

JEFFERSON ...and I did the whole scene butt naked. True story.

DOROTHY I doubt it.

JESSICA It so didn't happen, Dad.

DOROTHY *claps her hands to get the cast's attention.*

DOROTHY OK everyone. I have a little announcement!

NIGEL (to DENIS and MARY) Don't tell me they're getting engaged?

DOROTHY I'm pleased to announce that the part of Cordelia will no longer be played by myself. It will be played by Miss Jessica Steel.

*This is news to everyone including JESSICA and JEFFERSON. DENIS leads a round of applause.*

JEFFERSON Over my dead body...

DOROTHY Quite possibly if you have to lift me again. We can't risk your back, and I have decided I simply can't be the Fool and Cordelia whilst directing.

JEFFERSON But...

DOROTHY And besides Jessica has played the part before and has a particular insight into playing the daughter of a vain, spoilt, tyrant...

JEFFERSON I am not a tyrant!

JESSICA Then you won't mind if I take the role?

DOROTHY Good! So shall we go from Act One Scene Three again. Lear's dividing his time between his two daughters and neither of them are happy with the domestic arrangements.

MARY I know exactly how they feel.

MARY *glares at JEFFERSON...*

DOROTHY OK, Mary.

MARY's *delivery is laced with extra venom.*

MARY/GONERIL By day and night he wrongs me; every hour

He flashes into one gross crime or other,

That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it.

DOROTHY *is surprised at this performance.*

DOROTHY That's good - but maybe even a bit more anger?

MARY/GONERIL (*really letting rip*) By day and night, he wrongs me; every hour

He flashes into one gross crime or other

That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it.

*This surprises everyone with its rage.*

DOROTHY Gosh! Mary I'm really feeling that anger now.

MARY I'm sorry, I can't go on with this. I don't want to be in the play any more.

DOROTHY Mary? What is it?

MARY Mr. Steel knows what I'm talking about.

JEFFERSON (to DOROTHY) No I don't!

MARY (*tearful*) You've been a huge disappointment to me Mr. Steel!

JEFFERSON (to DOROTHY) She's nuts.

MARY I'm sorry Dorothy. That's just how it is!

MARY *leaves in tears.*

DOROTHY Mary... Mary... come on...

MARY My final word... Goodbye!

MARY *slams the door and exits. Throughout this*

JEFFERSON *looks genuinely mystified and annoyed.*