

The Admirable Crichton
By J.M. Barrie
Directed by Kath Walton

Stone Revellers
Audition Pack

Thursday 20th and Sunday 23rd June

Contents

The Admirable Crichton	1
Introduction	2
Synopsis	3
Character List	5
CRICHTON (MAIN CHARACTER)	6
THE EARL OF LOAM (SUPPORTING CHARACTER).....	10
LADY MARY (MAIN CHARACTER)	12
THE HONOURABLE ERNEST WOOLLEY (SUPPORTING CHARACTER).....	15
CATHERINE (SUPPORTING CHARACTER).....	18
AGATHA (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)	20
TWEENY (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)	22
LORD BROCKLEHURST (SUPPORTING CHARACTER).....	26
LADY BROCKLEHURST (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)	29
REVEREND JOHN TREHERNE (SUPPORTING CHARACTER).....	31
MISS FISHER (ENSEMBLE)	34
TOMPSETT (ENSEMBLE).....	36
ENSEMBLE	37

Introduction

Hello!

This is the Audition Pack for The Admirable Crichton by J.M. Barrie directed by Kath Walton which takes place **Wednesday 4th September – Saturday 7th September 2019.**

Auditions will primarily take place **Thursday 20th and Sunday 23rd June.** Please contact Kath if you need to arrange an alternative audition date.

In this Audition Pack you will find a Synopsis, Character List, Character Descriptions and Audition Pieces.

Some **Main and Supporting Characters** have **two or more pieces** of dialogue, one from the beginning of the play (before the Shipwreck) and one from the middle or nearer the end of the play (after the Shipwreck). **If the Character you have chosen has two or more pieces you will need to prepare to read all the pieces for the audition.** There is no need to learn these pieces off by heart but do familiarise yourself with the language and practice prior to the audition.

Other **Supporting Characters** only have one piece of dialogue for the audition.

I would also like each person auditioning for any Main or Supporting Character role to look at the Ensemble section of the Audition Pack and be prepared to read this in their audition.

If you would prefer a smaller part, please see the Ensemble section of the Audition Pack. These roles will have a small amount of line learning and movement and are perfect for those who are looking for a smaller role.

Please make sure you detail any holidays or days you are unavailable to rehearse on your audition form, and if there is anything else you feel the audition panel need to know please include it in your form or let us know in the audition.

We can't wait to see what everyone brings to the audition!

Good luck!

The Production Team

Synopsis

The Earl of Loam fancies himself a radical, modern thinker, a true futurist and intellectual, and to prove that class is non-existent and all men are equal, throws a tea for his household staff once a month, and forces his three indolent, fashionable daughters, and any guests they might have at the time, to serve as hosts.

This social transgression annoys his entire household, especially Crichton, the butler, a man who holds strong opinions about the dignity of the British ruling class, the sanctity of the established order, and the tendency of Nature to have the elite few rule over the many. To prove his point, Lord Loam takes a group composed of himself, his daughters -- Mary, Catherine, and Agatha -- his nephew (and suitor to Agatha) Ernest, and Treherne the clergyman (suitor to Catherine) on a sea voyage with only two servants -- Crichton and Tweeny, the humble "between maid" -- to take care of them, a form of "roughing it" in the wild Atlantic waters.

When the party is shipwrecked on a deserted island, where a living can be hewn from the wilderness only by those with the skill to do so, the admirable Crichton proves to be the most intelligent, resourceful, and able man to command the party. After a brief resistance on everyone's part, survival compels them to follow his lead, and after two years' time, Crichton builds a utopian island home, an ingenious little civilization where he rules, kindly but firmly, believing that on an island, Nature requires him to step into the elite role of master, and the formerly aristocratic others, now his worshipful servants, live a life composed of healthy exercise and willing labour.

Crichton's happiness is nearly complete when Lord Loam's eldest daughter, Mary, happily accepts his proposal of marriage. But when the party is rescued, the new social order crumbles as Lord Loam reasserts himself, Mary returns to her stuffy fiancé, and Crichton steps back into his former role.

Will Mary's mother-in-law-to-be discover the scandalous events of the past two years? Will Crichton's sense of self-sacrifice stand up to extreme insult? Will Ernest, who has written a thrilling memoir of the island, starring himself, ruin everything by letting slip the truth? Hilarity and hypocrisy run rampant, and upstairs/downstairs meets indoors/outdoors in J. M. Barrie's fantastical adventure comedy *The Admirable Crichton*, which explores divisions of

social class, the strict hierarchical orders in place at the time -- and indeed, in many times -- and the effects of Nature on all sorts of behaviours.

Character List

CRICHTON – A Butler, early 30s, RP

EARL OF LOAM – Master of the Household, 40s/50s (*3 grown up daughters*), RP

LADY MARY – Loam's Eldest daughter, approx. 22 years old, RP

THE HONOURABLE ERNEST WOOLLEY – Loam's nephew, 20s, RP

CATHERINE – Loam's Second daughter, approx. 20 years old, RP

AGATHA – Loam's Youngest daughter, approx. 18 years old, RP

TWEENY – Servant, 'In-between' maid, late teens to 20s, Cockney or Other (not RP)

LORD BROCKLEHURST – Lady Mary's Fiancé, approx. 20 years old, RP

LADY BROCKLEHURST – Lord Brocklehurst's Mother, 50s-70s, RP

REVEREND JOHN TREHERNE – Clergyman, approx. 20 years old, RP

MISS FISHER (ENSEMBLE) – Maid, approx. 20 years old

TOMPSETT (ENSEMBLE) – Servant, 20-40 years old

ENSEMBLE – Servants & Other parts, teens-60s

RP = Received Pronunciation

CRICHTON (MAIN CHARACTER)

William (Bill) Crichton, early 30s, the butler to the earl of Loam. Stuffy, honest, and efficient, Crichton has one complaint about his master: He is not contemptuous enough of his inferiors. While in England, Crichton believes that the established social order is absolutely correct. Stranded on an island, however, he believes in the natural selection of leaders. When everyone realizes how efficient he is, Crichton takes command; he is stern, fair, and almost regal in his deportment.

