Prelude to a Kiss

By Craig Lucas
If you hear
A song in blue
Like a flower crying
For the dew
That was my heart
Serenading you
My prelude to
A kiss
I love...
the little sign when you buy
your ticket to the rollercoaster-
"Ride at your own risk."
As if the management is not
at all concerned with your safety,
the entire contraption
is about to collapse,
and to top it off,
there are supernatural powers
out there...
just waiting to pull you
off the tracks...
and out into your worst,
cruelst nightmare-
the wild blue.
They want you to believe
that anything can happen.
And they're right.
Open that window.
# Spendin' cash
talkin' trash#
# Good-bye, I showed you
a real good time#
# Come along with me and
leave your troubles behind#
- Hey, Terry. I'm splitting.
- Hey, Pete. Did you meet-Rita.
No. Hi.
- Hi.
- Peter, Rita. Rita, Peter.
- Actually, I'm gonna go-
- What's everybody drinking?
- Rit?
- Oh.
- Can I fill you up there?
- I'll have another Dewar's, thanks.
- Pete?
- Uh, no, thank you. I'm -
  Oh, don't worry. I'll get it.
You two just relax.
So, one, uh, Dewar's,
and one, uh, beer.
#I love myself
I want you to love me #
# When I feel down #
# I want you above me #
# I search myself #
# I want you to find me #
# I forget myself #
# I want you to remind me #
# I don't want anybody else #
How do you know
the Sokols?
I don't.
Except from the hall.
- Oh, you're a neighbor?
- I couldn't sleep.
Oh, really? Why?
How long have you lived here?
I haven't slept
since I was 14. Two years.
Did you say you hadn't slept
since you were 14?
Pretty much.
You look great,
considering.
Thank you.
- Rita what?
- Uh, Boyle.
Peter Hoskins.
- Hoskins?
- As in "Hoskin's disease."
Oh, Hodgkin.
No, no.
It was just
a nonhumorous flail.
- What?
- # I don't want #
Anybody else
- When I think about you I touch myself
- I like your shirt.
I don't want anybody else
- Dewar's, madam.
- Thank you.
- No beer. Sorry.
- Wine's fine, thanks.
Rita has insomnia.
Oh, yeah?
Listen, I gotta pee.
I'm sorry.
Excuse me.
Forgive me.
So, what do you do
when you're not not sleeping?
Oh, I usually write
in my journal.
You mean, for a living?
I'm a bartender.
- Oh, really, where?
- Yeah. At the Tin Market.
You work Saturdays?
Well, you must
make good money.
- What are your aspirations in that case?
- I'm, like, a graphic designer.
Oh, great.
So, why can't you sleep?
You know what's good?
I forget what it's called.
It's an herb.
- I tried it.
- Didn't work?
I can't remember what it's called
either. My memory's terrible.
Maybe that's why you can't sleep-
you forget how tired you are.
Well, if you need any help
getting to sleep, I -
Sorry.
Nice talking to you.
You too.
I stood outside for awhile...
just listening to the silence.
Then I tried to figure out
which window was hers,
and what her life
might be like,
and why she couldn't sleep.
Like that.
The spell was cast.
# There's always something
in the road #
# Always something in the road #
# Keeping me from
the one thing #
# That I want #
# The one thing
I will never have #
Hi.
Oh, hi.
Is this all right?
No, I'm sorry.
You can never come in here.
What's new?
Since yesterday?
Let's see.
So much has happened.
You look great.
What will you drink?
Do you have Molson?
- Did you get some sleep?
- Eventually.
- You?
- Sleep? Oh.
I don't have
any trouble.
But let's see.
I read The White Hotel
today.
Oh.
That was pretty much it.
How was it?
- Did you read it?
- No.
But I read some of the case histories
that it was based on.
You have?
Freud.
You've read Freud?
- Have you?
- No.
But this book starts...
with this very highfalutin',
sexual dream thing, you know?
Yeah, I hear everybody beats off
when they read it.
I'm sorry.
You heard that?
- Go on.
- This lovely, very neurotic woman...
go into therapy
with Freud him self.
- Right.
- And he sort of cures her,
so that she can go on
to live for awhile...
before being killed
by the Nazis...
in a... lime pit.
Uh, happy, happy stuff.
So,
why were you in Europe
for ten years?
How did you know
I was in Europe?
Word gets a rou nd.
You asked Taylor
about me?
You were asking around
about me?
Let's get ma rried.
Okay.
Okay.
- This is the story, and I'm not making it up.
- Okay.
- And it's not as sad as it sounds.
- Shoot.
My parents separated
when I was four.
I went to live
with my grand parents—
who are unfortunately
deceased now—
- I'm gonna make this as brief as possible.
- Take your time.
- And - We can go up to
my place when you're done.
And everything worked out
great for everybody. It was amazing.
No. Go on.
I'm four years old. I go to live
with my grand parents,
who both wound up having
to go into nursing homes when I was 12.
They were both sick.
So I go to live
with my mother,
who by this time
is remarried to Hank,
- Uh-huh.
