

TOP GIRLS

Caryl Churchill

- JOYCE: You've caught me on the hop with the place in a mess. / If you'd let me know you was coming I'd have got
- MARLENE: That doesn't matter.
- JOYCE: something in to eat. We had our dinner dinnertime. We're just going to have a cup of tea. You could have an egg.
- MARLENE: No, I'm not hungry. Tea's fine.
- JOYCE: I don't expect you take sugar.
- MARLENE: Why not?
- JOYCE: You take care of yourself.
- MARLENE: How do you mean you didn't know I was coming?
- JOYCE: You could have written. I know we're not on the phone but we're not completely in the dark ages, / we do have a postman.
- MARLENE: But you asked me to come.
- JOYCE: How did I ask you to come?
- MARLENE: Angie said when she phoned up.
- JOYCE: Angie phoned up, did she?
- MARLENE: Was it just Angie's idea?
- JOYCE: What did she say?
- MARLENE: She said you wanted me to come and see you. / It was a couple of weeks ago. How was I to know that's a
- JOYCE: Ha.
- MARLENE: ridiculous idea? My diary's always full a couple of weeks ahead so we fixed it for this weekend. I was meant to get here earlier but I was held up. She gave me messages from you.
- JOYCE: Didn't you wonder why I didn't phone you myself?
- MARLENE: She said you didn't like using the phone. You're shy on the phone and can't use it. I don't know what you're like, do I.
- JOYCE: Are there people who can't use the phone?
- MARLENE: I expect so.
- JOYCE: I haven't met any.

MARLENE: Why should I think she was lying?

JOYCE: Because she's like what she's like.

MARLENE: How do I know / what she's like?

JOYCE: It's not my fault you don't know what she's like. You never come and see her.

MARLENE: Well I have now / and you don't seem over the moon.*

JOYCE: Good. *Well I'd have got a cake if she'd told me.

PAUSE.

MARLENE: I did wonder why you wanted to see me.

JOYCE: I didn't want to see you.

MARLENE: Yes, I know. Shall I go?

JOYCE: I don't mind seeing you.

MARLENE: Great, I feel really welcome.

JOYCE: You can come and see Angie any time you like, I'm not stopping you. / You know where we are. You're the

MARLENE: Ta ever so.

JOYCE: one went away, not me. I'm right here where I was. And will be a few years yet I shouldn't wonder.

MARLENE: All right. All right.

JOYCE gives MARLENE a cup of tea.

JOYCE: Tea.

MARLENE: Sugar?

JOYCE passes MARLENE the sugar.

It's very quiet down here.

JOYCE: I expect you'd notice it.

MARLENE: The air smells different too.

JOYCE: That's the scent.

MARLENE: No, I mean walking down the lane.

JOYCE: What sort of air you get in London then?