DIALOGUE (Before the Shipwreck)

LADY Milk and sugar, Crichton?

MARY

CRICHTON I'm ashamed to be seen talking to you, my lady.

LADY To such a perfect servant as you all this must be most distasteful.

MARY (*CRICHTON is too respectful to answer*) Oh, please do speak, or I shall have to recite. You do hate it, don't you?

CRICHTON It pains me, your ladyship. It disturbs the etiquette of the servants' hall. After last month's meeting the pageboy, in a burst of equality, called me Crichton. He was dismissed.

LADY I wonder—I really do—how you can remain with us.

MARY

CRICHTON I should have felt compelled to give notice, my lady, if the master had not had a seat in the Upper House. I cling to that.

LADY Do go on speaking. Tell me, what did Mr. Ernest mean by saying he was not

MARY young enough to know everything?

CRICHTON I have no idea, my lady.

LADY But you laughed.

MARY

CRICHTON My lady, he is the second son of a peer.

LADY Very proper sentiments. You are a good soul, Crichton.

MARY

CRICHTON *(still talking to LADY MARY)* No, my lady; his lordship may compel us to be equal upstairs, but there will never be equality in the servants' hall.

**LORD
LOAM** *(overhearing this)* What's that? No equality? Can't you see, Crichton, that our divisions into classes are artificial, that if we were to return to nature, which is the aspiration of my life, all would be equal?

CRICHTON If I may make so bold as to contradict your lordship—

**LORD
LOAM** *(with an effort)* Go on.

CRICHTON The divisions into classes, my lord, are not artificial. They are the natural outcome of a civilised society. *(To LADY MARY)* There must always be a master and servants in all civilised communities, my lady, for it is natural, and whatever is natural is right.

**LORD
LOAM** *(wincing)* It is very unnatural for me to stand here and allow you to talk such nonsense.

CRICHTON *(eagerly)* Yes, my lord, it is. That is what I have been striving to point out to your lordship.

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

**LADY
MARY** But it is all so awful. Crichton, is there any hope of a ship coming?

CRICHTON *(after hesitation)* Of course there is, my lady.

**LADY
MARY** *(facing him bravely)* Don't treat me as a child. I have got to know the worst, and to face it. Crichton, the truth.

CRICHTON *(reluctantly)* We were driven out of our course, my lady; I fear far from the track of commerce.

**LADY
MARY** Thank you; I understand.

CRICHTON *(watching her, and forgetting perhaps for the moment that they are not just a man and woman)* You're a good pluckt 'un, my lady.

**LADY
MARY** *(falling into the same error)* I shall try to be. *(Extricating herself)* Crichton, how dare you?

CRICHTON I beg your ladyship's pardon; but you are. (*She smiles, as if it were a comfort to be told this even by CRICHTON*) And until a ship comes we are three men who are going to do our best for you ladies.

LADY (*with a curl of the lip*) Mr. Ernest does no work.
MARY

CRICHTON (*cheerily*) But he will, my lady.

LADY I doubt it.
MARY

CRICHTON (*confidently, but perhaps thoughtlessly*) No work—no dinner—will make a great change in Mr. Ernest.

LADY No work—no dinner. When did you invent that rule, Crichton?
MARY

CRICHTON (*loaded with bamboo*) I didn't invent it, my lady. I seem to see it growing all over the island.

LADY (*disquieted*) Crichton, your manner strikes me as curious.
MARY

CRICHTON (*pained*) I hope not, your ladyship.

LADY (*determined to have it out with him*) You are not implying anything so unnatural, I presume, as that if I and my sisters don't work there will be no dinner for us?
MARY

CRICHTON (*brightly*) If it is unnatural, my lady, that is the end of it.

LADY If? Now I understand. The perfect servant at home holds that we are all equal now. I see.
MARY

CRICHTON (*wounded to the quick.*) My lady, can you think me so inconsistent?

LADY That is it.
MARY

CRICHTON (*earnestly*) My lady, I disbelieved in equality at home because it was against nature, and for that same reason I as utterly disbelieve in it on an island.

LADY (*relieved by his obvious sincerity*) I apologise.
MARY

CRICHTON (*continuing unfortunately*) There must always, my lady, be one to command and others to obey.

MONOLOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

CRICHTON. I am thinking of two people whom neither of us has seen for a long time—Lady Mary Lasenby, and one Crichton, a butler. (*He says the last word bravely, a word he once loved, though it is the most horrible of all words to him now.*) I had nigh forgotten them. He has had a chance, Polly—that butler—in these two years of becoming a man, and he has tried to take it. There have been many failures, but there has been some success, and with it I have let the past drop off me, and turned my back on it. That butler seems a far-away figure to me now, and not myself. I hail him, but we scarce know each other. If I am to bring him back it can only be done by force, for in my soul he is now abhorrent to me. But if I thought it best for you I'd haul him back; I swear as an honest man, I would bring him back with all his obsequious ways and deferential airs, and let you see the man you call your Gov. melt forever into him who was your servant.

THE EARL OF LOAM (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

The Earl of Loam, a peer of the realm and Crichton's liberal master. In theory, the earl believes in the equality of all members of society. Once a month, he has his servants in for tea. When he has an opportunity to practice his theories in fact, he becomes an ardent believer in the supremacy of the aristocracy. When the yachting party of which he is host is cast away on a Pacific island, he proves completely ineffectual. For a time, he is his pompous self, until he realizes his utter incapability of leading the stranded party. After Crichton assumes command, the other castaways call him "Daddy," and he seems quite happy doing odd jobs around the camp.

MONOLOGUE (Before the Shipwreck)

LORD LOAM. My friends, I am glad to see you all looking so happy. It used to be predicted by the scoffer that these meetings would prove distasteful to you. Are they distasteful? I hear you laughing at the question. *(He has not heard them, but he hears them now, the watchful CRICHTON giving them a lead.)*

No harm in saying that among us to-day is one who was formerly hostile to the movement, but who to-day has been won over. I refer to Lord Brocklehurst, who, I am sure, will presently say to me that if the charming lady now by his side has derived as much pleasure from his company as he has derived from hers, he will be more than satisfied.

