MARIE

You know what I think, Claire? I think half the reason you're with me is to use me as a stepping stone for your career.

CLAIRE

Well if that were the case, I'd be pretty stupid to have stuck around all this time when you've done absolutely nothing on my behalf.

(Marie suddenly wilts, sinks onto the couch. Claire runs to her.)

CLAIRE

Are you all right? Do you feel faint? Put your head between your legs.

(Marie does so.)

CLAIRE

You see, darling. You're really not well. You mustn't—

MARIE

(Raising her head) I thought you loved me, Claire. More fool I.

CLAIRE

Of course I love you. We love each other.

MARIE

But your career is obviously your first priority.

CLAIRE

No it isn't. But it *is* important to me, yes.

MARIE

So now you're leaving me—

CLAIRE

Leaving you? I'm not leaving you. I'm just going to an audition.

MARIE

But if you get the part, that'll be it. The beginning of the end.

CLAIRE

What more must I do to prove my loyalty? I gave up my career to be your… your… friend and your helper and your traveling companion and your nurse and… When my mother was sick and I wanted to go see her, I didn't, remember? Because you said you needed me more than she did.

MARIE

I was going through a bad time.

CLAIRE

Well, so was she! But everything has to be about you. The great Marie Dressler, center of the world. And if I resume my career and it's successful, you might have some competition.

MARIE

Competition? With you? Don't make me laugh. I've been on the cover of Time magazine, dearie, and I'm supposed to feel threatened by someone who's… no one?

CLAIRE

I'm "no one?" That's what you think of me? You're a selfish old woman.

MARIE

Is that so? Well, I can't imagine why you'd want to spend your time with someone like that, so I suggest you leave. In fact, that's the prize that *I'd* extra love. For you to get out of my life!

CLAIRE

C'mon, Marie.

MARIE

I mean it. I won't be taken advantage of again. I'll give you a day to pack your things.

CLAIRE

But—

MARIE

Get out! Now!