

there are times I'd kill to have her back, just for a day. So I could show her something I've written, or talk to her about my thoughts, or just even to see her smile when I did something silly. *(Long pause.)*

NINA. What are you thinking about?

WALLACE. I don't know. About my mother, and about how you listen to me talk, and — and about how I'd love to kiss you right now.

NINA. So why don't you?

WALLACE. What? Well, umm, Nina, do you — did your sister tell you —

NINA. I know. You and my sister were — together.

WALLACE. And it doesn't bother you?

NINA. A little. Not much. I mean, you were drunk —

WALLACE. What?

NINA. And all you did was kiss, right?

WALLACE. Umm — umm, yeah. Just a few drunken kisses, that's all it was.

NINA. A few? She said one.

WALLACE. Well, I mean, there were a few within the one. But we never pulled our lips apart, so technically, I guess, yeah, just one.

NINA. Okay. *(Pause.)* Well?

WALLACE. Well what?

NINA. Kiss me.

WALLACE. Nina, I think I love you. I know it sounds stupid, but — is that okay?

NINA. Sure.

WALLACE. Okay. I'm going to kiss you now, okay?

NINA. Okay.

WALLACE. Okay. *(They kiss.)*

SCENE SEVENTEEN

Wallace's dormitory room. Wallace and Wendy are sitting on the bed, kissing.

WENDY. Are you sure we should be doing this?

WALLACE. Why not?

WENDY. Well, what about your girlfriend?

Wendy Side

WALLACE. What about her?

WENDY. Well —

WALLACE. I'm drunk, you're drunk, we don't know what we're doing. Right?

WENDY. Umm, right.

WALLACE. Right. Give me a kiss. *(They kiss.)*

SCENE EIGHTEEN

Wallace in a spotlight.

WALLACE. I fucked up. Mommy. I fell in love — really — for the first time. I mean, it wasn't romance for the sake of romance. It was romance for the sake of — somebody. Nina. Nina listened. And I got scared. I ran away. To somebody else. What do I do? Mommy. It hurts. *(Pause.)* I want my — I need my mother. *(Pause.)* I'm not asking for much. I just — all I want is to take the knife away from her. To go back and take the knife away from her. All I want to do is change history. *(The lights come up on the kitchen. Mother is fixing a peanut butter and banana sandwich. She is peeling the banana. Wallace looks at her. He looks at the audience, then looks back at her. He walks past the table picking up the large knife as he goes by. He walks out. Mother finishes peeling the banana and fixes the sandwich, breaking the banana up with her hands and spreading the peanut butter with a spoon. She puts the sandwich into a lunchbox on the table. Wallace runs in.)* I'm going to miss the bus! Is my lunch ready?

MOTHER. All set. *(Wallace grabs the lunchbox and kisses Mother on the cheek.)*

WALLACE. Bye, Mommy.

MOTHER. Bye, Wallace.

WALLACE. *(To the audience.)* I love the second grade!

MOTHER. Don't shout, Wallace. *(Wallace runs out. Mother watches after him. She writes a note on a slip of paper. While she is writing the note, Wallace walks in and quietly watches her from the side. She puts the note on the table. She takes off her towel and shirt, so she is in her brassiere. She wraps the towel around her neck and pulls it taut, attempting to strangle herself. The lights on the kitchen slowly fade, and Wallace is in the spotlight again.)*

WALLACE. *(To the audience. Pause.)* In countless science