

NELL. Men pay a coin to watch me change. I know about lack of privacy.

ARLINGTON. I don't think you understand.

NELL. You underestimate me.

ARLINGTON. We've waited a decade for him. A decade under the thumb of a commoner. The King is divine, madam. God's emissary on Earth. And you –

NELL. What? I'm a what? A commoner? A whore? You can't insult me, sir. I am common. And I was a whore. What are you scared of? That I'll bring down the English Court by dancing a jig in it?

ARLINGTON. You may be schooled in backchatting. Tit-firting. But your games don't wash with me. You will lose, so I'd strongly advise you not to play.

NELL. Are you threatening me?

ARLINGTON. I'm merely imparting friendly advice. *(Pause.)*
How do you find it, in Coal Yard Alley?

NELL. Sir?

ARLINGTON. You hear terrible stories of girls being roughed up after dark. I'd hate to think you were in any danger. Round there, people just disappear without a trace. *(Beat.)*
Good luck with the rehearsals, Miss Gwynn, I hope the punters are entertained.

And with that, he is gone. NELL is shaken. ROSE looks at her sister.

ROSE. What are you doing?

NELL. How dare he!

ROSE. You have to stop.

NELL. Come in here?! It's my dressing room!

ROSE. He's not some sponger with a gin mouth, Nell, he's a courtier.

NELL. He could be Henry the Eighth for all I care, he has no place!