

**SIDES FOR *RUNNING WILDE* AUDITIONS:
OSCAR, DAVENPORT AND ALAN (ACT 1, SC. 2)
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(OSCAR is the 27-year-old Oscar Wilde, who has come in from the rain and has been unable to dry his hair until now that a pair of female visitors have left. DAVENPORT is his African-American valet from New York City. ALAN is the hotel bellboy. GWEN, whom ALAN is in love with and wants to marry, and GUSSIE, GWEN's aunt who forbids the marriage – as do ALAN's parents – have just left. GUSSIE has just addressed ALAN by his birth name, "Algernon." DAVENPORT has poured a glass of claret, and brings it to OSCAR.)

OSCAR: Davenport, you anticipate my every need. (Chugs it.)

DAVENPORT: "Algernon," huh? (Exit to bathroom.)

ALAN: Please don't go callin me that. I hate it. My Momma thought it sounded high-toned. But marryin Gwenny's a little *too* high-toned for them. Speakin of that, Mister Wilde, can I ask you –

OSCAR (as DAVENPORT re-enters with a towel, hairbrush and mirror): Thank you, Davenport. (To ALAN, as he towels his head and neck:) Can't be drying one's hair in the presence of ladies, can we? It is simply washing one's clean linen in public.

ALAN: What?

OSCAR: No, that doesn't work, does it.

DAVENPORT: No, Sir. (To ALAN:) They're called witticisms. If he comes up with one that makes any sense, we write it down.

OSCAR: *Something* is simply washing – Women who flirt with their own husbands! Are simply washing their clean linen in public! Davenport, record for posterity. (DAVENPORT makes a note. Brushing his hair:) What a contrast! On the one hand, that dreadful woman, with her "fanology" nonsense. An invention by commercial tradesmen, to sell more fans. Even the word is a bastardisation of Old English and Greek. On the other hand, your Miss Gwendolen is too too lovely. (During this, DAVENPORT gets OSCAR a cigarette.)

ALAN: Yeah, well, I gotta say, with all due respect, I didn't appreciate you flirtin with her, Mister Wilde. That's the lady I love.

OSCAR: Oh, you've nothing to fear from me, Alan. She's all yours, you fortunate rogue, it's clear from the way she looks at you. I predict you will have sublime sexual relations.

ALAN: Excuse me?

OSCAR: I do mean both of you, of course.

ALAN (puzzled): All right then.

DAVENPORT: Alan, I'm sure you have work to do.

ALAN: Oh, the delegates are all checked in, so things are pretty quiet right now. Mister Wilde, can I ask you–

OSCAR: Yes, I can imagine nothing quieter than a hotel full of Canadian Liberals, but Davenport is quite right, we must get me ready for my lecture. Off you go, please.

DAVENPORT: Yeah, don't want to be hanging around here if you're needed elsewhere, do you? (To OSCAR:) See, Sir? Younger generation, they don't have the training.

OSCAR (as ALAN begins to cry): Quite so. I shan't be needing you at the theatre tonight, Davenport, but I'll want you here when I return.

DAVENPORT: Very good, Sir.

OSCAR (notices ALAN crying): Oh, dear.

ALAN (sobbing): I'm sorry – I'm real sorry – Please don't get me sacked! I love workin here, and I got ambitions, and I need the job so I can marry Gwenny!

OSCAR (to DAVENPORT): “Sacked”?

DAVENPORT: Dismissed. He allowed Miss Gwendolen into your rooms, in my absence.

OSCAR: Dismissed! My dear boy.

DAVENPORT: With your permission, Sir, I'll be in my room. (OSCAR nods, waves him away.) Of course, feel free to ring me if any of this gets interesting. (Exit to corridor.)

OSCAR: My dear fellow, no one's going to sack you. You helped a reporter obtain an interview with a guest, which was a service to us both. And as my things were not yet unpacked, you did not intrude on my privacy. So if you get into any trouble over this with Mister Chasuble, tell me and I shall intercede.

ALAN: Thank you, Sir, thank you so much, that's a big relief.

OSCAR: You're most welcome. Off you go, now. Go marry your Gwendolen. (ALAN bursts into fresh sobs.) Oh, dear. Not out of the woods yet. (Takes out a notebook and fountain pen, sits, indicates other chair:) Come. Sit.

ALAN: I aint allowed to sit in the presence of a guest.

OSCAR: This guest demands it.

ALAN: You gotta get dressed for your lecture.

OSCAR: I have time. Stop arguing, pull up a chair and talk to me. (ALAN sits.) What is the real dilemma here? Though I fear I can guess.

ALAN: We're so much in love, but our folks don't want us gettin hitched.

OSCAR: Oh, shite.

ALAN: I appreciate your sympathy.

OSCAR: No, the *plot*. It's done to death, dear chap, and repeatedly dug up again. Romeo and Juliet –

ALAN: Yeah, Gwenny says that's us.
