

Noises Off Side #4: Poppy, Selsdon, and Lloyd

(Poppy has gone on a full search of the theatre for Selsdon, a hard-of-hearing character actor who often disappears to take a nip or 2 – or twenty – before going onstage. Unbeknownst to her, Selsdon has turned up, chatting with Lloyd, and happily waiting to “start” rehearsal.)

Selsdon: So what's next on the bill?

Lloyd: Well, Selsdon, I thought we might try a spot of rehearsal.

Selsdon: Oh, I won't, thank you.

Lloyd: You *won't?*!

S: You all go ahead. I'll sit and watch you. But you know, I think we ought to rehearse.

L: Rehearse, yes! Well done, Selsdon, I knew you'd think of something. Right, from Belinds and Freddie's entrance. **(Enter Poppy from the wings alarmed)** Oh, my God! What's happened now?

Poppy: The police!

L: The police?

Poppy: They've found an old man. He was lying in the doorway unconscious across the street.

L: Oh. Yes. Thank you.

P: They say he's rather dirty and rather smelly, and I thought, oh my God, because—

L: Thank you, Poppy.

P: Because when you get close to Selsdon...

L: Poppy—

P: No, I mean, if you stand anywhere nears Selsdon you can't help noticing this very distinctive... **(She stops, sniffing)**

S: **(puts his arm around her)** I'll tell you something, Poppy. Once you get it in your nostrils, you'll never forget it. Sixty years now, and the smell of the theatre still haunts me. **(Selsdon exits into the study.)**

L: Tell me, Poppy, love—how did you get a job like this that requires tact and understanding?

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