

SC. 1 – Max/Olive

MAX

Well, you're an incredibly bright young lady.

OLIVE

This room is full of them. With advanced degrees, no less.

MAX

Still: an interesting idea.

OLIVE

Of course it is. Everyone has secrets, Max.

MAX

Surely not a lovely family such as yours, I'm sure.

WILLIAM

Absolutely not.

ELIZABETH

Of course not.

OLIVE

Yes.

MAX

You don't strike me as the "deep, dark secret" type.

OLIVE

Nothing dark about it.

MAX

Really, then--go on.

OLIVE

It's really quite simple. I am not the good doctor's ward. That's all.

MAX

That's all?

OLIVE

No. These two fine people are married, but also love me as an equal partner in their romantic entanglement. We share a polyamorous life that is exciting, to say the very least. But never deep and dark.

*(Pause.)*

Well, sometimes it is.

MAX

The three of you?

OLIVE

Lovers. Hedonistic. Downright Parisian, I know. But love, Mr. Gaines, is love.

*A long, uncomfortable beat. Finally it breaks when MAX laughs uproariously. OLIVE joins him.*

MAX

Polyamorous hedonists! Damndest thing I ever heard in my life! What an imagination! Perhaps we should have *you* writing for our comics!

OLIVE

There's no way your romance books could publish what I'd have to say.