- A very unhappy person.
Ridicules me in front of the other
two children they have created...
from their unsavory loins.
So I go to live with my father, who has
also remarried with three other children.
Sophie, the new wife,
hates me even more
than Hank.
This is like Dickens.
The only nice thing Sophie ever did
for me was make the same food twice...
when I made the mistake
of saying that I liked it.
Usually she would stop
cooking whatever it was I said I liked.
What was it?
What I liked?
Spaetzles.
Oh, God.
You've had spaetzles?
Oh, sure.
You like them?
I love them.
You love spaetzles.
- Anyway, everyone is unhappy now.
- Uh-huh.
My father doesn't seem
too fond of me.
I'm not sure
if he ever was, but-
So one night I say
I'm going to the movies,
and instead,
I go to Europe.
What movie?
The Wild Bunch,
I think. Why?
Did you call them?
- Not until I got there. And I called collect.
- Europe?
- That is-
- Yeah.
- Good for you.
- Yeah.
Why did you ask me
which movie?
That is fabulous.
- That's the story.
- Oh, wow.
Then I came back
when my dad died.
Somebody call
about the ice machine?
- Tom.
- Hmm?
- This is Peter.
- Hi.
How do you do?
But I was only
in the party...
for two months.
- I've never known a communist.
- Socialist.
Socialist.
It was a strange time.
So what was
Amsterdam like?
Do you speak Dutch?
Ja.
Say something in Dutch.
Je hebt erg witte tanden.
What's that?
You have very
white teeth.
Oh, thank you.
Now you say,
"Om je beter
mee op teeten. "
Wait.
Okay.
What is it?
Om je beter
mee op teeten.
"Om me. "
- Beter.
- Beter.
- Mee op teeten.
- Mee op teeten.
Om je beter
mee op teeten.
Great.
You 've got a good ear.
- Oh, good ear, clean teeth.
- You do.
What did I say?
- I can't tell you.
- I knew you were gonna say that.
- I knew it.
- No. It's untranslatable.
I'm sure it is.
I'll tell you someday.
I will. I promise.
When you're first getting
to know someone...
and in that blissful, psychotic
first flush of love,
it seems like every aspect
of their personality-
their whole demeanor, the simple
lovely twist of their ear lobes,
and their marvelous
phone voice,
and their soft,
dark, wet... whatever...
is somehow imbued
with an extra push of color-
an intensity heretofore,
you know, unknown.
You want a Molson?
- You drink Molson?
- Uh -huh.
In your own home?
I've been known to.
So why can't you sleep?
I want to solve this.
I wasn't exaggerating.
It's been since I was 14.
Aha.
That's a lot
of journal - keeping.
# Every time #
# We say good-bye #
# I die a little #
Have you seen doctors?
I've seen all the doctors.
Uh-huh.
- Every known persuasion.
- Right.
- And I've in gested countless pills and liquids.
- Thank you.
I've seen an acupuncturist.
You did?
What did it feel like?
Little needles in your back.
- It hurt?
- Sometimes.
You're really beautiful.
You are.
Thank you.
That's, uh-
Thank you.
What do you do
for a living?
# There's no love song finer #
# But how strange the change #
From major to minor
I make little tiny transparent photographs of scientific articles... which are rolled onto strips like microfilm, only smaller.
You'd... like it.
It's really interesting.
Do you see your family?
Your mom?
No.
Sometimes?
Never?
Nope.
Call them?
Uh-uh.
Do you miss them?
- Hey.
- Hey.
What's your dirtiest fantasy?
Excuse me?
You know, I thought you just said, "What is my dirtiest fantasy".
What?
I can't. I'm sorry.
Come on.
No.
What's yours, though?
I'd be curious.
I asked you first.
Well, they change.
Sure.
What's one?
Well-
One...
Uh-huh.
might be that someone...
Uh-huh.
might sort of, just, you know, spontaneously start crawling across the floor... on their... hands and knees, and more or less... unzip me...
with their...
teeth.
I'd do that.
Christ.
Happiness.
  - Are you?
  - Uh-huh.
You are?
It's like a drug.
  - It is a drug.
  - Sex?
To snare us into mating.
I must be peaking then.
  - You know, the body manufactures it.
  - Uh-huh.
Like epinephrine,
or something.
Did I detect a note of cynicism
in your comment about mating?
Oh. No.
You don't like kids?
No.
I love them.
But you don't
want to have them?
No, I don't.
But-
  - Why not?
  - I just don't.
Your career?
What career?
No. I think kids are great.
I just don't think it's fair to raise
them in the world the way it is now.
Where else are you
going to raise them?
We're here.
Say.
Like the woman
in The White Hotel,
people really do struggle their
wholelives just to die in lime pits.
And not just in books.
Women... go blind...
from watching their children
being murdered.
Not in this country,
they don't.
They get shot on the sidewalk in front
of their houses in some drug war.
Just what happened to you—being
passed from one parent to the next—
I survived.
I'll be lying in bed late at night
and I'll look at the light in the room.
