

**Jasper:** Have you been ill, dear girl? Rosa is one of our choir soloists. Helena, I hope you will be joining our choir.

**Edwin:** Yes, Rosa has a lovely voice!

**Mrs. Crisparkle:** Perhaps after dinner, you will sing for us, Rosa?

**Edwin:** Of course she will. Won't you Kitty?

*Rosa is obviously uncomfortable.*

**Rosa:** Oh Eddy, please.

**Edwin:** But you do have a lovely voice, doesn't she Jack?

**Jasper:** Everything about Rosa is lovely.

*Rosa is obviously embarrassed. Edwin is oblivious. The twins look at each other knowingly again.*

**Edwin:** Rosa and I are orphans, too. We are both very thankful for my uncle and guardian and the seminary, aren't we Rosa?

**Neville:** Do men always speak for woman in this country?

*Edwin and Neville glare at each other.*

**Rev. Crisparkle:** Uh... Miss Rosa and Mr. Drood are engaged to be married.

**Neville:** Ah, now I understand. So if a man and woman are betrothed, he is allowed to speak for her.

*Edwin pushes his chair back as if ready to fight.*

**Rev. Crisparkle:** Neville, please. Your inquiries are beyond proper etiquette.

**Neville:** Forgive my lack of knowledge of your customs, Mr. Drood.

**Helena:** If it is not improper to ask, how did two orphans come to be betrothed?

**Rosa:** Our parents were good friends before they died.

**Edwin:** Yes, and our fathers arranged for us to be married when we came of age. Rosa and I will be married in 6 months, and then we are off to Egypt where I will work as an engineer.

**Neville:** And what will you do, Miss Rosa.

**Rosa:** Oh, learn about boilers and pipes...and visit the pyramids, I guess.

*Everyone laughs and Edwin looks angry.*

**Jasper:** Perhaps it is time for that song, Rosa. I will play for you.

*Rosa and Jasper move to the piano. Rosa is very nervous being near him. She sings a love song. He stares at her as she sings, and moves his mouth as if saying the love words to her. About halfway through the song, Rosa's voice becomes unsteady. She starts crying and runs to the other side of the room as she speaks!*

**Rosa:** I can't bear this! I am frightened! Take me away.

*Helena goes to her and hugs her, speaking softly to soothe her.*

**Helena:** It's all over now. Don't worry. Just stay here a minute with me.

**Edwin:** Rosa is not used to an audience; that's the fact. She just got nervous. Besides Jack, you are such a conscientious teacher, and require so much, that I believe you made her afraid of you.

**Helena:** No wonder.

**Jasper:** It seems I have unintentionally caused a problem here. Perhaps I should go.

*Mrs. Tope enters and hands him his hat/coat.*

**Jasper:** Thanks for your hospitality Mr. Crisparkle, Reverend. I am sorry to have upset you, Miss Bud. Good night all.

**Edwin:** I am afraid calling Jack a monster has upset him greatly, Rosa. What on earth upset you so? He was just trying to help you sing better.

**Neville:** Perhaps it was more than that...and perhaps she is not ready to share the reason with you.

**Edwin:** Mind your own business, Landless. You are still a stranger here from a backwards country. In civilized society, we do not overstep our bounds. What do you know of my fiancé and our ways!

**Neville:** Perhaps I am not so blinded by my "obligations" that I cannot see Miss Rosa's real feelings. I do not think you realize how special she is and how lucky you are. If you really cared for her and not just the "arrangements," you would not take her for granted.

**Edwin:** How dare you imply you know Rosa or me? Keep away from my fiancé, you foreign pig!

**Neville:** Foreign pig, you say? Is that how civilized society speaks? Your vanity is intolerable, your conceit is beyond endurance, you talk as if you were some rare and precious prize, instead of a common boaster. You are a common fellow and a common boaster!

*They move toward each other as if they are going to fight. Rev. Crisparkle and Mr. Tope each grab one of them to stop it. They struggle as they are held. The other ladies looked shocked and scared.*

**Rev. Crisparkle:** That will be enough, both of you. This behavior is intolerable. Neville, to your room to cool off. Mr. Drood, perhaps you should leave now.

*Neville storms off, exiting upstage center. Mrs. Tope enters and gives Edwin his hat/coat. Edwin apologizes and exits stage right.*

**Edwin:** Please forgive me for my behavior, Reverend, Ladies. Good night.

**Rev. Crisparkle:** I will see to Neville and then get your coats, Miss Twinkleton.

*The ladies start clearing the table, taking things off stage left.*

**Helena:** Are you feeling better, Rosebud.

**Rosa:** Oh yes, thank you for being so kind.

**Helena:** Of course, I hope we will become great friends. Now...who is Mr. Jasper?...You know that he loves you.

**Rosa:** Oh don't, don't, don't!! Don't tell me of it. He terrifies me! He haunts my thoughts, like a dreadful ghost! I feel I am never safe from him. And he is