

MAN #1 Sides – The Wilde Tales

Please be familiar with all sides, but present your best first. You may be asked to repeat with direction or to read another side. All actors play multiple parts within the whole and even individual stories. We are looking for actors with great range, playful inventiveness, facility and ease with language, and comfort with dialects particularly those of Great Britain. We present these pieces in a concert reading format with minimal staging taking the words directly out to the audience.

THE DEVOTED FRIEND – Miller – self-important and faux-generous, hypocritical, talks of friendship but is immune to its understanding; buffo

A plank of wood! Why, that is just what I want for the roof of my barn. There is a very large hole in it, and the corn will all get damp if I don't stop it up. How lucky you mentioned it! It is quite remarkable how one good action always breeds another. I have given you my wheelbarrow, and now you are going to give me your plank. Of course, the wheelbarrow is worth far more than the plank, but true friendship never notices things like that. And now, as I have given you my wheelbarrow, I am sure you would like to give me some flowers in return.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE – Red Rose – arch, mysterious, not unkind but necessarily dire, think of it as being underscored in a minor key by a distant but sinister flute

My roses are red, as red as the feet of the dove, and redder than the great fans of coral that wave and wave in the ocean-cavern. But the winter has chilled my veins and I shall have no roses at all this year. There is a way, but it is so terrible that I dare not tell it to you. If you want a red rose, you must build it out of music by moonlight, and stain it with your own heart's-blood. You must sing to me with your breast against a thorn. All night long you must sing to me, and the thorn must pierce your heart, and your life-blood must flow into my veins, and become mine.

THE REMARKABLE ROCKET – Rocket – think snooty upper class and let's hear something in the nature of a character voice

I am a very remarkable Rocket, and come of remarkable parents. My mother was the most celebrated Catherine Wheel of her day, and was renowned for her graceful dancing. When she made her great public appearance she spun round nineteen times before she went out, and each time that she did so she threw into the air seven pink stars. My father was a Rocket like myself, and of French extraction. He flew so high that the people were afraid that he would never come down again. He did, though, for he was of a kindly disposition, and he made a most brilliant descent in a shower of golden rain. The newspapers wrote about his performance in very flattering terms. Indeed, the Court Gazette called him a triumph of Pylotechnic art.

THE SELFISH GIANT – Giant – simple, plain of understanding, LARGE

In one corner is it still Winter. It's the farthest corner of the garden, and there's a little boy standing there. How selfish I have been! Now I know why the Spring would not come here. I will put that poor little boy on the top of the tree, and then I will knock down the wall, and my garden shall be the children's playground forever and ever.