For the time being the artificial and unnatural — I say unnatural *(glaring at CRICHTON, who bows slightly)* — barriers of society are swept away. Would that they could be swept away for ever.

But that is entirely and utterly out of the question. And now for a few months we are to be separated. As you know, my daughters and Mr. Ernest and Mr. Treherne are to accompany me on my yacht, on a voyage to distant parts of the earth. In less than forty-eight hours we shall be under weigh.

Do not think our life on the yacht is to be one long idle holiday. My views on the excessive luxury of the day are well known, and what I preach I am resolved to practise. I have therefore decided that my daughters, instead of having one maid each as at present, shall on this voyage have but one maid between them.

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

CRICHTON Daddy, I want you.

LORD *(with a sinking)* Is it because I forgot to clean out the dam?

LOAM

CRICHTON *(encouragingly)* No, no. *(He pours some wine into a goblet)* A glass of wine with you, Daddy.

LORD *(hastily)* Your health, Gov. *(He is about to drink, but the master checks him.)*

LOAM

CRICHTON And hers. Daddy, this lady has done me the honour to promise to be my wife.

LORD *(astounded)* Polly!

LOAM

CRICHTON *(a little perturbed)* I ought first to have asked your consent. I deeply regret but nature; may I hope I have your approval?

LORD

LOAM May you, Gov.? *(Delighted)* Rather! Polly! *(He puts his proud arms round her.)*

LADY Oh, oh! Father, they are pinching me.

MARY

LORD *(taking her under his protection)* Agatha, Catherine, never presume to pinch your sister again. On the other hand, she may pinch you henceforth as much as ever she chooses.

LADY MARY (MAIN CHARACTER)

Lady Mary, the oldest daughter of the Earl of Loam. A part of useless aristocracy, she is haughty, proud, and languorous. After the shipwreck, she shows herself to adaptable and courageous. Unlike her former self in England, she becomes a useful member of the island society. The hunter of the group, she has the opportunity to wait on the 'Gov' (Crichton). If a rescue ship had not arrived, she would have been chosen to become Crichton's wife.

DIALOGUE (Before the Shipwreck)

LADY Milk and sugar, Crichton?

MARY

CRICHTON I'm ashamed to be seen talking to you, my lady.

LADY To such a perfect servant as you all this must be most distasteful.

MARY (*CRICHTON is too respectful to answer.*)

Oh, please do speak, or I shall have to recite. You do hate it, don't you?

CRICHTON It pains me, your ladyship. It disturbs the etiquette of the servants' hall. After last month's meeting the pageboy, in a burst of equality, called me Crichton. He was dismissed.

LADY I wonder—I really do—how you can remain with us.

MARY

CRICHTON I should have felt compelled to give notice, my lady, if the master had not had a seat in the Upper House. I cling to that.

LADY Do go on speaking. Tell me, what did Mr. Ernest mean by saying he was not

MARY young enough to know everything?

CRICHTON I have no idea, my lady.

LADY But you laughed.

MARY

CRICHTON My lady, he is the second son of a peer.

LADY Very proper sentiments. You are a good soul, Crichton.

MARY

MONOLOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

LADY MARY (gaily). I sighted a herd near Penguin's Creek, but had to creep round Silver Lake to get to windward of them. However, they spotted me and then the fun began. There was nothing for it but to try and run them down, so I singled out a fat buck and away we went down the shore of the lake, up the valley of rolling stones; he doubled into Brawling River and took to the water, but I swam after him; the river is only half a mile broad there, but it runs strong. He went spinning down the rapids, down I went in pursuit; he clambered ashore, I clambered ashore; away we tore helter-skelter up the hill and down again. I lost him in the marshes, got on his track again near Bread Fruit Wood, and brought him down with an arrow in Firefly Grove.

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

CRICHTON Got any followers on the island, Polly?

LADY MARY (*tossing her head*) Certainly not.

CRICHTON I thought that perhaps John or Ernest—

LADY MARY (*tilting her nose.*) I don't say that it's for want of asking.

CRICHTON (*emphatically*) I'm sure it isn't. (*Perhaps he thinks he has gone too far*) You may clear.

CRICHTON Did you lose any arrows to-day?

LADY MARY Only one in Firefly Grove.

CRICHTON You were as far as that? How did you get across the Black Gorge?

LADY MARY I went across on the rope.

CRICHTON Hand over hand?

LADY MARY (*swelling at the implied praise.*) I wasn't in the least dizzy.

CRICHTON *(moved)* You brave girl! *(He sits back in his chair a little agitated.)* But never do that again.

LADY *(pouting.)* It is such fun, Gov.
MARY

CRICHTON *(decisively.)* I forbid it.

LADY *(the little rebel.)* I shall.
MARY

CRICHTON *(surprised.)* Polly! *(He signs to her sharply to step forward, but for a moment she holds back petulantly, and even when she does come it is less obediently than like a naughty, sulky child. Nevertheless, with the forbearance that is characteristic of the man, he addresses her with grave gentleness rather than severely.)* You must do as I tell you, you know.

LADY *(strangely passionate.)* I shan't.
MARY

CRICHTON *(smiling at her fury.)* We shall see. Frown at me, Polly; there, you do it at once. Clench your little fists, stamp your feet, bite your ribbons— *(A student of women, or at least of this woman, he knows that she is about to do those things, and thus she seems to do them to order. LADY MARY screws up her face like a baby and cries. He is immediately kind.)* You child of nature; was it cruel of me to wish to save you from harm?

LADY *(drying her eyes.)* I'm an ungracious wretch. Oh God, I don't try half hard
MARY enough to please you. I'm even wearing— *(she looks down sadly)* —when I know you prefer it.

