

SMALL TITLES AND ORDERS

CAS. My only hope is that when my husband sees what a shady family he has married into he will repudiate the contract altogether.

DUKE. Shady? A nobleman shady, who is blazing in the lustre of unaccustomed pocket-money? A nobleman shady, who has transformed himself into a Limited Company? And this, just as I have just had my initial public offering? O fie!

DUCH. Your Majesty is surely unaware that before that same offering your father's stock was sagging badly, very badly indeed! He was practically worthless!

CAS: Mama, you have told me many times how worthless my father was.

DUKE. But under the Limited Liability Act, all barriers, be they moral or economical, have vanished! And you, my royal, resplendent, refulgent daughter, have only profited from it! Since I am, by legal and commercial definition, a corporation, it behooves my bottom line to renounce any responsibility for my actions whatsoever, and to commit my Limited self solely to the acquisition of fantastic wealth, no matter the consequences. It's the *in* thing to do.

RECITATIVE—DUKE & DUCHESS

DUKE To help unhappy citizens, and add to their enjoyment,
Affords a man of noble rank congenial employment;
DUCHESS Of our attempts we offer you examples illustrative:
The work is light, and, I may add, it's most remunerative.

DUET--DUKE and DUCHESS.

DUKE. All brokers and traders
And deft corp'rate raiders
I gladly involve in my dealings

DUCH. His criminal dealings.

DUKE. Our clients are trusting,
We leave before busting,
To off-shore accounts go the stealings

DUCH. Yes, all of the stealings.

DUKE. High-social soireeing
I find very paying:
It adds a large sum to my makings--

DUCH. Large sum to his makings.

DUKE. At charity dinners
The best of speech-spinners,
I get ten per cent on the takings--

DUCH. One-tenth of the takings.

I skim off donations
To wealthy foundations
I helm, and I speak at each dinner--

DUKE. She speaks at each dinner.

DUCH. And some hanky-panky,
With Fed Chair Bernanke,
And at that, I'm not a beginner.

DUKE. She's *not* a beginner!

DUCH. Celebrity parties
 With nouveau-riche smarties
 Are perfect for blackmail and scandal

DUKE. Such blackmail and scandal!

DUCH. To Hollywood fixtures
 I claim I have pictures,
 There's nothing this Duchess can't handle!

DUKE. This Duchess can't handle!

CAS. Next to me, with admittance,
 They both raise a pittance,
 I'm very much more enterprising

DUKE and DUCH. She's more enterprising!

CAS. On magazine pages
 This princess outrages
 My gowns, they are not minimizing.

DUKE. No, not minimizing!

CAS. My name and my title
 I lend, for requital,
 To scents that the French are perfuming

DUCH. The French are perfuming!

CAS. Designers all dress me,
 They pay to impress me,
 And should when a beauty is blooming!

DUKE. This beauty is blooming!

DUCH. Attending first-nighters
 With glam parasiters
 Is less for the art than the feeding

DUKE. She loves a good feeding!

DUCH. The op'ra is boring
 At downbeat, I'm snoring,
 At curtain I'm exit-stampeding!

DUKE. But oh! the stampeding!
 Investment house failings
 And CEO jailings
 I watch with an eye to some profit

DUCH. An eye to some profit!

DUKE. I buy when they sail out

And wait for my bail-out
Well, someone should make something off it!

DUCH. He makes a lot off it!

DUKE. We're ready as witness
To any one's fitness
To fill any place or position-

DUCH & CAS. A place or position.

DUCH. We're often attended
By spongers, befriended,

CAS. And sometimes a handsome musician--!

DUKE and DUCH. We require a musician.

ALL THREE. In short, if you'd kindle
The spark of a swindle,
Lure simpletons into your clutches--
Yes; into your clutches.
Or hoodwink a debtor,
You cannot do better

CAS. Than trot out a Duke or a Duchess--

DUKE. A Duke...

DUCH: or a Duchess!