

Audition Piece for Chloe Coverly

Enters from the garden, sits down and starts exchanging her shoes for the boots,

Chloë: The best thing is, you wait here, save you tramping around. She spends a great deal of time in the garden, as you may imagine.

Bernard: Yes. Why?

Chloë: Well, she's writing a history of the garden, didn't you know?

Bernard: No, I knew she was working on the Croom papers but...

Chloë: Well, it's not exactly a history of the garden either. I'll let Hannah explain it. The trench you nearly drove into is all to do with it. I was going to say make yourself comfortable but that's hardly possible, everything's been cleared out, it's *en route* to the nearest lavatory.

Bernard: Everything is?

Chloë: No, this room is. They drew the line at chemical "Ladies".

Bernard: Yes, I see. Did you say Hannah?

Chloë: Hannah, yes. Will you be alright? *(stands up wearing the boots)* I won't be ... *(she has lost him)* Mr Nightingale?

Bernard: *(waking up)* Yes. Thank you. Miss Jarvis is Hannah Jarvis the author?

Chloë: Yes. Have you read her book?

Bernard: Oh, yes. Yes.

Chloë: I bet she's in the hermitage, can't see from here with the marquee...

Bernard: Are you having a garden party?

Chloë: A dance for the district, our annual dressing up and general drunkenness. The wrinklies won't have it in the house, there was a teapot we once had to bag back from Christies in the nick of time, so anything that can be destroyed, stolen or vomited on has been tactfully removed; tactlessly, I should say – *(She is about to leave)*

Bernard: Um – look – would you tell her – would you mind not mentioning my name just yet?

Chloë: Oh. All right.

Bernard: *(smiling)* More fun to surprise her. Would you mind?

Chloë: No. But she's bound to ask ... Should I give you another name, just for the moment?

Bernard: Yes, why not?

Chloë: Perhaps another bird, you're not really a Nightingale. *(she leaves)*