

Vietnam Bob

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Yesterday, I met my new grandfather, Bob, for the first time. He seemed a little crazy. By new, I mean recently married to my grandmother--*abuelita* Julia. By crazy, I mean crazy. My old grandfather died two years ago. Well, they're both old, but you know what I mean—my "real" one died of a heart attack. He was my grandfather for fifteen years, my mom's dad, Uelo Lupe. Uelo was a Vietnam veteran like Bob, except Bob did two tours according to *abuelita* Julia. *That's hardcore*, I thought. *That explains the weird twitching in his eye.*

Today, I confronted Bob just to see how far I could go, you know, break the ice. It was nothing I hadn't done before to crazy Carl, the guy at school that cleaned toilets. It would be typical teenager stuff: stink bombs, loud firecrackers, flare guns. I set it up so when Bob got home, he'd be back in Vietnam, if you know what I mean. After school, I put a stink bomb in the garage to blind Bob with the smoke; a string of Black Cats, loud at his feet, scared the hell out of him, and cracked me up too. Before I could get off that flare gun from behind the kitchen wall, I was busted. I heard my *abuelita* yelling "*¿Qué haces mijo, qué haces Pedrito?!"* Bob lunged forward and head-butted me, popped my ears with cupped hands, and swept my legs off balance, all the while screaming, "You think you can take me, Charlie? You think you got me now, Charlie?"

The last thing I remember thinking before I passed out was, *Who the hell is Charlie?*