CRICHTON *(thoughtfully.)* I admit I do prefer it. Perhaps I am a little old-fashioned in these matters. *(Her tears again threaten.)* Ah, don't, Polly; that's nothing.

LADY If I could only please you, God.
MARY

THE HONOURABLE ERNEST WOOLLEY (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

The Hon. Ernest Woolley, a nephew of the Earl of Loam and a maker of brilliant epigrams. Ernest is an cheerful, egotistical young man about town with enough shrewdness to avoid work entirely. In London, he idles away his time making witty remarks. Soon after being stranded on the island, however, his talent for wit gets him into trouble with Crichton, now the leader of the party. With every epigram that Ernest makes, Crichton dips his head into a bucket of cold water, thus curing Ernest of a useless habit. Proving him to be very adaptable, he becomes a diligent worker. After returning to England, however, he reverts to type, and between epigrams he manages to write a book about his island experience, making himself the hero of the adventure. In the book, the contributions of the rest of the party, including Crichton, are dealt with summarily.

DIALOGUE (before the Shipwreck)

ERNEST I perceive, from the teacups, Crichton, that the great function is to take place here.

CRICHTON *(with a respectful sigh)* Yes, sir.

ERNEST *(chuckling heartlessly)* The servants' hall coming up to have tea in the drawing-room! [With terrible sarcasm.] No wonder you look happy, Crichton.

CRICHTON *(under the knife.)* No, sir.

ERNEST Do you know, Crichton, I think that with an effort you might look even happier (CRICHTON *smiles wanly.*) You don't approve of his lordship's compelling his servants to be his equals—once a month?

CRICHTON It is not for me, sir, to disapprove of his lordship's radical views.

ERNEST Certainly not. And, after all, it is only once a month that he is affable to you.

CRICHTON On all other days of the month, sir, his lordship's treatment of us is everything that could be desired.

ERNEST *(This is the epigram.)* Teacups! Life, Crichton, is like a cup of tea; the more heartily we drink, the sooner we reach the dregs.

CRICHTON *(obediently.)* Thank you, sir.

ERNEST (*becoming confidential, as we do when we have need of an ally.*) Crichton, in case I should be; asked to say a few words to the servants, I have strung together a little speech. (*His hand strays to his pocket.*) I was wondering where I should stand.

(He tries various places and postures, and comes to rest leaning over a highchair, whence, in dumb show, he addresses a gathering. CRICHTON, with the best intentions, gives him a footstool to stand on, and departs, happily unconscious that ERNEST in some dudgeon has kicked the footstool across the room.)

ERNEST (*addressing an imaginary audience, and desirous of startling them at once.*) Suppose you were all little fishes at the bottom of the sea—

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

ERNEST (*button-holing him.*) I say, John, I want a word with you.

TREHERNE Well?

ERNEST (*become suddenly diffident.*) Dash it all, you know, you're a clergyman.

TREHERNE One of the best things the Gov. has done is to insist that none of you forget it.

ERNEST (*taking his courage in his hands.*) Then—would you, John?

TREHERNE What?

ERNEST (*wistfully.*) Officiate at a marriage ceremony, John?

TREHERNE (*slowly.*) Now, that's really odd.

ERNEST Odd? Seems to me it's natural. And whatever is natural, John, is right.

TREHERNE I mean that same question has been put to me today already.

ERNEST (*eagerly.*) By one of the women?

TREHERNE Oh no; they all put it to me long ago. This was by the Gov. himself.

ERNEST By Jove! (*Admiringly.*) I say, John, what an observant beggar he is.

TREHERNE Ah! You fancy he was thinking of you?

ERNEST I do not hesitate to affirm, John, that he has seen the love-light in my eyes. You answered—

TREHERNE I said Yes, I thought it would be my duty to officiate if called upon.

ERNEST You're a brick.

TREHERNE *(still pondering.)* But I wonder whether he was thinking of you?

ERNEST Make your mind easy about that.

TREHERNE Well, my best wishes. Agatha is a very fine girl.

ERNEST Agatha? What made you think it was Agatha?

TREHERNE Man alive, you told me all about it soon after we were wrecked.

ERNEST Pooh! Agatha's all very well in her way, John, but I'm flying at bigger game.

TREHERNE Ernest, which is it?

ERNEST Tweeny, of course.

TREHERNE Tweeny? *(Reprovingly.)* Ernest, I hope her cooking has nothing to do with this.

ERNEST *(with dignity.)* Her cooking has very little to do with it.

CATHERINE (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

Second Daughter of the Earl of Loam. After being on the island for a time, learns to do things for herself, and no longer depend on maids to answer her every whim. At first, the lack of domestic help is trying to her.

DIALOGUE (before the Shipwreck)

AGATHA *(contriving to reach a settee)* Don't be silly, Ernest. If you want to know how we are, we are dead. Even to think of entertaining the servants is so exhausting.

CATHERINE *(subsiding nearer the door)* Besides which, we have had to decide what frocks to take with us on the yacht, and that is such a mental strain.

ERNEST You poor over-worked things. *(Evidently AGATHA is his favourite, for he helps her to put her feet on the settee, while CATHERINE has to dispose of her own feet)*
Rest your weary limbs.

CATHERINE *(perhaps in revenge)* But why have you a footstool in your hand?

AGATHA Yes?

AGATHA *(to CATHERINE)* What is the matter with Fisher? She is looking daggers.

CATHERINE The tedious creature; some question of etiquette, I suppose. *(She sails across to FISHER)* How are you, Fisher?

FISHER *(with a toss of her head)* I am nothing, my lady, I am nothing at all.

AGATHA Oh dear, who says so?

FISHER *(affronted)* His lordship has asked that kitchen wench to have a second cup of tea.

CATHERINE But why not?

FISHER If it pleases his lordship to offer it to her before offering it to me—

AGATHA So that is it. Do you want another cup of tea, Fisher?

FISHER No, my lady—but my position—I should have been asked first.

AGATHA Oh dear.

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

CATHERINE How horribly still it is.

