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JOSIE from "Steaming" by Nell Dunn
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Please note that this is an excerpt from a scene. Some drama school auditioners say they don't like monologues "extracted" from dialogue, but we think in this case it's possible to create a very effective speech without destroying Josie's impact as a character. If you decide to work on this speech, we can offer you a suggested edit.

Act 2 Scene 1

Josie: What do you know of it anyway?

(Nancy: I know you have to pay for self-respect.)

Josie: What sort of job can I get? I'm not even a young girl any more. And I happen to like nice things . . . I like money . . . I don't like wearing 'sensible' shoes and last year's coat and organising other people's lives like a colonel-in-chief. Well, I'm going to tell you something – I don't *want* to be like you. It's boring, it's every day! Boring! Boring! Boring! Do you know why us working-class women have a little bit on the side? Why we spend money on clothes and make-up and shoes when we don't, as you say, 'strictly need them'? We've been brought up to do the shit work and we can't escape from doing the shit work except by finding a man with money and hanging on

to him! Anyway, who's to say you've got a better life than me? - I'm not so sure - I've been to South Africa, the Barbados, Tenerife - I've laid beside more pools than you've had hot dinners!

(Nancy: On stolen money?)

Josie: You don't thief because you don't need to, not because you're any better than I am! I want excitement in my life! I want beautiful clothes, beautiful travelling, cars . . . if I've got to steal them - well, at least I've had them, which is more than I can say for you.

Have your drab dreary life and keep your good name if that's what you want. Women should be beautiful things of pleasure. (*She walks away then turns back*) Do you know what it feels like to go into a library if you don't know your way around . . . and you get looked down on because of your accent?

(Nancy: Looked down on?)

Violet: The only time I ever went to the library was when I was caught out . . . dying to go I was. . . Flew in there and asked for the toilet . . . "You'll Have to ask the Chief Librarian", he says. The Chief Librarian, a woman - I thought, well, surely she'll have a bit of sympathy for me - "No" she says, "Staff only". "Why's that?" I say. "Bomb caution", she says, "Bomb Caution?" I says, "I only want to go to the toilet."

Josie: They think too bloody much of themselves . Real facts in life are what you feel and what you experience -those are facts, facts aren't what you read in books.)

Nancy: Looked down on? I've never looked Down on you. That's simply not fair!

Josie: It's a horrible feeling being looked down on –
being turned down for job after job because you
haven't got the right qualifications . . . because
you can't spell and you can't speak right . . .
and you know in the end all they're going to
offer you is cleaning!

(Nancy: *(Has stood up)* . . . Please stop.)

Josie: Why should I stop when you tell me? . . . Who
are you . . . Miss Boss? Just because you can
spell you think you're Queen of England . . .
well, you're not . . . you're just an ordinary
woman with a bit of money whose been deserted
by her old man – I'm not surprised he left you
– you always have to be on top! You pretend
different deep down that's how you are – he
wanted loving not organising.