

**RUTH.** But it's outrageous! I ought to hand you over to the police.

*(She crosses to the fireplace.)*

**MADAME ARCATI.** You go too far, Mrs. Condomine.

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**RUTH.** *(Furiously.)* [REDACTED] Do you realize what your insane amateur muddling has done?

**MADAME ARCATI.** I have been a professional since I was a child, Mrs. Condomine. 'Amateur' is a word I cannot tolerate.

**RUTH.** It seems to me to be the height of amateurishness to evoke malignant spirits and not be able to get rid of them again.

**MADAME ARCATI.** *(With dignity.)* I was in a trance. Anything might happen when I am in a trance.

**RUTH.** Well, all I can suggest is that you go into another one immediately and get this damned woman out of my house.

**MADAME ARCATI.** I can't go into trances at a moment's notice. It takes hours of preparation. In addition to which I have to be extremely careful of my diet for days beforehand. Today, for instance, I happened to lunch with friends and had pigeon pie which, plus these cucumber sandwiches, would make a trance out of the question.

**RUTH.** Well, you'll have to do something.

**MADAME ARCATI.** I will report the whole matter to the Society for Psychical Research at the earliest possible moment.

**RUTH.** Will they be able to do anything?

**MADAME ARCATI.** I doubt it. They'd send an investigation committee, I expect, and do a lot of questioning and wall-tapping and mumbo-jumbo, and then they'd have a conference and you would probably have to go up to London to testify.

**RUTH.** *(Near tears.)* It's too humiliating – it really is.



**MADAME ARCATI.** (*Rising and going to RUTH at the fireplace.*)

Please try not to upset yourself. Nothing can be achieved by upsetting yourself.

**RUTH.** It's all very fine for you to talk like this, Madame Arcati. You don't seem to have the faintest realization of my position.

**MADAME ARCATI.** Try to look on the bright side.

**RUTH.** Bright side indeed! If your husband's first wife suddenly appeared from the grave and came to live in the house with you, do you suppose you'd be able to look on the bright side?

**MADAME ARCATI.** (*Crossing away to left and up to center.*) I resent your tone, Mrs. Condomine; I really do.

**RUTH.** You most decidedly have no right to. You are entirely to blame for the whole horrible situation.

**MADAME ARCATI.** Kindly remember that I came here the other night on your own invitation.

**RUTH.** On my husband's invitation.

**MADAME ARCATI.** I did what I was requested to do, which was to give a séance and establish contact with the Other Side. I had no idea that there was any ulterior motive mixed up with it.

**RUTH.** Ulterior motive?

**MADAME ARCATI.** Your husband was obviously eager to get in touch with his former wife. If I had been aware of that at the time I should naturally have consulted you beforehand. After all, 'Noblesse oblige'!

**RUTH.** He had no intention of trying to get in touch with anyone. The whole thing was planned in order for him to get material for a mystery story he is writing about a homicidal medium.

**MADAME ARCATI.** (*Drawing herself up.*) Am I to understand that I was only invited in a spirit of mockery?

**RUTH.** Not at all. He merely wanted to make notes of some of the tricks of the trade.

**MADAME ARCATI.** (*Incensed.*) Tricks of the trade! Insufferable! I've never been so insulted in my life.

I feel we have nothing more to say to one another,  
Mrs. Condomine. Goodbye!

*(She turns away upstage center to the door.)*

**RUTH.** Please don't go – please –

**MADAME ARCATI.** *(Turning and facing RUTH upstage center by the door.)* Your attitude from the outset has been most unpleasant, Mrs. Condomine. Some of your remarks have been discourteous in the extreme and I should like to say, without umbrage, that if you and your husband were foolish enough to tamper with the unseen for paltry motives and in a spirit of ribaldry, whatever has happened to you is your own fault, and, to coin a phrase, as far as I'm concerned you can stew in your own juice!

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*(MADAME ARCATI goes majestically from the room.)*

**RUTH.** *(Stubbing out her cigarette in the ashtray on the small table downstage right.)* Damn – damn – damn!

*(After a moment or two CHARLES comes in with ELVIRA.)*

*(Light Cue No. 02. Act II, Scene Two.)*

*(CHARLES moves to above the sofa. ELVIRA turns to the piano and tidies her hair in the mirror.)*

**CHARLES.** What on earth was Madame Arcati doing here?

**RUTH.** She came to tea.

**CHARLES.** Did you ask her?

**RUTH.** Of course I did.

**CHARLES.** You never told me you were going to.

**RUTH.** You never told me you were going to ask Elvira to live with us.

**CHARLES.** I didn't.

**ELVIRA.** *(Sauntering over to the tea table.)* Oh, yes, you did, darling – it was your subconscious.