

ROBERT 2

tates at all: break his heart. Take him and shatter him. Leave him in a thousand pieces, so he'll never want to look back on this day and remember.

CAITHLEEN. But—

ROBERT. You'll be doing me a favor.

CAITHLEEN. —I thought he was your friend.

ROBERT. He's a *feckin eejit*. You'll call him that and he'll deserve it. Deserve that and more. For being gutless—

CAITHLEEN. (*Sharp.*) Excuse me.

ROBERT. —for letting you walk away.

And Caithleen is walking away, not looking back.

The cold bastard. He watched you walk down Grafton—even saw you slow down—like a sign—saying “*you can still catch me—I'm not gone yet!*”—but he just stood there, cold to the bone.

Caithleen is gone.

All for pride. Fear and pride.

If I could meet him...oh, man, if only I could have five minutes alone with him...

Robbie enters. He wears beat-up jeans and a T-shirt. Carries a weathered backpack.

Start

Robert is surprised by what he sees.

ROBBIE. Hey.

ROBERT. “Hey”?

ROBBIE. Yeah—hey—did you see a girl here?

ROBERT. I saw a lot of girls here.

ROBBIE. She was the tour guide—for that Joyce thing?

ROBERT. “*That Joyce thing*”?

ROBBIE. Hey—c'mon, man—her name is Caithleen—

ROBERT. What did she look like?

ROBBIE. I don't know—she's real pretty—she has a kind of—

ROBERT. (*Overlapping.*) You don't know?! How can I help you if you don't know?

ROBBIE. Okay—forget it—

Robbie starts off—

ROBERT. I might have seen her at Davy Byrne's—just a while ago havin' a real tiny sandwich.

—but this stops him.

ROBBIE. Yeah—we were there—

ROBERT. But she stormed out, I think.

ROBBIE. —yes, she did, but how—

ROBERT. I think it was something you said.

ROBBIE. —how do you know that?

ROBERT. Then I saw her on a bench in St. Stephen's Green—but the thunder started, so the two of you ran through the rain to McDaid's. A good pub, that one.

ROBBIE. You've been following me?!

ROBERT. Americans go to Europe to find their ancestors. That's what I'm doing. You are my ancestor!

ROBBIE. What the hell, man?

ROBERT. You—what you did—what you will do here today—*you are what gave birth to me.*

ROBBIE. Which way is the river? Is the river west of here?

Robbie pulls out a map and tries to make sense of it.

ROBERT. God—look at us! It's the ultimate *déjà vu!*

ROBBIE. This city—

ROBERT. *(To audience.)* Who gets a chance like this?!

ROBBIE. *(Re: the map.)* —this city makes no sense at all!

ROBERT. You and me—face to face—Time as we know it be damned!

Robbie shoves the map at Robert—

ROBBIE. Just tell me where the hell I am!

ROBERT. You are in the thick of it, my friend!—and you are *fantastically unprepared!*

ROBBIE. Look—if you've seen her—

ROBERT. You know—when I was your age I swore that when I got older I would not hate young people. And now I'm older. And I hate young people. *(With a laugh.)* God I hate 'em so much!—

ROBBIE. Hey, listen—

ROBERT. (*Overlapping.*) —I hate the trivial crap you talk about—
and how little you worry—and how nothing is expected of you!

ROBBIE. If you've SEEN HER you've got to HELP ME—

ROBERT. And worst of all—I hate that you TAKE IT ALL FOR
GRANTED.

ROBBIE. FORGET IT—OKAY?!

ROBERT. Caithleen is WASTED ON YOU: You and your cocky
nonchalance and your stupid firm body and your messy full head
of hair—I hate the sight of you, you fucker!

Robert starts off, saying—

And TUCK YOUR SHIRT IN—you look AWFUL.

—Robert is gone, as—

Stop

*Cait appears, opposite. Her clothes are modest, casual, worse
for wear. She has an old umbrella and a bag from the market.*

Cait removes a roll and some jam from her bag.

CAIT. You did the right thing, Robbie. Lettin' that girl get away. I
say let 'er go—and get on with your life.

Robbie turns to her.

It's Caithleen you're talkin' about, am I right?

ROBBIE. (*How do you know this?*) I'm sorry?

CAIT. Say you run after her—what then? People are too sugary.
Makin' sweet little movin' pictures in their head. You think you're
gonna catch upta her—an' pour out your heart—like that's a good
thing!—like people truly want to see the drops an' dregs of some-
body's bloody ol' organs! An' then you're thinkin' all is forgiven an'
you put your lips together with fireworks over the river behind
you—cute little unicorns shittin' out rainbows across the sky that's
all a-twinkle with the sugary sweet endings that're never really
there at all...

*Cait takes an enormous bite of her roll. She enjoys it im-
mensely.*

You hungry?

She holds out some roll and jam.