

SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

This sample is an *excerpt* from a Samuel French title.

This sample is for perusal only and may not be used for performance purposes.

You may not download, print, or distribute this excerpt.

We highly recommend purchasing a copy of the title before considering for performance.

For more information about licensing or about purchasing a play or musical, please visit our website.

www.samuelfrench.com
www.samuelfrench.co.uk

Celebration

by Harold Pinter

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



**SAMUEL
FRENCH**

FOUNDED 1830

SAMUELFRENCH.COM

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *CELEBRATION* is subject to a Licensing Fee. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional, amateur, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. In its present form the play is dedicated to the reading public only.

The amateur live stage performance rights to *CELEBRATION* are controlled exclusively by Samuel French, Inc., and licensing arrangements and performance licenses must be secured well in advance of presentation. PLEASE NOTE that amateur Licensing Fees are set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. When applying for a licensing quotation and a performance license please give us the number of performances intended, dates of production, your seating capacity and admission fee. Licensing Fees are payable one week before the opening performance of the play to Samuel French, Inc., at 45 W. 25th Street, New York, NY 10010.

Licensing Fee of the required amount must be paid whether the play is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged.

Stock licensing fees quoted upon application to Samuel French, Inc.

For all other rights than those stipulated above, apply to: Judy Daish Associates Ltd., 2 St. Charles Place, London, W10 6EG, England.

Particular emphasis is laid on the question of amateur or professional readings, permission and terms for which must be secured in writing from Samuel French, Inc.

Copying from this book in whole or in part is strictly forbidden by law, and the right of performance is not transferable.

Whenever the play is produced the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc."

Due authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play.

No one shall commit or authorize any act or omission by which the copyright of, or the right to copyright, this play may be impaired.

No one shall make any changes in this play for the purpose of production.

Publication of this play does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised in their own interests to apply to Samuel French, Inc., for written permission before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre.

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

MUSIC USE NOTE

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permission is obtained by the licensee, then the licensee must use only original music that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for all music clearances and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play and their licensing agent, Samuel French, Inc., against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of music by licensees.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of *CELEBRATION* *must* give credit to the Author of the Play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play, and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for the purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production. The name of the Author *must* appear on a separate line on which no other name appears, immediately following the title and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent of the size of the title type.

Billing must be substantially as follows:

(NAME OF PRODUCER)
presents

CELEBRATION

by Harold Pinter

CELEBRATION

by

Harold Pinter

was first presented by the Almeida Theatre Company at the

Almeida Theatre, London,
on 16 March 2000.

Cast:

Lambert	Keith Allen
Julie	Susan Wooldridge
Matt	Andy de la Tour
Prue	Lindsay Duncan
Russell	Steven Pacey
Suki	Lia Williams
Richard	Thomas Wheatley
Waiter	Danny Dyer
Sonia	Indira Varma
Waitress 1	Nina Raine
Waitress 2	Katherine Tozer

Directed by Harold Pinter

Designer: Eileen Diss


Lighting: Mark Hughes

Costume: Dany Everett

Sound: John Leonard

CHARACTERS

LAMBERT
JULIE
MATT
PRUE



all in their forties

RUSSELL, a man in his thirties

SUKI, a woman of twenty-eight

RICHARD, a man in his fifties

WAITER, a man of twenty-five

SONIA, a woman in her thirties

(Scene: A restaurant. Two curved banquettes. LAMBERT, JULIE, MATT, and PRUE sit at one banquette, RUSSELL and SUKI at the other.)

TABLE ONE

WAITER. Who's having the duck?

LAMBERT. The duck's for me.

JULIE. No it isn't.

LAMBERT. No it isn't. Who's it for?

JULIE. Me.

LAMBERT. What am I having? I thought I was having the duck.

JULIE. (To WAITER.) The duck's for me.

MATT. (To WAITER.) Chicken for my wife, steak for me.

WAITER. Chicken for the lady.

PRUE. Thank you so much.

WAITER. And who's having the steak?

MATT. Me. (He picks up a wine bottle and pours.) Here we are. Frascati for the ladies. And Valpolicella for me.

