

**SIDES FOR *RUNNING WILDE* AUDITIONS:
OSCAR AND ERNIE (ACT 2, SC. 3)
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(OSCAR is the 27-year-old Oscar Wilde, in his hotel room in Kingston, Ontario, during his 1882 lecture tour of North America. ERNIE is a good-looking working-class Ontario man in his 40s. They went to bed together the night before, and now ERNIE has come knocking on OSCAR's hotel room door.)

OSCAR (opening the door to ERNIE): My dearest Ernie, how flattering that you've come back for more, but tragically, I haven't the time, and I've just had the most / dreadful –

ERNIE (rushes in, slams the door, and grabs OSCAR's shirt front): You traitorous son of a bitch.

OSCAR: I beg your pardon, Sir?

ERNIE: You goddamn turncoat.

OSCAR: Is it a game? Is mild corporal punishment involved?

ERNIE: We had an understanding. This was between us. Our secret.

OSCAR: Oh. Of course, my dear fellow.

ERNIE: Don't "dear fellow" me. First thing this morning, you tell the world! You told the newspapers!

OSCAR: What newspapers?

ERNIE: The Whig! The Darlington girl!

OSCAR: Oh. Well, as to that, her name is no longer Darlington, / it is now –

ERNIE: I happened to run into her, I asked how the interview went, and she said you told her I was *here* last night!

OSCAR: I did not! I never spoke your name. To be quite candid, I don't even *know* your name.

ERNIE: She said you told her the fella had your book. And the only people in town with your book are her and me! And she knows it! You've ruined my life!

OSCAR: That *is* dreadful!

ERNIE: Damn right!

OSCAR: Only two copies in all Kingston?

ERNIE: Last night I told my wife I was goin to the bar with my buddies. If this comes out in the paper, my marriage is over.

OSCAR: It's not going to come out in –

ERNIE (raises fists): You and I are gonna settle this right now.

OSCAR (cowers): Please don't. I abhor fisticuffs.

ERNIE: Take it like a man, damn you! (Begins swinging at him and missing.)

OSCAR (dodging skillfully): This is a most unequal match!

ERNIE (repeatedly missing): You shoulda thought of that – when you opened – your big mouth!

OSCAR: This morning or last night?