And I'll suddenly see it all
 go up in a blinding flash— in flames—
and I'm the only one left alive.
And I can't
look at you sitting there...
without imagining
you... dying—
bursting into flames.
No wonder you can't sleep.
The world
is a really terrible place.
It's too...
precarious.
And you want kids,
obviously.
I wish I could say I did.
It's okay.
We saw each other
every day for the next six weeks.
I'd stop by my apartment
every once in a while...
to see if the view out into
the air shaft had improved any.
But...
all my clothes had found their way
over to Rita's.
I told my parents
about you.
What did you tell them?
I said that you were
very considerate.
In what way?
I said, well—
I mean, we talk very frankly
about sex.
You and your parents?
I said that you always
brought protection.
You did not.
And that you were very attentive
to whether or not I had an orgasm.
This is such bullshit.
No, I said they should meet you.
What do you think?
Protection.
So are you free
this weekend?
Don't be nervous.
You told them about my family
and everything?
My mother.
– She knows the story?
– Mm-hmm.
They know
all about me?
Uh-huh.
Will you marry me?
Uh-huh.
You will?
No. Peter.
Hop to.
Oh.
Mom.
Nice to meet you.
Dad.
Dr. Boyle.
These are my parents.
So.
I understand you're a manager
in a publishing firm.
That's correct.
Yes.
That must be, uh–
– What kind of firm is it?
– Publishing.
What? Don't belittle me
in front of new people.
Be little?
Dad, please.
What kind of publishing firm is it,
I was asking.
It's, uh,
scientific publishing.
They publish scientific, uh,
publishing things.
Journals.
I knew I knew that.
You want a beer?
Sure.
In the morning, Rita?
Yes, Mother. We've been drinking
nonstop for weeks.
It's time
you knew this about us.
- I'll have one too then.
- Me too.
A bunch of lushes here, Rita.
You didn't tell me.
Oh, I can pull four wisdom teeth
on a fifth of Stoli.
- You can?
- He's teasing you.
Scien-
What kind of scientific?
Abstracting and indexing.
It's a service.
- Like a database?
- It is a database.
- It is a database. Covering?
- All kinds of fields.
- All kinds?
- Pretty much.
You know, everything from energy
to robotics—thank you—
to medical articles.
- So you are the manager?
- Of the fiche department.
- Microfiche?
- Right.
- Now, what is it?
- Microfiche.
It's like microfilm, only smaller.
Aha.

Little film.
- All right, we approve.
- Daddy.

We're just playing with you.
Maybe now she'll get some sleep.

So, how long have you two been going out?
Over a year now.
About that, year.
That's my first bull dog. Okay.
No! No! No!
Daddy, no!
Please.
If he's gonna be in this family, you ought to see these guys.
You really should.
This monster I got when I was an undergraduate at Virginia.
See his little tail?
I stood in front of the mirror in their upstairs guest room...
Looking out over the yard and the little tent and the food which had been catered.
I felt a certain kinship with these people-
the caterers.
Don't look.
It's badluck.
All right, I won't.
But wait, you don't believe in that, do you?
- You looked.
- I won't look.

Now you've already cursed the first 14 years of our marriage.
I love you.
What about when I'm a hundred years old
with a mustache and yellow teeth?
I'll still love you.
And I'm sagging down to here
and I'm bald?
I'll love you
all the more.
Are you sure?
Yes, I promise.
Oh, can't we ask one of the boys
in the neighborhood to do that?
I am one of the boys
in the neighborhood. What do you mean?
Let me get rid of these.
Okay.
Are you gonna
join the living?
Hmm?
- Well, hello.
- Too late.
Sorry, all done. You should have
spoken sooner.
You going for a walk?
See you all in a bit.
Now, there's nothing
to worry about.
This is a natural step
in life's plan.
Ah.
Like sliding
down a banister...
that turns
into a razor blade.
Where to?
Round trip.
To Lake Forest.
Lake Forest.
They've asked
that we all sit down.
Is there a nother
language you all speak?
Come on. Let's go.
Okay. Let's try
to stick together.
- Is Grand ma gonna meet us?
Yeah, she should be in the car.

I, Peter
take thee, Rita...
to be my wedded wife.
To have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better or for worse,
for richer or for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
until death do us part.
And thereto
I pledge thee my troth.

I, Rita
take thee, Peter...
to be my wedded husband.
To have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better or for worse,
for richer or for poorer,
In sickness and in health.
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish...
till death us do part.
And thereto
I pledge thee my troth.

I pronounce...
by the authority committed unto me
as a minister of God...
that you are
husband and wife...
according to the law
of this state,
and in the name of the Father, Son
and Holy Ghost.
I think a little applause
would be in order.
Smush together.
Come on. Marshal.
- Marshal!
- What?
Get in the picture.
Jesus Christ.
I thought you were on fire.
Get in.
Say "bull shit." 
Bull shit.
Now, you.
I'm so happy.
- So happy.
- Well.