LAMBERT. And for me. I mean, what about me? What did I order? I haven't the faintest idea. What did I order?

JULIE. Who cares?

LAMBERT. Who cares? I bloody care.

PRUE. Osso buco.

LAMBERT. Osso what?

PRUE. Buco.

MATT. It's an old Italian dish.

LAMBERT. I knew *osso* was Italian but I know bugger-all about *bucco*.

MATT. I didn't know arsehole was Italian.

LAMBERT. Yes, but on the other hand what's the Italian for

arsehole?

PRUE. Julie, Lambert. Happy anniversary.

MATT. Cheers.

(They lift their glasses and drink.)

TABLE TWO

RUSSELL. They believe in me.

SUKI. Who do?

RUSSELL. They do. What do you mean, who do? They do.

SUKI. Oh, do they?

RUSSELL. Yes, they believe in me. They reckon me. They're investing in me. In my *nous*. They believe in me.

SUKI. Listen. I believe in you. Honestly. I do. No really, honestly. I'm sure they believe in you. And they're right to believe in you. I mean, listen, I want you to be rich, believe me. I want you to be rich so that you can buy me houses and panties and I'll know that you really love me.

(They drink.)

RUSSELL. Listen, she was just a secretary. That's all. No more.

SUKI. Like me.

RUSSELL. What do you mean like you? She was nothing like you.

SUKI. I was a secretary once.

RUSSELL. She was a scrubber. A scrubber. They're all the same, these secretaries, these scrubbers. They're like politicians. They love power, they use it. They go home, they get on the phone, they tell their girlfriends, they have a good laugh. Listen to me. I'm being honest. You won't find many like me. I fell for it. I've admitted it. She just twisted me round her little finger.

SUKI. That's funny. I thought she twisted you round *your* little finger.

(Pause.)

RUSSELL. You don't know what these girls are like. Those secretaries.

SUKI. Oh I think I do.

RUSSELL. You don't.

SUKI. Oh I do.

RUSSELL. What do you mean, you do?

SUKI. I've been behind a few filing cabinets.

RUSSELL. What?

SUKI. In my time. When I was a plump young secretary. I know what the back of a filing cabinet looks like.

RUSSELL. Oh, do you?

SUKI. Oh yes. Listen, I would invest in you myself if I had any money. Do you know why? Because I believe in you.

RUSSELL. What's all this about filing cabinets?

SUKI. Oh, that was when I was a plump young secretary. I would never do all those things now. Never. Out of the question. You see, the trouble was I was so excitable, their excitement made me so excited, but I would never do all those things now I'm a grown-up woman and not a silly young thing, a silly and dizzy young girl, such a naughty, saucy, flirty, giggly young thing; sometimes I could hardly walk from one filing cabinet to another I was so excited, I was so plump and wobbly it was terrible, men simply couldn't keep their hands off me, their demands were outrageous but coming back to more important things, they're right to believe in you; why shouldn't they believe in you?

TABLE ONE

JULIE. I've always told him. Always. But he doesn't listen. I tell him all the time. But he doesn't listen.

PRUE. You mean he just doesn't listen?

JULIE. I tell him all the time.

PRUE. (*To LAMBERT.*) Why don't you listen to your wife? She stands by you through thick and thin. You've got a loyal wife there and never forget it.

LAMBERT. I've got a loyal wife where?

PRUE. Here! At this table.

LAMBERT. I've got one under the table, take my tip. (*He looks under the table.*) Christ. She's really loyal under the table. Always has been. You wouldn't believe it.

JULIE. Why don't you go and buy a new car and drive it into a brick wall?

LAMBERT. She loves me.

MATT. No, she loves new cars.

LAMBERT. With soft leather seats.

MATT. There was a song once.

LAMBERT. How did it go?

MATT.

"Ain't she neat?

Ain't she neat?

As she's walking up the street.

She's got a lovely bubbly pair of tits

And a soft leather seat."

LAMBERT. That's a really beautiful song.

MATT. I've always admired that song. You know what it is? It's a traditional folk song.

LAMBERT. It's got class.