LADY *(remembering some recent sounds.)* It is best when it is still.

MARY

CATHERINE *(drawing closer to her.)* Mary, I have heard that they are always very still just before they jump.

LADY Don't. *(A distinct chapping is heard, and they are startled.)*

MARY

LADY *(controlling herself.)* It is only Crichton knocking down trees.

MARY

CATHERINE *(almost imploringly.)* Mary, let us go and stand beside him.

LADY *(coldly.)* Let a servant see that I am afraid!

MARY

CATHERINE Don't, then; but remember this, dear, they often drop on one from above.

(She moves away, nearer to the friendly sound of the axe, and LADY MARY is left alone. She is the most courageous of them as well as the haughtiest, but when something she had thought to be a stick glides toward her, she forgets her dignity and screams.)

AGATHA (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

Youngest Daughter of the Earl of Loam. After being on the island for a time, learns to do things for herself, and no longer depend on maids to answer her every whim. At first, the lack of domestic help is trying to her.

DIALOGUE (Before the Shipwreck)

ERNEST *(eagerly plucking another epigram from his quiver)* I knew that was it, though I don't know everything. Agatha, I'm not young enough to know everything.

(He looks hopefully from one to another, but though they try to grasp this, his brilliance baffles them)

AGATHA *(his secret admirer)* Young enough?

ERNEST *(encouragingly)* Don't you see? I'm not young enough to know everything.

AGATHA I'm sure it's awfully clever, but it's so puzzling.

AGATHA *(to CATHERINE)* What is the matter with Fisher? She is looking daggers.

CATHERINE The tedious creature; some question of etiquette, I suppose. *(She sails across to FISHER)* How are you, Fisher?

FISHER *(with a toss of her head)* I am nothing, my lady, I am nothing at all.

AGATHA Oh dear, who says so?

FISHER *(affronted)* His lordship has asked that kitchen wench to have a second cup of tea.

CATHERINE But why not?

FISHER If it pleases his lordship to offer it to her before offering it to me—

AGATHA So that is it. Do you want another cup of tea, Fisher?

FISHER No, my lady—but my position—I should have been asked first.

AGATHA Oh dear.

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

LADY MARY A hairpin! It must be one of ours. Give it me, father.

AGATHA No, it's mine.

LORD I didn't keep it.

LOAM

LADY MARY *(speaking for all three.)* Didn't keep it? Found a hairpin on an island, and didn't keep it?

LORD *(humbly.)* My dears.

LOAM

AGATHA *(scarcely to be placated.)* Oh father, we have returned to nature more than you bargained for.

LADY MARY For shame, Agatha. *(She has something on her mind)* Father, there is something I want you to do at once—I mean to assert your position as the chief person on the island.

LORD But who would presume to question it?

LOAM

CATHERINE She must mean Ernest.

LADY MARY Must I?

AGATHA It's cruel to say anything against Ernest.

LORD *(firmly.)* If any one presumes to challenge my position, I shall make short work of him.

LOAM

AGATHA Here comes Ernest; now see if you can say these horrid things to his face.

LORD I shall teach him his place at once.

LOAM

TWEENY (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

Tweeny, in England the 'between' maid. When the Earl of Loam decrees that the three sisters can have only one maid among them, she goes with them, mainly to be near Crichton. On the island, she proves to be a useful helper.

DIALOGUE (Before the Shipwreck)

LADY What is your position downstairs?

MARY

TWEENY *(bobbing)* I'm a tweeny, your ladyship.

CATHERINE A what?

CRICHTON A tweeny; that is to say, my lady, she is not at present, strictly speaking, anything; a between maid; she helps the vegetable maid. It is she, my lady, who conveys the dishes from the one end of the kitchen table, where they are placed by the cook, to the other end, where they enter into the charge of Thomas and John.

LADY I see. And you and Crichton are—ah—keeping company?

MARY

(CRICHTON draws himself up)

TWEENY *(aghast)* A butler don't keep company, my lady.

LADY *(indifferently)* Does he not?

MARY

CRICHTON No, your ladyship, we butlers may— *(he makes a gesture with his arms)* —but we do not keep company.

LADY She dresses Fisher's hair?

MARY

TWEENY Yes, my lady, and I does them up when they goes to parties.

CRICHTON *(pained, but not scolding)* Does!

TWEENY Doos. And it's me what alters your gowns to fit them.

- CRICHTON** What alters!
- TWEENY** Which alters.
- AGATHA** Mary?
- LADY** I shall certainly have her.
MARY
- CATHERINE** We shall certainly have her. Tweeny, we have decided to make a lady's-maid of you.
- TWEENY** Oh lawks!
- AGATHA** We are doing this for you so that your position socially may be more nearly akin to that of Crichton.
- CRICHTON** (*gravely*) It will undoubtedly increase the young person's chances.
- LADY** Then if I get a good character for you from Mrs. Perkins, she will make the
MARY necessary arrangements.

[She resumes reading.]
- TWEENY** (*elated*) My lady!
- LADY** By the way, I hope you are a good sailor.
MARY
- TWEENY** (*startled*) You don't mean, my lady, I'm to go on the ship?
- LADY** Certainly.
MARY
- TWEENY** But— (*To CRICHTON*) You ain't going, sir?
- CRICHTON** No.
- TWEENY** (*firm at last*) Then neither ain't I.
- AGATHA** YOU must.
- TWEENY** Leave him! Not me.
- LADY** Girl, don't be silly. Crichton will be—considered in your wages.
MARY
- TWEENY** I ain't going.
- CRICHTON** I feared this, my lady.

TWEENY Nothing'll budge me.

LADY Leave the room.

MARY

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

ERNEST Are you very busy, Tweeny?

TWEENY *(coming to him good-naturedly.)* There's always work to do; but if you want me, Ernest—

ERNEST There's something I should like to say to you if you could spare me a moment.

TWEENY Willingly. What is it?

ERNEST What an ass I used to be, Tweeny.

