

(He shows Peter the card.)

"In case of emergency, please notify Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Blier."

His daughter and her husband. They came and picked me up.

(Beat.) So how was our honeymoon?

(Peter does not laugh.)

Oh, come on!

Peter. I'm fine.

Old Man. Does he know you know?

Peter. HE? Yeah. He does.

Old Man. She. Whatever. He does?

Peter. Yes, I think so.

(They stop walking. They look up at the apartment.)

Old Man. Is he there now?

Peter. *(nodding)* I think maybe you should wait outside in the hall in case he tries to bolt. All right?

Old Man. Peter.

Peter. What? ... I know, come on.

Side 5

Rita's Dad, Peter

F.S. 24 Start:

(The apartment. Peter enters. The Old Man stands outside the open door.)

Peter. Rita?

(Rita's Dad emerges from the bedroom with a suitcase; the Old Man recedes out of sight.)

Rita's Dad. Peter.

Peter. What's the matter? Where's Rita?

Rita's Dad. I'm sorry about all this, Peter.

Peter. Did something happen?

Rita's Dad. You know I am. You know I like you.

Peter. What do you mean you're sorry?

Rita's Dad. Rita's gone back to New Jersey with her mother, Peter.

Peter. Why?

Rita's Dad. I think it would be best if you didn't come out to the house or call for a while until she calms down.

Peter. I went for a walk. Calms down?

Rita's Dad. We brought both cars so I could pick up some of her things. And I'll be out of your way momentarily.

Peter. Wait a minute, Rita's Dad, I'm

Rita's Dad. I'm sorry for whatever personal turmoil you're going through, Peter.

Peter. Turmoil? What did she tell you?

Rita's Dad. If you want me to refer you to somebody ... Rita says you're suffering from delusions, Peter. And I should tell you she's talking about filing for a divorce or an annulment, whichever would be—

Peter. What? Wait.

Rita's Dad. *(Overlapping, continuous)* —most appropriate under the circumstances. I'm awfully sorry.

Peter. What circumstances? What sort of delusions did she say I was suffering from?

Rita's Dad. Rita ...

Peter. Go on. I want to hear this.

Rita's Dad. She was hysterical, Peter, when she called us.

Peter. What did she say?

Rita's Dad. Rita says you're convinced that she's someone else.

Peter. Someone—? What, and you believe that? What does that mean?

Rita's Dad, I went for a walk. We had a—okay, we had a fight. I went out. You and Rita's Mom never have fights? We had a difference of opinion.

Rita's Dad. I practically had to carry her to the car. Are you telling me that nothing else has happened between the two of you? Nothing at all?

Peter. Seriously, Marshall, think about what you're saying. Rita ...
You're—

Rita's Dad. (*overlapping*) If you'd seen that girl's face— I'm sorry, I'm just—I'm going to have to defer to my daughter's wishes.

Peter. I can't believe this. You're just going to take her word?

Rita's Dad. It's a little difficult to believe— knowing Rita as I do, son, that this—

Peter. You don't know her.

Rita's Dad. (*overlapping continuous*) —is all about a squabble, a tiff as you say.

Peter. (*overlapping*) You don't know anything about her, that's the absurd part. You don't know your own flesh and blood.

Rita's Dad. Well, I'm sure you're right.

(*Rita's Dad starts to leave; Peter halts him.*)

Peter. Rita was a Communist, did you know that? That she was in a Communist—Socialist party? And, all right, here's something else you don't know: we didn't go out for a year. We didn't go out for anything like a year; we went out for two months—at that point, six weeks. We haven't even known each other six months now! You wouldn't know if she was lying to you, because you don't know her; you only see what you want to see. And she's lying to you now,

Rita's Dad, she may know certain facts—

Rita's Dad. Let go of my sleeve, please.

Peter. (*continuous*) —but that's from reading Rita's journals! She doesn't—watch her! Watch the way she sits! Her eyes!

Rita's Dad. See a doctor, boy, all—

Peter. (*overlapping*) Rita—watch the way she listens to everything we say, the way she chews for god's sake, it isn't her! Open your eyes!

Rita's Dad. I'd like to leave now Peter.

(*Beat.*)

Thank you.

(*He goes out.*)

Finish

Old Man. He didn't see me.

(*The Old Man returns.*)

Peter. This isn't happening.

Peter. Look ... I like you very much. I'm not equipped for this. I'm sorry. I still like you.

Old Man. Like me?

Peter. I'm not ... I don't feel the same way about you, I'm sorry. I'm not attracted to you.

Old Man. What, are you nuts? I don't think that's the issue, Peter, have a seat, come on, you're—

Peter. If I thought that you were really here, Rita ... What's the name of the guy you went out with in high school? Wait. You told me once—Rita did—but I've forgotten. And if I can't remember, then you can't. The one who wanted to run away.

Old Man. John.

Peter. Oh Rita. (*Beat.*) It could have been in my unconscious. You know that. You've read Freud. Haven't you?