

6. Pages 43-45 – Maggie-Stuart-Ida-Winifred-June-Celeste & Grace as Witness ... listening

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INTO THE BREECHES!

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STUART. I could do it.

MAGGIE. What?

STUART. I'd be happy to do it. Hotspur.

IDA. Stuart? I...

STUART. Since you need someone.

IDA. Hear, hear!

WINIFRED. Oh, how wonderful!

MAGGIE. But Stuart, we need you running the show.

STUART. I can do both! I'll stay in costume, run the lights,
pop in for a scene, pop back in time for a cue.

WINIFRED. Hooray!

MAGGIE. Well, I suppose -

JUNE. NO!

MAGGIE. (*What the -?*) June?

JUNE. This has been bugging me ever since I - I'm sorry,
you're a hoot, Stuart, you are, but I refuse to act with
a - talk about a Mr. Exception! Every man I know is
Over There.

STUART. Well, that's certainly direct.

JUNE. Max enlisted the second after Pearl Harbor, but you...a year later and you're sitting in here staring at a stopwatch.

IDA. Stuart's no coward!

JUNE. Then why is he here?

MAGGIE. Now June, you'd be hard-pressed to find a more patriotic -

STUART. No, Maggie. You have every right to know, June. I can assure all of you ladies that I tried to enlist on numerous occasions, at various recruitment stations. First, they told me I was too short, so I wore shoes with lifts. Then they told me my eyes were too poor, so I cheated on the exam. Finally, they told me I was a swish, a suspicion which led to an extremely humiliating interrogation I found I did not have the strength to repeat.

(JUNE is embarrassed.)

JUNE. Jeepers.

STUART. Believe me, I know where I should be.

(WINIFRED raises her hand.)

MAGGIE. Winifred?

WINIFRED. I'm sorry, maybe I'm missing something - Stuart, you're not saying you're a... "homosexual"?

STUART. I...I suppose I am.

WINIFRED. Oh, my.

(A moment.)

This just keeps getting more delightful! Mercy, I'll have to pick Ellsworth's jaw up off the floor!

STUART. Well, actually, if we could keep that within these walls, that would be swell. Providence is - it's a big small town.

WINIFRED. Ah, of course. Loose lips!

STUART. Exactly.

(MAGGIE has been flipping through Andrew's papers fruitlessly.)

MAGGIE. All right, well, getting back to Hotspur - Stuart, I obviously don't have Andrew's approval for your taking on a role, but I suppose -

CELESTE. Maggie, if I might raise what seems to me to be a most valid argument.

MAGGIE. (Sighing.) Go ahead.

CELESTE. Whatever the outcome of our all-female endeavor might be, there is at least that aesthetic at work.

MAGGIE. Meaning?

CELESTE. Might tossing an actual man into the mix remove the one thing we have going for us?

MAGGIE. Well, I hadn't - I suppose - I can see what you -

STUART. Maggie?

MAGGIE. Oh, Stuart, I'm afraid...I'm afraid she may be right.

(STUART stands up.)

STUART. (Quietly.) Let's take ten.

(He exits.)

MAGGIE. Stuart?

(He's gone.)

Yes, let's...let's take ten.