Peter, you remember
my Aunt Dorothy...
and Uncle Fred.
- Yes. Hi, how are you?
- Peter and Rita.
- That's very euphonious.
- Isn't it?
- You must get a lot of "Peter and Riter."
- Yes.
Or "Pita and Rita,"
I suppose.
- It's hard to say, I know.
- Excuse me.
You know, I was
the world's youngest aunt.
Uh-oh, here we go.
No, now. I remember Rita
trying to say my name...
- when I was 16 and she was just-
- Minus 20.
All right, I deserve that.
Fred says I always shave...
two years off my age.
I've never known anybody
who has a niece so young.
- I was 15.
- What? Who was 15?
Stop. You're gonna
give me a complex.
Mom.
Who's that guy over there
in the strawhat?
Oh, uh - No.
I thought he was
with your firm.
Marsh.
Hey.
Marsh.
Behind me.
Don't look now.
Very peculiar.
Never saw him before in my life.
Congratulations,
both of you.
- Thank you very much.
- Thank you.
- I'm Taylor McGowan.
- You make a lovely couple.
And your name?
I'm sorry.
And what a wonderful
day for it.
Nice to meet you.
You'll have to forgive us.
But none of us seems
to remember who you are.
- It's all right, Daddy.
- I only wanted to wish the two you g people well.
And perhaps
to... kiss the bride...
- before I'm on my way.
- I'd be flattered.
Some angle
this guy's got.
My blessings to you.
And to you.
- You want to sit down?
- Get him a chair, Fred.
Too much blood rushing
to the wrong place, I guess.
Are you dizzy?
I t's okay. Just relax.
Here we go.
Now, just breathe for me.
Daddy?
Oh, God. He thinks Marshal
is his father.
Where do you live?
Can you tell us?
He's gonna be fine,
everybody. Just relax.
That's right.
Where are you going
for your honeymoon?
Why, you wanna come?
- Jamaica.
- Oh.
I love you all.
Bye!
I just keep thinking
about that poor old schmuck.
He seemed so vulnerable.
Calling me honey, and-
I swear I've never
seen him before.
You are too much.
- What's come over you?
- You like?
I- Yes. I think you're out of your mind
and I love you.
Come on.
Day's a-wastin'.
Chop, chop.
# Again #
# This couldn't happen again #
Don't you even
want to try one?
No, thanks.
Sorry you married me?
Rita, you were
supposed to laugh.
Aw.
You're my puppy puppy.
Thank you.
Okay.
You know how you never
get any time...
to work
on your portfolio?
Well, now that we have
just the one rent,
what if just for a while—
not forever—
you quit tending bar
and let me support us?
Sure.
What?
You'd consider it?
Let you bring home the bacon
for a while, right?
Our first full day
being married...
and she seemed
like a different Rita.
I told myself,
"It's the excitement. "
And besides,
it's natural to wonder,
"Is this the right person for me?
"Am I the right person
for her?
Who the hell is she
anyway? "
Baby, I'm sorry.
I'm freaking out.
Are you sorry you married me?
No.
Oh.
I'm serious this time.
Don't be a silly.
The days went by.
We went to a soccer game,
we windsurfed—
or "windfell "—
we snorkeled,
we walked on the beach,
and always
under a ton of sunscreen.
Rita was tireless,
fearless,
and sleeping.
Nothing was wrong, exactly,
but nothing felt—
nothing felt.
# Down at the bay
where the lights are gay #
# And the sun shines daily #
# On the mountaintop #
Excuse me.
I'm sad to say
I'm on my way #
I won't be back
for many a day #
They're a riot.
He calls her
"Little Missie."
Their grand son
is a comedy weatherman in Boca.
Something from the bar?
Yes.
Another seltzer, please.
And clean this up, would you?
It's drawing flies.
I'll have a Long Island
iced tea this time. Thanks.
A lot.
Doesn't it ever bother you
sometimes, though,
the black-white thing?
I mean, it's so obviously
a class issue here.
You'd think they'd all
just rise up and kill us all pool side.
Why is that?
Because we have
the money and they don't.
You want to give them
your money, go ahead.
Oh.
Good attitude.
Look, I'm just making
conversation here, Rita,
you're the commie
in the wood pile, not me.
I'm sorry, sir. The bartender say
he don't know that.
Oh.
What goes into one,
a Long Island iced tea?
Rita.
I'm sorry, darling.
I've forgotten.
What, do you have it all written down
behind the bar or something?
I'm on vacation.
So you can't remember a drink recipe
for something that I would like to order?
Peter,
you're doing it again.
You take a perfect situation
and you pee all over it.
Be happy.
It's great to be alive!
And young!
There will never be
a more perfect night.
Or a better chance for two people
to love each other...
if they don't try so hard.
Make love to me.
What, here?
No one will see.
I want to have your baby.
I want your baby
inside m e.
You don't want babies.
Don't you remember?
Sweetie.
No.
You never say that.
Or " puppy puppy"
or " chop chop."
You don't drink now. Rita used to drink
like a fish. You're not using salt.
