

ROS: We could play at questions.

GUIL: What good would that do?

ROS: Practice!

GUIL: Statement! One—love.

ROS: Cheating!

GUIL: How?

ROS: I hadn't started yet.

GUIL: Statement. Two—love.

ROS: Are you counting that?

GUIL: What?

ROS: Are you counting that?

GUIL: Foul! No repetitions. Three—love. First game to . . .

ROS: I'm not going to play if you're going to be like that.

GUIL: Whose serve?

ROS: Hah?

GUIL: Foul! No grunts. Love—one.

ROS: Whose go?

GUIL: Why?

ROS: Why not?

GUIL: What for?

ROS: Foul! No synonyms! One—all.

GUIL: What in God's name is going on?

ROS: Foul! No rhetoric. Two—one.

GUIL: What does it all add up to?

ROS: Can't you guess?

42

GUIL: Were you addressing me?

ROS: Is there anyone else?

GUIL: Who?

ROS: How would I know?

GUIL: Why do you ask?

ROS: Are you serious?

GUIL: Was that rhetoric?

ROS: No.

GUIL: Statement! Two—all. Game point.

ROS: What's the matter with you today?

GUIL: When?

ROS: What?

GUIL: Are you deaf?

ROS: Am I dead?

GUIL: Yes or no?

ROS: Is there a choice?

GUIL: Is there a God?

ROS: Foul! No *non sequiturs*, three—two, one game all.

GUIL (*seriously*): What's your name?

ROS: What's yours?

GUIL: I asked you first.

ROS: Statement. One—love.

GUIL: What's your name when you're at home?

ROS: What's yours?

GUIL: When I'm at home?

43

"Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead"
by Tom Stoppard

2 Males Serve

ROS: Is it different at home?
GUIL: What home?
ROS: Haven't you got one?
GUIL: Why do you ask?
ROS: What are you driving at?
GUIL (*with emphasis*): What's your name?!

ROS: Repetition. Two—love. Match point to me.
GUIL (*seizing him violently*): WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

ROS: Rhetoric! Game and match! (*Pause.*) Where's it going to end?
GUIL: That's the question.
ROS: It's *all* questions.
GUIL: Do you think it matters?
ROS: Doesn't it matter to you?
GUIL: Why should it matter?
ROS: What does it matter why?
GUIL (*teasing gently*): Doesn't it matter why it matters?
ROS (*rounding on him*): What's the matter with you?

Pause.
GUIL: It doesn't matter.
ROS (*voice in the wilderness*): . . . What's the game?
GUIL: What are the rules?
Enter HAMLET behind, crossing the stage, reading a book—as he is about to disappear GUIL notices him.
GUIL (*sharply*): Rosencrantz!

44

ROS (*jumps*): What!
HAMLET *goes. Triumph dawns on them, they smile.*
GUIL: There! How was that?
ROS: Clever!
GUIL: Natural?
ROS: Instinctive.
GUIL: Got it in your head?
ROS: I take my hat off to you.
GUIL: Shake hands.
They do.
ROS: Now I'll try you—Guil—I
GUIL: --Not yet—catch me unawares.
ROS: Right.
They separate. Pause. Aside to GUIL.
Ready?
GUIL (*explodes*): Don't be stupid.
ROS: Sorry.
Pause.
GUIL (*snaps*): Guildenstern!
ROS (*jumps*): What?
He is immediately crestfallen, GUIL is disgusted.
GUIL: Consistency is all I ask!
ROS (*quietly*): Immortality is all I seek. . . .
GUIL (*dying fall*): Give us this day our daily weck. . . .
Beat.

45

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