

Audition 1 Piece for Men

Excerpt from the opening speech of Alan Seymour's

The One Day of the Year first published in 1962.

Alf is an Australian lift driver. He's had a few beers.

N.B. Please prepare the text in black. The rest is to expand the character.

It's OK to audition with the script in hand.

The vowel in 'clerk' is pronounced as in the word 'part'.

Alf: 'E gets in the lift, 'e says "Seven". Like that. Not please, thank you, or kiss my foot. Just "Seven".

I get 'm all day, jumped-up little clerks, think they're God Almighty, well, they're not God Almighty, I know 'm I take 'm up and down all day. You think I'm not sick of that lift? Well, it won't be for that long, I'll show 'em, won't be that long now. You see when I get my new job. Did I tell you about my new job? I'll be right when I get my new job. None of this up and down, up and down all day. *(He drinks)*

'E says "Seven". I says: "Wotcher say?" 'E looks me up and down as if I'm a lumpa dirt. His nose wrinkles up, he dunno he's doin' it but I seen it, I seen it so I says, more polite like, layin' it on only he don't see I'm havin' a go at him, I says "Beg yr pardon, sir, did you say Seven or Second?" I wish I had a quid for every time I've had to ask that in the last thirteen years.

And he says, "I said Seven, old man." Gawd, when they start old man-n' me . . . Bloody Poms. I thought of a few things I could've said but there was a dame in the lift, she was eight months gone if she was a day. I thought what I'd say'd make you drop that colt right 'ere and it'd be me who'd have to deliver it, wouldn't be the first time neither.

You dunno what it's like, shut up in that thing, it's a bloody cage, being polite to every no-hoper every day, all day, holdin' yr horses when they tread on yr foot or ask silly bloody questions or bloody near insult you in front of the mob. They give me the dries, they do, they give me the screamin' – *(by now almost beside himself)* I'm as good a man as them. Who says I'm not? Who says I'm not?