TWEENY *(tolerantly.)* Oh, let bygones be bygones.

ERNEST *(sincerely, and at his very best.)* I'm no great shakes even now. But listen to this, Tweeny; I have known many women, but until I knew you I never knew any woman.

TWEENY *(to whose uneducated ears this sounds dangerously like an epigram.)* Take care—the bucket.

ERNEST *(hurriedly.)* I didn't mean it in that way. *(He goes chivalrously on his knees.)* Ah, Tweeny, I don't undervalue the bucket, but what I want to say now is that the sweet refinement of a dear girl has done more for me than any bucket could do.

TWEENY *(with large eyes.)* Are you offering to walk out with me, Erny?

ERNEST *(passionately.)* More than that. I want to build a little house for you—in the sunny glade down by Porcupine Creek. I want to make chairs for you and tables; and knives and forks, and a sideboard for you.

TWEENY *(who is fond of language.)* I like to hear you. *(Eyeing him.)* Would there be any one in the house except myself, Ernest?

ERNEST *(humbly.)* Not often; but just occasionally there would be your adoring husband.

TWEENY *(decisively.)* It won't do, Ernest.

ERNEST *(pleading.)* It isn't as if I should be much there.

TWEENY I know, I know; but I don't love you, Ernest. I'm that sorry.

ERNEST *(putting his case cleverly.)* Twice a week I should be away altogether—at the dam. On the other days you would never see me from breakfast time to supper. *(With the self-abnegation of the true lover.)* If you like I'll even go fishing on Sundays.

TWEENY It's no use, Erny.

ERNEST *(rising manfully.)* Thank you, Tweeny; it can't be helped. *(Then he remembers.)* Tweeny, we shall be disappointing the Gov .

TWEENY *(with a sinking.)* What's that?

EKNEST He wanted us to marry.

TWEENY *(blankly.)* You and me? the Gov.! *(Her head droops woefully. From without is heard the whistling of a happier spirit, and TWEENY draws herself up fiercely.)* That's her; that's the thing what has stole his heart from me. *(A stalwart youth appears at the window, so handsome and tingling with vitality that, glad to depose CRICHTON, we cry thankfully, 'The Hero at last.' But it is not the hero; it is the heroine. This splendid boy, clad in skins, is what nature has done for LADY MARY. She carries bow and arrows and a blow-pipe, and over her shoulder is a fat buck, which she drops with a cry of triumph . Forgetting to enter demurely, she leaps through the window.)* *(Sourly)* Drat you, Polly, why don't you wipe your feet?

LORD BROCKLEHURST (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

Lord Brocklehurst, the man Mary has chosen to be her husband. He is a complete nonentity, a mother's boy, humourless, pompous, correct, cold and useless.

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

- LORD LOAM** *(very unhappy)* The fact is—before I go—I want to say—
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** Loam, if you don't mind, I wish very specially to have a word with Mary before dinner.
- LORD LOAM** But—
- LADY MARY** Yes, father. *(She induces him to go, and thus courageously faces LORD BROCKLEHURST to hear her fate)* I am ready, George.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** *(who is so agitated that she ought to see he is thinking not of her but of himself)* It is a painful matter—I wish I could have spared you this, Mary.
- LADY MARY** Please go on.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** In common fairness, of course, this should be remembered, that two years had elapsed. You and I had no reason to believe that we should ever meet again.
- (This is more considerate than she had expected)*
- LADY MARY** *(softening)* I was so lost to the world, George.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** *(with a groan)* At the same time, the thing is utterly and absolutely inexcusable—
- LADY MARY** *(recovering her hauteur)* Oh!
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** And so I have already said to mother.
- LADY MARY** *(disdaining him)* You have told her?
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** Certainly, Mary, certainly; I tell mother everything.
- LADY MARY** *(curling her lip)* And what did she say?
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** To tell the truth, mother rather pooh-poohed the whole affair.

- LADY MARY** *(incredulous)* Lady Brocklehurst pooh-poohed the whole affair!
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** She said, 'Mary and I will have a good laugh over this.'
- LADY MARY** *(outraged)* George, your mother is a hateful, depraved old woman.
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** Mary!
- LADY MARY** *(turning away)* Laugh indeed, when it will always be such a pain to me.
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** *(with strange humility)* If only you would let me bear all the pain,
Mary.
- LADY MARY** *(who is taken aback)* George, I think you are the noblest man—

*(She is touched and gives him both her hands. Unfortunately, he
simpers)*
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** She was a pretty little thing *(She stares, but he marches to his doom)*
Ah, not beautiful like you. I assure you it was the merest flirtation;
there were a few letters, but we have got them back. It was all owing
to the boat being so late at Calais. You see she had such large, helpless
eyes.
-
- LADY MARY** George, who and what is this woman?
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** *(cowering)* She was—she is—the shame of it—a lady's-maid.
- LADY MARY** *(properly horrified)* A what?
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** A lady's-maid. A mere servant, Mary. *(LADY MARY whirls round so that
he shall not see her face)* I first met her at this house when you were
entertaining the servants; so you see it was largely your father's fault.
- LADY MARY** *(looking him up and down)* A lady's-maid?
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** *(degraded)* Her name was Fisher.
- LADY MARY** My maid!
- LORD
BROCKLEHURST** *(with open hands)* Can you forgive me, Mary?

