

**#1A**

**AUDREY BRAGG** is an awkward, meditative Berkshire girl.

(After Samuel has left, Audrey muses on his sudden attempt to seduce her and her discouragement of his advances.)

**AUDREY**

Ah. So he wants to play, how flattering.  
I mean it really. That's the thing with love:  
Though fires are as sparse as scatterings  
Of ash, the sparks that drift from lights above,  
From suns and thunder bolts can warm us up.  
If one should say "how pretty Audrey is,"  
Though otherwise I'd scorned this little pup,  
Or else "She is a far from tawdry miss,"  
"How elegant," though I should never hope  
For love from him, I must admit I'm touched.  
And for an instant warmed. But then it's "Nope,"  
The reject goes away and I am left to rust.  
Poor foolish boy. But how will I find love,  
How separate the thimble from the grain  
Among these ashen pigeons score a dove.  
Better to wait, though waiting be in vain.

**#1B**

**LOUISE SMITH** is an 18 year old debutante in love with love.

(Louise and Camilla chat about the party, and life.)

**CAMILLA**

So what do you think about this menagerie?

**LOUISE**

I admit that I quite like it.

**CAMILLA**

*(chuckling)* I guess I used to too. I do remember, formerly, it was so lovely.

**LOUISE**

Yes. I still find it quite lovely.

**CAMILLA**

Ah, but love is the ultimate act of the imagination!

**LOUISE**

I couldn't agree more.

**CAMILLA**

*(slowly)* Yes, I see how you mean. But I've spent so long, in so many places, so many wonderful places: and they are empty. I wonder if they are the products of imagination, places to escape. And if they are, I hope there is more than fantasy to reality.

**LOUISE**

Camilla, I can't say I know what you mean. I haven't seen too much, but, even with what little I know, I feel so differently about things.

**CAMILLA**

And how is that?

**LOUISE**

I used to worry that my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, were all... illusions, a show, shadows. Everybody around me made me think that my imagination was a route of escape. "Come back to reality," they'd tell me, "think about your future!" Well fine, I think now. Fine. But what was a future before? Wasn't it a dream? What's our imagination, I wonder, but a tool against what is, or what is not enough?

**CAMILLA**

And why do you think such dreams could provide what you wanted? Let the future become the present, and then come talk to me, my friend.

**LOUISE**

Yes, well, I suppose you might know better than me. (*pauses*) But how things are is affected by how I think, how I hope. It makes a human difference, now, doesn't? People forget that.

**CAMILLA**

But not everybody.

**LOUISE**

No, not everybody.

**CAMILLA**

You sound like you are in love.

**LOUISE**

(*defensively*) You sound like you were too.

**CAMILLA**

Yes, that's right, I was.

**LOUISE**

(*softening*) But what happened?

**#2A**

**AUDREY WALKER** is a beautiful, jealous social climber.

(Audrey flaunts her skill and her person, then expresses her excitement for the evening festivities to come.)

**AUDREY WALKER**

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold—  
the silver, emerald, and sapphire, too—  
Where those gems which revelled in their beauty  
Illumined my face with a wondrous hue.  
I sat with sceptered kings, ruled right-truly  
By my own light, and those shades added late;  
Adorned with goods beauty brings, these newly-  
Found wonders overwhelmed my teeming pate.  
My mind was too confused for invention;  
It recalls only now the forms I saw:  
Up from my brain's abysm, ascension  
Guards these men of memory from death's maw.  
But though those immortal boys strode on gold  
None cut figures so stout, nor *half* as bold.

*(dramatic and effusive, playing for laughs)*

Saved from boredom, God has granted us a boon!  
If forced to find fit men, I'd be a loon!  
For nowadays we scarcely trust the moon  
For fun festivals—after, pleased swoon.

**#2B**

**ANGELA PRESCOTT** is a rich, desperate melancholic.

(Angela is vying for George's attention, while George remains blind to her efforts.)

**ANGELA**

I told her I would scold her, tear her skirt and so unfold her, just to leave her shoulder colder, if she wore a dress like me.

**GEORGE**

Yes, so I see.

**ANGELA**

I cannot let a girl so vile, steal my shoes and walk a mile, steal my dress with wiley smile, steal my wit and steal my style...why George your ears will not obey!

**GEORGE**

But I hear every word you say!

**ANGELA**

(To herself) Oh, what a lousy play... (Turning from him, morosely) Louise, tell me good news about love.

**LOUISE**

About what?

**ANGELA**

About Audrey, of course. (looking with sullen eyes at George) What other possible love affairs could be going on?

**GEORGE**

Certainly only that one. (Angela and Louise glare)

**LOUISE**

Well, we really don't know that. (Rather hurt, but trying to keep it to herself) Others could, after all, be lurking.

**ANGELA**

*(still fixed on George)*

And some of us might think others were in plain sight.

**GEORGE**

*(Looking at Louise)*

Now, ladies, it is true that these things are rarely so simple.

**ANGELA**

*(upset, moving her eyes from George to Louise)*

But what is so complicated, Louise, about simply saying who it is Audrey is interested in?

**LOUISE**

I'm sorry, but I don't have the pleasure of knowing that at all.

**ANGELA**

Well, what *did* she tell you? Did she tell you about the *pain* of love? Of being a sophisticated lady who wants one thing, but cannot seem to get it?

**LOUISE**

She did say that Samuel Dawes was in love with Audrey Bragg.

**GEORGE**

It sounded before, though, that Audrey Walker had her sights set on Samuel. She was being awfully slippery about it, but he's the only clerk I could think of who'd be here.

