

STAGE KISS

SHE

Do you want some—I think we have some—rice?

DIRECTOR

~~No thanks.~~ I came about an audition.

SHE

Oh, what is it?

DIRECTOR

Something I wrote myself, actually. My first play. Kind of a gritty, downtown New York kind of a thing. I miss New York in the seventies.

*Looking at the apartment.*

DIRECTOR

Actually, do you mind if I take a picture of your apartment? Research.

SHE

It's a mess, sorry.

DIRECTOR

No, it's *perfect*!

SHE

What are the roles?

DIRECTOR

*(Taking a picture of the apartment with his phone)* What? Oh, there's a meaty role for the man, but the woman's role is—smaller and—well—she's a whore—an aging whore—she wants to leave the business and become an ophthalmologist—how comfortable are you with nudity on stage?

SHE

My situation has changed. I need the money.

START

DIRECTOR

Oh.

HE

We'll only go out of town together. We're a package deal. As of now.

SHE

When are auditions?

DIRECTOR

Two hours ago.

SHE

Oh.

DIRECTOR

We could, I guess we could read some of it here?

HE

Do you have the script?

DIRECTOR

As a matter of fact I do.

SHE

I'm all wet.

DIRECTOR

Use it.

SHE

Okay.

DIRECTOR

*(Taking out the script)* You'll have to share.

I can be the pimp.

Let's see . . . From: "You taste like a whore"?

STAGE KISS

HE AS JOHNNY

You taste like a whore.

DIRECTOR

Sorry—Could you try an Irish accent?

HE

Yeah. Uh—regular or northern?

DIRECTOR

Oh. Northern.

HE AS JOHNNY

You taste like a whore.

SHE AS WHORE

What does a whore taste—  
(*As herself*) Sorry, am I Irish?

DIRECTOR

No, uh, try a Brooklyn accent.

SHE AS WHORE

(*Brooklyn accent*) What does a whore taste like?

HE AS JOHNNY

Like blood. And childhood.

SHE AS WHORE

(*Indicating an imaginary knife*) What is that?

HE AS JOHNNY

A knife. I'm going to leave my mark on you.

SHE AS WHORE

No! Don't!

SARAH RUHL

HE AS JOHNNY

I'll be gentle.

*He pretends to make a mark on her inner thigh.*

SHE AS WHORE

Oh! No! . . . wait, don't stop, I like it . . .

*(Not acting, whispering to him)* I can't do this.

HE

*(In a low voice to her)* We need the money.

SHE

Right.

*(To the director)* Sorry, could you just give me a sort of overview of the play?

DIRECTOR

Sure. So, there's this very charismatic soldier in the IRA who runs guns from New York to Belfast. You meet in Washington Square Park watching street musicians and fall in love. He doesn't realize you're a whore. You don't realize he's in the IRA. When he realizes you're a prostitute he gets violent with you, and ends up revealing that he's in the IRA. The two of you plan to escape together, to move to Dublin and open an eye glasses clinic for poor children, but when you finally get up the courage to tell your pimp you're leaving, your pimp kills you, and in the last scene, your lover finds you bloody on the floor, and he's about to shoot himself in the head, when his comrades burst in the door and kill him first. And there's this sort of rain of bullets, and then they sing a Catholic hymn over the bodies, and then a small child enters and removes the glasses off your dead body and puts them on—and this little boy can finally see, and then a beam of light comes down, and well, I think it will be rather devastating. Okay?