- LADY MARY** Oh George, George!
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** Mother urged me not to tell you anything about it; but—
- LADY MARY** *(from her heart)* I am so glad you told me.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** You see there was nothing wrong in it.
- LADY MARY** *(thinking perhaps of another incident)* No, indeed.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** *(inclined to simper again)* And she behaved awfully well. She quite saw that it was because the boat was late. I suppose the glamour to a girl in service of a man in high position—
- LADY MARY** Glamour!—yes, yes, that was it.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** Mother says that a girl in such circumstances is to be excused if she loses her head.
- LADY MARY** *(impulsively)* George, I am so sorry if I said anything against your mother. I am sure she is the dearest old thing.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** *(in calm waters at last)* Of course for women of our class she has a very different standard.
- LADY MARY** *(grown tiny)* Of course.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** You see, knowing how good a woman she is herself, she was naturally anxious that I should marry some one like her. That is what has made her watch your conduct so jealously, Mary.
- LADY MARY** *(hurriedly thinking things out)* I know. I—I think, George, that before your mother comes I should like to say a word to father.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** *(nervously)* About this?
- LADY MARY** Oh no; I shan't tell him of this. About something else.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** And you do forgive me, Mary?
- LADY MARY** *(smiling on him)* Yes, yes. I—I am sure the boat was very late, George

LADY BROCKLEHURST (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

Lady Brocklehurst, Lord Brocklehurst's formidable, domineering mother. After the return of the seafarers, she tries to learn what really happened on the island.

DIALOGUE (after the Shipwreck)

LADY BROCKLEHURST I mean I wouldn't. Now if I had said that, what would have made me say it (*Suspiciously*) George, is Mary all we think her?

LORD BROCKLEHURST (*with unexpected spirit*) If she wasn't, mother, you would know it.

LADY BROCKLEHURST Hold your tongue, boy. We don't really know what happened on that island.

LORD BROCKLEHURST You were reading the book all the morning .

LADY BROCKLEHURST How can I be sure that the book is true?

LORD BROCKLEHURST They all talk of it as true.

LADY BROCKLEHURST How do I know that they are not lying?

LORD BROCKLEHURST Why should they lie?

LADY BROCKLEHURST Why shouldn't they? (*She reflects again*) If I had been wrecked on an island, I think it highly probable that I should have lied when I came back. Weren't some servants with them?

LORD BROCKLEHURST Crichton, the butler. (*He is surprised to see her ring the bell*) Why, mother, you are not going to—

LADY BROCKLEHURST Yes, I am. (*Pointedly*) George, watch whether Crichton begins any of his answers to my questions with 'The fact is.'

LORD BROCKLEHURST Why?

LADY BROCKLEHURST Because that is usually the beginning of a lie.

LORD BROCKLEHURST (*as CRICHTON opens the door*) Mother, you can't do these things in other people's houses.

- LADY BROCKLEHURST** *(coolly, to CRICHTON)* It was I who rang. *(Surveying him through her eyeglass)* So you were one of the castaways, Crichton?
- CRICHTON** Yes, my lady.
- LADY BROCKLEHURST** Delightful book Mr. Woolley has written about your adventures. *(CRICHTON bows)* Don't you think so?
- CRICHTON** I have not read it, my lady.
- LADY BROCKLEHURST** Odd that they should not have presented you with a copy.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** Presumably Crichton is no reader.
- LADY BROCKLEHURST** By the way, Crichton, were there any books on the island?
- CRICHTON** I had one, my lady—Henley's poems.
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** Never heard of him.
- (CRICHTON again bows)*
- LADY BROCKLEHURST** *(who has not heard of him either)* I think you were not the only servant wrecked?
- CRICHTON** There was a young woman, my lady.
- LADY BROCKLEHURST** I want to see her. *(CRICHTON bows, but remains)* Fetch her up. *(He goes)*
- LORD BROCKLEHURST** *(almost standing up to his mother)* This is scandalous.
- LADY BROCKLEHURST** *(defining her position. CATHERINE and AGATHA enter in dazzling confections, and quake in secret to find themselves practically alone with LADY BROCKLEHURST. Even as she greets them....)* How d'you do, Catherine—Agatha? You didn't dress like this on the island, I expect! By the way, how did you dress?
- (They have thought themselves prepared, but-)*
- AGATHA** Not—not so well, of course, but quite the same idea.
- (They are relieved by the arrival of TREHERNE, who is in clerical dress)*
- LADY BROCKLEHURST** How do you do, Mr. Treherne? There is not so much of you in the book as I had hoped.

REVEREND JOHN TREHERNE (SUPPORTING CHARACTER)

Reverend John Treherne, an athletic young clergyman, gets shipwrecked along with the other characters.

DIALOGUE (Before the Shipwreck)

ERNEST Look here, Treherne, I'm not young enough to know everything.

TREHERNE How do you mean, Ernest?

ERNEST *(a little nettled)* I mean what I say.

LADY Say it again; say it more slowly.

MARY

ERNEST I'm—not—young—enough—to—know—everything.

TREHERNE I see. What you really mean, my boy, is that you are not old enough to know everything.

ERNEST No, I don't.

TREHERNE I assure you that's it.

LADY Of course, it is.

MARY

CATHERINE Yes, Ernest, that's it.

(ERNEST, in desperation, appeals to CRICHTON)

ERNEST I am not young enough, Crichton, to know everything.

(It is an anxious moment, but a smile is at length extorted from CRICHTON as with a corkscrew)

CRICHTON Thank you, sir, *(He goes)*

ERNEST *(relieved)* Ah, if you had that fellow's head, Treherne, you would find something better to do with it than play cricket. I hear you bowl with your head.

TREHERNE *(with proper humility)* I'm afraid cricket is all I'm good for, Ernest.

CATHERINE *(who thinks he has a heavenly nose)* Indeed, it isn't. You are sure to get on, Mr. Treherne.

TREHERNE Thank you, Lady Catherine.

CATHERINE But it was the bishop who told me so. He said a clergyman who breaks both ways is sure to get on in England.

TREHERNE I'm jolly glad.

LORD (*expansively*) You are here, Ernest. Feeling fit for the voyage, Treherne?

LOAM

TREHERNE Looking forward to it enormously.

DIALOGUE (After the Shipwreck)

ERNEST (*button-holing him.*) I say, John, I want a word with you.

TREHERNE Well?

ERNEST (*become suddenly diffident.*) Dash it all, you know, you're a clergyman.

TREHERNE One of the best things the Gov. has done is to insist that none of you forget it.

ERNEST (*taking his courage in his hands.*) Then—would you, John?

TREHERNE What?

ERNEST (*wistfully.*) Officiate at a marriage ceremony, John?

