

APRIL DE ANGELIS

**Mrs Marshall** Are you in love?

**Nell** Love? Going there. It's exciting. I'm sixteen. I want to try things. New things. I'm lucky. I've always been lucky. People say I'm beautiful, but so are lots of girls. So why me? Why me and the King? Luck. That's all. I get what I want. I always have. I had my own oyster stall at eleven. I have this thing I do. I imagine. I imagine what I want and then I get it. Somehow I get it. It just seems to go on and on and on. And I became an actress and I got the King.

**Mrs Marshall** I imagine things, too. I imagined not having a keeper. Freedom.

**Nell** And you got it. We're different, that's all. I'm free to do what I want, and you are too.

**Mrs Marshall** Free. To play a faithful wife or an unfaithful wife. A whore, a mistress. We play at being what we are. Where's the freedom in that?

**Nell** How d'you mean?

**Mrs Marshall** But now I'm none of those things, so what am I?