

PRELUDE TO A KISS

Rita and Peter

PETER: Christ!

RITA: What?

PETER: Happiness!...Are you?

RITA: Uh-huh!

PETER: You are? It's like a drug.

RITA: It is a drug.

PETER: Sex?

RITA: To snare us into mating.

PETER: I must be peaking then.

RITA: No, the body manufactures it.

PETER: Uh-huh.

RITA: Like epinephrine or something.

PETER: Maybe that's where they got the word "crack."

RITA: Shut up. I prefer the word "hole." Frankly.

PETER: Hole?

RITA: And dick.

PETER: Slit.

RITA: Ugh.

PETER: This is sick.

RITA: Tool, I like.

PETER: Uh-huh.

RITA: It's practical.

PETER: Wait a minute; did I detect an earlier note of cynicism in your comment about mating?

RITA: Oh. No.

PETER: You don't like kids?

RITA: No, I love them.

PETER: But you don't want to have them?

RITA: No, I don't, but...

PETER: Why not?

RITA: I just don't.

PETER: Your career?

RITA: What career? No, I think kids are great, I just don't think it's fair to raise them in the world, the way that it is now.

PETER: Where else are you going to raise them? We're here.

RITA: I know, but...

PETER: It's like what you were saying about the socialists.
(Rita hesitates) Say.

RITA: Like...the woman in *The White Hotel*. People really do struggle their whole lives just to die in lime pits, and not just in books. Women go blind from watching their children being murdered.

PETER: Not in this country they don't.

RITA: No, they get shot on the sidewalk in front of their houses in some drug war. I mean, just what you went through being passed from one parent to another who didn't even –

PETER: I survived...

(PAUSE)

RITA: I'll be lying in bed late at night and I'll look at the light in the room and suddenly see it all just go up in a blinding

flash, in flames, and I'm the only one left alive...I can't look at you sitting there without imagining you...dying...bursting into flames...

PETER: No wonder you can't sleep.

RITA: The world's a really terrible place. It's too precarious.
(pause) You want kids, obviously. I wish I could say I did.

PETER: It's okay.

RITA: What's your dirtiest fantasy?

PETER: Excuse me? No, I thought you just said what's my dirtiest fantasy.

RITA: What?

PETER: No, I can't –

RITA: Yes, you can. Please?

PETER: I'm sorry, I can't. What's yours, though? I'd be curious.

RITA: I asked you first. Come on.

PETER: Oh god.

RITA: Please.

PETER: Well, they change.

RITA: Sure. What's one?

PETER: One?

RITA: Uh-huh.

PETER: Well...one?

RITA: Uh-huh.

PETER: Might be that someone...you know...

RITA: Uh-huh.

PETER: (mimicking her) Uh-huh, uh-huh. Might...sort of just, you know, spontaneously start crawling across the floor –

RITA: Uh-huh.

PETER: -- on their hands and knees and...more or less unzip me with their, uh...teeth.

RITA: I'd do that.

PETER: You would?

RITA: Uh-huh.

PETER: Right now? (she nods)