MATT. It's got tradition and class.

LAMBERT. They don't grow on trees.

MATT. Too bloody right.

LAMBERT. Hey, Matt!

MATT. What?

(LAMBERT picks up the bottle of Valpolicella. It is empty.)

LAMBERT. There's something wrong with this bottle.

(MATT turns and calls.)

MATT. Waiter!

TABLE TWO

RUSSELL. All right. Tell me. Do you think I have a nice character?

SUKI. Yes, I think you do. I think you do. I mean I think you do. Well ... I mean ... I think you could have quite a nice character but the trouble is that when you come down to it you haven't actually got any character to begin with — I mean as such, that's the thing.

RUSSELL. As such?

SUKI. Yes, the thing is you haven't really got any character at all, have you? As such. *Au fond*. But I wouldn't worry about it. For example, look at me. I don't have any character either. I'm just a reed. I'm just a reed in the wind. Aren't I? You know I am. I'm just a reed in the wind.

RUSSELL. You're a whore.

SUKI. A whore in the wind.

RUSSELL. With the wind blowing up your skirt.

SUKI. That's right. How did you know? How did you know the sensation? I didn't know that men could possibly know about that kind of thing. I mean men don't wear skirts. So I didn't think men could possibly know what it was like when the wind blows up a girl's skirt. Because men don't wear skirts.

RUSSELL. You're a prick.

SUKI. Not quite.

RUSSELL. You're a prick.

SUKI. good gracious. Am I really?

RUSSELL. Yes. That's what you are really.

SUKI. Am I really?

RUSSELL. Yes. That's what you are really.

TABLE ONE

LAMBERT. What's the other song you know? The one you said was a classic.

MATT.

"Wash me in the water

Where you washed your dirty daughter."

LAMBERT. That's it. *(To JULIE:)* Know that one?

JULIE. It's not in my repertoire, darling.

LAMBERT. This is the best restaurant in town. That's what they say.

MATT. That's what they say.

LAMBERT. This is a piss-up dinner. Do you know how much money I made last year?

MATT. I know this is a piss-up dinner.

LAMBERT. It is a piss-up dinner.

PRUE. *(To JULIE.)* His mother always hated me. The first time she saw me she hated me. She never gave me one present in the whole of her life. Nothing. She wouldn't give me the drippings off her nose.

JULIE. I know.

PRUE. The drippings off her nose. Honestly.

JULIE. All mothers-in-law are like that. They love their sons. They love their boys. They don't want their sons to be fucked by other girls. Isn't that right?

PRUE. Absolutely. All mothers want their sons to be fucked by themselves.

JULIE. By their mothers.

PRUE. All mothers —

LAMBERT. All mothers want to be fucked by their mothers.

MATT. Or by themselves.

PRUE. No, you've got it the wrong way round.

LAMBERT. How's that?

MATT. All mothers want to be fucked by their sons.

LAMBERT. Now wait a minute —

MATT. My point is —

LAMBERT. No, my point is — how old do you have to be?

CELEBRATION

15

JULIE. To be what?

LAMBERT. To be fucked by your mother.

MATT. Any age, mate. Any age.

(They all drink.)

LAMBERT. How did you enjoy your dinner, darling?

JULIE. I wasn't impressed.

LAMBERT. You weren't impressed?

JULIE. No.

LAMBERT. I bring her to the best caff in town — spending a fortune — and she's not impressed.

MATT. Don't forget this is your anniversary. That's why we're here.

LAMBERT. What anniversary?

PRUE. It's your wedding anniversary.

LAMBERT. All I know is this is the most expensive fucking restaurant in town and she's not impressed.

(RICHARD comes to the table.)

RICHARD. Good evening.

MATT. Good evening.

PRUE. Good evening.

JULIE. Good evening.

LAMBERT. Good evening, Richard. How you been?

RICHARD. Very very well. Been to a play?

MATT. No. The ballet.

RICHARD. Oh, the ballet. What was it?

LAMBERT. That's a fucking good question.

MATT. It's unanswerable.

RICHARD. Good, was it?

LAMBERT. Unbelievable.

