

# **Hobson's Choice**

## **Audition Pieces**

### **Audition Piece 1 – Albert, Alice, Maggie**

**Albert:** Good morning, Miss Alice.

**Alice:** Good morning, Mr Prosser (*Leans in*). Father's not gone out yet. He's late.

**Maggie:** What can we do for you, Mr Prosser?

**Albert:** Well, I can't say I came in to buy anything, Miss Hobson.

**Maggie:** This is a shop, you know. We're not here to let people go out without buying.

**Albert:** Well, I'll just have a pair of bootlaces, please.

**Maggie:** What size do you rake in boots?

**Albert:** Eights. I have small feet (*He simpers, but perceives Maggie is not smiling*). Does that matter to the laces?

**Maggie:** It matters to the boots. Sit down, Mr Prosser. It's time you had a new pair. These uppers are disgraceful for a professional man to wear.

**Alice:** Mr Prosser didn't come in to buy boots, Maggie.

**Maggie:** I wonder what does bring him in here so often?

**Albert:** I'm terrible hard on bootlaces, Miss Hobson.

**Maggie:** Do you get through a pair a day? You must be strong.

**Albert:** I keep a little stock of them. It's as well to be prepared for accidents.

**Maggie:** And now you'll have boots to go with the laces, Mr Prosser. How does that feel?

**Albert:** Very comfortable. Yes, that fits all right.

**Maggie:** I'll put the other on.

**Albert:** Oh, no, I really don't want to buy them.

**Maggie:** Sit down, Mr Prosser. You can't go through the streets in odd boots.

**Albert:** What's the price of these?

**Maggie:** A pound.

**Albert:** A pound! I say –

**Maggie:** They're good boots, and you don't need to buy a pair of laces today. Of course, if you want leather ones, you being so strong in the arm and breaking so many pairs, you can have them, only it's a tuppence more.

**Albert:** These...these will do.

**Maggie:** Very well, you'd better have the old pair mended and I'll send them home to you with the bill.

**Albert:** Well, if anyone had told me I was coming in here to spend a pound I'd have called...

**Maggie:** It's not wasted. Those boots will last. Good morning, Mr Prosser.

**Alice:** Maggie, we know you're a pushing sales-woman, but – You know why he comes.

**Maggie:** I know it's a time he paid a rent for coming. A pair of laces a day's not half enough. Coming here to make sheep's eyes at you. I'm sick of the sight of him.

**Alice:** It's all very well for an old maid like you to talk, but if father won't have us go courting where else can Albert meet me except here when father's out?

**Maggie:** If he wants to marry you why doesn't he do it?

**Alice:** Courting must come first.

**Maggie:** It needn't. See that slipper with a fancy buckle on to make it pretty? Courting's like that, my lass. All glitter and no use to nobody.

## **Audition Piece 2 – Hobson, Maggie, Vickey, Alice**

**Hobson:** Maggie, I'm just going out for a quarter of an hour

**Maggie:** Yes, father. Don't be late for dinner. There's liver.

**Hobson:** It's an hour off dinner-time.

**Maggie:** So that, if you stay more than an hour in the Moonraker's Inn, you'll be late for it.

**Hobson:** Moonraker's? Who said – ?

**Vickey:** If your dinner's ruined, it'll be your own fault.

**Hobson:** Well, I'll be eternally –

**Alice:** Don't swear, father.

**Hobson:** No. I'll sit down instead. Listen to me, you three. I've come to conclusions about you. And I won't have it. Do you hear that? Interfering with my goings out and comings in. The idea! I've a mind to take measures with the lot of you.

**Maggie:** I expect Mr Heeler's waiting for you in Moonraker's, father.

**Hobson:** He can go on waiting. At present, I'm addressing a few remarks to the rebellious females of this house, and what I say will be listened to and heeded.

