

**Old Man.** I don't want me to die, either. And I'm going to. So are you. Hopefully later and not sooner. 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...

**Peter.** I adore you.

**Old Man.** What? My hearing. No, I'm serious.

**Peter.** I said I adore you!

**Old Man.** That's what I thought.

**Peter.** For better or for worse.

**Old Man.** Huh?

**Peter.** I said: you would have hated Jamaica. Trust me.

*(The Old Man rises, crosses to Peter. Peter stands. They face one another for a moment. Peter can't bring himself to kiss the Old Man. The Old Man hands Peter the phone.)*

**Old Man.** Try again.

*(Peter dials. Phone rings. Rita's Mom enters with receiver.)*

**Rita's Mom.** Hello

**Peter.** Oh, Marion, it's Peter.

**Rita's Mom.** I thought it might be you.

**Peter.** Where've you been? I've been worried. How's Rita?

**Rita's Mom.** They've just run down to the store; I may have to get off.

She's terrible, Peter. We took her to London. She was so shook up, Marshall thought she needed a rest. I don't know, I was tempted to call you from over there, but I didn't, I'm sorry.

**Peter.** Is she okay?

**Rita's Mom.** What happened between the two of you, Peter? If you don't want to tell me you don't have to.

Side 4

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Start

Rita's Mom, Peter

SO

**Peter.** No, I do, I just am not sure I know. I said—I guess I must have said something about her not being the same person. And then I lost my temper with Rita's Dad; I said some things I didn't mean. I was just so surprised to see him here. You know? Did he tell you?

**Rita's Mom.** No, Peter.

**Peter.** But I would do anything to get Rita back. *(looking at the Old Man)* I love her with all my heart and soul ...

**Rita's Mom.** Well, she says that you're unstable and she's sorry she ever met you. I don't know, you don't seem so unstable to me.

**Peter.** No.

**Rita's Mom.** Maybe I'm being naïve.

**Peter.** No, you're not.

**Rita's Mom.** That's what all unstable people say, Peter ... I'm teasing you.

**Peter.** If I could just see her.

**Rita's Mom.** You can't come here, Peter. If either of them knew I was talking to you, they'd have me shot at sunrise.

**Peter.** How's she been? Is she okay?

**Rita's Mom.** Oh, I don't know what her problem is.

**Peter.** If she wants me to see a psychiatrist...

**Rita's Mom.** Well ...

*(The Old Man scribbles something on a pad and hands it to Peter, who reads as he talks.)*

**Peter.** Marion, what if ... it's just a thought, but what if you told her I was going away on business for a couple of weeks—

**Rita's Mom.** Are you?

**Peter.** No, wait.

**Rita's Mom.** Oh.

**Peter.** And you said she could stop by to pick up the rest of her things

from storage here, you know, all her old letters and journals from her childhood and all that stuff she's left here, and then when you came by with her I'd be here. And we could talk.

**Rita's Mom.** Oh, I don't know, Peter.

**Peter.** I have to see her. Even if she won't even speak to me ... Please.

*(Pause.)*

**Rita's Mom.** When would you want us?

**Peter.** Anytime.

**Rita's Mom.** I'm not promising anything.

**Peter.** I understand ...

**Rita's Mom.** Monday?

**Peter.** Monday's great.

**Rita's Mom.** All right, I'll try. That's all I can do.

**Peter.** I understand. Thank you.

**Rita's Mom.** What time?

**Peter.** Anytime.

**Rita's Mom.** Noon, say?

**Peter.** Noon's great. Fine.

**Rita's Mom.** High noon.

**Peter.** High noon.

**Rita's Mom.** All right.

**Peter.** Thank you very much ...

**Rita's Mom.** Peter?

**Peter.** Yes?

**Rita's Mom.** What you said before about Rita not being the same person?

**Peter.** Uh-huh? ...

**Rita's Mom.** They never are, Peter. They're never Rita. They're never

Dr. Marshall Boyle, not the way that you think they should be.

They're always someone else. They're always changing.

**Peter.** Uh-huh.

**Rita's Mom.** That's life. That's marriage. They're always growing and shifting and so are you.

**Peter.** Right.

**Rita's Mom.** She may not be the picture of the woman you thought she was, but that's an image, Peter. That's just a picture. Words.

**Peter.** I know.

**Rita's Mom.** I'm sure you're not always the prize either.

**Peter.** No.

**Rita's Mom.** Nobody is. But I know she loves you and misses you.

**Peter.** I miss her too.

**Rita's Mom.** All right. We'll see you Monday then.

**Peter.** Thank you, Mom.

**Rita's Mom.** All right.

**Peter.** Bye.

**Rita's Mom.** Bye now.

*(They both hang up. Rita's Mom disappears.)*

**Peter.** She'll try.

*(Long pause. Peter slowly kneels and kisses the Old Man tenderly on the mouth.)*

Finish

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*[Optional Scene:]*

*(Rita's Parents' Home. Rita alone, staring out a window.*

*Perhaps she has a phone, starts to dial, then stops herself.*

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