

CONNIE. Those tests aren't supposed be wrong.

LEIF. (*Shaking his head.*) Of course they can be wrong. I read the disclaimer. It's rare, but you *can* occasionally get a false positive.

ALTHEA. (*To CONNIE.*) Did you do a third one, dear? Best two out of three?

CONNIE. Yes. At my Aunt Arlene's. The verdict's in.

(*To LEIF.*)

START

I didn't know you liked jigsaw puzzles.

LEIF. Well, it's something we just never shared with each other.

CONNIE. It's a strange thing to like. I mean, it's very low tech.

LEIF. I have a low-tech side too, pumpkin.

(*CONNIE moves toward the table. LEIF follows.*)

CONNIE. (*Scrutinizing their progress.*) You finished the gondolas.

LEIF. (*Proudly.*) That one's mine. The other one's Althea's.

CONNIE. There are too many people in that boat. It's liable to capsize.

(*CONNIE picks up a piece and starts to scout its location.*)

This is very blue. Where's a spot that's very blue?

(*ALTHEA picks up the box and studies the picture on the top.*)

ALTHEA. There's a glimmer of bright blue beneath that foot bridge.

CONNIE. Yes, I see it. Well, I'll put it down but there's nothing to connect it to. It's just going to float there by itself.

ALTHEA. (*Warmly.*) Then you'll simply have to locate its companions.

(CONNIE turns to LEIF.)

CONNIE. (*Matter-of-factly.*) You know we're going to be childless, don't you?

LEIF. We can adopt.

CONNIE. I wanted my own. A little girl with my hair and your eyes.

LEIF. What if she'd gotten *my* hair and *your* eyes?

CONNIE. There is nothing wrong with my eyes.

LEIF. (*Darkly playful.*) They're actually a little bloodshot at the moment. I prefer them, you know, a little less veiny.

ALTHEA. (*To LEIF.*) Shame on you! Connie's eyes are beautiful.

(*Confidentially.*)

Do you want me to get you some Visine, dear?

(CONNIE shakes her head.)

CONNIE. (*Suddenly becoming distracted.*) This piece is sticky.

LEIF. There was an accident.

(MATTIE begins making th-th sounds with her flicking tongue.)

ALTHEA. Mattie, dear, what are you doing?

MATTIE. The pigeons are taking off from the plaza. Cover your heads.

*(She turns to CONNIE.)*

Sorry about your loss.

*(CONNIE smiles sadly and turns to LEIF.)*

CONNIE. When are we going home?

LEIF. Probably about three o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

*(CONNIE gives him a quizzical look.)*

Unless we finish it sooner.

*(CONNIE continues to stare at LEIF.)*

CONNIE. Will we eat?

MATTIE. Pizza.

ALTHEA. And soon.

MATTIE. Good. I'm *starving!*

ALTHEA. And I'll make egg and cheese McMuffins tomorrow morning.

CONNIE. *(To LEIF.)* Will we sleep?

LEIF. Probably not.

ALTHEA. No rest for the weary! Look, look! I found his pole. I found the gondolier's missing pole.

CONNIE. *(To LEIF.)* And we're doing this because...?

LEIF. Because it's Venice. Because we've never been to Venice before. Because I love you...

*(He kisses her.)*

...and I very much need you right by my side tonight. All night long. And I'm going to take myself a little guess...

*(He pinches CONNIE's nose with affection.)*

...that just maybe you need me too.

*(CONNIE backs away from the table. She mulls this over, then makes a decision; she rolls up her sleeves, pulls her hair back out of her face and returns in earnest to the puzzle.)*

CONNIE. I like mushroom. With red pepper.

*(To LEIF.)*

Step back a little, honey. You're in my light.

*(Lights fade out.)*

END

End of Act One