

Audition (2) Daphne, Garry and Fred

DAPHNE (*burying her face in his shoulder*), Garry! Oh, Garry! I'm ridiculously happy.

GARRY I'm so glad, darling.

DAPHNE Are you?

GARRY Happy?

DAPHNE Mm!

GARRY There's something awfully sad about happiness, isn't there?

DAPHNE What a funny thing to say.

GARRY It wasn't meant to be funny.

DAPHNE Don't you trust me?

GARRY Trust you? Of course, I trust you. Why shouldn't I?

DAPHNE I've been in love with you for such a long time.

GARRY (*retreating to arm's length*) Don't - don't say that.

DAPHNE Why? What's the matter?

GARRY Don't love me too much, Daphne! Promise me you won't. You'll only be unhappy. No good can come of loving anyone like me - I'm not worthy of it, really I'm not.

DAPHNE You're more worthy of it than anyone in the world.

GARRY Foolish child.

DAPHNE I'm not a child. I'm twenty-four.

GARRY (*smilingly*) Twenty-four! Twenty-four! If only I were younger. (*He sits at the left end of the settee.*) If only you were older...

DAPHNE (*kneeling on the settee*) What does age matter when people love each other?

GARRY I wonder how tragically often that has been said.

DAPHNE It's true.

GARRY Look at me, Daphne. Look at me kindly, clearly and honestly - look at the lines on my face - my thinning hair - look at my eyes!

DAPHNE You're not so very old.

GARRY (*with a touch of asperity*) I didn't say I was so very old, Daphne. I merely said look at me. As a matter of fact, I'm only just forty.

DAPHNE What's forty?

GARRY (*rising and moving left of the settee*) Too old for twenty-four.

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DAPHNE You mean you don't love me.

GARRY (*turning*) I don't mean any such thing.

DAPHNE Do you love me?

GARRY Of course I do.

DAPHNE Say it. Do you? Say it.

GARRY I love you, Daphne.

DAPHNE Oh, darling...

GARRY But this is goodbye.

DAPHNE (*rising, aghast*) Goodbye?

GARRY It must be. It's inevitable. Not for my sake, my dear, but for yours. Last night - suddenly - a spark was struck. The flame burned brightly for a little. That was happiness - wonderful, tremendous happiness, something to be remembered always ...

DAPHNE (*subsiding on to the settee; weeping*) You're different this morning - you don't love me - you didn't mean any of the things you said last night.

GARRY Youth never understands. That's what's so absolutely awful about Youth - it never, never understands.

DAPHNE (*with spirit; sitting erect*) I don't know what you're talking about.

GARRY (*taking a pace towards centre*) Listen, my dear. You're not in love with me, the real me. You're in love with an illusion, the illusion that I gave you when you saw me on the stage. Last night I ran a terrible risk. I ran the risk of breaking that dear young illusion for ever - but I didn't. (*He moves to her and puts his hand under her chin.*) Oh, thank God, I didn't. It's still there - I can see it in your eyes - but never again- (*turning away to left he pushes her backwards*) never - never again - that's all I can dare to hope for now - moments like last night - that's why I'm so lonely sometimes, so desperately lonely, but I have learned one bitter lesson in my life and that lesson is to be able to say goodbye... (*He moves up left of the settee.*)

DAPHNE (*rising*) But, Garry...

GARRY Let me go on, dear.

DAPHNE (*easing to centre*) But I...

GARRY "We meet not as we parted

We feel more than all may see;

My bosom is heavy-hearted

And thine full of doubt for me.

One moment has bound the free."

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He crosses above the settee to the right of it. DAPHNE turns to the settee and sits at the left end of it.

"That moment has gone for ever,
Like lightning that flashed and died,
Like a snowflake upon the river,
Like a sunbeam upon the tide,
Which the dark shadows hide..."

DAPHNE *(turning to face him)* But, Garry...

GARRY *(easing to centre)* Be quiet for a minute, darling...

"That moment from time was singled
As the first of a life of pain,
The cup of its joy was mingled
Delusion too sweet though vain,
Too sweet to be mine again:'

There now, that was Shelley. Don't you think it's beautiful?

DAPHNE Yes, but ...

GARRY There was nothing Shelley didn't know about love, not a thing! *(crossing down left)*
All the sadness, all the joy, all the unbearable pain...

DAPHNE I don't see why love should be so miserable.

GARRY *(turning)* That's because you're young, my sweet - young and eager and greedy for life...

DAPHNE *(rising and facing right)* You said last night that I was the one that you had been searching for always and now that you had found me, you'd never let me go.

GARRY *(with beautiful simplicity)* That's perfectly true ...*DAPHNE turns....* I never shall let you go. You will be here in my heart for ever.

DAPHNE *(weeping again)* Oh, Garry...

GARRY *(going to her and tenderly putting his arms round her)* Don't cry - please, please don't cry - I can't bear it...

DAPHNE *(clinging to him)* How can you say that I'm only in love with an illusion and not the real you at all...

GARRY Because it's true.

DAPHNE It isn't - it isn't - it was the real you last night, you weren't on the stage - you weren't acting.

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GARRY I'm always acting - watching myself go by - that's what's so horrible. *(He puts his hand to his forehead and crosses below her to right.)* I see myself all the time eating, drinking, loving, suffering - sometimes I think I'm going mad - mad. *(He turns, left of the armchair.)*

DAPHNE *(kneeling on the right end of the settee)* I could help you if only you'd let me.

GARRY What, dear?

DAPHNE I could help you if only you'd let me.

GARRY *(moving above the right end of the settee)* If only you could, but it's too late.

DAPHNE It isn't - I swear it isn't - you see I'll prove it to you.

GARRY You must get out of the tiresome habit of contradicting everything I say. It is too late! *(very quietly)* Listen, my dear. It isn't that I don't love you, I do. I knew it the first moment that I took you in my arms last night but you see I am not free, like other men, to take happiness when it comes to them. I belong to the public and to my work. In two weeks' time I am going to Africa with a repertory of six plays - do you realize what that means? The work, the drudgery, the nerve strain? But that is my job, the one thing to which I must be faithful. *(Moving to the left of the settee)* When I come back, if I come back, I shall look at you again and I shall know - in the first glance - whether you have waited for me or not. *(He moves below the settee.)* Now come here, kiss me once, just once and then go.... *(He holds out his arms.)*

DAPHNE *(running to him)* Oh, Garry - oh, darling... *(She puts her arms round him and her head on his chest.)*

GARRY Au revoir, my sweet - not goodbye - just au revoir... *He closes his right arm round her, then looks at his wrist-watch on the other, and kisses her. Then he leads her, below the settee, to the door down right. As they cross. Come, dear, away with melancholy.*

He opens the door, kneels, and kisses her hand. DAPHNE exits crying. GARRY closes the door and leans his head against the wall. He moves to centre and sits on the settee in an attitude of deep dejection. FRED enters up left with a breakfast tray.

FRED Do you want your coffee here or upstairs?

GARRY Anywhere, Fred, put it anywhere - within reason.

FRED I'd have brought it in before but I 'eard all the weeping and wailing going on and thought perhaps I'd better wait....I 'eard the Shelley...

GARRY Put the tray down, Fred, and go away.

FRED Rightyo.

He starts to whistle. The telephone rings. Monica enters with a tray of letters

GARRY *(transferring himself to the armchair)* My God, who switched that telephone in here? Stop that whistling, Fred, it's like living in Waterloo Station. I wish I were dead!