

Miss M: Young ladies, I wish to introduce you to your new companion. I shall expect you all to be very agreeable to Miss Crewe; she has just come to us from a great distance—in fact, from India. As soon as lessons are over you must make each other's acquaintance. Sara, come here to me. As your papa has engaged a French maid for you I conclude that he wishes you to make a special study of the French language.

Sara: I think he engaged her because he—he thought I would like her, Miss Minchin.

Miss M: I'm afraid that you have been a very spoiled little girl and always imagine that things are done because you like them. My impression is that your papa wished you to learn French.

Sara: I have never really learned French, but—but—

Miss M: That is enough! If you have not learned, you must begin at once. The French master, Monsieur Dufarge, will be here in a few minutes. Take this book and look at it until he arrives.

M Dufarge enters the classroom. All the ladies stand and greet him in a variety of French accents

ALL STUDENTS: Bonjour Monsieur Dufarge.

M Duf: Bonjour Madamemoiselles. Ah, Miss Minchin... is this a new pupil for me, eh? I hope that is my good fortune.

Miss M: Yes M Dufarge. This is Sara. Her papa—Captain Crewe—is very anxious that she should begin the language. But I am afraid she has a childish prejudice against it. She does not seem to wish to learn.

M Duf: I am sorry of that, mademoiselle Sara. Perhaps, when we begin to study together, I may show you that it is a charming tongue.

Sara: I am so sorry Monsieur Dufarge, but there seems to have been a misunderstanding. I have not learned French through books but my Papa has always spoken to me in your language as my dear Mama, who died when I was born, was, herself, French. I have read and written in French many times and I love the language.

Sara: *Je suis navré Monsieur Dufarge, mais il y a un malentendu. Je n'avais pas étudié la langue française à livre mais mon Papa parle toujours en votre langue, à cause de ma chère maman, qui a mouru quand j'étais jeune, et qui était la-même française. J'ai lu et écrit en français plusieurs fois et j'aime bien la langue.*

M.Duf: Ah, Miss Minchin, there is not much I can teach her. She has not LEARNED French; she **is** French. Her accent is exquisite.

While Sara was speaking in French, many of the students were starting to giggle, and look at Miss Minchin. Miss M is looking more and more furious.

Miss M: You ought to have told me.

Sara: I – I tried. I – I suppose I did not begin right.

There is an explosion of giggles from the girls.

Miss M: Silence, young ladies! Silence at once. *(she turns and glares at Sara who visibly shrinks in her chair, and she storms out)*