

OUR KIND
by Goldwyn of Britain

characters (in order of appearance)
Newman Greenhorn
Lord Boozehound Wench-chaser
Cupcake Gaolbait
Lady Lowbodice Crowncraver
Mistress Laurel Seamchecker
Lord Stickjock Rhinohide
Sir Smash-'n'-bash
the Dream

(Newman enters, wearing blue jeans, sneakers, a tee shirt, and two towels safety-pinned together and belted to form a rough tabard.)

NEWMAN: At last! I've finally found the S.C.A.! You know, I've heard about this group for so very long, and I've wanted to join, but I could never find them. And now I'm really here! I can hardly wait to get in on all the fun!

(Boozehound enters, goblet in hand.)

BOOZEHOUND: Fun? Did I hear someone mention fun? Ah, there you are. And a fine-looking lad you are, too. Here, son. Have a drink.

(He hands Newman his goblet.)

NEWMAN: Drink?

BOOZEHOUND: Thanks. Don't mind if I do.

(He takes the goblet back and drinks.)

Can't be in the good ol' S.C. of A. and not drink!

NEWMAN: But I thought . . .

BOOZEHOUND: Oh, no, you don't. You haven't been in long enough for that. Just relax, enjoy, and leave the thinking to the Peers.

NEWMAN: I . . . I'll try, sir.

BOOZEHOUND: That's the spirit, lad! By the by, what's your name?

NEWMAN: Newman Greenhorn.

BOOZEHOUND: That's too bad.

NEWMAN: Why? What's wrong with it?

BOOZEHOUND: Nothing! Nothing at all! The heralds will tear it to pieces.

NEWMAN: Why?

BOOZEHOUND: It's what they do.

NEWMAN: Heralds?

BOOZEHOUND: Yeah, but don't mind 'em too much, kid. No-one else does.

NEWMAN: Thank you. I'll remember that. And you are . . .

BOOZEHOUND: Lord Boozehound Wench-chaser, A.L.E., S.O.T., S.O.B., C.P.R., M.T.V.!

NEWMAN: Wow! What do all those letters mean?

BOOZEHOUND: Beats the hell out of me. I can never remember what all this stuff means.

(Cupcake enters.)

But I sure as hell know what that means! 'Scuse me while I live up to my name.

(Boozehound chases her out. Lowbodice enters.)

LOWBODICE: Excuse me, good sir. Are you a Knight?

NEWMAN: No, I'm not.

LOWBODICE: Are you at least a fighter?

NEWMAN: No.

LOWBODICE: Too bad.

(Laurel enters. During the following scene, she examines Lowbodice's garb, jotting down notes in a notepad.)

NEWMAN: I'm sorry. If there's anything I can do to help . . .

LOWBODICE: Yes. Point out someone who's likely to win Crown, and I, Lady Lowbodice Crowncraver, will do the rest.

NEWMAN: I don't know what you're talking about.

LOWBODICE: Why, being Queen, of course! What else is there? You see, we choose our Monarchs through combat, and I need a fighter for that.

NEWMAN: Don't they let women fight?

LOWBODICE: Of course! We're a very modern medieval society. We'll let anyone get bruised, if they want to.

NEWMAN: Then, couldn't you --

LOWBODICE: Why should I, if I can get a fighter with more muscles than brains to do it for me? After all, half the Royal Peers in this Kingdom got where they are by sleeping with the right person.

NEWMAN: I'd fight for you, if I could.

LOWBODICE: That's nice. And you are a dear boy. But you're just not good enough, yet. However . . . if you ever get good enough to win Crown, keep me in mind.

(Lowbodice exits.)

NEWMAN: Wait! You forgot to tell me how I learn how to fight! *(to Laurel)* How do I learn how to fight?

LAUREL: *(sniffs disdainfully)* Ask a f- . . . f- . . .

(She forces herself to say the word, but it leaves a bad taste in her mouth.)

. . . fighter. Here comes one, now.

(Laurel exits. Stickjock enters. He wears a surcoat with a rhino's head on the chest and the words "sword" and "shield" on the appropriate arms.)

STICKJOCK: One! Two! One! Two! Hit! Pound! Kill! Make way there, you. Lord Stickjock Rhinohide coming through!

NEWMAN: Wow! A real fighter! Excuse me, sir . . .

