

**SIDE #1: Marlene, Isabella, Nijo, Joan, and Gret**

MARLENE: Magnificent all of you. We need some more wine, please, two bottles I think, Griselda isn't even here yet, and I want to drink a toast to you all.

ISABELLA: To yourself surely, we're here to celebrate your success.

NIJO: Yes, Marlene.

JOAN: Yes, what is it exactly, Marlene?

MARLENE: Well it's not Pope but it is managing director.

JOAN: And you find work for people.

MARLENE: Yes, an employment agency.

NIJO: Over all the women you work with. And the men.

ISABELLA: And very well deserved too. I'm sure it's just the beginning of something extraordinary.

MARLENE: Well it's worth a party.

ISABELLA: To Marlene.

MARLENE: And all of us.

JOAN: Marlene.

NIJO: Marlene.

GRET: Marlene.

MARLENE: We've all come a long way. To our courage and the way we changed our lives and our extraordinary achievements. *(They laugh and drink a toast.)*

## **SIDE #2: JOAN, MARLENE**

JOAN: But I didn't know what was happening. I thought I was getting fatter, but then I was eating more and sitting about, the life of a Pope is quite luxurious. I don't think I'd spoken to a woman since I was twelve. [My lover] the chamberlain was the one who realized.

MARLENE: And by then it was too late.

JOAN: Oh I didn't want to pay attention. It was easier to do nothing. [...] I never knew what month it was. [...] I wasn't used to having a woman's body.

JOAN: I didn't know of course that it was near the time. It was Rogation Day, there was always a procession. I was on the horse dressed in my robes and a cross was carried in front of me, and all the cardinals were following, and all the clergy of Rome, and a huge crowd of people. [...] I had felt a slight pain earlier, I thought it was something I'd eaten, and then it came back, and came back more often. I thought when this is over I'll go to bed. There were still long gaps when I felt perfectly all right and I didn't want to attract attention to myself and spoil the ceremony. Then I suddenly realized what it must be. I had to last out till I could get home and hide. Then something changed, my breath started to catch, I couldn't plan things properly any more. [...] I just had to get off the horse and sit down for a minute. [...] And the baby just slid out on to the road.

**SIDE #3: ANGIE, KIT**

ANGIE: I'm going to London. To see my aunt.

KIT: And what?

ANGIE: That's it.

KIT: I see my aunt all the time.

ANGIE: I don't see my aunt.

KIT: What's so special?

ANGIE: It is special. She's special.

KIT: Why?

ANGIE: She is.

KIT: Why?

ANGIE: She is.

KIT: Why?

ANGIE: My mother hates her.

KIT: Why?

ANGIE: Because she does.

KIT: Perhaps she's not very nice.

ANGIE: She is nice.

KIT: How do you know?

ANGIE: Because I know her.

KIT: You said you never see her.

ANGIE: I saw her last year. You saw her.

KIT: Did I?

ANGIE: Never mind.

KIT: I remember her. That aunt. What's so special?

ANGIE: She gets people jobs.

KIT: What's so special?

ANGIE: I think I'm my aunt's child. I think my mother's really my aunt.

**SIDE #4: MARLENE, MRS. KIDD**

MRS. KIDD: Howard's not in today.

MARLENE: Isn't he?

MRS KIDD: He's feeling poorly.

MARLENE: I didn't know. I'm sorry to hear that.

MRS KIDD: The fact is he's in a state of shock. About what's happened.

MARLENE: What has happened?

MRS KIDD: You should know if anyone. I'm referring to you been appointed managing director instead of Howard. He hasn't been at all well all weekend. He hasn't slept for three nights. I haven't slept.

MARLENE: I'm sorry to hear that, Mrs. Kidd. Has he thought of taking sleeping pills?

MRS KIDD: It's very hard when someone has worked all these years.

MARLENE: Business life is full of little setbacks. I'm sure Howard knows that. He'll bounce back in a day or two. We all bounce back.

MRS KIDD: If you could see him you'd know what I'm talking about. What's it going to do to him working for a woman? I think if it was a man he'd get over it as something normal.

MARLENE: I think he's going to have to get over it....Are you suggesting I give up the job to him then?

MRS KIDD: It had crossed my mind if you were unavailable for some reason, he would be the natural second choice I think, don't you? I'm not asking.

MARLENE: Good.

MRS KIDD: You mustn't tell him I came. He's very proud.

MARLENE: If she doesn't like what's happening here he can go and work somewhere else.

MRS KIDD: Is that a threat?

MARLENE: I'm sorry but I do have some work to do.

MRS KIDD: It's not easy, a man of Howard's age. You don't care. I thought he was going too far but he's right. You're one of those ball breakers, that's what you

MARLENE: I'm sorry but I do have some work to do.

MRS KIDD: are. You'll end up miserable and lonely. You're not natural.

**SIDE #5: MARLENE, JOYCE**

MARLENE: I hate the working class which is what

JOYCE: Yes you do.

MARLENE: you're going to go on about now, it doesn't exist any more, it means lazy and stupid. I don't

JOYCE: Come on, now we're getting it.

