

NELL. Odd, though. Pretending for a living.

HART. I suppose it is a strange existence. My father has two dozen scars on his back for his efforts.

NELL. They whipped him?

HART. They said it was 'the devil's work'! But that was before. We're all right for now, as long as Charles keeps his head. So to speak.

NELL. If they thought *you* were sinners, lucky they didn't come down the Madam's.

HART. Of course. Sorry.

NELL. Oh, I don't do it any more. Swapped selling my oyster for my oranges, didn't I.

HART. And does it make you happy? Hawking?

NELL. S'pose. I never thought to ask.

*Pause.*

HART. Listen. If you were willing to work... hard, perhaps I could teach you.

NELL. Teach me?

HART. You would have to commit. Every day, at dusk we'd meet, for a month. And we'd practise. And then, if you show aptitude, I might take you to meet Mr Killigrew. What do you say?

NELL. Why?

HART. I don't quite know.

NELL. I don't think so.

HART. Why not?!

NELL. There's no point.

HART. You don't know that.

NELL. I might not be any good.

HART. Then go back to your oranges.