JULIE. What ballet?

MATT. None of them could reach the top notes. Could they?

RICHARD. Good dinner?

MATT. Fantastic.

LAMBERT. Top-notch. Gold-plated.

PRUE. Delicious.

LAMBERT. My wife wasn't impressed.

RICHARD. Oh, really?

JULIE. I liked the waiter.

RICHARD. Which one?

JULIE. The one with the fur-lined jockstrap.

LAMBERT. He takes it off for breakfast.

JULIE. Which is more than you do.

RICHARD. Well, how nice to see you all.

PRUE. She wasn't impressed with her food. It's true. She said so. She thought it was dry as dust. She said — what did you say, darling? — she's my sister — she said she could cook better than that with one hand stuffed between her legs; she said — no, honestly — she said she could make a better sauce than the one on that plate if she pissed into it. Don't think she was joking — she's my sister, I've known her all my life, all my life, since we were little innocent girls, all our lives, when we were babies, when we used to lie in the nursery and hear Mummy beating the shit out of Daddy. We saw the blood on the sheets the next day — when Nanny was in the pantry — my sister and me — and Nanny was in the pantry — and the pantry maid was in the larder and the parlor maid was in the laundry room washing the blood out of the sheets. That's how my little sister and I were brought up and she could make a better sauce than yours if she pissed into it.

MATT. Well, it's lovely to be here, I'll say that.

LAMBERT. Lovely to be here.

JULIE. Lovely, lovely.

MATT. Really lovely.

RICHARD. Thank you.

(PRUE stands and goes to RICHARD.)

PRUE. Can I thank you? Can I thank you personally? I'd like to thank you myself, in my own way.

RICHARD. Well, thank you.

PRUE. No, no, I'd really like to thank you in a very personal way.

JULIE. She'd like to give you her personal thanks.

PRUE. Will you let me kiss you? I'd like to kiss you on the mouth.

JULIE. That's funny. I'd like to kiss him on the mouth too. (*She stands and goes to him.*) Because I've been maligned, I've been misrepresented. I never said I didn't like your sauce. I love your sauce.

PRUE. We can't both kiss him on the mouth at the same time.

LAMBERT. You could tickle his arse with a feather.

RICHARD. Well, I'm so glad. I'm really glad. See you later I hope.

(*RICHARD goes. PRUE and JULIE sit. Silence.*)

MATT. Charming man.

LAMBERT. That's why this is the best and most expensive restaurant in the whole of Europe — because he *insists* upon proper standards, he *insists* that standards are maintained up to the highest standards, up to the very highest fucking standards —

MATT. He doesn't jib.

LAMBERT. Jib? Of course he doesn't jib — it would be more than his life was worth. He jibs at nothing!

PRUE. I knew him in the old days.

MATT. What do you mean?

PRUE. When he was a chef.

(*LAMBERT's mobile phone rings.*)

LAMBERT. Who the fuck's this? (*He switches it on.*) Yes? What? (*He listens briefly.*) I said no calls! It's my fucking wedding anniversary! (*He switches it off.*) Cunt.

TABLE TWO

SUKI. I'm so proud of you.

RUSSELL. Yes?

SUKI. And I know these people are good people. These people who believe in you. They're good people. Aren't they?

RUSSELL. Very good people.

SUKI. And when I meet them, when you introduce me to them, they'll treat me with respect, won't they? They won't want to fuck me behind a filing cabinet?

(SONIA comes to the table.)

SONIA. Good evening.

RUSSELL. Good evening.

SUKI. Good evening.

SONIA. Everything all right?

RUSSELL. Wonderful.

SONIA. No complaints?

RUSSELL. Absolutely no complaints whatsoever. Absolutely numero uno all along the line.

SONIA. What a lovely compliment.

RUSSELL. Heartfelt.

SONIA. Been to the theatre?

SUKI. The opera.

SONIA. Oh, really, what was it?

SUKI. Well ... there was a lot going on. A lot of singing. A great deal, as a matter of fact. They never stopped. Did they?

RUSSELL. *(To SONIA.)* Listen, let me ask you something.

