

(MARY hammers out the first few notes of Beethoven's 5th Symphony in C Minor on the piano.)

ANN
I'd say she's plenty advanced already.

ASA
You can say that again.

ANN
I'd say she's plenty advanced already.

ASA
Whose side are you on?

ANN
I'll never tell.

MARY
All me to ease your minds about your investment in my mind.

(MARY tinkles out Mary Had a Little Lamb.)

ASA
Eh! No going back now, you were playing Beethoven mere moments ago.

MARY
(With great, affected shock) Beethoven composed that little tune? You don't say...
(Seems advanced for someone / my age but-.)

ASA
None of that. You're a Roff. And Roff's don't lie. And you've obviously fallen behind in your Shakespearean studies.

MARY
Why's that?

ASA
That performance was void of all believability. (nudges MARY playfully)

ANN

If you seek a living on the stage, we'll all starve.

MARY

(With greater affected shock) Say it isn't so Mama!

ANN

I'd stick with music, Mary.

MARY

(Quickly drops the act) Tf you insist.

(MARY begins playing Jenny Lind Polka)

ASA

Lovely. Wait. We were just talking about- How did we get away from arithmetic?

MARY

What's that, Pa?

ASA

Arithmetic!

MARY

Can't hear you over the piano.

ASA

Arithmetic! So you can be a famous mathematician!

MARY

No use! Just can't hear you.

ANN

She's playing one of your favorites, Asa.

ASA

And doesn't she know it?

(MARY smiles innocently, knowingly at her family.)

ANN

All Lask is you put your books away when you're done.

MARY

Will do, Ma.

ASA

Oh that you hear?

MARY

Stop bothering Pa and ask Ma to dance with you.

ASA

Well, there's an idea.

(ASA turns, bows, and offers a hand to ANN)

ANN

Oh Asa, you old fool, 'm sewing!

ASA

I'm merely following orders.

ANN

And I need to start dinner.

ASA

It can wait.

MARY

Ma, dance with him so he stops pestering me.

ANN

Bosh...

ASA

Bosh nothing! I pester, or you dance.