

Mrs Barker and Mrs Dean audition piece

MRS BARKER: There's a visitor outside asking to see Nellie.

MRS DEAN: What sort of visitor is he? I'm not interested in time-wasters.

MRS BARKER: I don't know. I don't waste my time quizzing every man that wanders about the place.

MRS DEAN: Fine. Show him in. Nellie is getting changed but I'll speak to him.

MRS BARKER USHERS JOE INTO THE ROOM.

ESTELLE INTERCEPTS HIM.

ESTELLE: I wouldn't waste your time with that old viper unless you've got a peerage. She sent an MP home in tears the other night.

ESTELLE AND THE OTHER WOMEN GRADUALLY FILTER OUT, LEAVING JOE FACE-TO-FACE WITH MRS DEAN.

MRS DEAN: Aren't you going to introduce yourself?

JOE: Good lord! Sorry... that was rude... I mean, I'm looking for Nellie?

MRS DEAN: She's getting changed. But I handle all her business affairs, so if there's something you'd say to her, you can say it to me. I suggest you start by introducing yourself. Although, judging by the look of you, maybe you shouldn't bother.

JOE: *(Panicking)* I'm a lord.

MRS DEAN: You?

JOE: Yes.

MRS DEAN: You don't look like a lord.

JOE: No... I mean... I'm... a lord... 's man... I work for a lord.

MRS DEAN: You're a servant.

JOE: Well, I mean, more like a butler. He asked me to bring a message for Nel...-lie. Nellie Dean. Er, he saw her performance and he'd like to meet her.

MRS DEAN: Is he waiting outside?

JOE: No... er... he had to attend a vote. A late night one. He is free on Thursday, though. He would like to meet her after the show. He'll wait in his carriage outside... if that is... agreeable?

MRS DEAN: What is your master's name?

JOE: Oh... er...

JOE LOOKS AROUND DESPERATELY FOR INSPIRATION.

ESTELLE POPS HER HEAD AROUND THE DOOR.

ESTELLE: Don't mind me, forgot me purse.

SHE EXITS.

JOE: Lord... Farthing.

MRS DEAN: Lord Farthing of where?

JOE: Lord Farthing of...

THREE PERFORMERS IN 'WILSON, KEPPLER AND BETTY' STYLE OUTFITS WALK THROUGH THE DRESSING ROOM. JOE IS EXASPERATED.

A PERFORMER WALKS PAST IN A KILT.

JOE: Forfar.

MRS DEAN: Lord Farthing of Forfar?

JOE: What should I tell him?

MRS DEAN: You can tell Lord Farthing that Nellie will meet with him on Thursday.

JOE: Great. I mean, I'm sure his lordship will be pleased.

MRS DEAN: You may go now.

JOE: But Nellie...

MRS DEAN: I'll pass on the message to her.