**Vickey:** Father, you'd have more time to talk after we've closed tonight.

**Hobson:** I'm talking now, and you're listening. Providence has decreed that you should lack a mother's hand at the time when single girls grow bumptious and must have somebody to rule. But I'll tell you this, you'll none rule me.

**Vickey:** I'm sure I'm not bumptious, father.

**Hobson:** Yes, you are. You're pretty, but you're bumptious, and I hate bumptious like I hate a lawyer.

**Alice:** If we take trouble to feed you it's not bumptious to ask you not to be late for your food.

**Vickey:** Give and take, father.

**Hobson:** I give and you take, and it's going to end.

**Maggie:** How much a week do you give us?

**Hobson:** That's neither here nor there. At the moment I'm on uppishness, and I'm warning you your conduct towards your parent's got to change. But that's not all. I've looked upon my household as they go about the streets, and I've been disgusted. The fair name and fame of Hobson have been outraged by members of Hobson's family, and uppishness has done it.

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

**Hobson:** Vickey, you're pretty, but you can lie like a gas-meter. Who had new dresses on last week?

**Alice:** I suppose you mean Vickey and me?

**Vickey:** We shall dress as we like, father, and you can save your breath.

**Hobson:** I'm not stopping in from my business appointment for the purpose of saving my breath.

**Vickey:** You like to see me in nice clothes.

**Hobson:** I do. That's why I pay Mr Tudsbury, the draper, ten pounds a year a head to dress you proper. I saw you and Alice out of the Moonraker's parlour on Thursday night and my friend asked me who you were. And well he might. You were going down Chapel Street with a hump added behind you. The hump was wagging, and you put your feet on pavement as if you'd got chilblains – aye, stiff neck above and weak knees below. It's immodest!

**Alice:** It is not immodest, father. It's the fashion to wear bustles.

**Hobson:** Then to hell with the fashion.

### **Audition Piece 3 – Hobson, Maggie, Mrs Hepworth, Tubby, Willie**

**Hobson:** Good morning, Mrs Hepworth. What a lovely day.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Morning, Hobson. I've come about these boots you sent me home. Who made these boots?

**Hobson:** We did. Our own make.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Will you answer a plain question? Who made these boots?

**Hobson:** They were made on the premises.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Young woman, you seemed to have some sense. Can you answer me?

**Maggie:** I think so, but I'll make sure for you, Mrs Hepworth. Tubby!

**Hobson:** You wish to see the identical workman, madam?

**Mrs Hepworth:** I said so.

**Hobson:** I am responsible for all the work turned out here.

**Mrs Hepworth:** I never said you weren't.

**Tubby:** Yes, Miss Maggie?

**Mrs Hepworth:** Man, did you make these boots?

**Tubby:** No, ma'am.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Then who did? Am I to question every soul in the place before I find out?

**Tubby:** They're Willie's making, those.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Then tell Willie I want him.

**Tubby:** Certainly, ma'am.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Who's Willie?

**Hobson:** Name of Mossop, madam. But if there is anything wrong...

**Mrs Hepworth:** Are you Mossop?

**Willie:** Yes, mum.

**Mrs Hepworth:** You made these boots?

**Willie:** Yes, I made them last week.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Take that (*hands him a card*). Read it.

**Willie:** I'm trying. Only it's such a funny print.

**Mrs Hepworth:** It's the usual italics of a visiting card, my man. Now listen to me. I'm particular about what I put on my feet.

**Hobson:** I assure you it shall not occur again, Mrs Hepworth.

**Mrs Hepworth:** What shan't?

**Hobson:** I...I don't know.

**Mrs Hepworth:** Then hold your tongue. Mossop, I've tried every shop in Manchester, and these are the best-made pair of boots I've ever had. You'll keep that card, Mossop, and you won't dare leave here to go to another shop without letting me know where you are.