**ANGELA**

Oh dear, that is so wretched! One loves one, but that one loves another, and so it goes. These love affairs, they always go south – don't they, George?... What a wretched night. *(abruptly leaving, in a tearful voice)* I'm getting back to the party, George! *(To the audience, bitterly)* It's a much better stage for love drama.

**CALLBACKS: AUDREY WALKER**

(Audrey is furious upon finding out that Samuel is in love with the other Audrey--Audrey Bragg.)

**AUDREY W.**

Bragg? Bragg? Audrey *Bragg*? That licentious fool!

**LOUISE**

*(entering, in a dreamy state)*

I feel a very different kind of way  
Than ever I felt before today -

**AUDREY W.**

Quit this chatter Louise. Can't you tell that I'm in a rage?

**LOUISE**

Now I can, surely.

**AUDREY W.**

I have been betrayed, Louise! My honor, my dignity, it has been smeared by an unprincipled, uncivil, tiny, puny, miniscule, extremely extremely small...

**LOUISE**

Mouse-like character?

**AUDREY W.**

Yes! The very likes!

**LOUISE**

Yes, it sounded like Samuel. I saw him passing now, humming to himself with a greater joy than I ever imagined him capable.

**AUDREY W.**

I'll make that joy into the inky blackness of despair, I'll teach him what it means to hinder me, Audrey *Walker*! I apportioned some of my heart for him, that fool, I did it, and

what did he do, Louise? He took up with Audrey Bragg! The indignity!

**LOUISE**

Yes, the whole thing sounds like a terrible mistake.

**AUDREY W.**

Oh it is, it was, for me, Louise. I made a grievous error, but I became fond of that fool, and approached him with my heart for a sleeve. How dare he? How DARE he?!

**LOUISE**

You have lost no honor by merely showing interest, because if you didn't know about the pairing, then what was stopping you from approaching him?

**AUDREY W.**

YOU! You're behind this, you jealous strumpet! How dare you call yourself my friend! (*in a quiet fury*) I see how it is. You heard me excited, perhaps even bragging - no not bragging, anything but that! - merely *entertained* by the idea of Samuel's love, which I knew from an indubitable source, and which no doubt is still present in Samuel's bosom, though he hides it from me for his own cruel, cruel sport.

**LOUISE**

Audrey, you must understand -

**AUDREY W.**

But you! You couldn't bare to see me happy! You, who have everything, couldn't bare the fact that I'd be climbing up while your own boring, simple heart keeps you down! (*wringing her hands in anger*) So what'd you do! I know what! You turned Samuel onto Audrey Bragg, out of spite! You're a pimp, that's what you are, a jealous pimp! How could you?!



**CALLBACKS: AUDREY BRAGG**

(Audrey and Italo discuss love--past, present, and future.)

**AUDREY**

Italo you need to stop lying to me... (*Italo protests*). Every time the names change, the location changes, the details change!

**ITALO**

(*Sadly*) Yes, life changes so quickly. "La vita è fatta di formaggio saporito," as we say in Italy.

**AUDREY**

Italo, tu sai che io parlo italiano?

**ITALO**

Si, tutti parliamo Italiano – when we *love*!

**AUDREY**

I'm not sure about that Italo, but, at any rate, all is forgiven – I wanted to ask you something.

**ITALO**

(*Busy with his cart*)

Si?

**AUDREY**

Well, you are aware of the Harvest Ball tonight, no doubt?

**ITALO**

Ah, yes, yes! What a lovely evening it will be!

**AUDREY**

Well, that's the thing: I was hoping to find dates for Camilla and myself – nobody serious, mind you, but just some acquaintances to have fun with.

**ITALO**

Ah yes, the pleasure of lovemaking... it so quickly slips my mind; I only feel the ache of love now..

**AUDREY**

Oh quit it, Italo! You're twisting my sense (*he shrugs in acknowledgement*). Anyway, I thought it might have been nice to find dates, but Camilla wouldn't hear it. I asked her, "Camilla, what do you think about Peter, or Paul --

**ITALO**

Perhaps offer something more exciting than disciples? Though, maybe a Judas for her?

**AUDREY**

Please, Italo, must you interrupt with such sacrilege? (*Italo nods, casually crosses himself*). As I was saying, I gave her quite the choice, but she found them all revolting. "No, none of that, I get along quite fine," she told me, with such a self-assured air.

**ITALO**

She doesn't seem terribly inclined to doubt.

**AUDREY**

Yes, but to talk that way to me, her very best friend? "Perhaps you would like someone, Audrey dear, but I've given up the matter." She made me feel like I was so silly, fashioning herself so very wise.

**ITALO**

This is no mystery my darling: it sounds like Miss Camilla is keeping someone close to her heart. There is only one explanation: the girl is in love!

**AUDREY**

Italo, that makes no sense at all! C'mon now, you're too much of a romantic, and anyways I would know about anyone Camilla could love - we tell each other everything.

**ITALO**

Fine, mia cara. But then, what is your question?

**AUDREY**

Yes, you're keeping me honest... well, the spat with Camilla got me thinking about things. We can't really afford to keep on playing around, I suppose. She seems to know that, but... well I don't know. I'm not so young as I was before, but here I am, still just me, alone. I don't mind it particularly much – I actually quite like it – but it gets me thinking. *(pauses)* I'm just so content with things going on like they are that it worries me sometimes. When life starts moving so regularly, I could see it seeming like nothing is moving at all, and I find that rather frightening.