MARLENE: like the way they talk. I don't like beer guts and football vomit and saucy tits and brothers and sisters—

JOYCE: I spit when I see a Rolls Royce, scratch it with my ring Mercedes it was.

MARLENE: Oh very mature—

JOYCE: I hate the cows I work for and their dirty dishes with blanquette of fucking veau.

MARLENE: and I will not be pulled down to their level by a flying picket and I won't be sent to Siberia or a loony bin just because I'm original. And I support

JOYCE: No, you'll be on a yacht, you'll be head of Coca Cola and you wait, the eighties is going to be stupendous all right because we'll get you lot off our backs—

MARLENE: Reagan even if he is a lousy movie star because the reds are swarming up his map and I want to be free in a free world—

JOYCE: What? What?

MARLENE: I know what I mean by that—not shut up here.

JOYCE: So don't be round here when it happens because if someone's kicking you I'll just laugh.

*(silence)*

MARLENE: I don't mean anything personal. I don't believe in class. Anyone can do anything if they've got what it takes.

JOYCE: And if they haven't?

MARLENE: If they're stupid or lazy or frightened, I'm not going to help them get a job, why should I?

JOYCE: What about Angie?

MARLENE: What about Angie?

JOYCE: She's stupid, lazy and frightened, so what about her?

MARLENE: You run her down too much. She'll be all right.

JOYCE: I don't expect so, no. I expect her children will say what a wasted life she had. If she has children. Because nothing's changed and it won't with them in.

**SIDE #6: MARLENE, ANGIE**

MARLENE: Don't you have to go home?

ANGIE: No.

MARLENE: Why not?

ANGIE: It's all right.

MARLENE: Is it all right?

ANGIE: Yes, don't worry about it.

MARLENE: Does Joyce know where you are?

ANGIE: Yes of course she does.

MARLENE: Well does she?

ANGIE: Don't worry about it.

MARLENE: How long are you planning to stay with me then?

ANGIE: You know when you came to see us last year?

MARLENE: Yes, that was nice wasn't it.

ANGIE: That was the best day of my whole life.

MARLENE: So how long are you planning to stay?

ANGIE: Don't you want me?

MARLENE: Yes yes, I just wondered.

ANGIE: I won't stay if you don't want me.

MARLENE: No, of course you can stay.

ANGIE: I'll sleep on the floor. I won't be any bother.

MARLENE: Don't get upset.

ANGIE: I'm not, I'm not. Don't worry about it.

### **SIDE #7: NELL, SHAUNA**

NELL: You find it easy to get the initial interest do you?

SHONA: Oh yeh, I get plenty of initial interest.

NELL: And what about closing?

SHONA: I close, don't I?

NELL: Because that's what an employer is going to have doubts about with a lady as I needn't tell you, whether she's got the guts to push through to a closing situation. They think we're too nice. They think we listen to the buyer's doubts. They think we consider his needs and feelings.

SHONA: I never consider people's feelings.

NELL: I was selling for six years, I can sell anything, I've sold in three continents, and I'm jolly as they come but I'm not very nice.

SHONA: I'm not very nice.

### **SIDE #8: GRET**

GRET: We come to hell through a big mouth. Hell's black and red. It's [...] like the village where I come from. There's a river and a bridge and houses. There's places on fire like when the soldiers come. There's a big devil sat on a roof with a big hole in his arse and he's scooping stuff out of it with a big ladle and it's falling down on us, and it's money, so a lot of the women stop and get some. But most of us is fighting the devils. There's lots of little devils, our size, and we get them down all right and give them a beating. [...] Well we'd had worse, you see, we'd had the Spanish. We'd all had family killed. My big son die on a wheel. Birds eat him. My baby, a soldier run her through with a sword. I'd had enough, I was mad, I hate the bastards. I come out of my front door that morning and shot till my neighbours come out and I said, "Come on, we're going where the evil come from and pay the bastards out." And they all come out just as they was from baking or [...] washing in their aprons, and we push down the street and the ground opens up and we go through a big mouth into a street just like ours but in hell. [...] You just keep running on and fighting, you didn't stop for thing. Oh we give them devils such a beating.

**SIDE #9: Isabella, Nijo, Marlene, Joan**

ISABELLA: I longed to go home, but home to what? Houses are so perfectly dismal.

NIJO: I longed to go back 10 years.

MARLENE: I thought traveling cheered you both up...

ISABELLA: Oh, it did, of course, It was on...

NIJO: I'm not a cheerful person, Marlene, I just laugh a lot.

ISABELLA: ...the trip from Australia to the Isles, I fell in love with the sea. There were rats in the cabin and ants in the food but suddenly it was like a new world. I woke up every morning happy, knowing there would be nothing to annoy me. No nervousness. NO dressing.

NIJO: Didn't you like getting dressed? I adored my clothes. When I was chosen..

MARLENE: You had prettier colors than Isabella.

NIJO: ...to give sake to his Majesty's brother, the emperor, on his formal visit, I wore silk pleated trousers and a seven layer gown in shades of red and two outer garments, yellow lined with green...

MARLENE: Yes, All that silk must have been very—

JOAN: I dressed as a boy when I left home.

ISABELLA: You dressed as a boy?

MARLENE: Of course. For safety.