- Peter.
- You're a communist or a socialist-
whatever you are-
you don't defend the social order
in Jamaica, or anywhere.
You need
to take a hot bath...
and breathe life in.
The world is a glorious
place to live.
Rita is afraid of life.
I'm gonna insist
that you see someone...
when we get back
to Chicago.
Je hebt erg witte tanden.
- Thanks.
- What did I say?
You said my teeth are white.
You know what you said.
Yes!
My baby.
Thank you.
- What do you say?
- What do you mean?
What's your line?
What do you say?
- You memorized it.
- I'm sorry, Peter.
N o. In Dutch.
Rita, what do you say?
I say, "good night."
No, please.
You're lying.
Hey!
Watch it, pal.
I want you, Rita.
I want you to be you.
I'm sorry I can't be whatever it is
you want me to be.
This is all I am.
Maybe what you saw
wasn't here at all.
They're waiting
for a decision.
Rochelle has another
question about storage.
So, Tay,
if you could, like,
switch souls with somebody-
you know, go inside their body
and they go inside yours-
You know, switch.
Mm-hmm.
Do you think it would be possible
if you didn't know someone,
to impersonate them
by just being inside them... 
ad... looking like them?
- Where are they?
- Inside you.
- And you're in them?
- Right.
Why would you want to go inside another person's body if you didn't know them?
That's conjecture.
I think I know that, Peter.
But wouldn't you do better to pick somebody that you knew?
So then you could do, or be, or have...
the things that they did, or "beed" or had?
Right.
Are you Rita now?
Is that what you're telling me?
That you two have... merged?
All right.
Have you ever-
This is sort of a bizarre question.
- But have you ever been having sex with somebody...
- No.
and they're doing everything right-
- more or less-
- Oh, yeah. Sex. I remember.
and you just get the feeling that something is wrong?
I mean, they pretty much stop doing...
some of the things they used to do... and only do certain things now-
more traditional sorts of things?
Blow jobs, you mean?
No. I'm not talking about anything specific.
No one likes to do that.  
WELL, that happens not to be  
strictly the case, but—  
No, no.  
I'm just telling you.  
No woman ever  
enjoyed doing that.  
It's common knowledge.  
You haven't had sex,  
but you know all about it?  
I'm just trying to help.  
Thank you.  
That night,  
everything was  
miraculously restored.  
Hi. How was work?  
— Okay.  
— It was?  
I'm making you  
a surprise.  
What?  
Guess.  
I can't.  
Spaetzles?  
# Every time we say good-bye #  
I'm sure they won't be  
as good as Sophie's, but—  
What's this?  
Dewar's.  
You want a Molson?  
Sure.  
# When you leave  
there's such #  
# An air of spring #  
So I started reading  
that, finally.  
Cheers.  
Cheers.  
Oh, I know things were  
difficult in Jamaica.  
Maybe it's taken me this time  
to get used to being married.  
But...  
I love you, Peter.
You read her journal, didn't you?
You figured out how to fix your hair...
from the pictures in the albums.
What she drinks.
Where is she?
Please.
Don't be angry.
You can go back wherever you came from,
and I won't tell a soul.
You don't even have to tell me who you are.
Just tell me where Ritais,
and we'll pretend this never took place.
Okay.
- Play it your way.
But I'm onto you.
Hey, Pete.
You're back.
How was your honeymoon?
Great, thanks.
- How's Rit?
- Great.
Where is she?
Not feeling too well, actually.
Let me have a double vodka on the rocks.
Got your postcard.
Yeah?
Here you go.
It's on the house.
Don't mention it.
Dewar's please.
# I been carryin'
# Every time #
# We say #
# Good-bye #
my heavy load #
# Waiting for the light
to come shining through #
# Someone like you #
# Make it all worthwhile #
Is he a regular?
He... looks familiar.
You know him?
# I been doin'
some soul searching #
Have we-
Have we met?
Mind if I sit?
You were at my wedding,
weren't you?
Do I know you?
What's my
stepmother's name?
Uh -
What's the movie I said I was going
to see the night I left for Europe?
The Wild Bunch.
Je hebt erg
witte tanden.
Not anymore.
What's your father's tattoo
say, right here?
" Bruno, "
his first bull dog.
I knew it wasn't you!
I knew it!
Oh, I knew i t!
Oh, my God!
Rita!
Maybe we
shouldn't, uh-
How- How much do I
owe you here, Tom?
No, it's on the house.
- Oh! Okay.
- Okay.
Great.
Great. Uh-
Okay?
I'm just gonna walk the old guy down to the train.
- Uh, o-okay.
- Yeah.
- Good to see you, Tom.
- Uh, you too.
- Tell Rita I hope she feels better.
- I will.
Uh, I will.
Uh, come on.
Let's get out of here.
I missed ya.
- Where did you go?
- Berwyn.
I stayed with his family.
Julius Becker.
He had his wallet on him.
I didn't know what else to do, where to go.
I couldn't tell my mom or go to the cops. Who would believe me, right?
