

MISS SHINGLE

My poor dear Isabel, bless her soul.

(Grabs his face affectionately.)

Look at himself, all grown up and handsome as the devil.

(MISS SHINGLE takes a seat, exhausted from her journey.)

MONTY

How is it you knew Mother, Missus... ?

MISS SHINGLE

Miss. Shingle. Marietta Shingle... ?

MONTY

Of course! Miss Shingle! She spoke of you often—and how she looked forward to your letters!

MISS SHINGLE

And I hers, I assure you.

(Removing her hat.)

You were going to offer me a spot of tea, were you?

MONTY

You must forgive my manners, Miss Shingle. Mother always had a kettle on.

MISS SHINGLE

And if you could spare a biscuit or two, I'm sure I wouldn't mind.

(MISS SHINGLE takes in the faded gentility of the parlor for the first time and shakes her head sadly.)

I knew you and your mother were having a rough time of it, but I didn't know it had come to this. Have you any prospects, love?

MONTY

Mother always dreamt I should go to Oxford or Cambridge somehow.

(Realizing sadly:)

It seems rather unlikely now.

MISS SHINGLE

There's nothing your mother wouldn't have done for you.

MONTY

I hardly know how I shall go on without her.

MISS SHINGLE

(SHE eyes him admiringly.)

You rather favor your father... physically, I mean.

MONTY

Did you know my father? He died when I was but seven.

MISS SHINGLE

Only met him once, love. Castilian, you know. As dashing a face and figure as you will ever see.

(A heavy sigh.)

Tell me, love, what do you know of your *mother's* family?

MONTY

Mother never spoke of them. Must've been curs and mountebanks. Horse thieves, at the very least.

MISS SHINGLE

Well, not exactly. Have you heard of the D'Ysquith family?

(MUSIC starts under scene.)

#2 – You're a D'Ysquith**MONTY**

The D'Ysquiths? Why, yes, of course, hasn't everyone?

MISS SHINGLE

Then you've heard of Highhurst Castle?

MONTY

Of course.

MISS SHINGLE

You're aware, then, of their position? Their vast wealth and influence?

MONTY

Yes, yes, what's it got to do with me?

MISS SHINGLE

(Singing:)

YOU'RE A D'YSQUITH...

MONTY

What?

MISS SHINGLE

YOU'RE A D'YSQUITH.

MONTY

No...