

SIDE 2

LUCIUS. You what?

PHYLLIDA. They were much more concerned with a poisonous snake than with poor Luigi, so we were able to escape.

LUCIUS. You released a deadly cobra in the throne room?

PHYLLIDA. I wasn't thinking clearly! I had to save Luigi! What if they come for him? Luigi, *visha!* We have to protect him.

PERCY. (*Drawing his line in the sand.*) No. No. We can't promise that. Say nothing, Lucius. Be strong, old man. She's a lovely girl but her savage slapped the Queen of England and England expects every man to — (*To Phyllida.*) What are you doing?

LUCIUS. (*Horrified.*) She's crying!

PERCY. No fair! Stop that! Caught between slapping the queen and a woman crying? What's an Englishman to do?

LUCIUS. We need to think.

PHYLLIDA. I need to faint. (*She matter-of-factly swoons into Percy's arms.*)

PERCY. My God, she weighs nothing! Did you know that? No, of course you didn't.

LUCIUS. That's immaterial.

PERCY. Immaterial, nothing. She's thin, and right now she's very quiet. That's how I like them.

LUCIUS. You can't base your decision on this. Her weight carries no ... weight.

PERCY. You're just jealous.

LUCIUS. Percy, hand her here.

PERCY. No.

LUCIUS. Hand her over.

PERCY. No.

LUCIUS. Percy ...

PERCY. No.

LUCIUS. Fine. Put her on the couch. We'll get her some brandy or something. Roger?! (*Sloane enters.*)

PERCY. Oh, don't even bother. Worst bartender in London. I'll get it. Sloane! Thank goodness. Help us with Phyllida, here.

SLOANE. I'm not touching that woman! This is what comes of having anything to do with women. They are not like men. They are not like us! (*Cope enters, with Rosie draped over him.*)

COPE. (*Exactly like Phyllida.*) Oh, what a state I'm in! Oh, I'm all a-twitter! Oh, I don't know *what* to do! Is Walling back yet?

LUCIUS. We thought he was at the palace with you?

COPE. He was! But then Rosie here got out of her cage ... It was chaos. The guards were all over. I thought they were going to kill Rosie, but ...

LUCIUS. Cope, what is it?

COPE. Rosie never went near Her Majesty. She was ... distracted.

LUCIUS. By what?

COPE. By Jane. Jane finally figured out how to open the latch on the cage. Walling dove for her but Rosie was faster. Rosie ... ate Jane, Lucius! Right there in the throne room. Walling ... I've never seen him look like that. I grabbed Rosie and ran for it. Why, why did Jane have to figure out the latch right then? Stupid animal! (*Walling enters, enraged.*)

WALLING. "STUPID ANIMAL"?! "STUPID ANIMAL"?! Lucius, tell that man and his ... thing that Jane was a gentle and noble animal!

COPE. Wally, old man ...

WALLING. Don't you "Wally" me! Do you see this? (*Walling produces Jane's tiny collar with the bell. He shakes it repeatedly at Cope. Ring.*) This is what's left of her! (*Ring.*) This is what you've done! (*Ring.*) This!

COPE. Walling ...

WALLING. (*Ring.*) Thiiiiiiiiis! Ask not for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for Jane! (*Walling collapses in tears. Shock settles over the club. Lucius steps in.*)

LUCIUS. (*Gently.*) Give me the collar, Walling. Sloane, as a Biblical scholar, perhaps you have a few appropriate words.

SLOANE. Glad to. Glad to, old chap. Good thinking.

LUCIUS. Would that be alright, Walling?

WALLING. That would be v — very nice. (*Percy fills everyone a glass of brandy and Sloane begins.*)

SLOANE. O God, accept our prayers on behalf of Thy servant, Jane. For none of us liveth to himself, and no creature dieth to himself. For if we live, we live unto the Lord and if we die, we die unto the Lord. Jane was small in size but great in spirit. Though caged in life, she is uncaged in death to frolic in the fields of the Lord. Grant her, O Lord, eternal life and ... and ...

WALLING. Lettuce.

SLOANE. Let us what?

WALLING. Lettuce. She liked lettuce.

SLOANE. Ah. Grant her eternal life and lettuce. Receive her into the arms of Thy mercy. For she died not in vain but died for Science.

END