

MIGUEL. And this was useful to the USSR how?
EMMA. I've read everything I can get my hands on and none of it is very specific, but I can imagine that he would have gleaned from his colleagues in the Soviet division some — I don't know, strategies, or — that the U.S. was keeping from the Soviet Union.
MIGUEL. But they were our allies.
EMMA. Yes, but you don't share everything you know, even with your allies.

MIGUEL. I'm just not hearing anything that sounds that significant.
EMMA. Well, obviously the Soviets felt it was significant because they kept working with him.

MIGUEL. Was he paid?

EMMA. No! And that is not the point!

MIGUEL. Maybe I don't understand exactly what the point is.
EMMA. He stood up and testified — okay, you know the picture hanging over my desk in our office? That picture, where he looks so broken, but so — I thought — *noble* — on the day that picture was taken, he took an oath, and then he — *(She flips through the testimony.)* He said, listen to this, he said, "Gentleman, may you know this too, that I have never committed espionage!"

MIGUEL. So you're upset that he perjured himself.

EMMA. I'm — of course I'm upset that he perjured himself, but I'm also upset that — and the point is not that I'm upset, it's a matter of principle, that we honored him, we believed that he upheld the Constitution by fighting for what he believed in, openly, lawfully, and he was persecuted for *that*. So if that basic premise is a lie then what is it exactly that we are doing here?

MIGUEL. Emma, there is an innocent man on death row, fifty years after all this bullshit with your grandparents went / down —
EMMA. Bullshit!

MIGUEL. Yes, and you have made yourself a key figure in the fight to free this man, and you have not returned a single phone call to *anyone* in two weeks, including a man who is trying to leave us four million dollars. So I'm very interested in the psychodrama of your family, but I'm also wondering some things, like, do I still have a job?

EMMA. Four million / dollars?

MIGUEL. That's the figure Morry's accountant quoted me, yeah. *(Pause. Emma takes this in.)* I mean that's ... that's a game-changer.
EMMA. Holy shit, yeah.

Ben
MIGUEL. Listen, stop me if I'm like way over the line here, Em, but I think what's happening, with the book — it could actually be really good for you. And for us. *(She stares at him.)* I mean, I think it's about time you put some distance between yourself and your family.

EMMA. Okay.

MIGUEL. It's just, it's a different time now, and I think maybe this will help you move forward in a really healthy way. Making the connection between Mumia and the blacklist was so smart, I mean it got the Morry's of the world involved, and you having this personal story obviously ... but maybe at this point, it's, I don't know. Time to let that go a little.

EMMA. I see. *(He registers that this is really not going well and back-pedals.)*

MIGUEL. Don't get me wrong, I have a ton of respect for your grandfather and his whole / generation —
EMMA. Uh-huh.

MIGUEL. I mean I don't think we can even know what they were up against, what those times were / like.

EMMA. You've been an activist for about five minutes, Miguel, you actually really don't know anything. *(Pause.)*

MIGUEL. Well, that's not true. And I think making our work more about Mumia and less about 1953 is not the worst idea. But I just work here. So I guess I'll go to the office and wait until you make up your mind. *(He exits. Lights shift.)*

Scene 11

Ben leaves a message for Emma.

Ben
BEN. My question is are you not picking up your phone for anyone, or did you get caller ID just to avoid me? Or are you screening? Are you listening to me, right now? Pick up the phone, Emma. This is your dad and you're hurting me a lot. Please pick up the phone. *(Pause.)* I was reelected president of the teachers' union this week. I know you think it's time I retired

and let somebody young with new ideas step in, maybe a woman or somebody of color, but honey, nobody with any real vision came forward and there was a lot of pressure on me to run again, so I caved and I did. This is the kind of thing I'd usually like to talk to you about, see if you think I did the right thing. Emma? If you're there? Please? (*Emma seems like she might pick up. Then, angrily.*) Okay, since this fucking machine is the only way to talk to you, let me tell you a few things you might not have thought of. When he first got involved in the spying, we're barely out of the Depression, that meant *thirty percent* unemployment, it meant you don't walk past a garbage can without someone elbow deep in it. This is the landscape of my father's childhood and young adulthood. Now who are the people speaking up on behalf of the destitute? The American Communist Party. Who is talking about racial equality, twenty-five years before the Civil Rights movement? Same answer. Who is calling attention to the fact that Russians are dying by the millions fighting fascism so that American hands can stay clean? Same answer, Emma. So who is my dad's allegiance to? Is it to J. Edgar Fucking Hoover? Is it to a president who fully intends to sell out the Soviets once Hitler is out of the way? No, it's to his party, it's to the honest working-class Russians who are dying so that he can be free. So that his kids, and their kids, that's *you*, could be free. You want to condemn him from where you're sitting, kiddo, from your Upper West Side / apartment, fine, but he's my father and I want nothing to do with it.

MEL. (*Having come upon him.*) Ben! (*Gently.*) Benji, Benji, Benji. (*She takes the phone from him and hangs it up.*)

End of Act One

40

ACT TWO

Scene 1

Emma's apartment. Emma is in PJs, smoking.

Miguel enters, quietly. She doesn't hear him.

MIGUEL. Hey. (*She turns.*)

EMMA. Hey.

MIGUEL. I've been trying to call you.

EMMA. You have?

MIGUEL. Yeah, I think your phone's off the hook.

EMMA. Oh.

MIGUEL. (*Finding the phone indeed off the hook, and replacing it.*) "Oh." (*The phone immediately rings. Emma shakes her head. They wait it out. It stops ringing.*)

EMMA. It's good to see you.

MIGUEL. Yeah, you too.

EMMA. I have been feeling so terrible about /what I said.

MIGUEL. I know.

EMMA. No, let me say this, because it was actually completely not representative — it's not how I feel. At all.

MIGUEL. I know that, Em.

EMMA. Because I have so much respect for your work, I'm sure I haven't said enough that I think you have a fucking incredible political mind, and the left is very lucky to have you.

MIGUEL. I've also been told I have an amazing face.

EMMA. Miguel, I'm being serious.

MIGUEL. I know you are.

EMMA. I'm trying to tell you that I admire you, *so much*, and you've taught me a lot.

MIGUEL. (*Truly.*) Thank you.

EMMA. And I also think we've been really equal partners up to this point. (*Brief pause.*)

41

Miguel
Emma

Start

End