

THE GREEDY SERVANT

Theme: Greed, selfishness

Cast: Sandra Kingston (a selfish woman), Mr Norton (bank manager/mortgage lender)
Helen (Sandra's friend)

Props: High-end/designer branded shopping bags, eg Chanel, Jimmy Choo, Jack Wills etc (can be homemade), an envelope to be placed on the floor (side of stage), a desk with a telephone and a mobile phone.

Bible reference: 'Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.'

At this the servant fell on his knees before him. "Be patient with me", he begged, "and I will pay back everything". The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.

But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. "Pay back what you owe me!" he demanded.

His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, "Be patient with me, and I will pay it back." But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.' (Matthew 18:23–30 NIV)

Performance notes: This sketch can be performed without props if preferred.

Mr Norton and Helen enter only when speaking and stand either side and slightly behind Sarah.

The two secondary parts can be played by one person, with or without a small costume change, eg a tie for the bank manager, jacket for the friend etc.

The Greedy Servant

Written by Ira Thomas

(Sandra enters humming and talking to herself, carrying lots of high-end shopping bags indicating she has lots of money. She puts them down on the envelope).

Sandra I suppose I shouldn't have spent so much, but I'm fed up with bills and debts – they can wait. I work hard and I deserve to enjoy myself.

(Pauses) I wonder if the bank will believe me, again, if I spin a few more white lies like, 'I was attacked and had my handbag stolen'... That sounds a bit dramatic, and I'll probably need a police reference.

Or what about...

'After a very serious fall, sadly, my mother has had to be moved into a care home and I find myself, unexpectedly, having to contribute to very expensive care costs'?

That sounds more believable, although I must try and remember what I said the last time I lied to the bank. Oh, anyway, it's worth a try.

(Dismissively) If I haven't got it, I can't pay it.

(Reaches for her phone and calls)

Mr Norton *(Enters)* Good afternoon – Mortgage Lenders Unit. How can I help you?

Sandra *(In a gentle, childlike voice)*
Good afternoon, this is Ms Sandra Kingston. I currently have a mortgage with you. The mortgage account number is 3579023.

Mr Norton Ah – Ms Kingston, we have been trying to contact you...

Sandra *(interrupts in a panic before he can say any more)*
Well, the thing is, I have had a great deal of unforeseen expenditure. As a family, we have been so upset due to our mother having had a fall and needing expensive care. I have heard that sometimes you allow a smaller payment for personal reasons and I was just hoping...

Mr Norton *(interrupts)* Ms Kingston, can I stop you there please. There seems to be an alert on your mortgage – let me just open your account and find your details please...

(Sandra looks very worried)

Mr Norton Well, Ms Kingston, I'm pleased to say it's very good news.

(Sandra looks confused)

Mr Norton Someone from the bank will be in contact with you later today by phone, but we will also send a confirmation in the post.

Sandra *(Crossly)* Confirmation? Of what?

Mr Norton Of course, sorry, I should explain. As a mark of loyalty and service to our customers, we have awarded full mortgage repayment to three of our lenders, of whom you are one. There will be a presentation at the Dorchester Hotel in London where you will receive the deeds to your house. On that day, the bank will be delighted to announce that you, Ms Kingston, will become the proud owner of your home, number 27 Kings Avenue.

Sandra Er... What? That's incredible! Please just check again that it's me. Um... When will I receive confirmation? I'm assuming, of course, that from today's date, I do not need to pay anything further?

Mr Norton That's correct, a confirmation will be sent to you shortly. Enjoy your day, Ms Kingston. Goodbye.

Sandra Bye.

(Hangs up and laughs) Wow!

(After a couple of moments, her phone rings)

Helen Hi, Sandra, I'm just calling to ask if you're coming out for Jane's birthday on Saturday? We need to plan how we are really going to spoil her.

Sandra I might – but I'm really annoyed that you used me last time we went out. I suppose it's slipped your mind that I subbed you a fiver for your cab fare home. You just seem to have forgotten all about it, but I need it back.

Helen Oh Sandra, I'm so sorry. Being a student means that my loan doesn't go very far, but I just love being out with you all – and I thought, probably wrongly, that as you are earning, you wouldn't mind helping me out that time. I won't ask again, especially as Jane had mentioned that you were 'a bit short' this month. So I posted an envelope with the money through your door this morning. I hope it's still there? Sandra? Sandra?

(Long pause)

Sandra or other Matthew 18:32-34 (The Message) says: 'The king summoned the man and said "You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn't you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?"'