

## ② Cait + Caithleen

~~Cait grabs at Robbie's arm—pulls him to her—~~

~~ROBBIE. Let go of me—~~

~~CAIT. Let me tell you her thoughts—~~

~~ROBBIE. —just leave me the hell ALONE.~~

~~Robbie pulls away from Cait and rushes off, as—~~

~~Caithleen appears opposite. She wears her coat. She carries a small, simple blue suitcase.~~

~~Robbie and Caithleen do not see each other here.~~

~~CAIT. —her devil-may-care thoughts about the grand things she's gonna do with her life. An' all of it—ALL OF IT—is tied up in a boy she barely knows. A boy she's come crawlin' back for.~~

~~Cait turns to Caithleen.~~

CAITHLEEN. Hello:

CAIT. Hello.

*Pause.*

CAITHLEEN. Were you talkin' to someone? Was someone just here?

CAIT. Oh, I suppose. Now I suppose they're gone.

*Pause. Caithleen is looking around, looking off...*

Can I help you? You needin' somethin'?

CAITHLEEN. Oh, no—thank you.

*Pause.*

Are you needin' something?

CAIT. Oh, not a thing. I've more than I need already. Ask anyone.

*Pause.*

CAITHLEEN. Got your umbrella. That's smart. Shoulda brought mine. Gonna be fierce rain, I heard.

CAIT. Did you hear that?

CAITHLEEN. Yes.

*Pause.*

CAIT. Hmm.

CAITHLEEN. It's not what you heard?

CAIT. I heard you were lookin' for a boy. A boy you snared into

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your group so there wouldn't be thirteen of you. Made him come on one of your "tours." I heard you gave him a packet of crisps an' then you poured out your whole future on 'im an' asked if he was "serious."

*Caithleen says nothing.*

No matter. Easier this way. Won't have to swallow your pride. Tell him how you came runnin' back for him.

CAITHLEEN. That's not what I've done.

CAIT. Of course it is! Just look at you!

CAITHLEEN. You don't know anything about—

CAIT. I know you are *starvin'*. Hungry as can be for the affections of *anyone*. Someone to see you—really see you—'cause for too long you've been the invisible girl in your home, an' at your church, an' everywhere you ever thought to go—

CAITHLEEN. No...

CAIT. —*you are starvin', Caithleen.*

An' that boy...you don't know him from Adam. But he *saw you*, didn't he? An' you came runnin' back...with Momma's suitcase. Where on earth did you ever find that?

*Caithleen is staring at Cait. We think she might leave. But instead...she sets her suitcase down. And she stands there. Lost.*

*Cait pats the seat next to her on the bench...but Caithleen does not move.*

CAITHLEEN. How long?

CAIT. Hmm?

CAITHLEEN. How long will it feel like this?

CAIT. You mean what feels like a tap on your shoulder an' you turn to find someone holdin' out a lovely present wrapped in blue paper just for you, but when you go to open it they yank it away an' you never even saw it—never knew what it was but now that it's gone you want it more than anything—

CAITHLEEN. Aye, but—

CAIT. (*Overlapping/interrupting.*) —but it's gone—an' the summer

too is gone—an' the warm light always goes with it—an' Momma says the rain will always find the wedding, the bride, the mud, the dull lace dragging like gaps of blue earth into carriages gone to hazard—into the horses bespeckled with steam an' slop—into the sound of hoofs poundin' like a lost ancient music in the catacombs of dull-hearted girls named Caithleen.

Is that what you mean?

CAITHLEEN. Aye. How long will I feel that?

CAIT. Only always. Only then.

*Pause.*

CAITHLEEN. You talk strange.

CAIT. You get used to it.

CAITHLEEN. An' you're old.

CAIT. I plan to be older—no thanks to you. You coulda spared me all this, you know.

CAITHLEEN. How?

CAIT. Are you havin' me on here—

CAITHLEEN. No, I'm only—

CAIT. (*Overlapping.*) —can you really not venture a guess 'bout the road that gets traveled between you an' me?!

CAITHLEEN. But you can't know the future!—no one can.

CAIT. Every woman knows the future if she's got the nerve to look! Aye, it's a fact beyond dispute: women can see an older version of themselves walkin' across the road an' say, "Oh look what's to become of me!"

Can you imagine a man sayin' such a thing?! Not on your life! If a man saw his older self across the road, he'd say, "Thanks be to St. Patrick that I'm never gonna end up like *that!*"

*Silence, and then...*

*Caithleen slowly walks over and sits down beside Cait.*

*They sit there for a good long while.*

~~CAITHLEEN. What time is it?~~

~~CAIT. It's none. It's no o'clock.~~

~~CAITHLEEN. There's no moon.~~

STOP