

JOHNNY

(Waving hand in dismissal.)

Ehhhhh

SHIRLEY

Oh, I'm hungry! I'm gonna go try some of that chocolate cake they're serving.

MITZI

Oh, Lord . . .

SHIRLEY

Be right back!
(Exits.)

START

MITZI

(Suddenly remembering)

Oh, Johnny! *Chocolate cake!*

JOHNNY

Huh??

MITZI

When Bob Hope came, we had that gigantic chocolate cake in the shape of a battleship! Remember?

JOHNNY

Hmmm . . .

MITZI

And it was the same week we had the follies! We did all that work, building the stage, and getting the music together . . . ?

JOHNNY

That was the same week?

(Pause as he thinks.)

I remember that big cake. Lord. Someone there, doing a show. But I could have sworn it was George Burns. No, but wait, maybe he was there at a different time. Maybe Christmas.

(Throws hands up in defeat.)

I don't know!

MITZI

The follies were a hoot! Tommy and all those navy guys dressed up like women! Those grass skirts and makeup!

JOHNNY

I loved that!

MITZI

Bunch of clowns!

(They laugh and laugh. Pause as they look at each other.)

JOHNNY

Fifty years . . . wow.

MITZI

Yep.

JOHNNY

Mitzi, where did all that time go?

MITZI

Johnny . . . tell me, seriously. How is life in Fremont? How are things?

JOHNNY

I'm getting by.

MITZI

Are you still volunteering at the library?

JOHNNY

No. Had to give that up.

MITZI

Oh.

JOHNNY

It got to where I had trouble focusing for long periods of time. I just had to stop. I feel pretty good, overall, I guess.

(Pause. He is more uncomfortable.)

Some of the . . . of the infantry stuff comes back to me time and again.

MITZI

Ohh . . .

JOHNNY

Lots of it, to be honest.

MITZI

How many years has your wife been gone?

JOHNNY

Exactly three.

MITZI

And you're not dating?

JOHNNY

No. I . . . I tried. Sort of.

MITZI

Well, come on. Surely you've got something going on.

JOHNNY

Not a whole lot. Darwin and I play cards, and, you know, we have lunch.

MITZI

You just don't . . . seem happy, Johnny.

JOHNNY

In some ways, my life didn't turn out the way it was supposed to, Mitzi. That's all. Lots of things have happened over the years. I mean, I'm okay. The war . . . well, it really did a number on me.

(Pause.)

But, you know, I got into gardening. I see my grandkids every now and again. When my son isn't too busy with *his* life.

MITZI

Not dating. Tsk-tsk-tsk. You always were mysterious with the women, weren't you?

JOHNNY

Oh, please. Give me a break. You were the one nurse that caught the eye of every soldier in the Pacific.

MITZI

Johnny!

JOHNNY

Mrs. Mitzi, who volunteered to run the follies so she could be around all those officers. Mrs. Mitzi, who was always late for our dates.

MITZI

I am *shocked* at you!

JOHNNY

(Laughing a little.)

Well, it's true.

MITZI

Oh, go jump in the lake.

JOHNNY

Mrs. Mitzi . . . who lit all of those beautiful red candles under that coconut tree that night. For our dinner.

MITZI

Mmmm . . . I remember.

JOHNNY

You called it ‘coconuts and candles.’

(Pause.)

MITZI

What happened to us, Johnny?

(Pause. He is incredulous.)

JOHNNY

What *happened?* I can’t believe you’re asking me this.

MITZI

Why?

JOHNNY

What happened was I left Wabu-Wabu. I got transferred to Midway. *You* stayed there.

MITZI

But what happened?

(Enter SHIRLEY, abruptly.)

JOHNNY

Mitzi, what are you talking about? You *know* what happened.

SHIRLEY

Mitzi, I just told two fellers that you were a widow and now they’re looking for you!

MITZI

Oh, Shirley!

SHIRLEY

Ya’ll come in here and dance! They’re finally playing Glenn Miller! Come on, you’re missing the party!

Oh, goodness . . .

JOHNNY

Why did I come in here?
(Sees her drink.)

SHIRLEY

Oh, yeah. To get my drink. There it is!

MITZI

Isn't there a bar in there?

SHIRLEY

Yes, but the line is too dang long! Can you believe they ran out of eggnog?

(Sound of loud popping offstage.)

Whaa . . . ?

JOHNNY

MITZI

What's that noise??

SHIRLEY

Fireworks, goofy. It's New Year's Eve!

MITZI

Oh.

SHIRLEY

Mitzi, liven Johnny up and ya'll come in here!

MITZI

Um, okay.

END *(She exits hurriedly with her drink. Pause. JOHNNY and MITZI are still in mild shock.)*

MITZI

Um. Johnny—

JOHNNY

Mitzi, what were you just talking about? What *happened* to us? You . . .

(Gets up stormily and paces.)

MITZI

I *what*?