

*At rise: ZACH and MORGAN are discovered sitting at opposite ends of a kitchen table, heads buried in their books as they work on their college assignments. After a while, ZACH emits a heavy sigh.*

ZACH

*(Without looking up from his book.)*

Why do they have to make this stuff so damn hard?

MORGAN

*(Without looking up from her book.)*

So that you learn.

*(Pause. Presently, ZACH looks up from his book, his attention distracted by something.)*

ZACH

Did I just hear a car pull up?

MORGAN

*(Still not looking up.)*

I didn't hear anything.

*(Soon after a knock at the door is heard.)*

ZACH

It was! I knew I heard somethin'.

*(ZACH rises and exits R. to answer the door.)*

ZACH

*(Off.)*

Uncle Nero!

*(MORGAN covers her face with her hands in dismay. Momentarily, UNCLE NERO enters, followed by ZACH.)*

UNCLE NERO

Indeed, 'tis I! Yer favourite Uncle in the entire world...in the entire universe...in the entire...whatever weird shit lies beyond that, right? Ha, ha!

*(UNCLE NERO looks over at MORGAN, who still has her head buried in her book.)*

UNCLE NERO

An' it's very nice to see you, too, Miss Morgan.

MORGAN

*(Looking up, her voice devoid of enthusiasm.)*

Hi, Uncle Nero.

UNCLE NERO

*(Dismissively.)*

Yeah. *(Beat.)* Well anyways, I was just passin' through so I figured I'd drop by an' pay a visit on yer folks. They about?

ZACH

Oh, you just missed 'em, Uncle Nero.

UNCLE NERO

Well, darn it, wouldn't ya know it!

ZACH

They go down and help out at the soup kitchen on Tuesday evenin's nowadays.

UNCLE NERO

*(With a derisive snort.)*

They do what? What in the name of the Lord do they wanna be doin' somethin' like that for?

MORGAN

*(Superciliously.)*

Uh, to help the less fortunate.

UNCLE NERO

Nothin' but a bunch o' junkies an' idlers lurkin' round them places. Your folks better watch out or they could find themselves in a whole heap o' trouble in no time flat.

ZACH

Do ya think so?

UNCLE NERO

Why sure, Zach, as sure as I'm standin' here. Them places are magnets for the worst o' the worst: thieves, rapists, druggies, perverts – you name it.

ZACH

Sweet Jesus, we oughta do somethin'. (*Turning to MORGAN.*) We oughta do somethin', Morgan.

MORGAN

You're not falling for that, are you?

ZACH

Fallin' for what?

MORGAN

His scaremongering. He's just trying to get you all worked up, that's all.

UNCLE NERO

Oh, is that right, Missy Morgan?

MORGAN

Yes, Uncle Nero, that's one hundred percent right.

UNCLE NERO

Says who?

MORGAN

Says me. What you just told him is a bunch of baloney.

UNCLE NERO

And how would you know? Been readin' about it in one o' yer weak-kneed, rainbow-colored college newspapers, have ya? Been discussin' it over lattes and cup cakes with yer skinny-jeaned classmates who think they know all about the world before they've even got one foot inside the door?

MORGAN

No, Uncle Nero – because I volunteered at the same soup kitchen during my winter break last year.

ZACH

You never told me that.

MORGAN

Trust me, there's plenty I don't tell you.

UNCLE NERO

An' you expect me and young Zach here to believe that?

MORGAN

I don't expect anything; I'm just telling you the truth.

UNCLE NERO

Pah! The truth – you mean *your* truth.

MORGAN

It's not my truth. We don't have our own truths. There is only one and I just told it to you.

UNCLE NERO

Listen to that, Zach – now she's tryin' to getcha all confused.

ZACH

(*To MORGAN.*)

But I don't get it – if you did what you said you did, how come you never told me?

MORGAN

Just because I never told you, it doesn't mean it didn't happen.

UNCLE NERO

Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't.

ZACH

Yeah, maybe it does, maybe it doesn't.

MORGAN

Uh huh. And I guess since no one told you that your Uncle Nero here was caught with a prostitute at the Econo Lodge out on Route 10 a couple of years back means that didn't happen either?

UNCLE NERO

Lies! Damn lies!

ZACH

What are you talkin' about?

MORGAN

I heard Mom and Dad discussing it one night as I was passing by their room.

UNCLE NERO

Good God alive, Zach, can you believe this one? First she's spewin' her lies every which way, and now we come to find out she's been sneakin' round the house spyin' on y'all.