

## **Audio Description Transcript:**

### **Waitress, Garrick Club, London 1962**

Written and read by Eleanor Margolies

A tall woman stands behind a laid dining table in a room with an open window to the right and a large, figurative painting above a fireplace behind her.

This black and white portrait is in portrait format, taller than it is wide. The waitress, a white woman in her sixties, looks straight out at us, her right hand holding the back of a dining chair, as if about to pull it out for us to sit down. She appears completely in possession of the space. She wears a uniform that would have seemed old-fashioned even in 1962: a rather military tunic dress with two rows of buttons and contrasting collar and cuffs, and a short, pleated apron tucked into her belt.

The room has wooden panelling and long brocade curtains and the wooden chairs are gleaming with polish. Each setting has three knives and forks, a crystal wineglass and a linen napkin folded into a bishop's mitre. The cutlery sits on the bare surface of the table, rather than on a tablecloth, and the closeness of the place settings suggests conviviality rather than formality.

The dining room is in the Garrick Club in Covent Garden, founded in 1830 and named in honour of the leading actor of the previous generation. The eighteenth-century painting above the fireplace shows the actors David Garrick and Susannah Cibber in dramatic moment from a play called 'Venice Preserved': a man in tailcoat, embroidered waistcoat and breeches raises a knife high in one

hand, while a woman on her knees clasps his other hand, as if attempting to stop him. The line of the knife blade and the faces of the two actors form a diagonal pointing to the waitress's face and there are echoes between the two scenes: between the waitress's set white curls and the white wig worn by Garrick, between her buttoned uniform and his coat, between the necklaces of white pearls worn by both the waitress and the pleading woman. But the waitress's calm, steady gaze is a complete contrast to the passionate scene behind her.