

The Importance of Being Earnest (underscoring)

Russell Stern

GWENDOLEN:

Do you allude to me, Miss Cardew, as an entanglement?
Freely

You are presumptuous. On an occasion of this kind it becomes more than a moral duty to speak one's mind. It becomes a pleasure.

CECILY: Do you suggest, Miss Fairfax, that I entrapped Ernest into an engagement? How dare you?

9

This is no time for wearing the shallow mask of manners. When I see a spade I call it a spade.

GWENDOLEN: I am glad to say that I have never seen a spade. It is obvious that our social spheres have been widely different.

(Enter MERRIMAN, followed by the footman. He carries a salver, tablecloth, and plate stand. CECILY is about to retort. The presence of the servants exercises a restraining influence, under which both girls chafe.)

MERRIMAN: Shall I lay tea here as usual, Miss?

CECILY: (Sternly, in a calm voice.) Yes, as usual.

(Merriman begins to clear table and lay cloth. A long pause. CECILY and GWENDOLEN glare at each other)

Vamp:
15 $\bullet = 116$

GWENDOLEN: Are there many interesting walks in the vicinity, Miss Cardew?

CECILY: Oh! Yes! A great many. From the top- of one of the hills quite close one can see five counties.

GWENDOLEN: Five counties! I don't think I should like that: I hate crowds.

24 CECILY: (Sweetly) I suppose that is why you live in town?

(GWENDOLEN bites her lip,
and beats her foot nervously
2 with her parasol.)

GWENDOLEN: Quite a well kept garden...
Cue: CECILY: May I offer you some tea, Miss Fairfax?

36 Vamp:

Musical score for measures 36-43. The score is in 4/4 time and features a piano accompaniment. The melody in the right hand consists of eighth notes, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

GWENDOLEN:

(With elaborate politeness.) Thank you.

CECILY: (Sweetly) Sugar?

(Aside.) Detestable girl!

But I require tea!

44

Musical score for measures 44-48. The score is in 4/4 time. It begins with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The melody in the right hand includes a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The piece ends with a double bar line.

GWENDOLEN: (Superciliously) No, thank you.
Sugar is not fashionable any more.

(CECILY looks angrily at her, takes up the tongs,
and puts four lumps of sugar into the cup.)

49

Vamp:

Musical score for measures 49-52. The score is in 4/4 time. It features a vamp section with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

CECILY: (Severely)

GWENDOLYN: (In a bored manner)
Cake or bread and butter? Bread and butter, please...

Cue: CECILY:

Hand that to Mrs. Fairfax.

53

Musical score for measures 53-55. The score is in 4/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The melody in the right hand consists of quarter notes, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

(Merriman does so....)

Cue: (rises in indignation)

56

Musical score for measures 56-60. The score is in 4/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *f*. The melody in the right hand consists of eighth notes, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

CECILY: (Rising)

To save my poor, innocent, trusting boy
from the machinations of any other girl
there are no lengths to which I would not go.

GWENDOLEN:

59 You have filled my tea...
Cue: you may go too far.

GWENDOLEN: From the moment I saw you...
Cue: people are invariably right.

CECILY: It seems to me...
in the neighborhood.
(Enter JACK)

66 Vamp:

GWENDOLEN:

(Catching sight of him)

Ernest! My own Ernest!
JACK: Gwendolen! Darling!

(Offers to kiss her.)

GWENDOLEN: (Draws back)

A moment! May I ask if you
are engaged to be married to
this young lady? (Points to Cecily.)

71

JACK: (Laughing)
To dear little Cecily!

Of course not!
What could have
put such an idea
into your pretty
little head?

GWENDOLEN:
Thank you. You may!
(Offers her cheek)

78

The gentleman whose
arm is at present round
your waist is my guardian,

CECILY:(Very sweetly). I knew there must be some misunderstanding,
Miss Fairfax. Mr. John Worthing.

84

mf

ff