**Hobson:** Oh, he won't make a change.

**Mrs Hepworth:** How do you know? The man's a treasure, and I expect you underpay him.

**Hobson:** That'll do, Willie. You can go.

**Willie:** Yes, sir.

**Maggie:** Can I take your order for another pair of boots, Mrs Hepworth?

**Mrs Hepworth:** Not yet, young woman. But I shall send my daughters here. And that man's to make the boots.

**Maggie:** Certainly, Mrs Hepworth.

**Hobson:** Good morning, Mrs Hepworth. Very glad to have the honour of serving you, madam. (*Mrs Hepworth leaves*). What does she want to praise a workman to his face for?

#### **Audition Piece 4 – Jim, Hobson**

**Jim:** You're doing a good class trade if the carriage folk come to you, Hobson.

**Hobson:** What?

**Jim:** Wasn't that Mrs Hepworth?

**Hobson:** Oh, yes. Mrs Hepworth's an old and valued customer of mine.

**Jim:** It's funny you deal with Hope Hall and never mentioned it.

**Hobson:** Why, I've made boots for her and all her circle for...how long? Oh, I dunno.

**Jim:** You kept it dark. Well, aren't you coming round yonder?

**Hobson:** Yes. That is, no.

**Jim:** What's the trouble, Henry?

**Hobson:** Do your daughters worry you, Jim?

**Jim:** Nay...They mostly do as I bid them, and the missus does the leathering if they don't.

**Hobson:** I'm a talkative man by nature, Jim. You know that.

**Jim:** You're an orator, Henry. I doubt John Bright himself is better gifted of the gab than you.

**Hobson:** In the eyes of my daughters, I'm a windbag.

**Jim:** Nay. Never!

**Hobson:** I am. They scorn my wisdom, Jim. They answer back. I'm landed in a hole – a great and undignified hole. My own daughters have got the upper hand of me.

**Jim:** Women are worse than men for getting above themselves.

**Hobson:** A woman's foolishness begins where a man's leaves off.

**Jim:** They want a firm hand, Henry.

**Hobson:** I've lifted up my voice and roared at them.

**Jim:** Beware of roaring at women, Henry. Roaring is mainly hollow sound. It's like trying to defeat an army with banging drums instead of cold steel.

**Hobson:** I've tried all the ways, and I'm fair moithered. I dunno what to do.

**Jim:** Then you quit roaring at 'em and get 'em wed.

**Hobson:** I've thought of that. Trouble is to find the men.

**Jim:** Men's common enough. Are you looking for angels in breeches?

**Hobson:** I'd like my daughters to wed temperance young men, Jim.

**Jim:** You keep your ambitions within reasonable limits, Henry. You've three daughters to find husbands for.

**Hobson:** Two, Jim, two.

**Jim:** Two?

**Hobson:** Vicky and Alice are mostly window dressing in the shop. But Maggie's too useful to part with. And she's on the ripe side for marrying, is our Maggie.

**Jim:** I've seen 'em do it at double her age. Still, leaving her out, you've two.

**Hobson:** One'll do for a start, Jim.

**Jim:** Well, you want a man, and you want him temperance. It'll cost you a bit, you know.

**Hobson:** Eh? Oh, I'll get my hand down for the wedding all right.

**Jim:** A warm man like you 'ull have to do more than that. There's things called settlements.

**Hobson:** Settlements?

**Jim:** Aye. You've to bait your hook to catch fish, Henry.

**Hobson:** Then I'll none go fishing. I've changed my mind. I'd a fancy for a bit of peace, but there's luxuries a man can buy too dear. Settlements indeed!

**Jim:** I had a man in mind.

**Hobson:** You keep him there, Jim. I'll rub along and chance it. Settlements indeed!

### **Audition Piece 5 – Maggie, Willie**

**Maggie:** Willie, come here. I want to talk to you.

**Willie:** We're very busy in the cellar.

**Maggie:** Show me your hands, Willie.

**Willie:** They're dirty.

**Maggie:** Yes, they're dirty, but they're clever. Who taught you, Willie?

**Willie:** Why, Miss Maggie, I learnt my trade here.

**Maggie:** Hobson's never taught you to make boots the way you do.

**Willie:** I've had no other teacher.

**Maggie:** And needed none. You're a natural born genius at making boots. It's a pity you're a natural fool at all else.