STICKJOCK: No, no. I'm not a Knight. Yet. Dammit. But I will be. All I have to do is win, win, win!

NEWMAN: Please, m'lord, would you teach me how to fight?

STICKJOCK: Wanna be my squire?

NEWMAN: I don't know. I'm new, you see . . .

STICKJOCK: Then to hell with you.

NEWMAN: That isn't very nice. What about courtesy?

STICKJOCK: Courtesy? Don't make me laugh. That's only for wimps.

NEWMAN: And honour? And chivalry?

STICKJOCK: That's for on the field.

NEWMAN: And fighting for a lady's honour?

STICKJOCK: Yeah, I do that a lot.

NEWMAN: Well, that's good to hear.

STICKJOCK: Trouble is, they always fight back. *(to his belt)* Oh, if only you were white!

NEWMAN: There must be more to the Society than fighting.

STICKJOCK: *(simply)* No, there isn't.

NEWMAN: But surely --

STICKJOCK: Nobody listens to you, unless you're a fighter. Your opinions don't count, unless you're a fighter. And, most important, you can't get any girls . . .

NEWMAN: . . . unless you're a fighter. I think I know just the girl for you. She was looking for someone who might win Crown Tournament.

STICKJOCK: Lady Lowbodice.

NEWMAN: Oh, you've met her.

STICKJOCK: Well, let's just say that I've had the pleasure. Which way did she go?

NEWMAN: *(pointing vaguely)* That way.

STICKJOCK: Thanks.

(Stickjock starts to exit in the opposite direction.)

NEWMAN: No, left. Left!

STICKJOCK: Huh?

NEWMAN: Shield arm!

(Stickjock reverses direction and exits. Newman looks heavenward.)

Lord, I promise I will never be like that. All I really need is a lady of my own.

(Cupcake enters. Newman sees her, then looks up again.)

Thank you.

CUPCAKE: I knew I could get away by running past an ale stand. *(to Newman)* Hi.

NEWMAN: Hello.

CUPCAKE: Are you new?

(Laurel enters. During the following scene, she examines Cupcake's garb, again jotting down notes in her notebook. At one point, she pulls up the shoulder of Cupcake's off-the-shoulder blouse. Cupcake absently pulls it down again.)

NEWMAN: Yes, but I'm starting to feel slightly used.

CUPCAKE: Me, too.

NEWMAN: I'm Newman Greenhorn.
(Cupcake looks him up and down.)

CUPCAKE: You poor thing!

NEWMAN: No, that's my name.

CUPCAKE: Oh, I'm sorry. They call me Cupcake Gaolbait.

NEWMAN: "Cupcake?"

CUPCAKE: It's a nickname. The rest of it isn't.

NEWMAN: But, why would they call you --

CUPCAKE: Look, I can't help it if I'm only fifteen!

NEWMAN: Fifteen!

CUPCAKE: Or that I'm pretty.

NEWMAN: That's not the word I'd use.

CUPCAKE: Or that I like boys . . . and men. Right?

NEWMAN: *(entranced)* You have the loveliest blue eyes . . .

CUPCAKE: Oh, no. Not another one!

(Cupcake exits.)

NEWMAN: Wait! Don't go! Was it something I said?

LAUREL: Obviously.

NEWMAN: Beg pardon, ma'am. I've noticed you around. Are you somebody important?

LAUREL: *(nostrils flaring with indignation)* I should say so! I am Mistress Laurel Seamchecker. You may bow.

(Newman bows. Laurel motions him to bow lower, then still lower. Finally, when he is bowing low enough, she beams, and allows him to straighten up.)

NEWMAN: You're a mistress?

LAUREL: Not that kind.

NEWMAN: *(copying her tone of voice)* Obviously.

LAUREL: I am a Peer of the Realm, a Mistress of the Order of the Laurel.

NEWMAN: What does that mean?

LAUREL: It is the equivalent of being a Knight.

NEWMAN: You're a Knight?

LAUREL: Bite your face. I am equal to a Knight.

NEWMAN: And what do you do?

LAUREL: We are the artisans of the Kingdom. We teach everyone the right and proper way to behave, to act . . . to think . . . and are the arbiters of good taste and all that is civilized. Not like the f- . . . f- . . . you know . . . who only care about fighting.

NEWMAN: Shouldn't they?

