

***STAR ACTING* at ESPA**
MONOLOGUES FOR WOMEN
by Charles Busch

THE DIVINE SISTER, MRS. LEVINSON, page 27, Samuel French

Mrs. Levinson, an elegant grande dame is visited by Jeremy, a young man she's known for years. He asks her about her beliefs as a strict atheist.

MRS. LEVINSON

My husband, Morris, was an explorer and surprisingly, a man of faith. To prove to me the existence of God, he took me on a voyage to the ancient Island of Crete. We traveled to the dark corner of the island, far away from any tourists. I wore a Bill Blass safari jacket with a stand up collar and matching slacks. Morris wanted me to observe the life cycle of the species *Sepia Officinalis*, otherwise known as the cuttle fish. Yes, I saw them hatched from their mothers, small yet sinister creatures with eight arms and two tentacles. Their shells iridescent and jewel-like. Did you know that the large, staring black eyes of the cuttle fish are fully developed before birth, allowing them to hunt their prey even before hatching? And hunt their prey they did. I saw them move together as one as they stalked and ultimately devoured a terrified octopus, its ink spreading through the water in grim black floating sentences. I said, "Morris, take me away from here. I have seen enough." "No, Margaret, we must stay. We must stay. We must now see them die to feed the more superior species." And so we stayed. I removed my jacket and slacks, revealing a Schiaparelli pink bathing suit. We saw the great dolphin leap from the sea and snatch a generation of cuttle fish into its hideous gaping mouth. Morris shouted, "We are looking at the face of God! It is His will to create such divine perfection." I replied, "If that is your God, then He is a cruel one and I'll have none of Him." We returned to our hotel in silence. With an overpowering dread of the unknown, I slipped into a turquoise silk Galanos. I found Morris standing on our balcony, hypnotized by the sea. And then, without a warning, he grasped his heart and fell to the ground. I knew at that very instant he was dead. And now, when I look upon the ocean, despite its glorious magnitude, all I see is debris, debris, debris. An endless trail of debris. Is that an answer to your question?