They could've thrown me into an institution or an old folk's home.
I didn't even have our keys.
I had to pretend to be him until you figured it out.
And I knew you would.
I think this is like one of those dreams...
where you keep telling yourself, "Just hang on..."
" and we're all gonna wake up.
We'll walkin and she'll be there and it's gonna be okay, Rita."
I just keep thinking there's something I'm forgetting.
When he leaned in to kiss me, something-
I - I gotta slow down.
I'm sorry.
- That's okay.
- I get short of breath.
- Better?
- What was I saying?
You get short
of breath.
No, before that.
I'm not senile.
I know.
I know.
Yeah, I thought maybe it was salmonella
from those horrible chicken wings,
and I was
imaging it all.
So how was
our honeymoon?
Oh, come on.
Does he know you know?
- He?
- She, whatever.
Yes.
He does.
I think maybe you should
wait out in the hallway...
in case he tries to...
bolt.
Thanks.
What's the matter?
Where's Rita?
I'm sorry
about this, Peter.
- Did something happen?
- You knowllike you.
What do you m an,
you're sorry?
Ri a's gone back to Lake Forest
with her mother, Peter.
Why?
I don't think it's a good idea
for you to come to the house or call...
for awhile,
until she calms down.
I went for a walk.
" Calms down "?
We brought both cars
so I could pick up some of her things, and I'll be out of your way momentarily.
Wait a minute!
Marshal!
I's sorry for whatever personal turmoil you're going through, son.
Turmoil?
What did she tell you?
If you want me to refer you to someone- Rita says...
that you're suffering from delusions, Peter.
And I should tell you that she's talking about...
filing for a divorce.
- Or an annulment. Whichever.
- Oh, now- Okay.
What sort of delusions did she say I was suffering from?
She says...
that you're convinced she's someone else.
Uh-huh.
Sure.
I'm sorry. I'm gonna have to defer to her wishes.
I can't believe this!
You're just gonna take her word?
It's difficult for me to believe, knowing Rita the way that I do,
- that this is about as quibble or a tiff of some kind.
- You don't know her!
You don't know the first thing about her. That's the absurd part.
You don't even know your own flesh and blood.
I'm sure you're right, Peter.
Rita was a communist.
Did you know that?
That's he was in a communist or socialist party? Then all right.
Here's something else
you didn't know.
We didn't go out for a year. We didn't
go out for anything like a year.
You only see
what you wanna see.
- She's lying to you now, Dr. Boyle.
- Let go, please.
She may know certain facts,
but that's from reading
Rita's journals.
Watch her.
Watch the way
she sits.
- Her eyes.
- See a doctor, boy.
Watch the way she listens
to everything we say.
It isn't her!
The way she chews,
for Christ sake.
I'd like to leave now.
- Open your eyes!
Look, I'm not
equipped for this.
I'm sorry.
I'm not attracted to you.
What are you, nuts?
I don't think that's
the issue here.
Have a seat.
Come on.
- You're just-- If I thought
that you really were here, Rita, I -
What's the name-- okay-- of the guy
you went out within high school?
Wait. The one who wanted
to run away with you.
If I can't remember his name,
then you can't remember it either.
- John.
- Oh, Rita.
You're not
imagining me.
This just
does not happen.
Tell me about it.
All right.
Think.
Let me see his wallet,
please. May I?
Thank you.
- Becker. Is he Dutch, do you know?
- Is it a Dutch name?
You were the one that said
you lived there, Rita. Jesus!
Well, they don't speak Dutch.
I can't exactly ask.
I'm trying to keep a low profile in case
they find out I'm really a girl. Okay?
Who is it?
- Hi, Ms. Blier.
- Don't worry.
What?
What's wrong?
My name is
Barry Sanford.
Your dad apparently walked up
to a couple of young gentlemen...
- I got lost.
- downtown...
and asked them
what city he was in,
and they were kind enough
to call us at the hot line.
I'm home now, so-
I work with the Madison Street
Crisis Intervention Center.
We just wanted to make sure
that he got home safe.
Oh, uh, come in, please.
I'm Leah. This is my husband, Jerry.
- Hi, Larry Sanford.
- What can we get you? Come on in.
Something to-
You're sure?
Yes, thank you.
You told me you were
going for a walk.
Did you take the train again? I got lost, I told you. Your dad's gonna be fine, Mrs. Blier.
- Why did you take the train?
- Please.
Daddy. Did you want to go somewhere? I'm going to lie down. Don't wake me up.
You want me to go with you?
You wanna lie down, I'll stay here. This is how he gets.
Two weeks ago, we had to go pick him up in Lake Forest. Why? Did he know someone there?
N, not that we're aware of. He doesn't always get this way.
- Lately.
- He just takes off.
Is your father involved in any... activities that might bring him into the city?
He isn't involved in anything. We keep telling him to take an interestin life.
Is your father suffering from any... mental or neurological disorders?
He hasn't been him self since my mother died last fall. He had to move in with us, and-
This has been coming on for a while.
What has?