**Willie:** I'm not much good at owt but leather, and that's a fact.

**Maggie:** When are you going to leave Hobson's?

**Willie:** Leave Hobson's? I...I thought I gave satisfaction.

**Maggie:** Don't you want to leave?

**Willie:** Not me. I've been at Hobson's all my life, and I'm not for leaving till I'm made.

**Maggie:** I said you were a fool.

**Willie:** Then I'm a loyal fool.

**Maggie:** Don't you want to get on, Will Mossop? You know the wages you get and you know the wages a bootmaker like you could get in one of the big shops in Manchester.

**Willie:** Nay, I'd be feared to go in them fine places.

**Maggie:** What keeps you here? Is it the...the people?

**Willie:** I dunno what it is. I'm used to being here.

**Maggie:** Do you know what keeps this business on its legs? Two things: one's the good boots you make that sell themselves, the other's the bad boots other people make and I sell.

**Willie:** You're a wonder in the shop, Miss Maggie.

**Maggie:** And you're a marvel in the workshop. Well?

**Willie:** Well, what?

**Maggie:** It seems to me to point in one way.

**Willie:** What way is that?

**Maggie:** You're leaving me to do all the work, my lad.

**Willie:** I'll be getting back to my stool, Miss Maggie.

**Maggie:** You'll go back when I've done with you. I've watched you for a long time and everything I've seen, I've liked. I think you'll do for me.

**Willie:** What way, Miss Maggie?

**Maggie:** Will Mossop, you're my man. Six months I've counted on you and it's got to come out some time.

**Willie:** But I've never –

**Maggie:** I know you never, or it 'ud not be left to me to do the job like this.

**Willie:** I'll...I'll sit down I'm feeling queer-like. What dost want me for?

**Maggie:** To invest in. You're a business idea in the shape of a man.

**Willie:** I've got no head for business at all.

**Maggie:** But I have. My brain and your hands 'ull make a working partnership.

**Willie:** Partnership! Oh, that's a different thing. I thought you were axing me to wed you.

**Maggie:** I am.

**Willie:** Well, by gum! And you the master's daughter.

### **Audition Piece 6 – Willie, Maggie, Ada**

**Willie:** What makes it so desperate awkward is that I'm tokened.

**Maggie:** You're what?

**Willie:** I'm tokened to Ada Friggins.

**Maggie:** The scheming hussy. It's not that sandy girl who brings your dinner?

**Willie:** She's golden-haired is Ada. Aye, she'll be here soon.

**Maggie:** I'll talk to Ada. I've seen her and I know the breed. Ada's the helpless sort.

**Willie:** She needs protecting.

**Maggie:** You wed her, and you'll be an eighteen shilling a week bootmaker all the days of your life. You'll be a slave, and a contented slave.

**Willie:** I'm not ambitious that I know of.

**Maggie:** No. But you're going to be. There's the makings of a man about you.

**Willie:** I wish you'd leave me alone.

**Maggie:** So does the fly when the spider catches him. You're my man, Willie Mossop.

**Willie:** Aye, so you say. Ada would tell another story, though.

**Ada:** There's your dinner, Will.

**Willie:** Thank you, Ada.

**Maggie:** A word with you. You're treading on my foot, young woman.

**Ada:** Me, Miss Hobson?

**Maggie:** What's this with you and him?

**Ada:** Oh, Miss 'Obson, it is good of you to take notice like that.

**Willie:** Ada, she –

**Maggie:** You hold your hush. This is for me and her to settle. Take a fair look at him, Ada.

**Ada:** At Will?

**Maggie:** Not much for two women to fall out over, is there?

**Ada:** Maybe he's not so much to look at, but you should hear him play.

**Maggie:** Play? Are you a musician, Will?

**Willie:** I play the Jew's harp.

**Maggie:** That's what you see in him, is it? A gawky fellow that plays the Jew's harp?

**Ada:** I see the lad I love, Miss 'Obson.

**Maggie:** It's a funny thing, but I can say the same.

**Ada:** You!

**Willie:** That's what I've been trying to tell you, Ada, and...and, by gum, she'll have me from you if you don't be careful.

