

**Frank Audition Sides**

*(Scene abbreviated for audition purposes - please use this text)*

FRANK

Ain't you coming?

VIVIE

No. I want to give you a warning, Frank. You were making fun of my mother just now. That is barred in the future. Please treat my mother with as much respect as you treat your own.

FRANK

My dear Viv: she wouldn't appreciate it: the two cases require different treatment. But what on earth has happened to you? Last night we were perfectly agreed as to your mother and her set. This morning I find you attitudinizing sentimentally with your arm around your parent's waist.

VIVIE

*[flushing]* Attitudinizing!

FRANK

That was how it struck me. First time I ever saw you do a second-rate thing.

VIVIE

*[controlling herself]* Yes, Frank: there has been a change: but I don't think it a change for the worse. Yesterday I was a little prig.

FRANK

And today?

VIVIE

*[wincing; then looking at him steadily]* Today I know my mother better than you do.

FRANK

Heaven forbid!

VIVIE

What do you mean?

FRANK

Viv: there's a freemasonry among thoroughly immoral people that you know nothing of. You've too much character. *That's* the bond between your mother and me: that's why I know her better than you'll ever know her.

VIVIE

You are wrong: you know nothing about her. If you knew the circumstances against which my mother had to struggle—

FRANK

*[adroitly finishing the sentence for her]* I should know why she is what she is, shouldn't I? What difference would that make? Circumstances or no circumstances, Viv, you won't be able to stand your mother.

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VIVIE

*[very angry]* Why not?

FRANK

Because she's an old wretch, Viv. If you ever put your arm around her waist in my presence again, I'll shoot myself there and then as a protest against an exhibition which revolts me.

VIVIE

Must I choose between dropping your acquaintance and dropping my mother's?

FRANK

*[gracefully]* That would put the old lady at ever such a disadvantage. No, Viv: your infatuated little boy will have to stick to you in any case. But he's all the more anxious that you shouldn't make mistakes. It's no use, Viv: your mother's impossible. She may be a good sort; but she's a bad lot, a very bad lot.

VIVIE

*[hotly]* Frank—! *[He stands his ground. She turns away and sits down on the bench under the yew tree, struggling to recover her self-command. Then she says]* Is she to be deserted by the world because she's what you call a bad lot? Has she no right to live?

FRANK

No fear of that, Viv: she won't ever be deserted. *[He sits on the bench beside her].*

VIVIE

But I am to desert her, I suppose.

FRANK

*[babyishly, lulling her and making love to her with his voice]* Mustn't go live with her. Little family group of mother and daughter wouldn't be a success. Spoil our little group.

VIVIE

*[falling under the spell]* What little group?

FRANK

The babes in the wood: Vivie and little Frank. *[He nestles against her like a weary child].* Lets go and get covered up with leaves.

VIVIE

*[rhythmically, rocking him like a nurse]* Fast asleep, hand in hand, under the trees.

FRANK

The wise little girl with her silly little boy.

VIVIE

The dear little boy with his dowdy little girl.

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FRANK

Ever so peaceful, and relieved from the imbecility of the little boy's father and the questionableness of the little girl's—

VIVIE

*[smothering the word against her breast]* Sh-sh-sh-sh! little girl wants to forget all about her mother. *[They are silent for some moments, rocking one another. Then Vivie wakes up with a shock, exclaiming]* What a pair of fools we are! Come: sit up. Gracious! your hair. *[She smooths it]*. I wonder do all grown up people play in that childish way when nobody is looking. I never did it when I was a child.

FRANK

Neither did I. You are my first playmate. *[He catches her hand to kiss it, but checks himself to look around first. Very unexpectedly, he sees Crofts emerging from the box hedge]*. Oh damn!

VIVIE

Why damn, dear?

FRANK

*[whispering]* Sh! Here's this brute Crofts. *[He sits farther away from her with an unconcerned air]*.