SONIA. You can ask me absolutely anything you like.

RUSSELL. What was your upbringing?

SONIA. That's funny. Everybody asks me that. Everybody seems to find that an interesting subject. I don't know why. Isn't it funny? So many people express curiosity about my upbringing. I've no idea why. What you really mean of course is how did I arrive in the position I hold now — *maîtresse d'hôtel* — isn't that right? Isn't that your ques-

tion? Well, I was born in Bethnal Green. My mother was a chiropodist. I had no father.

RUSSELL. Fantastic.

SONIA. Are you going to try our bread-and-butter pudding?

RUSSELL. In spades. (*SONIA smiles and goes.*) Did I ever tell you about my mother's bread-and-butter pudding?

SUKI. You never have. Please tell me.

RUSSELL. You really want me to tell you? You're not being insincere?

SUKI. Darling. Give me your hand. There. I have your hand. I'm holding your hand. Now please tell me. Please tell me about your mother's bread-and-butter pudding. What was it like?

RUSSELL. It was like drowning in an ocean of richness.

SUKI. How beautiful. You're a poet.

RUSSELL. I wanted to be a poet once. But I got no encouragement from my dad. He thought I was an arsehole.

SUKI. He was jealous of you, that's all. He saw you as a threat. He thought you wanted to steal his wife.

RUSSELL. His wife?

SUKI. Well, you know what they say.

RUSSELL. What?

SUKI. Oh, you know what they say.

(The WAITER comes to the table and pours wine.)

WAITER. Do you mind if I interject?

RUSSELL. Eh?

WAITER. I say, do you mind if I make an interjection?

SUKI. We'd welcome it.

WAITER. It's just that I heard you talking about T. S. Eliot a little bit earlier this evening.

SUKI. Oh, you heard that, did you?

WAITER. I did. And I thought you might be interested to know that my grandfather knew T. S. Eliot quite well.

SUKI. Really?

WAITER. I'm not claiming that he was a close friend of his, but he was a damn sight more than a nodding acquaintance. He knew them

all, in fact, Ezra Pound, W. H. Auden, C. Day-Lewis, Louis MacNeice, Stephen Spender, George Barker, Dylan Thomas, and if you go back a few years he was a bit of a drinking companion of D. H. Lawrence, Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford, W. B. Yeats, Aldous Huxley, Virginia Woolf, and Thomas Hardy in his dotage. My grandfather was carving out a niche for himself in politics at the time. Some saw him as a future Chancellor of the Exchequer or at least First Lord of the Admiralty but he decided instead to command a battalion in the Spanish Civil War but as things turned out he spent most of his spare time in the United States where he was a very close pal of Ernest Hemingway — they used to play gin rummy together until the cows came home. But he was also boon compatriots with William Faulkner, Scott Fitzgerald, Upton Sinclair, John Dos Passos — you know, that whole vivid Chicago gang — not to mention John Steinbeck, Erskine Caldwell, Carson McCullers, and other members of the old Deep South conglomerate. I mean — what I'm trying to say is — that as a man my grandfather was just about as all-round as you can get. He was never without his pocket Bible and he was a dab hand at pocket billiards. He stood four-square in the center of the intellectual and literary life of the tens, twenties, and thirties. He was James Joyce's godmother.

(Silence.)

RUSSELL. Have you been working here long?

WAITER. Years.

RUSSELL. You going to stay until it changes hands?

WAITER. Are you suggesting that I'm about to get the boot?

SUKI. They wouldn't do that to a nice lad like you.

WAITER. To be brutally honest, I don't think I'd recover if they did a thing like that. This place is like a womb to me. I prefer to stay in my womb. I strongly prefer that to being born.

RUSSELL. I don't blame you. Listen, next time we're talking about T. S. Eliot I'll drop you a card.

WAITER. You would make me a very happy man. Thank you. Thank you. You are incredibly gracious people.

SUKI. How sweet of you.

FINISH READING THIS SCRIPT

Visit our website to purchase the full script or to explore other titles.

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

To stay up to date on all that we are doing, follow us on social media:



*Titles for licensing are subject to availability depending on your territory.