

AGNES MONOLOGUE

ACT ONE

Scene 1

AGNES sits alone on stage. A flask in her bag; a suitcase beside her. She addresses the audience.

AGNES: In the dream I'm drowning. But I don't know it at first. At first I hear water and I imagine it's going to be a lovely dream. Even though every time I dream the dream I'm drowning each and every time I dream the dream I forget. Fooled by the sound of water I guess and I imagine it's a dream of a wonderful night on the beach, or a cruise in the moonlight, or an August afternoon in a secret cove—but a moment after having been fooled into expecting bonfires or handsome captains or treasures in the weedy shore it becomes very clear that the water I'm hearing is the water that's rushing around my ears and fighting its way into my mouth and pulling me down into its dark, soggy oblivion. No captains, no treasures, no bonfires for me, no in my dream I'm drowning. And then, just when it seems it's over—that I drown and that's the dream—in the distance, on the beach, I see a child. A tall thin child, maybe nine or ten. And his sister, younger, five. Then behind them comes their

mother spreading out a blanket on the sand. It's a picnic. And beside the mother is the man. Tall. Strong. And broad shoulders, good for sitting on if you're five, or even ten. Good for leaning on if you're tired, good for crying on if you're sad. And he's got his hands on his hips and he's looking out at the water, and he sees something. Me. And he reaches out and touches his wife's elbow who at that very moment sees something too and then the children, as if they're still connected to their mother's eyes, think they might see the same thing. And with all my strength—if you can call strength that strange, desperate, exhausted panic—I wave. My right arm. High. So they'll be sure to see. And they do. They see me. And then all of them, standing in a perfect line, they all wave back. The little girl, her brother, their mother and the man. They smile and wave. Then the mother returns to her blanket and the basket of food she has there, the man sits, stretching out his legs, propping himself up on one arm, the little boy runs off in search of starfish or crab shells and the little girl smiles and waves, smiles and waves and smiles and waves. And then I drown. And that's so disturbing, because you know what they say when you die in your dream. Strange. But stranger I guess is that I'm still here. Back here. Still here.

THERESA enters.

THERESA: Why are you sitting in the dark?

AGNES: I like the dark, it's good for my complexion.

THERESA: I thought you were going to have a nap.

AGNES: Whatever.

THERESA exits briefly to turn on some lights.