) Oh my God! I forgot the bag!

ROZ. What bag?

HOWARD. I have a surprise for your father. When I was in New York last week, I read in the paper about an auction. They were selling off props and stuff from one of the big studios and...well, I bought one of your father's old costumes. I thought he'd like it.

ROZ. That is so sweet! Which one did you get?

HOWARD. General George S. Patton! Wait'll you see it! The trouble is, I don't have anything for your mother yet. I guess she wouldn't take cash...?

ROZ. Howard. They will love you for who you are.

HOWARD. What if I freeze up?! I-I-I do that sometimes, when I'm nervous! I can't even remember my own...
name.

ROZ. You'll be fine! I promise! (*A kiss.*) All right?

HOWARD. ...All right.

ROZ. I'll see if they're in their dressing rooms.

HOWARD. I'll go with you.

ROZ. You stay here, in case they show up.

HOWARD. I'd rather go with you—