TREHERNE (*slowly.*) Now, that's really odd.

ERNEST Odd? Seems to me it's natural. And whatever is natural, John, is right.

TREHERNE I mean that same question has been put to me today already.

ERNEST (*eagerly.*) By one of the women?

TREHERNE Oh no; they all put it to me long ago. This was by the Gov. himself.

ERNEST By Jove (*Admiringly.*) I say, John, what an observant beggar he is.

TREHERNE Ah! You fancy he was thinking of you?

ERNEST I do not hesitate to affirm, John, that he has seen the love-light in my eyes. You answered—

TREHERNE I said Yes, I thought it would be my duty to officiate if called upon.

ERNEST You're a brick.

TREHERNE (*still pondering.*) But I wonder whether he was thinking of you?

ERNEST Make your mind easy about that.

TREHERNE Well, my best wishes. Agatha is a very fine girl.

ERNEST Agatha? What made you think it was Agatha?

TREHERNE Man alive, you told me all about it soon after we were wrecked.

ERNEST Pooh! Agatha's all very well in her way, John, but I'm flying at bigger game.

TREHERNE Ernest, which is it?

ERNEST Tweeny, of course.

TREHERNE Tweeny? (*Reprovingly.*) Ernest, I hope her cooking has nothing to do with this.

ERNEST (*with dignity.*) Her cooking has very little to do with it.

TREHERNE But does she return your affection.

ERNEST (*simply.*) Yes, John, I believe I may say so. I am unworthy of her, but I think I have touched her heart.

TREHERNE (*with a sigh.*) Some people seem to have all the luck. As you know, Catherine won't look at me.

ERNEST I'm sorry, John.

TREHERNE It's my deserts; I 'm a second eleven sort of chap. Well, my heartiest good wishes, Ernest.

MISS FISHER (ENSEMBLE)

Lady Mary's maid featured only in Act One. This Character can double up as an Ensemble Member.

DIALOGUE (Before the Shipwreck)

CATHERINE The tedious creature; some question of etiquette, I suppose. *(She sails across to FISHER)* How are you, Fisher?

FISHER *(with a toss of her head)* I am nothing, my lady, I am nothing at all.

AGATHA Oh dear, who says so?

FISHER *(affronted)* His lordship has asked that kitchen wench to have a second cup of tea.

CATHERINE But why not?

FISHER If it pleases his lordship to offer it to her before offering it to me—

AGATHA So that is it. Do you want another cup of tea, Fisher?

FISHER No, my lady—but my position—I should have been asked first.

AGATHA Oh dear.

LADY MARY Fisher, you heard what his lordship said?

FISHER Yes, my lady.

LADY MARY *(coldly, though the others would have tried blandishment)* You have given me some satisfaction of late, Fisher, and to mark my approval I have decided that you shall be the maid who accompanies us.

FISHER *(acidly)* I thank you, my lady.

LADY MARY That is all; you may go.

FISHER *(rapping it out)* If you please, my lady, I wish to give notice.

(CATHERINE and AGATHA gleam, but LADY MARY is of sterner stuff)

LADY *(taking up a book)* Oh, certainly—you may go.
MARY

CATHERINE But why, Fisher?

FISHER I could not undertake, my lady, to wait upon three. We don't do it. *(In an indignant outburst to LADY MARY.)* Oh, my lady, to think that this affront—

LADY *(looking up)* I thought I told you to go, Fisher.
MARY

TOMPSETT (ENSEMBLE)

Tompsett, one of the servants, only appears in Act One. This character can double up as an Ensemble Member.

DIALOGUE

LORD *(to TOMPSETT, as they partake of tea together)* And how are all at home?

LOAM

TOMPSETT Fairish, my lord, if 'tis the horses you are inquiring for?

LORD No, no, the family. How's the baby?

LOAM

TOMPSETT Blooming, your lordship.

LORD A very fine boy. I remember saying so when I saw him; nice little fellow.

LOAM

TOMPSETT *(not quite knowing whether to let it pass)* Beg pardon, my lord, it's a girl.

LORD A girl? Aha! ha! ha! exactly what I said. I distinctly remember saying, If it's

LOAM spared it will be a girl.

ENSEMBLE

Servants, household staff, and other parts throughout the play.

DIALOGUE

The following passage is stage directions from the first page of the play. The following can be read in a Narrator style from the point of view as one of the servants / staff of the household.

ENSEMBLE A moment before the curtain rises, the Hon. Ernest Woolley drives up to the door of Loam House in Mayfair. There is a happy smile on his pleasant, insignificant face, and this presumably means that he is thinking of himself. He is too busy over nothing, this man about town, to be always thinking of himself, but, on the other hand, he almost never thinks of any other person. Probably Ernest's great moment is when he wakes of a morning and realises that he really is Ernest, for we must all wish to be that which is our ideal. We can conceive him springing out of bed light-heartedly and waiting for his man to do the rest. He is dressed in excellent taste, with just the little bit more which shows that he is not without a sense of humour: the dandiacal are often saved by carrying a smile at the whole thing in their spats, let us say. Ernest left Cambridge the other day, a member of The Athenaeum (which he would be sorry to have you confound with a club in London of the same name). He is a bachelor, but not of arts, no mean epigrammatist (as you shall see), and a favourite of the ladies. He is almost a celebrity in restaurants, where he dines frequently, returning to sup; and during this last year he has probably paid as much in them for the privilege of handing his hat to an attendant as the rent of a working-man's flat. He complains brightly that he is hard up, and that if somebody or other at Westminster does not look out the country will go to the dogs. He is no fool. He has the shrewdness to float with the current because it is a labour-saving process, but he has sufficient pluck to fight, if fight he must (a brief contest, for he would soon be toppled over). He has a light nature, which would enable him to bob up cheerily in new conditions and return unaltered to the old ones. His selfishness is his most endearing quality. If he has his way he will spend his life like a cat in pushing his betters out of the soft places, and until he is old he will be fondled in the process.