I'm not saying
he can't stay here.
He struggled for so many years
just to make ends meet.
Then when he was ready
to retire, boom.
We'd just gotten
my mother buried.
We found out he has
lung cancer a few weeks ago.
He always complains,
so I didn't-
I guess I didn't
take it serious,
and cirrhosis he's had
for years.
I can't put him away.
He doesn't even have
a year to live.
You know?
If you knew the man
he used to be-
He was a-a self-starter,
area I fighter.
- I'm sorry, Mrs. Blier. I -
  - Oh-
I think I left the gas on
in the kitchen...
in the center.
Well, should
I call someone?
No, no.
I'm so embarrassed.
The fire department?
- I apologize.
- I'll drive you.
- No.
- Yes.
Uh, no.
I have a car.
It's just up the street.
I'll be fine, thanks.
I'll call.
So what did she say?
Nothing.
- Am I sick?
- No.
This is me, Peter.
Remember?
You have lung cancer
and cirrhosis.
She said she thought
you had a year to live.
Wow.
The next six days
were the worst,
the strangest,
of my life.
We moved back and forth
from room to room.
We called her parents.
No answer.
The next day, the same.
And the next.
I called Rita's Aunt Dorothy
in Cincinnati.
She had no idea
where they were,
and wanted to know
why I didn't know.
I told her
Rita and I had split up.
Trust me.
The car's gone.
Mom never turns
the lights out, ever.
- They're not here.
Then why are
we whispering?
Some suitcases
are gone.
I miss your face.
How soft it was.
I miss it too.
Your hair was so great.
Oh, come on.
And your little white feet.
What?
You don't like these?
At night I could feel
the loneliness...
coming off both of us
like heat.
It was as if we'd been
married forever, suddenly,
without the sex.
Rita and I, mean while,
kept up the pleasantries.
The old married couple
we'd become.
Time's up.
Rita.
What?
You know,
if you think
how we're born,
and we go through
all the struggle of growing up...
and learning
the multiplication tables...
and the name
for everything.
The rules.
How not to get runover,
braid your hair,
pig Latin.
Just all the effort.
Then getting a job,
probably something
you don't even like doing...
for not enough money,
like tending bar.
And that's if you're lucky.
That's if you're...
not born in Calcutta...
or the U.S. without money.
Then there's your marriage,
having your own kids if-
You know.
And they're going through
the same struggle all over again.
Only worse, because...
somebody's trying to sell them
crack in the first grade by now.
And all this time,
you're paying taxes,
your hair starts
to fall out,
and you're wearing
six pairs of glasses...
which you can never find.
And you can't recognize
yourself in the mirror.
And if you live long enough,
you finally get to watch everybody die.
All your loved ones—
your wife,
your husband.
Your kids, maybe.
And you're totally alone.
And as a final reward
for all this,
you disappear.
No one knows where.
I don't want you
to die, Rita.
I don't want me
to die either.
And I'm going to.
So are you.
But...
we got to have this.
I mean,
what a trip...
meeting you...
and being in love,
falling.
It was bitchin'
for a while.
And okay.
So this isn't such
a turn-on, I admit, but—
I adore you.
- What?
My hearing.
No, I'm serious.
I said you would've
hated Jamaica.
Trust me.
Come on.
Call again.
I mean, he's always saying,
" Oh, you know-
Wow, you have got to come
to this club, the Aquamarine. "
- Have you been there?
- No? Oh, you're kidding.
It's actually pretty cool. They've got all
these different bars and huge fish tanks.
- It's really pretty amazing-
you know, for about a minute.
- Hello?
- Oh, Marion, it's Peter.
- I thought it might be you.
- Where have you been?
I've been worried.
How's Rita?
She's terrible, Peter.
We took her to London.
She was so shook up,
Marsha I thought she needed a rest.
What happened between
the two of you, Peter?
If you don't want to
tell me, you don't have to.
I guess I must've
said something about her...
not being the same person.
But I would do
anything...
to get Rita back.
I love her with all
my heart and soul.
You can't come
here, Peter.
If either of them knew I was talking
to you, they'd have me shot at sunrise.
What if-
It's just a thought-
but what if you said I was going away on business for a couple of weeks?
Oh, I don't know, Peter.
And you said that she could stop by... and pick up her things from storage in the basement.
All her old letters and diaries from her childhood.
And when you came by with her, I'd be here, and we could talk.
When would you want us?
- Anytime.
- I'm not promising anything.
- I understand.
- Monday?
Monday's great!
- I'll try. That's all I can do.
- I understand.
Thank you.
What time?
- Anytime.
- Noon, say?
- Noon's great.
- High noon.
High noon.
- Peter.
- Yes?
What you said before...
about Rita not being the same person-
Uh-huh.
She may not be the picture of the woman you thought she was, but that's an image, Peter.
Just a picture.
Words.
That's life.
That's marriage.
But I know she loves you... and misses you.
I miss her too.
All right.
I'll see you Monday then.
- Thank you, Mom.
- Alright.
- Bye.
