

I 'M A SHOE by Gary Young

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(NOTE: High School productions may require minor censoring of some of the words, etc. Also, some off-stage voices could be changed to on-stage characters to add actors to the play, if the school needs to do this. Gary Young can help with this transition.)

Setting: Well appointed Shipboard Stateroom. Couch, easy chair, desk, doors to bathroom, closet, bedroom outside, study. Port holes visible.

Speaking in the direction of the stage LEFT door. NORMAN, wearing a Ship Steward's uniform, unbuttons his collar and opens the coat while he ties and unties drawstrings on cloth bags.

NORMAN

I'm crazy about you. No. That doesn't even begin to say it. I can't live without you. Okay, that's a cliché, but love is a cliché. It's the oldest human emotion, next to hunger and constipation. I love you. If that's not enough for you, then how about this? I'll give it all up for you. I'll sell it all and move back to New York, buy a condo, have kids, get a dog that I'll walk every day and I'll even clean up the poop. I know I've been a shit. At times. A generous shit, a creative shit, a productive shit, but a shit nevertheless. I will change all of that. Not all of that, actually. I'll continue the good stuff but get rid of the evil me. You see, I'm taking responsibility for my words. I acknowledge what I've done and said to you that's bad, and I take it all back. All I ask is that you remember the good stuff and credit me, at least partial credit. Am I getting through to you at all? Because if I'm not...

FLUSH sound. DOOR opens. MARC enters, also wearing a Ship Steward's uniform, wiping his hands on a towel, stands at the door for a beat.

MARC

You had me at hello.

NORMAN

I didn't say hello.

MARC

In that case, it all sounded like apologetic crap.

NORMAN

You didn't use a towel in there, did you?

MARC

No. Wiped on my pants. No evidence left. See? Wet spots (*Pointing to the side of his pants*) Norm, it will never fly. She's much more intelligent than that. Try again. If you want her back you have to do more than say what every insensitive male has said for thousands of years. Jacqui wants to hear that you're sorry, definitely, but you sounded cynical there. You need to be soft when you say it. Where do you plan to be when you have this perilous discussion?

NORMAN

Where what?

MARC

Where? At a restaurant? In the drug store? Under some "mark's" house in the crawl space? Where?

NORMAN

On the couch. On this couch. Here. Or in the bedroom. Not the bathroom. She may use the towels.

MARC

Here? During this caper?

NORMAN

I have to get this out of my system.

MARC

Not the bedroom. Your motive will look too transparent, even if it's not really. Any couch would be nice. Real inexpensive. No tipping, no valet parking...

NORMAN

I see your point. Which restaurant do you suggest? Never mind. That part I can figure out for myself.

MARC

Let her choose.

NORMAN

Let her? Then she'll know. And we'll have to do the discussion then and there, over the phone or whatever.

MARC

You want success?

NORMAN

I don't have to ask Jacqui. I know her well enough to choose a good eatery. She has three favorites and there are a few that I haven't tried that I'm sure would be expensive enough to look good to her.

MARC

What did you give the guy?

NORMAN

The guy?

MARC

You know, the bellboy...steward.

NORMAN

I tipped heavily. Excessively. He's not suspicious, any more. He's rich and we're gone in 2 hours, supposedly.

MARC looks around the room.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

What?

MARC

It's too easy. It's too easy. This caper is too easy. It has a...difficult, sneaky difficult feel to it.

NORMAN

You're just reacting to Marcie's throwing up. She's hypersensitive to movement or the appearance of movement. She can't even use a bathtub. It's easy, Marc. Not every caper is hard. Don't invoke Murphy's Law. Don't do that. The ship's leaving in two and one-half hours and we're leaving in two. If we were at port another five hours, and under slightly different circumstances, it could be a nice, romantic shipboard meal.

MARC

So when the meal? Assuming we're not all in jail.

NORMAN

Stop that. When? I don't know. I could do it like the weekend after we fence the proceeds of our endeavor. But that seems so far off. I'd like to do it as soon as possible and get it over with.

It's that painful? MARC

Yes. (*Looking around*) MARC
I still say it's too easy.

Shut up with that. NORMAN

It's too easy. MARC

MARCIE enters explosively, a 30-something woman, also wearing Ship Steward's uniform, unbuttoned. SHE is disheveled, she has been crying for a long time and is still in a sobbing state, she waves her hands, palms facing breast, up and down several times as she speaks. HER mascara has run and she has a Kleenex in her hand. She often tries to repair a long string of hair that has fallen onto her face. As she approaches mirrors or pictures, she makes a "cosmetic" face and checks her lipstick. SHE is wheeling a large suitcase, obviously heavy, which is placed midstage center, facing upstage. SHE holds out a large diamond ring on her finger at arm's length and pauses a second to admire it. SHE breaks out into a loud wail. SHE sighs, and NORMAN shrugs and embraces her.

(*unable to verbalize*) MARCIE
Um...Um!

NORMAN
Marcie. Are you okay? Marcie! You're having one of your...things. This is not the best time. We need to be sensible right now...

Um...Um! MARCIE

MARC
Hi, Marcie. (*waving weakly to MARCIE*) (*to NORMAN*) Norm, this is going to be embarrassing. I should leave, but I won't.

MARCIE

Um, um...gaaah! (*cries*)

NORMAN hugs her. SHE puts her head on his chest and snorts. He looks down.

NORMAN

No snorting. Here. Sit. Marc, get her a glass of water. And Marcie, don't get too attached to that ring.

MARCIE

Diet coke with ice.

NORMAN

It'll make you burp.

MARC

And leave evidence.

NORMAN

You'll be snorting and burping, and God knows what else.

MARCIE

Then no ice.

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MARCIE

He wants to be cremated and scattered.

NORMAN

Any particular place? I wanted to do that to him ages ago.

MARCIE

He wants to be scattered at sea.

NORMAN

Well, that is convenient of him. Can't we just throw him overboard? (*A look from the OTHERS*) What? Amounts to the same thing.

MARCIE

No. Has to be cremated. Then scattered.

MARC

Not against the wind.

NORMAN

I'm going to end up with an urn full of his ashes sitting on my mantle for a year, right? Why is it always on a mantle? I'd put Dad on top of my toaster, so he could be with his own kind. So what did you manage to get into that big...suit...case...You're not going to tell me that he's...*(He really doesn't want to hear the answer)* Um, so what's in the big suitcase?

MARCIE

He's in here.

*NORMAN gives a look to MARCIE.*

MARCIE

Well, duh. *(NORMAN gives her a look)* Well, what else are we going to do? He's our responsibility, not hers.

NORMAN

Hers?

MARCIE

The girl. Jacqui. *(Gesturing)*

NORMAN

Oh, yes.

MARCIE

And he doesn't have a ticket...so...

NORMAN

*(Circling)* How did you get him in there? He weighs twice what you weigh. *(Looking at MARCIE)* Well...not twice...

MARCIE

She helped me. Jacqui doesn't want to get in trouble any more than we do. And you're right. It wasn't easy. We had to pack him three different ways until he fit and nothing stuck out. It was very upsetting *(low-grade sob)*.

NORMAN

Jacqui? He was with Jacqui?

MARC

Easy.

NORMAN

He was giving Jacqui the "old college try?"

MARC

We don't know that.