Sheila: (*gaily, possessively*) I should jolly well think not, Gerald, I'd hate you to know all about port – like one of these purple-faced old men.

Arthur Birling: here , I’m not a purple-faced old man.

Sheila Birling: no, not yet. But then you don't know all about port – do you?

Birling: (*noticing that his wife has not taken any*) N ow then, Sybil, you must a take a little tonight. Special occasion, y'know, eh?

Sheila: Yes, go on, mummy. You must drink our health.

Sheila: (*with mocking aggressiveness*) Go on, Gerald – just you object!

Gerald: (*smiling*) Wouldn't dream of it. In fact, I insist upon being one of the family now. I've been trying long enough, haven't I? (*as she does not reply, with more insistence*.) Haven't I? You know I have.

Mrs Birling: (*smiling*) Of course she does.

Sheila: (*half serious, half playful*) Yes – except for all last summer, when you never came near me, and I wondered what had happened to you.

Gerald: And I’ve told you – I was awfully busy at the works all that time.

Sheila: (*same tone as before*) Yes,that's what you say.

Mrs Birling: Now, Sheila, don't tease him. When you're married you'll realize that men with important work to do sometimes have to spend nearly all their time and energy on their business. You'll have to get used to that, just as I had.

Sheila: I don't believe I will. (*half playful, half serious, to Gerald*.) So you be careful.

Sheila: (*severely*) Now – what's the joke?

Eric: I don't know – really. Suddenly I felt I just had to laugh.

Sheila: You're squiffy.

Eric: I’m not.

Mrs Birling: What an expression, Sheila! Really the things you girls pick up these days!

Eric: If you think that's the best she can do-

Sheila: Don't be an ass, Eric.

Eric: (*rather noisily*) All the best! She's got a nasty temper sometimes – but she's not bad really. Good old Sheila!

Sheila: Chump! I can't drink to this, can I? When do I drink?

Gerald: You can drink to me.

Sheila: (*quite and serious now*) All right then. I drink to you, Gerald.

//*for a moment they look at each other*//

Gerald: (*quietly*) Thank you. And I drink to you – and hope I can make you as happy as you deserve to be.

Shelia: (*trying to be light and easy*) You be careful – or I’ll start weeping.

 Gerald: (*smiling*) Well, perhaps this will help to stop it. (*he produces a ring case*.)

Sheila: (*excited*) Oh – Gerald – you’ve got it – is it the one you wanted me to have?

Gerald: (*giving the case to her*) Yes – the very one.

Sheila: (*taking out the ring*) Oh – it's wonderful! Look – mummy – isn't it a beauty? Oh – darling -

(*she kisses Gerald hastily*.)

Eric: steady the buffs!

Sheila: (*who has put the ring on, admiringly*) I think it's perfect. Now I really feel engaged.

Mrs Birling: So you ought, darling. It's a lovely ring. Be careful with it.

Sheila: careful! I'll never let it go out of my sight for an instant.

Mrs Birling: (*smiling*) Well, it came just at the right moment. That was clever of you, Gerald. Now, Arthur, if you've no more to say, I think Sheila and I had better go into the drawing room and leave you men-

Birling: (*rather heavily*) I just want to say this.(*noticing that Sheila is still admiring her ring*.) are you listening, Sheila? This concerns you too. And after all I don't often make speeches at you -

Sheila: I’m sorry, daddy. Actually I was listening.