**Maggie:** So we're quits so far, Ada.

**Ada:** You'll pardon me. You've spoke too late. Will and me's tokened.

**Maggie:** That's the past. It's the future that I'm looking to. What's your idea for that?

**Ada:** You mind your own business, Miss 'Obson. Will Mossop's no concern of thine.

**Maggie:** I've asked for your idea of Willie's future. If it's a likelier one than mine, I'll give you best and you can have the lad.

**Ada:** I'm trusting him to make the future right.

**Maggie:** It's as bad as I thought it was. Willie, you wed me.

**Ada:** It's daylight robbery.

**Willie:** Aren't you going to put up a better fight for me than that, Ada?

**Maggie:** Will, you take your orders from me in this shop. I've told you you'll wed me.

**Ada:** Wait while I get you to home, my lad. I'll set my mother on to you.

### **Audition Piece 7 – Maggie, Alice, Vickey, Freddy**

**Maggie:** Has your young man been in yet this morning, Alice?

**Alice:** My young –

**Maggie:** Albert Prosser.

**Alice:** He's not been here so often since you and Will Mossop got –

**Maggie:** Since when?

**Alice:** Since you made him buy that pair of boots he didn't want.

**Maggie:** I see. He didn't like paying for taking his pleasure in our shop. Well, if he's not expected, somebody must go for him. Prosser, Pilkington and Prosser, Solicitors, of Bexley Square. That's right, isn't it?

**Alice:** Yes. Albert's 'and Prosser'.

**Maggie:** Aye? Quite a big man in his way. Then, will you go and fetch him, Mr Been stock? Tell him to bring the paper with him.

**Vickey:** *You're* ordering folk about a bit.

**Maggie:** I'm used to it.

**Freddy:** It's all right, Vickey.

**Alice:** Is it? Suppose father comes in and finds Albert and Freddy here?

**Maggie:** He won't.

**Alice:** He's beyond his time already.

**Maggie:** I know. You must have worried father very badly since I went, Alice.

**Alice:** Why?

**Maggie:** Tell them, Mr Beenstock.

**Freddy:** Well, the fact is, Mr Hobson won't come because he's at our place just now.

**Vickey:** At your corn warehouse? What's father doing there?

**Freddy:** He's...he's sleeping, Vickey.

**Alice:** Sleeping?

**Freddy:** You see, we've a cellar trap in our place that opens in the pavement and your father...wasn't looking very carefully where he was going and he fell into it.

**Vickey:** Fell? Is father hurt?

**Freddy:** He's snoring very loudly, but he isn't hurt. He fell soft on some bags.

**Maggie:** Now you can go for Albert Prosser.

**Alice:** Is that all we're to be told?

**Maggie:** It's all there is to tell till Freddy's seen his solicitor.

**Freddy:** I'll not be long.

**Audition Piece 8 – Albert, Alice, Freddy, Vickey, Willie, Maggie**

**Alice:** Well, I think we ought to be getting home, Maggie.

**Maggie:** Come and put your hats on. Willie, we'll need this table when they're gone. You'd better be clearing the pots away. And you and Fred can just lend a him a hand with the washing up, Albert.

**Freddy:** Me wash pots!

**Albert:** Are you going to wash up pots?

**Freddy:** Are you?

**Albert:** I look at it this myself. All being well, you and I are marrying into this family and we know what Maggie is. If we start giving in to her now, she'll be a nuisance to us all our lives.

