

JULIA. Now can I tell you something and you'll promise not to laugh? One of the reasons I produced your play — other than it's brilliant and it gave me goosebumps — is that it doesn't have any four-letter words in it.

PETER. I think I got all my four-letter words out of my system in my first play.

JAMES. The things he had me saying, Julia!

JULIA. I'm sorry, but I think the theatre should be a place of elegance. Elegant people in elegant clothes in elegant settings speaking elegant language.

JAMES. So much for David Mamet.

JULIA. The last play I saw every other word was the "f" word or the "k" word. I was appalled.

JAMES. The "k" word? What's the "k" word?

JULIA. You know: the "k" word.

PETER. Any word on the reviews?

JULIA. Just New York One and their "good solid theatre."

JAMES. Kangaroo? Kumquat?

JULIA. Buzz says he'll have the *Times* a good half-hour before they post it online. *(They are both in very good spirits.)*

JAMES. Ketchup? Kaleidoscope?

PETER. What about the chat rooms?

JULIA. FiddlerFartatic liked the first act.

JAMES. Kennebunkport? Knick-knack? This is driving me crazy,

Julia. Is there a dictionary in here? *(She whispers in his ear.)* What? The "k" word is what? Say it again! I still can't — Oh, "cunt"!

JULIA. I'm going to powder my nose before we all go down there.

JAMES. You look gorgeous.

JULIA. I won't be a moment. Talk amongst yourselves. *(She goes into the bathroom.)*

JAMES. We can thank our lucky stars for people like that.

START PETER. Guess how many times I threw up today? Actually leaned over the bowl and heaved my guts up?

JAMES. Then don't get too close. They have me in Prada tonight. What are you in? Somebody down there is going to ask you to get them a drink if you're not careful.

PETER. My father's tails, in his honor.

JAMES. They're almost in style again. How are your folks?

PETER. Fine, fine. I thought a Broadway opening would be too much for them. They'll be happy you came. Where are you staying?

JAMES. The Sherry, the Four Seasons was full.

PETER. The Sherry!

JAMES. The network's paying. Did you invite any of the old gang?

PETER. No, just you. We're practically the only ones still in the business. Billy Cutlip is teaching at NYU and Mary went back to school and got a degree in social work. I've lost track of most of them.

JAMES. I thought Mary had real talent, that she'd be the one of us who made it.

PETER. I wanted you up there on that stage so bad tonight. We were going to do this Broadway thing together.

JAMES. Who knew an iffy pilot would turn into nine years of my life?

PETER. We waited as long as we could for you.

JAMES. I know.

PETER. But Jack was marvelous, don't you think?

JAMES. Absolutely.

PETER. The Tony Award tom-toms are already throbbing!

JAMES. Not *that* marvelous. That part has my name written all over it. But he was wonderful, just wonderful. I would have been more wonderful, it's true.

PETER. I felt so ... bereft when you went to L.A. I had such a talent crush on you.

JAMES. It was mutual.

PETER. I didn't know what I was going to do. No one hears me like you. I thought you were the best actor I'd ever worked with. I was afraid when you left you took my talent with you. That's why tonight is so important to me. I did it without you.

JAMES. We'll do something together again, I'm sure of it.

PETER. You really liked the play?

JAMES. Peter, I'm the last one to ask. I was a talented character actor, one of thousands in this city, when I met you. I would have gone on having ten lines in each act for the rest of my life. *Once* I would have played Willy Loman or *Iceman* in a regional theatre *maybe* my agent wouldn't mind traveling to. But I would have gone on thinking I was lucky: I was a working actor. Then you went and wrote *Flashes* for me. When I finished it, I was overwhelmed, it was extraordinary, but I thought "He'll get someone else for it. They'll make him get someone else for it." But you didn't. Make no mistake: I'm a very lucky man and I know it. **END**

PETER. I'm lucky I saw you do those ten lines in that weird play at the Cherry Lane.