

# In Her Shoes

*Professor* – Is that Corin?

*Maggie* – No.

*Professor* – Who is it?

*Maggie* – Maggie.

*Professor* – Have we met before?

*Maggie* – There's a pick-up line with a little dust on it.

*Professor* – Fine. What's your sign? I've been out of the game for a while.

*Maggie* – What, like seventy, eighty years?

*Professor* – Give or take. Where's Corin? She's my number one girl.

*Maggie* – Excuse me, but what does Corin have that I don't?

*Professor* – She reads to me.

*Maggie* – Oh.

*Professor* – You can do it. Maybe nose her out of first place. Here...

*Maggie* – I'm a little busy right now. Maybe you should wait for Corin.

*Professor* – You sound too pretty, Maggie, to be cleaning bedpans.

*Maggie* – You're right, I am.

*Professor* – I have a grandson, a doctor over in Tampa. I should introduce you.

*Maggie* – You don't want to do that.

*Professor* – Are you bad news?

*Maggie* – Well, you know, I don't mean to be, but yeah.

**Professor** – Well, since you're not going to marry my grandson, you might as well read to me.

**Maggie** – I'm kind of a slow reader.

**Professor** – Perfect. I'm a slow listener.

**Maggie** – The... art... of... losing... You know, I should get back to work.

**Professor** – What is it? Dyslexia?

**Maggie** – What are you, a teacher?

**Professor** – Professor. Retired. Just take your time, Maggie. Listen to the words as you're about to say them. Nine times out of ten you'll hear a mistake coming and you'll correct it before you make it. Then again, you might make a total ass of yourself. Oh, come on. Poetry is supposed to be slow.

**Maggie** – The art of losing isn't hard to master. So many things seem filled with the intent to be lost that their loss is no disaster. Lose something every day. Accept the fluster of lost door keys... I lost two cities... two rivers, a continent. I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster. Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture I love) I shan't have lied. It's evident the art of losing's not too hard to master though it may look like (*Write it!*) like disaster.

**Professor** – Well, what do you think?

**Maggie** – Good.

**Professor** – Unacceptable answer. What's the poem about?

**Maggie** – I don't know.

**Professor** – Yes you do. What's it about?

**Maggie** – Losing?

**Professor** – What?

**Maggie** – Love?

**Professor** – Ah, and how about that. Is the love lost already? Is Bishop writing about it as a possibility, a probability, what?

**Maggie** – Well, in the beginning she's talking about losing real things, like her keys. Then she gets all, like, she lost a continent.

*Professor* – She’s getting grandiose.

*Maggie* – Yeah, and the way she says it is like, it doesn’t matter.

*Professor* – Ah, her tone. Would you call it detached?

*Maggie* – I think she wants to sound detached. She wants to sound like it doesn’t matter. Cause she knows, deep down, how bad it’s going to feel to lose.

*Professor* – Lose what? Or whom? Is it a lover?

*Maggie* – No, it’s a friend.

*Professor* – A plus. Smart girl.