

BLEAK HOUSE – Audition Piece**Snagsby / Mrs Snagsby / Tulkinghorn**

SNAGSBY: My dear, please! I simply haven't the time ...

MRS SNAGSBY: *(Off)* Time, Snagsby? What's time compared to eternity? Compared to your immortal soul?

She appears, pointing a rolling pin at him menacingly.

SNAGSBY: Now now, my dear...

MRS SNAGSBY: Mr Chadband, the Reverend Mr Chadband, is good enough to grace our humble house with his presence and expend words of heavenly wisdom upon us, the unworthy, and you, you have the gall to tell me you have an appointment!

SNAGSBY: My dear, it's Mr Tulkinghorn. You don't say no to Mr Tulkinghorn.

MRS SNAGSBY: But you can say no to me, your only wife! *(She bursts out sobbing)* Is this the thanks I get for saving your ungodly soul?

SNAGSBY: Well my dear, if the truth be told, Mr Chadband ain't really a minister, not of any particular church ...

MRS SNAGSBY: Mr Chadband despises organised religion! He is inspired to speak direct to our hearts, not through books and psalms.

SNAGSBY: Anyway, it can't be helped. I have to meet Mr Tulkinghorn at six. Dearest, if I were to refuse a man like him, we'd all be ruined ...

MRS SNAGSBY: Don't speak to me! Very well, go then, if you care more about a handful of dirty money than your own wife and your own soul. Oh why did I ever marry a man who worships only Mammon!

SNAGSBY: Dear one, light of my life ...

MRS SNAGSBY: Be gone from me, Satan!

She exits. Mr Tulkinghorn enters.

TULKINGHORN: Mr Snagsby.

- SNAGSBY: Oh, Mr Tulkinghorn. I was just on my way out to find you. The little woman was a little ... how shall one say it ... put out, that I wasn't a-staying indoors tonight to listen to the Reverend Chadband, but to be frank, Mr Tulkinghorn sir, the man's a fool. Only the other night, he were asking, why did we all not fly like angels, and when I told him that it was on account of us not having wings, he seemed to take offence rather...
- TULKINGHORN: Jarndyce and Jarndyce, Mr Snagsby.
- SNAGSBY: Yes indeed Mr Tulkinghorn, Jarndyce and Jarndyce to them all.
- TULKINGHORN: I have here some affidavits copied by your firm. This is not your hand, I take it?
- SNAGSBY: Why no, Mr Tulkinghorn, we gave this out, sir. We were giving out a large quantity of work at the time. Now let me see, who copied this ... Ah yes, I remember, this was given to the law writer who lodges on the other side of Chancery Lane.
- TULKINGHORN: And the name of the writer?
- SNAGSBY: It's coming to me, sir. Nemo, sir.
- TULKINGHORN: Nemo? Is that what you call him?
- SNAGSBY: That's the name he goes by, Mr Tulkinghorn.
- TULKINGHORN: But Nemo is Latin for no-one.
- SNAGSBY: Must be English for someone, sir.
- TULKINGHORN: Have you given this man work before?
- SNAGSBY: Many a time sir.
- TULKINGHORN: And where did you say he lived?
- SNAGSBY: Across the Lane, Mr Tulkinghorn, at Mr Krook's rag and bottle shop.
- TULKINGHORN: Can you show me the place as I walk back?
- SNAGSBY: With pleasure, sir. *(Calling)* My dearest, I shall be about a quarter of an hour with Mr Tulkinghorn. Happily I shall be able to hear Mr Chadband speak after all!