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MINA: We're awfully lucky, aren't we?

LUCY: Quite. *(Beat)* And not a dark cloud on the horizon to spoil it for us.

MINA: ...No. Quite right.

(MINA moves to the window seat where LUCY is sitting. Like schoolgirls, they huddle together as they begin to talk.)

MINA: Now I won't wait a moment longer. In your letters you promised to tell me everything about the engagement...I've hounded Arthur about it, but you know how men can be. The bravest of the lot becomes a stammering mess when discussing the altar!

(LUCY smiles at this. Nods in agreement)

LUCY: Oh Mina, how can I tell you? These last few weeks have been the most marvelous of my life. This past spring, Arthur and I met and fell in love...he's so handsome, isn't he?

MINA: Yes, he is. And from the looks of it, quite well off...

LUCY: Well, he is of good birth. Just think, only nine and twenty and yet has this enormous lunatic asylum under his own care...

(At that moment, DR ARTHUR SEWARD, a purposeful, somewhat dashing man of almost 30, pokes his head into the room.)

ARTHUR: Anyone fancy lunch on the lawn...say, in half an hour or so?

(LUCY is immediately on her feet, running to ARTHUR and throwing her arms around his neck. She playfully bites his neck.)

Goodness, Lucy, do show a bit of restraint...we have guests.

MINA: Oh, don't mind me, Arthur...I'm very forgiving in the face of passion.

ARTHUR: Yes, well, I'm afraid young Lucy here is rather open with her, umm, emotions...something she's forever trying to change about me.

LUCY: Nothing wrong with showing one's love, is there?

ARTHUR: As a rule of thumb, no...in public, however, my dearest angel, quite arguable.

LUCY: Hmmm...if the Lord Byron were here he'd say, and I quote...

(ARTHUR places a playful hand over LUCY's mouth.)

ARTHUR: Well, he's not here, thank the Lord, or I'm afraid I'd spend all my time keeping an eye on the two of you! And please don't quote that rake in my home.

LUCY: "Our" home, don't you mean, my love?

ARTHUR: Yes, yes, I do...very shortly.

MINA: Won't you, umm, tell us about your engagement then, Arthur? I'd love to hear...

ARTHUR: Oh, ahhh...well, best left to...got a few things to finish up in the office...nother time, perhaps...

(ARTHUR releases LUCY, moving awkwardly toward the door.)

ARTHUR: Don't forget now, lunch at half past...

(ARTHUR turns back to LUCY and MINA as if to add something, but mumbles to himself and exits. LUCY and MINA watch him go, then laugh to themselves.)

MINA: Didn't I tell you? Such a brilliant man and so absolutely tongue-tied when it comes to the two of you...

LUCY: And I love him all the more for it! *(Beat)* Ohh, it's a wonderful thing, isn't it, Mina?

MINA: What's that?

LUCY: The love of a man...

MINA: Yes...yes it is. But I think it's love itself that's the really marvelous thing.

(MINA pulls LUCY over to a divan and they sit together.)

LUCY: ...Have you ever been unsure of your love for Jonathan?

MINA: Not since I committed to it. The principles of a woman's happiness are well established, Lucy. She is to love her home and her children without reservation, and too, she must realize that it is her total devotion to her husband that makes these things possible for her... *(Beat)* Of course, it occasionally requires small deceptions to keep said men thinking that we are less capable than they...

LUCY: All that, and yet you say you love Jonathan completely?

MINA: Oh yes...if one is to be loved and respected, one must be steadfast in one's own commitments. *(Beat)* I'm simply suggesting that one must also love with their eyes wide open...

LUCY: Mina...

MINA: Now, enough of my philosophies... are you committed to Arthur in this same way?

LUCY: Without question...I love him and no other...

MINA: Are you sure?

LUCY: Yes I am, Mina.

MINA: Then I'm very happy for you...

(MINA turns away, not wanting to see her in a moment of distress.)

LUCY: Oh, you poor darling, here I am talking in trivial generalities! You mustn't worry...Jonathan will be back

before you know it, and we shall both have husbands. You'll see...

MINA: Oh Lucy, you are such a dear...I do hope you're right. *(Beat)* And yet...

LUCY: What is it, Mina?

(MINA looks out the window, clutching her letter from JONATHAN tightly in one hand. She shivers a bit.)

MINA: I'm not sure...not sure at all. It's just...I feel something coming. Something cold. *(Beat)* Perhaps it's nothing, a passing storm. Still, it's odd for this time of year...

LUCY: It does feel a bit like rain...

MINA: ...So very odd.

(Music up as scene shifts to:)

(Blast of storm effects. Lights up on five areas: MINA and LUCY in the library, writing at small tables; ARTHUR: sitting on a bench, reading from the newspaper; a SEA CAPTAIN on deck scribbling in his log; RENFIELD, looking deranged, hiding in the bowels of the ship talking to himself.)

(Wind howls and the sails of the ship drop into view and move dramatically back and forth.)

ARTHUR: "8 August. Whitby. One of the greatest and most sudden storms on record has just been experienced here..."

LUCY: "Another week gone, and no news from Jonathan. The suspense is becoming dreadful. If only Mina knew where to write or where to go to, I should feel better, but no one has heard a word since his last letter..."

MINA: "Lucy is more excitable than usual, but otherwise well. She has taken to sleep-walking as of late, and there is an odd concentration about her which