

MONTY – Shhh! Can you hear that?

RITA What?

MONTY That is the sound of nuns booing the Pope. Three thousand trade unionists booing a Labour Prime Minister.

RITA Oh my gawd, Harold Wilson's not here, is he?

MONTY Yeah, and that Bar *bar bar bar barbara* Castle.

RITA I'm so nervous, Monty.

MONTY You'll be great! You're not gonna read it, are you?

RITA Oh gawd. I can't learn it!

MONTY It looks terrible though, dunnit.

TANNOY (*Distort*) Composite five speakers, this is your two minute call.

MONTY That's you, composite five is the Equal Pay Amendment.
(*Enter LISA wearing a press badge around her neck.*)

LISA Rita.

RITA Lisa?! What you doin' here?

LISA I brought the Biba dress.

RITA Oh my gawd, it's beautiful. How did you get back stage?

LISA I have a press pass! I'm working for The Spectator Magazine.

RITA That's brilliant!

MONTY (*To RITA.*) You've obviously not read The Spectator. Anyway as they say in orthopaedics – break a leg!
(*MONTY is gone. Now alone, RITA and LISA hug.*)

RITA So you're working? What did your husband say?

- LISA He doesn't know. I told him I was going to Monaco for the weekend.
- RITA Don't walk out on him, Lisa, please, hating men isn't what this is about.
- LISA Absolutely, I don't hate all men. I just happen to have made an exception for my husband. Look, I have a Double First from Cambridge and he can't even imagine me working, never mind being any good. This isn't just about working class women, you are doing this for all of us.
- RITA Would you mind listening to my speech?
- LISA Of course.
- RITA President, Congress –
- LISA – You're not going to read it, are you?
- RITA Oh Jesus! I've tried to learn it but with everything, it's doing my head in!
- LISA You're going to be brilliant.
- TANNOY Composite five speakers, Equal Pay Amendment, to the wings, please.
- LISA You'd better get ready. Good luck.
- (RITA dives into the loo to change into the Biba dress. Enter TOOLEY, he's smoking a cigar. He finds the speech, looks at it, and tears it up. RITA comes out.)
- TOOLEY (*Whistles, impressed with her looks.*) I didn't expect you to be a looker.
- RITA You're the yank, aintcha?
- TOOLEY (*Threatening / lecherous.*) Yeah. And you're the Brit. We could have a special relationship.

(RITA goes to leave.)

TOOLEY I love the dress. Are you a Red? Ya know, I could create a position for you, baby.

TANNOY Composite five speakers to the stage!

TOOLEY You're on.

(He blocks the door.)

Who's looking after your kids today, Mommy? Daddy I guess, since he's laid off. I guess a strike must test a relationship. I never married, I prefer horses.

RITA Where's my speech?

TOOLEY Nervous, eh? I like a nervous broad. Frightened meat tastes better.

(TOOLEY edges towards RITA.)

RITA Don't touch me!

TOOLEY Bit of advice on public speaking, remember the three D's. Drive, Diction and Don't forget you're just a little girl!

(TOOLEY is gone. RITA crashes around the room in panic to piece CONNIE'S speech back together. She collapses and starts to cry. Enter BERYL, SANDRA, CLARE, and CASS.)

BERYL What the fuck's going on!?

RITA He's torn up Connie's speech.

BERYL Who?

CASS (Kisses teeth.) The bumbaclot American?

RITA I don't know what I'm gonna say!

BERYL Don't panic, we can put it back together again.

TANNOY Composite five speaker, Rita O'Grady to the stage now.

SANDRA You didn't need a speech in Liverpool.

BERYL No, you made it up.

CLARE And you was you know, fing!

CASS Come on girl, you're on!

RITA I can't do it. I can't . . .

BERYL Rita O'Grady! Get your fucking ^{bleeding} arse up there. You're letting
Connie Riley down.

 (RITA *pauses.*)

RITA Alright. I'm ready.

 (They all leave. End of scene.)

Music No. 19a: INTO T. U. C.

SCENE THIRTEEN

The TUC. The auditorium. TOOLEY and HOPKINS leave.

TANNOY Next composite number five, Equal Pay. Rita O'Grady of the
NUVB.

(RITA *amateurishly taps the microphone.*)

RITA Hello. Is this thing on?

(Taps microphone. Whiney feedback.)

So yeah we went on strike because you know, you gotta do something, ain't ya. What Connie woulda said was we are the working classes, men and women and we women have been earning less, sometimes, half – what you men earn, doing the same job, side by side. And that ain't fair, is it?