

THE PARTY

By Rod

[Based on Luke 14 vv 16 – 24, the Parable of the Great Banquet]

CAST

Lady Antonia Lovaduck

Lord George Lovaduck

Jenkins, their butler

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Richard Branston

Lavinia Parker-Knoll

Brad Pitbull

[Antonia and George are on stage. George is seated and reading a newspaper]

Narrator 1 Once upon a time there was a society hostess called Lady Antonia Lovaduck.

Narrator 2 She decided to throw a party.

N1 But she thought that she had better discuss it with her husband, Lord Lovaduck, before going ahead.

Antonia George, we're going to have a party.

George *[Without looking up from newspaper. Without enthusiasm]* If you say so, dear.

N2 The next question was who to invite.

A We must invite that Richard Branston. He's fabulously rich and a really successful businessman. It'll be good to be seen with the likes of him.

G *[Not looking up]* If you say so, dear.

A Then there's Brad Pitbull. *[Dreamily]* He's absolutely gorgeous. He and I have always got on well. I think he has a soft spot for me. He's sure to want to come.

G *[Still not looking up]* If you say so, dear. Although he may have difficulty finding the place since he's clearly blind and half-witted.

A *[Enthusiastically]* And we simply must have Lavinia Parker-Knoll. She's the real IT girl at the moment. She's fabulously pretty so she's bound to make a stir amongst the men.

G *[Leaping to his feet enthusiastically]* I agree. We should definitely invite **her**. This party of yours sounds a splendid idea, Antonia.

[During the next section Antonia is busy but George is seated throughout reading his newspaper]

N1 Invitations were written and sent. *[Antonia gives invitations to butler]*

N2 Preparations were made in full. *[Antonia is making a list]*

N1 Nothing was forgotten. *[She adds to list]*

N2 Finally the big day arrived.

[Butler, George and Antonia take their places in a line as if waiting for arrival of guests]

G Are you sure you sent out the invitations?

A Of course I did.

G What time did you say?

A 7.30 for 8.00.

G Well it's 8.30 now and not a single person has arrived. Where are they all? It's jolly bad form to be so late.

A I'll give Richard Branston a ring just to remind him. *[She telephones]* Hello, Richard, it's Lady Lovaduck here. I just thought I'd let you know that everything is ready for the party.

Richard B *[On the telephone]* Oh, is it tonight? I'm sorry but you'll have to excuse me. I'm in the midst of a take-over of a new Internet company, "Loadsofdoshforme.com" and I really must clinch the deal right away.

A Oh, what a shame. *[Puts telephone down]*

G I'll give Lavinia a call. *[He telephones]* Hello, Lavinia, it's George Lovaduck here.

Lavinia Oh, hello George, darling. Is it about that super party of yours?

G Yes, we do hope you can come.

L Oh, George, it's such a shame. You'll have to forgive me but I cannot come.

G Oh, why not?

L I've just got a new Porsche and I really must try it out tonight.

G Really? Why don't you just go and stand in it for a few moments and then come on to the party?

L Oh, that wouldn't be the same. And anyway you cannot stand up in it. It's far too low for that.

G How on earth do you get in then?

L Well you bend down, darling.

G That must be rather inconvenient. Can't you get the builders to bring it up to the full height of the house? I mean a knee-high porch is no use to anyone.

L Not porch, George. Porsche, you silly.

G Oh, I see. And you have to try it out tonight?

L Oh, yes, George, it's brand new and I cannot wait a minute longer to give it a spin.

G Oh! [*Puts telephone down*] What an utterly ridiculous woman.

A I'll try Brad. I'm sure he won't have forgotten. [*She telephones*] Hello, Brad, it's Antonia here.

Brad [*On telephone*] Antonia who?

A Antonia Lovaduck.

Brad I'm sorry, I can't quite place you.

A [*Irritated*] Lady Antonia Lovaduck. I sent you an invitation for a party tonight.

B Oh, yes, I remember now. So you did.

A What time will you be arriving?

B I can't come at all I am afraid. I've just got married.

A [*Surprised and disappointed*] Oh! [*Unenthusiastically*] Congratulations. Bring your wife. We'd love to meet her.

B I'm sorry but we cannot come at all. We're far too busy sorting out our new home.

A Oh. *[Puts telephone down]* Well, really. How rude.

G Right, that does it. I'm fed up to the back teeth with ungrateful, ill-mannered people.

A We'll have to cancel.

G We most certainly will not. *[Turns to butler]* Jenkins.

Jenkins Yes, my Lord.

G I want you to go out into the street and invite anyone you meet to our party.

J Anyone, sir?

G Anyone.

J Even beggars, sir? There are very often vagrants outside the back door hoping for a few leftovers from the kitchens.

G Especially beggars, Jenkins. We are going to throw our house open to anybody who wants to come. And we're going to have a terrific celebration.

A Oh, George, what a wonderful idea!

THE END