

# The Oath

Drama · Two-hander · 5 min · Female role · Adult · Advanced

*(The living room of a house being emptied. Boxes labelled in black marker.)*

**CLARA**

You've already labelled everything. "Anna." "Clara." "To give away." As if a life could be filed.

**ANNA**

Someone had to deal with it. You weren't here.

**CLARA**

I was six hours away by plane. That's not the far side of death.

**ANNA**

You were six hours away by plane for eleven years, Clara. Eleven years.

**CLARA**

And you count. You always counted. The days, the wrongs, the absences.

**ANNA**

Because someone, in this house, had to keep the accounts. She'd stopped keeping them.

*(Clara stops in front of a photo.)*

**CLARA**

Did she ask for me? At the end?

**ANNA**

...

**CLARA**

Anna. Did she ask for me?

**ANNA**

Do you want the truth, or something you'll be able to carry?

**CLARA**

I want the truth.

**ANNA**

Then no. At the end, she asked for nothing. She was saving her breath. You cost too much.

*(A silence. Clara takes the blow.)*

**CLARA**

You waited eleven years to tell me that. You kept it the way you keep a weapon.

**ANNA**

I kept it the way you keep a pain. I didn't know it would be of use.

**CLARA**

We swore, as little girls. Remember? That we'd never become her. Cold. Counting.

**ANNA**

I swore that at nine, to a sister who never came back. The oath wore out on its own.

**CLARA**

Then break it for good. Tell me to leave and let's say no more.

**ANNA**

I'm not telling you to leave.

**CLARA**

Then what are you telling me?

**ANNA**

That I've been alone. And that I can't even hate you properly, because you're the only one who remembers the same things I do.

*(She pushes a box toward Clara.)*

**ANNA**

That one says "Clara." I made it anyway. My hands knew before I did that I wouldn't turn you away.

**CLARA**

...Stay with me while I open it. I don't want to be alone for that.

**ANNA**

That's all I've wanted to hear for eleven years.

*(They sit on the floor, on either side of the box.)*

### **What you can do with it**

Original text written for Acto. Read it, print it, work on it in class, perform it at an audition or on a self-tape: that is what it is for, and you need no permission. For a public performance or any commercial use, write to us at [contact@acto.re](mailto:contact@acto.re).