**Freddy:** But there's this plan of hers to get us married. Are you prepared to work it in for us?

**Albert:** I'm not. Anything but –

**Freddy:** Then till she's done it we're to keep the sweet side of Maggie.

**Albert:** But, washing pots!

**Freddy:** What would you do in our place, Will?

**Albert:** What do you need the table for in such a hurry?

**Willie:** Nay, I'm not in any hurry myself. I'm fond of the company.

**Albert:** Do you want company on your wedding night?

**Willie:** I don't favour your going so soon.

**Freddy:** He's afraid to be alone with her. That's what it is. He's shy of his wife.

**Willie:** I've not been married before, you see. I've not been left alone with her, either.

**Freddy:** You've been engaged to her, haven't you?

**Willie:** Aye, but it weren't for long. And you see, Maggie's not the sort you get familiar with.

**Freddy:** You had quite long enough to thaw the ice. It's not our job to do your melting for you.

**Willie:** It's that being alone with her that worries me, and I did think you'd stand by a fellow man to make things not so strange at first.

**Albert:** That's not the way we look at it. Hurry up with those cups, Fred.

**Maggie:** Have you broken anything yet, Albert?

**Albert:** Broken? No.

**Freddy:** I must say you don't show much gratitude.

**Albert:** Aren't you at all surprised to find us doing this?

**Maggie:** Surprised? I told you to do it. You can stop now. (*Knock at door*)

**Alice:** Who's that?

**Vickey:** It's father!

**Albert:** Oh, Lord!

**Maggie:** What's the matter? Are you afraid of him?

**Freddy:** Well, I think, all things considered, and seeing –

**Maggie:** All right. We'll consider 'em. You can go into the bedroom, the lot of you... No not you, Willie. The rest. I'll shout when I want you.

**Alice:** When he's gone.

**Maggie:** It'll be before he's gone.

**Vickey:** But we don't want –

**Maggie:** Is this your house or mine?

**Vickey:** It's your cellar.

**Maggie:** And I'm in charge of it.



### **Audition Piece 9 – Tubby, Jim**

**Jim:** I'll go straight to him, Tubby.

**Tubby:** He's getting up, Mr Heeler.

**Jim:** Getting up! Why, you said –

**Tubby:** I told you what he told me to tell you. Run for Doctor MacFarlane, he said. Now go to Mr Heeler, he said, and tell him I'm very ill, and I came and told you. Then he said he would get up, and I was to leave his breakfast ready for him, and he'd see you down here.

**Jim:** Nonsense, Tubby. Of course, I'll go up to him.

**Tubby:** You know what he is, sir. I'll get blamed if you go, and he's short tempered this morning.

**Jim:** I don't want to get you into trouble.

**Tubby:** Thank you, Mr Heeler.

**Jim:** I thought it was something serious.

**Tubby:** If you ask me, it is.

**Jim:** Which way?

**Tubby:** Every way you look at it. Mr Hobson's not his own old self, and the shop's not its own old self, and look at me. Now I ask you, Mr Heeler, man to man, is this work for a foreman shoe-hand? Cooking and laying tables and –

**Jim:** By all accounts there's not much else for you to do.

**Tubby:** There's better things than being a housemaid, if it's only making clogs.

**Jim:** They tell me clogs are a cut line.

**Tubby:** Well, what are you to do? There's nothing else wanted. Hobson's in a bad way, and I'm telling no secret when I say it. It's a fact that's known.

**Jim:** It's a thousand pities with an old-established trade like this.

**Tubby:** And who's to blame?

**Jim:** I don't think you ought to discuss that with me, Tubby.

**Tubby:** Don't you? I'm an old servant of the master's, and I'm sticking to him now when everybody's calling me a doting fool because I don't look after Tubby Wadlow first, and if that don't give me the right to say what I please, I don't know. It's temper ruining this shop, Mr Heeler. Temper and obstinacy.

