

**SIDES FOR *RUNNING WILDE* AUDITIONS:
OSCAR AND DAVENPORT (ACT 1, SC. 1)
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(The year is 1882. OSCAR is the 27-year-old Oscar Wilde. DAVENPORT is his African-American valet, from New York City. They have been traveling together for three months now. The setting is the living room of the hotel suite where OSCAR is staying, at a hotel in Kingston, Ontario. This is the opening moment of the play. DAVENPORT is helping OSCAR out of his coat, and has just given OSCAR some news which displeases him.)

OSCAR: Kingston – *Ontario*?

DAVENPORT: I thought you knew that.

OSCAR: Nobody, including you, told me Ontario *had* a Kingston!

DAVENPORT: I can appreciate your disappointment.

OSCAR: Can you? Do you not recall me saying, as the train left Montreal and I settled in for my nap, “Wake me when you see the first palm trees”?

DAVENPORT: Yessir. That’s why I didn’t wake you.

OSCAR: You might’ve said something at the time!

DAVENPORT: I didn’t know! I’ve never been here before either! Maybe you knew something I didn’t and Ontario has palm trees.

OSCAR: Here I was expecting tropical sunshine, azure seas, and brown-skinned, slender lads and maidens nearly as nude as the youthful divinities of Ancient Greece. Instead I find a lot of limestone buildings and serious people in ugly overcoats, and it’s going to rain. I want my palm trees!

DAVENPORT: Excuse me, Sir, but would it have made any sense to schedule Montreal last night, Kingston Jamaica tonight, and Belleville Ontario tomorrow night?

OSCAR: *Yes!* It would have made *wonderful* sense!

DAVENPORT: You do understand Jamaica’s an island, right? You can’t get there by train. We would have had to take a boat across the Caribbean.

OSCAR: Don’t rub salt into the wound!

DAVENPORT: Yeah, sorry.

OSCAR: Ah, well, there's nothing for it. We're in Ontario, and there's no quick cure for that. I shall inspect the other rooms. (Exit to bedroom and bath. Off.) But sometimes I do grow weary of this tour!

DAVENPORT: Oh, now, you like it well enough when they're throwin parties at you.

OSCAR (off): True, Davenport! I like anything well enough when I'm the centre of attention!

DAVENPORT (aside): Well, you heard *that*. (Calls to OSCAR:) Acceptable?

OSCAR (entering): Excellent. The bedroom is charming and the bathroom reassuringly modern. You were quite correct in suggesting we haul the trunk upstairs first.

DAVENPORT: You can usually tell from the lobby, Sir.

OSCAR: Yes, I'm learning that. Didn't you say there'd be a bellboy to help us with the rest of the luggage?

DAVENPORT: Yessir, but the bellboys are otherwise engaged. They're extra busy with this political thing. The manager apologized. He admits he shoulda seen that coming.

OSCAR: What political thing?

DAVENPORT: The Liberal Party of Canada. They're having a convention here in Kingston. That's why the lobby's so crowded.

OSCAR: Oh. I thought that was for me.

DAVENPORT: Partly, I'm sure.

OSCAR: Nay, do not flatter. However, one would think that when they heard I was coming, they might have re-scheduled.

DAVENPORT: One would think so, would one not. Shall we get the trunk into the suite?

OSCAR: Yes, let's get on with it. We'll just put it against that wall for now.

DAVENPORT: Yessir. (They exit to the hotel corridor.)
