

CLAIRE: Why does it make that much difference, then, rowing a long way?

MAID: Because, miss, like many things in life, a lack of form can be hid in the short run, its absence being taken up by *power*. (Pause)

CLAIRE: How do you come to know so much about the nautical?

MAID: I was on a boat once.

CLAIRE: Really.

ANNA: That will be all. (MAID exits. Pause.)

CLAIRE: You were going to say something.

ANNA: What about?

CLAIRE: How the deuce should I know . . . ? (Pause)

ANNA: I've forgotten what I was going to say.

CLAIRE: Well, say something *else*, for the love of God.

(MAID enters.)

MAID: Mum.

ANNA: Oh MIGHT YOU GET OFF MY TITS? What is it? (Pause)

MAID: I've told a lie.

Start

~~CLAIRE: Well, then you're going to hell.~~

ANNA: A lie about what?

MAID: I can't rightly say it.

ANNA: Oh, spit it out.

MAID: It's me's in trouble.

ANNA: Go on.

MAID: I've lost me most precious possession.

^{Anna} ~~CLAIRE~~: Your Rapier Wit?

MAID: No.

^{Anna} ~~CLAIRE~~: I give up. (Pause)

MAID: Me maidenhood.

~~ANNA: How is it?~~

ANNA: When did it occur?

MAID: During before when you had yer tea.

ANNA: Aha.

MAID: No, not the *whole* of it.

ANNA: No.

DAVID MAMET

MAID: . . . jus' between the first time that you rang for the Hot water.

ANNA: Mmm.

MAID: No, not even. No, I tell a lie. It was when I came back with the tray.

ANNA: Yes . . .

MAID: But b'fore I put the tray down.

ANNA: Ah.

MAID: That's why the cook quit.

ANNA: Is it?

~~CLAUDE: I didn't like the entertainment?~~

MAID: No, I tell a lie. I'd put th' tray *down*, do you see, but I wz holdin' *on* to it, on to the handles, like, while it was on the counter.

ANNA ~~CLAUDE~~: . . . thank you, yes.

MAID: . . . for

ANNA ~~CLAUDE~~: . . . that's quite enough.

MAID: For "balance." (Pause)

ANNA ~~CLAUDE~~: Ah, yes.

BOSTON MARRIAGE

MAID: And I'm afraid I've spilt the milk. (MAID *cries*)

ANNA: Oh, Man—oh, Adversary Implacable. What does one not sacrifice upon the altar of your merciless caprice? (To MAID) Go away. You're fired.

ANNA ~~CLAUDE~~: Are you deaf? You're sacked. Go away now, go home.

MAID: I can't go home.

ANNA: Can't you see, we have troubles of our own?

~~CLAUDE: I have *you* as sympathy?~~

MAID: I can't go home, I'm *ruined*.

~~CLAUDE: You ain't ruined, just don't tell nobody. You dense *win*. Don't tell anyone. And pray to the gods your friend has neither given you the *pox*, or a *child*. (MAID *cries*.) Shall I write it down for you . . . ?~~

ANNA: Go, go, go, go away, you sad, immoral harlot.

MAID: I don't know what to *do*.

ANNA ~~CLAUDE~~: Well, what would your Auld Granny say?

MAID: I don't know.

ANNA ~~CLAUDE~~: Well, go home and ask her.

MAID: She's dead.

Ann

~~CLARE~~: She should have taken better care of herself.

MAID: Waal, she lived a long life.

Ann CLARE: Oh, good.

MAID: She was forty.

ANNA: . . . Ah ha . . .

MAID: But she always said, My Gran, she would Reach Out from Beyond the Grave.

~~CLARE: Told Fortunes, did she?~~

~~MAID: Go away.~~

~~CLARE: Turned the odd trick? Fill up the Family Tarders?~~

MAID: . . . she had the second sight.

Anna ~~CLARE~~: . . . how handy.

MAID: The islanders said she could see right through a man and two yards into the dirt that he stood on. One time, Annie MacPherson lost her locket. Actually, she lost it more than once. She never could hold on to anything. She used to tie her shovel to her apron strings when she went out to work in the garden. That's how she broke her ankle. One time, she baked a trowel in a pie. (Pause) I must pull up me bootstraps. Yer right. I'll go.

~~CLARE: Oh top him? (Pause)~~

ANNA: Happy Day.

MAID: Because Me Auld Gran used to say . . .

~~CLARE: Oh, for Christs sake, let her void her self.~~

ANNA: What did your Auld Gran say?

MAID: "Life is Froth and Life is Bubble. Two things stand like stone. Kindness in another's trouble. Courage in your own." (Pause)

(MAID exits.)

CLARE: We've fallen victim to the worst sin.

ANNA: Farting in Church?

CLARE: Despair.

ANNA: . . . that is the worst sin?

CLARE: The girl is right.

ANNA: In what particular?

CLARE: Fine. We are mired in difficulties. We must extricate ourselves.

ANNA: I am all attention.

CLARE: Our fortunes are turned upon the unwonted discovery in your home of a specific emerald necklace.