

La Flava Floro. People are arriving for the event.

Edward and Angela arrive.

Henry and Jane arrive.

Henry and Jane walk through to the garden.

“Hello Angela, nice to see you again, hello Edward”, says Edith.

“Hello.”

“Angela, sorry to be a nuisance, but would you mind if I ask Edward to come and have a look at the audio system, there is a bit of a problem, sorry to interrupt.”

“No, that’s fine”, replies Angela.

Edward and Edith depart leaving Angela alone. Angela starts to look at the displays that have been put up.

People are chatting happily.

“What are you doing here!”

People stop talking and turn in the direction from which the loud, angry voice had come.

The Editor of Trade Magazine is stood about five yards from Angela and has just confronted her.

Angela looks at him in disbelief.

Julia approaches. Julia speaks to the Editor of Trade Magazine.

“Can I be of help?”

“This one, this girl, I want to know what she is doing here.”

“The lady is attending a social event.”

“Don’t try to be funny, I want to see her ticket, or rather the ticket she used to get in here, she works for me, she works in the post room, dealing with the mail, I want to see the ticket she is using, where did she get it!”

“I can assure you that the lady is here perfectly lawfully. I was by the door when she entered and I can vouch for her being here perfectly lawfully, and very welcome too.”

“I want to see her ticket, I want to know where she got it.”

“That is not necessary, I am in charge here and I am entirely satisfied.”

The Editor of Trade Magazine addresses Angela.

“Right, nine o’clock Monday morning, my office, if you have the nerve to still come to work.”

“Who are you exactly?” asks Julia.

“I am the Editor of Trade Magazine, her employer.”

“Do you have any proof of that?”

“Proof? Proof? There, there’s the Managing Director of Gigantic Business, ask him”, says the Editor, pointing.

Julia turns in the direction indicated.

“Well, he looks somewhat like the Editor of Trade Magazine, but I don’t think he would speak to someone who works for him like that when she is just enjoying herself at a social event on a Saturday, so I can’t be sure.”

Julia tries to suppress a smile.

The wife of the Managing Director of Gigantic Business addresses Angela, though clearly within the hearing of the Editor of Trade Magazine.

“I’m a lawyer, a barrister actually, so if that man does not withdraw his threat to you I will gladly represent your interests if you like, pro bono, it won’t cost you anything.”

“Thank you.”

Edward arrives, and quietly stands in front of Angela, facing the Editor of Trade Magazine.

“Yes?” asks Edward.

“Oh that's it is it.”

“The lady is my guest. It is none of your business.”

“So, is there anyone else you think might be able to identify you to my satisfaction?” asks Julia.

“These two!” snaps the Editor.

Turning to Edward and Angela he sharply orders them.

“Tell her who I am!”

“Oh we're at a social event, on a Saturday”, replies Edward.

“Anybody else?” asks Julia.

The Editor looks around.

“There, that man there, he is a freelance journalist, he writes articles for me sometimes, ask him, he will be able to show you his press credentials to prove who he is.”

“Well, I ... I ...”, says the supposed businessman.

The Editor looks concerned.

“What!” exclaims Mariposa, “he told us he is the Sales Director of a machine tools company! Is he a journalist? Did you write that nasty article about me in The Daily Newspaper that caused all that trouble?”

“Oh, sorry Charles, were you here undercover to get a story, have I blown your cover?”

Edith looks concerned. Edith did not know that Mariposa knew about the newspaper article. Edith is annoyed that because of her good nature she had given him tickets for the event, she was tricked.

“I suppose you’ll want me to leave now then”, says the freelance journalist.

The supposed businessman's wife speaks loudly to him.

“Leave, we’re not leaving, we’ve been invited to a dance and a dinner and I’m not going to lose out because of you. Writing for The Daily Newspaper, wait till I get you home.”

“You were happy enough on that cruise that got paid for out of it.”

“You ... you ... that cruise, paid for by money got for writing for that rag! How dare you! Wait till I talk to you at home.”

Suddenly, waltz music starts to play quite loudly and people start to dance, including the freelance journalist and his wife.

‘That was fortuitous, defused the situation’, thinks Edith.

Edith turns and looks towards where the band is located. She notices Caroline Appleby by the band, looking towards her, smiling.

‘Well done, Caroline.’

Edith raises her right hand in greeting to Caroline and smiles.

Caroline does a regency era polite curtsy in response.

The event continues.

David Evans arrives.

“Hello Caroline.”

“Hello.”

“There is dancing.”

“Yes, but I'm not dancing, there are several unaccompanied ladies whom you could ask if you wish.”

“Er, right. Well, I'll just yes.”

David is dancing with Margaret Johnson.

The music stops.

They go and sit together.

“How are things then?” asks David.

“Well, frankly, I am in a bit of a quandary over work.”

“Ah, can I help?”

Margaret relates how she has been invited to go to Paris and can take a female companion to support her.

“I just asked Jane Hove if she could, a few minutes before you asked me to dance, but alas she can't so I am stuck. I can go without a companion as there will be a woman from the head office publicity department as well as the photographer and his assistant, but, well”

“So as I am male you can't ask me.”

“Well, no”, replies Margaret diplomatically, but anyway she and David have only just met.

“Of course, I could happen to be in Paris and staying at the same hotel.”

Margaret looks at David in astonishment.

A pause.

“Well, have a think about it for a few days and if you wish just tell me when and which hotel.”

A pause.

“Er right, I'll um I'll um think about it.”

“Fine, well the music has started again, shall we dance?”

Margaret smiles and they both stand and go to the dance floor and dance.

People are about to go home, or to hotels, as the social event draws to a close.

The freelance journalist and his wife decide to go promptly before the event formally closes and they get into their car and start their journey back to their hotel.

Silence until they are away from the event.

“Thank you dear, you got me out of that. Well done”, says the freelance journalist.

“You were good yourself, that bit about the cruise was good, perhaps we could go on a cruise sometime.”

“You improvised well, your indignation when I said that.”

“I do my best. When they all get back to the hotel, do you want me to do a bit of shouting and door slamming?”

“No, I don’t think that will be necessary, they will all be feeling happy and probably won’t even think about us if we keep out of sight, if we get an early night then we can get up early, and leave about 7 o’clock, tell the night porter there is a problem at the factory and I’ve had a message to go back to sort it out and ask him to give our apologies for leaving early to the manager, then once we are miles away we can get some breakfast at a service area.”

“Pity to go home early though, I was enjoying being in the country.”

“Well, we needn’t, we can go north up to the Lake District or somewhere for a few days.”

“I expect you’ll need to give up writing for The Daily Newspaper.”

“Not necessarily, I might just have to give up writing about electronics and information technology though. No matter, maybe gardening, or yachting, or travel, whatever.”