**Jim:** They say in Chapel Street it's Willie Mossop.

**Tubby:** Willie's a good lad, though I say it that trained him. He hit us hard, did Willie, but we'd have got round that in time. With care, you understand, and tact. Tact. That's what the gaffer lacks. Miss Maggie, now...well, she's a marvel, aye, a fair knock-out. Not slavish, mind you. Stood up to the customers all the time, but she'd a way with her that sold the goods and made them come again for more. Look at us now. Men assistants in the shop.

**Jim:** Cost more than women.

**Tubby:** Cost? They'd be dear at any price. Look here, Mr Heeler, take yourself. When you go to buy a pair of boots do you like to be tried on by a man or a nice soft young woman?

**Jim:** Well...

**Tubby:** There you are. Stands to reason. It's human nature.

**Jim:** But there are two sides to that, Tubby. Look at the other.

**Tubby:** Ladies?

**Jim:** Yes.

**Tubby:** Ladies that are ladies wants trying on by their own sex, and them that aren't buys clogs. It's the good-class trade that pays, and Hobson's have lost it.

### **Audition Piece 10 – Doctor MacFarlane, Hobson, Jim**

**Hobson:** I've never been in a bad way before this morning. Never wanted a doctor in my life.

**Doctor:** You've needed. But you've not sent.

**Hobson:** But this morning –

**Doctor:** I ken...well.

**Hobson:** What! You know!

**Doctor:** Any fool would ken.

**Hobson:** Eh?

**Doctor:** Any fool but one fool and that's yourself.

**Hobson:** You're damned polite.

**Doctor:** If ye want flattery, I dare say ye can get it from your friend. I'm giving you ma medical opinion.

**Hobson:** I want your opinion on my complaint, not on my character.

**Doctor:** Your complaint and your character are the same.

**Hobson:** Then you'll kindly separate them and you'll tell me –

**Doctor:** I don't diagnose as my patients wish, but as my intellect and sagacity direct.

**Jim:** But you have not diagnosed.

**Doctor:** Sir, if I am to interview a patient in the presence of a third party, the least the third party can do is to keep his mouth shut.

**Jim:** After that, there's only one thing for it. He shifts or I do.

**Hobson:** You'd better go, Jim.

**Jim:** There are other doctors, Henry.

**Hobson:** I'll keep this one. I've got to teach him a lesson.

**Jim:** If that's it, I'll leave you.

**Hobson:** That's it. I can bully as well as a foreigner. (*Jim leaves*)

**Doctor:** That's better, Mr Hobson.

**Hobson:** If I'm better, you've not had much to do with it.

**Doctor:** I think my calculated rudeness –

**Hobson:** If you calculate your fees at the same rate as your rudeness, they'll be high.

**Doctor:** I calculate by time, Mr Hobson, so we'd better get to business.

**Hobson:** No hanky-panky now.

**Doctor:** Aye. It just confirms ma first opinion. Ye've had a breakdown this a.m.?

**Hobson:** You might say so.

**Doctor:** And do you seriously require me to tell you the cause, Mr Hobson?

**Hobson:** I'm paying thee brass to tell me.

**Doctor:** Chronic alcoholism, if you know what that means. A serious case.

**Hobson:** I know it's serious. What do you think you're here for? It isn't to tell me something I know already. It's to cure me.

**Doctor:** Very well. I will write you a prescription.

**Hobson:** Stop that!

**Doctor:** I beg your pardon?

**Hobson:** I won't take it. None of your druggist's muck for me. I'm particular about what I put into my stomach.

**Doctor:** Mr Hobson, if you don't mend your manners, I'll certify you for a lunatic asylum. Are you aware that you've drunk yourself within six months of the grave? You'd a warning this morning that any sane man would listen to and you're going to listen to it, sir.