

Audition Extract **9**. DAVID & BERTIE

DAVID Hear you're taking elocution lessons, lad.

BERTIE Pardon?

DAVID Diction. Speechifying. That's the 'scoop' around town. Smashing American expression.

BERTIE Trying to overcome my dreadful impediment . . .

DAVID (*over-rides*) I'm the brother who speaks. Or do you wish to shoulder that task?

BERTIE Good lord no! I merely hope to . . .

DAVID Replace me? Younger brother trying to push older brother off throne . . . Positively medieval.

(*He thrusts a document into BERTIE's hands.*)

You may read the Coronation Plans to the Committee.

BERTIE (*whispers urgently*) I'm not prepared.

DAVID (*whispers back*) As a Boy Scout . . . and you are one, aren't you, very much a Boy Scout . . . you must always be prepared. Make sure it's nice and loud, so everyone can hear.

(*In terror BERTIE turns and addresses the audience, as though they are the committee. He looks at the pages, his throat constricts, chest tightens and hands begin to tremble.*)

BERTIE I . . . I . . . I thu-thu-think we should table the document.

(*He attempts to return the pages to DAVID, but his brother won't accept.*)

DAVID Be sure to tell them how Mrs Simpson is to be accommodated in a special alcove above the altar. See you at Balmoral this weekend, Buhbuh-Bertie.

(BERTIE stands frozen and shattered. DAVID exists.)