- Bye, now.
She'll try.
He keeps it clean.
Now, I want you
to talk, Rita.
I want you both to talk.
That's all.
You can do that much,
since you took the trouble to marry him.
This was my idea,
by the way.
How have you been?
- I wanted to come.
- Really?
I wouldn't
have thought that.
But you're here, so-
Can I get you
something?
It's been real lonely
without you, Rita.
You, uh,
went to London,
your mom says.
How was it?
Okay, tie his feet!
Rita, come on!
Give me- Gi-
Goddamn it!
Okay.
Give me the knife.
Rita!
Kiss him.
Go on!
Rita?
No, it didn't work.
- Is it you?
- I don't know how it happened.
- I don't know what I did.
- I'll kill you! I swear to God I will!
- Peter-- How the hell did you do this?
- Put the knife down, please.
- It's a trick, Rita.
- Don't you know that much?
- He doesn't know. Give it to me.
- Are you here, Rita?
- Yes. I'm right here.
- Talk to me if you're here. Please!
- Give me the knife.
- I can't.
- Put it down.
All right? Just-
- Thank you.
- Where did you go?

I couldn't imagine what happened to you.
Watch him.
4320 Southeast Avenue.
- How is Leah?
- I think she misses ya.
She keeps making soup and offering me another cup...
- and another cup-
- Your mother?
She isn't serious about the peanut butter and mayonnaise.
Oh, she made you one?
A sandwich?
- Stop this.
- I haven't had one of those since grade school!
I'd almost forgotten.
Did you try one?
- Rita!
- Oh, they're really good!
I've been over and over it... so many times, you know?
Exactly-
Have you tried?
I wanted it.
That's all I know.
I got on a train going nowhere,
as far as I knew.
There you were-
a wedding.
Young people
starting a life.
I wished to God
I was that bridegroom starting out,
or the bride,
for that matter.
Look at the shine
in those eyes.
Oh, you're kidding.
I was totally freaked from the moment
I woke up. I was terrified.
I thought,
if I could shine...
like the light
of that girl over there,
I'd never take another drink.
I'd let my liver hang on
another decade.
Stay out of the sun.
Eat right.
This time I would floss.
I remember now.
Oh, God.
I wanted to be you.
For one second
of one day,
what it would be like
to just be.
- Yes.
- And not be afraid.
- If I could just get inside,
- If I could get inside,
- I'll kiss the bride.
- My whole life would be behind me.
My whole life would be
a head of me again.
- Look at her- the soft arms,
the white teeth. - That smell.
- That sweet smell on her breath.
- A man.
Not like something rotting
coming up from your insides, but soft.
- Like a father.
- Like a baby. And white.
An old man...
with nothing-
- Nothing to lose.
- Nothing to lose.
All you got to do is want it...
better enough.
My God.
Rita?
Like an old suit.
My wife and daughter
had a bond.
I loved them both so much
I wanted to eat them alive.
Women make a life...
inside their body.
And that life comes out
and holds onto them.
Cling to them.
Calls them up
from school and says,
"I'm sick, Ma.
Come pick me up."
That baby is theirs
for life.
Don't you see?
To be able to look back...
from their side
of the bed,
with their eyes,
at last.
And you, my boy-
I tried to be patient.
I tried to be interested.
I called every hotel
in Ocho Rios.
What the hell is
a Long Island iced tea?
You're
a sweet kid.
No hard feelings,
but...
you're not my type.
- Please.
- I don't know.
The idea
of livin' forever-
It's not so good.
And those parents of yours
you can keep.
Thank you.
Do yourselves a favor.
Floss.
Oh, my God!
My body!
My body!
There they are.
Look at those.
Yes.
Your hair.
I'm here!
I'm not afraid.
I know.
I'm not afraid!
Oh, I love you!
Give me a smile.
Je hebt erg
witte tanden.
Je hebt erg
witte tanden.
Oh! I don't remember
what I was supposed to say, Peter.
- I know I memorized it.
- Om je beter mee op te eten.
You promised
you'd tell me.
What does it mean?
The better
to eat you with.
Never,
never to be squandered-
the miracle
of a nother human being.
- You're the miracle.
- No, you are.
You.

# If you hear #
# A song in blue #
# Like a flower crying #
# For the dew #
# That was my heart #
# Serenading you #
# My prelude to #
# A kiss #
# If you hear #
# A song that grows #
# From a tender #
# Sentimental rose #
# That was my heart #
# Trying to compose #
# A prelude to #
# A kiss #
# Though it's just
a simple melody #
# With nothing fancy #
# Nothing much #
# You could #
# Turn it to a symphony #
# A Schubert tune #
# With a Gershwin touch #
# Oh, how my love song #
# Gently cries #
# For the tenderness #
# Within your eyes #
# My love is a prelude #
# That never dies #
# A prelude to #
# A kiss #
# How my love song #
# Gently cries #
# For the tenderness #
# Within your eyes #
# My love is a prelude #
# That never dies #
# A prelude to #
# A kiss #