

5 Their next clients are a middle-aged couple from Croydon. The wife, her roly-poly figure stuffed into matching electric blue stretch-pants and jumper, looks flustered and anxious. 'He has a heart,' she says, thumbing sideways at her husband, who shakes his head and grins reassuringly at Leslie. 'He can't be expected to queue like this.'

10 The man certainly doesn't look particularly healthy: he has a flushed, mottled face with a red drinker's nose screwed into the middle like a light-bulb, and his white-shirted stomach droops doughily over his belt buckle.

'I could try and get you a wheelchair, if you like, sir,' says Leslie.

15 'No, no, don't be daft, Lilian,' says the man. 'Take no notice of her. I'm fine.'

'He shouldn't really be travelling all this way,' says Lilian, 'but we didn't want to disappoint Terry – that's our son. He booked the holiday for us. Paid for everything. He's coming from Sydney to Hawaii to meet us.'

20 'Very nice,' says Leslie, as he checks their documents.

25 'He's done ever so well out there. He's a fashion photographer, has his own studio. He phoned us up one day, six o'clock in the morning it was, well, they have a different time down under, don't they? He said: "I want to give you and Dad a holiday to remember. Just get yourselves to Heathrow and I'll take care of the rest."'

30 'It's very pleasing to hear of a young man who appreciates his parents,' says Leslie. 'Especially these days. Trevor: take Mr and Mrs Brooks to desk sixteen, explain that Mr Brooks has a medical condition. That's Business Class,' he adds for their benefit. 'A shorter queue.'