

Lucy (*aside*) First rule of Restoration comedy. Never give the maid a letter.

(*To Lydia, smiling.*) My pleasure, miss.

Lucy takes the letter and walks toward the door. The door opens obscuring **Lucy** completely. **Julia** enters in *ATS* uniform.

Julia Lydia!

Lydia Jujui!

Lydia and **Julia** and embrace.

Lydia Your uniform is awful! It's entirely brown!

Julia It's so itchy.

Lydia You look like a lovely big number two!

Julia It's really itchy.

Lydia opens the door revealing **Lucy**.

Lydia Lucy, meet another comrade, miss Julia Melville, daughter of Viscount Melville of the Edinburgh Melvilles.

Lucy Alright?

Julia I am thank you, yes. Hello.

Lucy Can I take your coat, miss?

Lydia No, comrade! You go downstairs and do something liberated like play tennis or have a manicure. I'll hang her coat. We're equals, remember.

She makes a show of taking Julia's coat.

Lucy Righto, comrade.

At the door, she raises a fist. Lydia copies. Lucy goes.

Julia Gosh, Lydia, have you gone terribly left wing?

Lydia tries desperately to find somewhere to hang Julia's coat but fails and eventually just chuck it on the floor and kicks it under the bed.

Lydia It's a brave new world, Jujui. Now, what's the goss?

Julia I'm so nervous. I just can't wait to see my Roy.

Lydia Must we always talk about boys? Two women in a room should be able to talk about anything they want.

Julia What do you want to talk about?

Lydia Female emancipation.

Julia Go on then.

Lydia As enlightened women, we need to decide if it is men that are the problem or capitalism. That is the dichotomy that has blocked our progress.

Julia It's not just economics though is it, Lydia. Women's freedom is also constrained by religion and cultural tradition.

Silence.

Lydia How is Roy?

Julia I've missed him so much!

Lydia Why?

Julia You don't approve of Roy do you?

Lydia He's your cousin.

Julia That's not Roy's fault, is it? I can't wait to kiss his little face, then I'll wash his socks and fill his pipe and make him a lovely ham salad.

Lydia Can't he make his own ham salad?

Julia He's a man, silly! When we're married I'll bake every day, and on a Sunday, when we get back from church, I'll draw the curtains and let him do anything he wants.

Lydia Have you already . . . you know, done it?

Julia Gosh no. But he did once show me Henry.

Lydia Henry?

Julia His willy.

Lydia He's called his willy Henry?

Julia It looked so very sweet, like a tiny field mouse, all curled up in its nest, wearing a roll-neck sweater.

Lydia If he hadn't saved your life when that boat sank, would you still love him?

Julia I have to marry someone!

Lydia One doesn't marry a man just because he can swim!

Julia We could have a joint wedding.

Lydia And who should I marry?

Julia Jack Absolute!

Lydia Never!

Julia You haven't stopped talking about him since Felicity Palmerston's coming out.

Lydia That was before I read this.

She gives Julia a book.

Julia 'The Memoirs of a Sexually Liberated Socialist Woman'?

Lydia It'll change your life.

Julia Are there some good recipes in it?

She leafs through the book.

Lydia Don't be ridiculous.

Julia Then why is there a picture of half an avocado pear.

Lydia That's your vagina.

Julia My vagina?!

Lydia Not yours! Everybody's.

Julia slams the book closed. Lydia opens it up again.

Lydia You have to understand how your body works.

Julia I was going to leave that to Roy, he's good at knots.

Lydia There are four different kinds of orgasm. The good news is that only one of them's fatal.

Mrs Malaprop enters without knocking, calling.

Mrs Malaprop Lydia?! *Vous avez arrivez!*

Lydia Hello, Auntie. You know Julia Melville?

Mrs Malaprop Of the Melville Melvilles of Edinburgh?

Julia We don't live in Scotland anymore, because of the food.

Lydia Julia is visiting her fiancée on the base.

Mrs Malaprop We must find Lydia a husband.

Lydia I shall never marry.

Mrs Malaprop If you were cognisant of the effect of being left bereft on the shelf, you would marry whilst I was young and still beautiful.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy There's someone to see you, ma'am.

Mrs Malaprop Is it a gentleman?

Lucy You want me to count his chromosomes?

Enter Sir Anthony Absolute, talking.

Sir Anthony In here are they? At ease!

Mrs Malaprop (aside) Oh my God! He. Will. Do!

Lucy Sir Anthony Absolute, ma'am.

Mrs Malaprop bows and gestures.

Mrs Malaprop Ooooh! Move in, come in!