

Act One - Scene Thirteen

(Karlaboy, the Present. HAROLD is mixing himself a drink.)

HAROLD. All right, perhaps my memory tends to overdramatize the past. But it was something like that and they did threaten me.

BILL. I read through all the studio memos relating to you and Karla. There was no mention of this topic.

HAROLD. Why should there be? I was married to the sexiest woman in Hollywood.

BILL. But what about the press? I've been through every fan magazine and society column. Again, no mention.

HAROLD. Well, Bill, if I was as deluded as most people in this town, I'd tell you that the press is sensitive towards homosexuals. That their liberal hearts "care" enough to respect their privacy. Unfortunately that's a crock of dog shit. The silence of the press is motivated completely out of self-interest. If the press reported about every gay - eighty goddamned percent of the Hollywood community, by my estimates - Mr. and Mrs. Front Porch would keel over and never buy another entertainment magazine or newspaper again. You see, Bill, it's bad for the news business to make gay newsworthy. They will accept adultery and drug abuse from their idols, but they will not allow them to turn on them sexually. It's the biggest slap in the face imaginable. It's just not done ... at least not while they're alive. *(a beat)* But why am I telling you this? You're the sort of writer who's well aware that Heterosexuality Sells Movie Tickets. Homosexuality Sells Posthumous Biographies.

BILL. You know who buys respectable, analytical film biographies? Movie Geeks. You know who buys biographies that name each

and every one of their lovers? The same movie geeks plus everyone else. I didn't create the phenomenon.

HAROLD. No. You just take advantage of it but with a carefully placed tear in your eye for the human condition.

BILL. Oh I see. You've just gone ahead and put me down in that sewer where you put everyone else, huh?

HAROLD. Everyone. Except Karla.

BILL. Don't you think I have the same respect for Karla?

HAROLD. Respect?!?

(HAROLD suddenly begins to rifle through a bureau while BILL continues -)

BILL. Yes. Respect. I loved Karla. I researched her life as a labor of that love.

(HAROLD pulls an eight-by-ten photo out of the bureau. Holds it right up to BILL 's face. NOTE: We only see the photo from the rear)

HAROLD. And you express that love by printing this in your book?! Karla on the coroner's slab?! Her head blown wide open?!

BILL. Karla Daven's suicide has been glamorized and romanticized out of all proportion. I had to put that picture in there to smack people in the face with the pathetic grainy ugliness of her death.

HAROLD. How very philanthropic of you, Bill. I wish I could have been there when this photograph came in contact with your sweaty fingertips. I wish I could have seen that great thin-lipped, ear-to-ear smile slither across your face. I'm sure it was filled with images of "your great contribution to humanity." Or was it "humanity's contribution to your bank account"?

BILL. Very nice, Mr. Bachman. Talk like that is sure going to win me over at the grand old hour of two-twenty.

HAROLD. Two-twenty?! Bill, I need an answer! She is going to kill me tonight!

BILL. Your sweet innocent Karla Daven is planning a coldblooded murder. Strangely inconsistent, wouldn't you say?

HAROLD. You've driven her to it! I'm telling you, she was an innocent when she came to this town! She didn't even know how to sign her own autograph, for Christ's sake!