

Sara: Forgive me for this intrusion as I know that you are ill, and may not like to be disturbed, but I simply could not pass the house again without calling to thank you for your generosity.

Carrisford: That was very thoughtful of you.

Sara: The lascars has been very good to me, and kept me from being too miserable.

Carrisford: How do you know that he is a lascar?

Sara: Oh, I know lascars. I was born in India.

Mr Carrisford immediately starts to breathe heavily, and begins to faint. Ram Dass hurries over, and Carmichael gets a glass of water.

Carrisford: You live next door?

Sara: Yes; I live at Miss Minchin's seminary.

Carrisford: But you are not one of her pupils?

Sara: *(smiling)* I don't think I know exactly *what* I am. At first I was a pupil, and a parlour boarder, but now .. *(she looks away, holding back tears)* now I am a scullery maid and I live in the attic.

Carrisford can't talk anymore – he is overcome with emotion. Mrs Carmichael is now by his side.

Carrisford: Question her, Carmichael. I cannot.

Carmichael: What do you mean by 'at first', my child?

Sara: When I was taken there by my papa.

Carmichael: Where is your papa?

Sara: *(quietly, and with difficulty)* He – he died. He lost all his money and there was none left for me. There was no one to take care of me or to pay Miss Minchin.

Carrisford is now very agitated. Mrs Carmichael is soothing him.

Carrisford: How did your father lose his money?

Sara: He did not lose it himself. He had a friend he was very fond of – it was his friend who took his money. He trusted his friend too much.

Carrisford: The friend might have *meant* no harm. It might have been a terrible mistake.

Sara: But my papa died.

Carrisford: *(he hardly dares to speak the words.)* What – what was your father's name?

By this time the children have stopped playing and they have begun to gather round Mr Carmichael and Mr Carrisford

Sara: Ralph Crewe. Captain Crewe. He died in India.

Carrisford: *(falling back, Carmichael and Ram Dass stop him from falling)* It is the child – it – is – the child.

Sara: What child am I?

Carmichael: Mr Carrisford was your father's friend, Sara. We have been looking for you for two years.

Sara puts her hand to her forehead, and lets out a gasp.

Sara: And I was at Miss Minchin's – just the other side of the wall!

She is overcome and Janet, Mrs Carmichael and the children crowd round her.

Donald: You see! I *knew* she was different. If I had just asked your name when I gave you that sixpence, you would have told me and you would have been found in a minute!

Sara laughs, and then cries. Mrs Carmichael hugs her. She takes her to sit on the chair.

Janet: We are so glad you are found.

Sara: But was Mr Carrisford truly wicked? He does not seem so.

Mrs Carm: No my dear. He did not lose your papa's money. He only thought he had lost it. He was so sorry that he became gravely ill with a brain fever, and before he began to recover, your poor papa had passed away.

Sara: And he did not know where to find me.

Mrs Carm: He has been ill with worry for you and has not rested since your father died. He will start to recover now Sara. Look, you can already see how he can smile again.

A doorbell is heard offstage. Ram Dass exits

Carrisford: Sara, come here. My dearest child. Here you are – the Little Missus. I shall never let you out of my sight again.

Nora: And you are rich. Like a real princess in a story.

Sara: Rich? But – but I don't understand I –

They are interrupted by Ram Dass entering, followed by Miss Minchin.

Miss M: ...I will see to it that she returns immediately with me.. Ah, there you are Sara. And what do you think you are doing coming uninvited to this house?

Sara: I'm sorry Miss Minchin I –

Carmichael: *(interrupting)* Ah, so this is Miss Minchin.

Miss M: *(turning to address Mr Carrisford)* I am sorry to disturb you Mr Carrisford. I am Miss Minchin, the proprietress of the Seminary for Young Ladies next door.

Carrisford: Well Miss Minchin, you have arrived at exactly the right time, for my solicitor here, Mr Carmichael, was on the point of seeing you.

Miss M: Your solicitor? I do not understand. I have come as a matter of duty as one of my pupils – well charity pupils – has intruded upon you. *(turning to Sara)* Go home AT ONCE. You shall be severely punished. GO!

Carrisford: *(drawing Sara close to him and putting his arm around her)* She is not going home – if you give your house that name. Her home for the future is with me.