LAUREL: Not to the exclusion of all else! They stand around at revels, talking about battles they've fought, and weapons, and shields. If more of them learned how to dance . . . Come to think of it, it wouldn't hurt you to learn some of the arts.

NEWMAN: Oh, I intend to.

LAUREL: Good. The first thing we'll teach you to do is sew . . . properly. You can't get a Laurel without gorgeous costumes, you know.

NEWMAN: I didn't know.

LAUREL: Then we'll move on. Fortunately for you, I am qualified to teach all the arts. As a member of the Order of the Laurel, I am well- rounded. Don't say it. Don't even think it.

(Smash enters, carrying a helm and rattan sword. His costume is a compendium of bits and pieces of prominent local Knights.)

SMASH: Think it, lad! Don't let this wench daunt you!

LAUREL: How dare you!

SMASH: I believe an introduction is in order. How about it, O fountain of couth?

LAUREL: Hmph! (*perfunctorily*) Sir Smash-'n'-bash, I have the honour of presenting a newcomer whose name I never bothered to learn.

NEWMAN: Newman Greenhorn, sir.

SMASH: Well, we'll make a fighter of you, anyway. Here. Put this on.
(Laurel steps between them.)

LAUREL: Oh, no you don't. I saw him first!

SMASH: Stand aside, woman!

LAUREL: See here! I am a member of the Order of the Laurel!

SMASH: So? I am a Knight!

LAUREL: We are equal.

SMASH: Says who?

LAUREL: The Corpora!

voices: (*offstage, singing*) Amen!

SMASH: I want to see it in writing.

LAUREL: (*snidely*) Who will read it to you?

NEWMAN: (*ever-helpful*) I will.

LAUREL: Lost another one.
(She exits.)

SMASH: Well, I got rid of her for a few moments, anyway.

NEWMAN: Wasn't she right, sir?

SMASH: Hm? About what?

NEWMAN: About Laurels and Knights being equal.

SMASH: Are you kidding?

NEWMAN: But she said --

SMASH: That's only on paper. Nobody believes it. Knights are just the same as the other Peers, except we're different. All the branches of the Peerage are equal, except that the Knights are more equal. Everybody knows it. Now, put this on.

(He puts the helmet on Newman - backwards.)

NEWMAN: But, I can't see!

SMASH: Fine, fine. Now, this is the way you hold a sword. And this is what you do with it!

(Smash beats him with the sword. Finally, he stops, and Newman removes the helmet.)

NEWMAN: I think you bruised something.

SMASH: Your first battle scar! Be proud of it, lad. There will be many more.

NEWMAN: But, if it hurts so much, why would anyone want to be a Knight?

(Boozehound enters with Cupcake. Stickjock enters with Lowbodice.)

SMASH: I'll show you.

(He hands Newman the sword and stands at center.)

Ahem!

(Smash shows off his belt[s] and chain[s]. Cupcake and Lowbodice leave their escorts and drape themselves over him.)

Any questions?

(Smash, Cupcake, and Lowbodice exit. Boozehound and Stickjock take the sword and helmet from Newman and exit.)

NEWMAN: To fight, or not to fight. There's so much to learn. It's all so confusing. Won't somebody help me?

(Laurel enters, carrying two huge stone tablets.)

LAUREL: What do I look like, a Pelican? *(pause)* See me next year.

(Laurel exits in pursuit of Smash. Dream enters.)

DREAM: I will help you.

NEWMAN: I'm almost afraid to ask, but . . . who are you?

DREAM: I am the Dream. I am what all good Society folk strive for.

NEWMAN: The Dream? I've never heard of you.

DREAM: That is because too few of those in the Society still hold The Dream in their hearts.

NEWMAN: Like Christmas?

DREAM: (*snapping at him*) Be quiet while I'm talking. (*sweet again*) Too many of them become concerned with their own little power trips, and too few actively strive to make the Dream a reality for everyone. You see, Newman, every member of the Society, from Kings and Queens to the newest newcomer . . .

(*She touches him on the head with her wand. A chime sounds from offstage.*)

. . . has their own vision of the Dream.

NEWMAN: But, if everyone's visions are different, how does it stay together?

DREAM: Because there is room enough in the Society for everyone's Dream. The Dream belongs to us all, and the Dream itself is what holds it together.

(*A huge roll of duct tape rolls across the stage.*)

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