**HEDDA AUDITION TEXT**

BRACK: A hat?

HEDDA: His aunt left it lying around. I pretended I thought it was the maid’s.

BRACK: How could you abuse such a dear, sweet lady?

HEDDA: Rage. I can’t stop myself. *(Slight pause.)* Why is that?

BRACK: You’re not happy.

HEDDA: Why should I be?

BRACK: You have the home you wanted, the one you told Tesman you dreamed of.

HEDDA: Ha! *(slight pause.)* Remember last summer? I let Tesman escort me home from all the parties.

BRACK: Yes, I was sadly unavailable.

HEDDA: Oh, but you were most available to that loose little –

BRACK: Shame on you! Continue:

HEDDA: One evening Tesman and I were stood outside. He was in knots, agonised by his inability to make romantic small talk. So I took pity on the mortified creature.

BRACK: *You* took pity?

HEDDA: Yes I did. Most certainly. I found myself telling him – frivolously – that I adored this building and that I’d always longed to live in it.

BRACK: You didn’t?

HEDDA: No!

BRACK: And then?

HEDDA: Terrible consequences.

BRACK: Frivolity punished.

HEDDA: Our mutual ‘passion’ for the property united us. It became our secret meeting place. And then: engagement, marriage, honeymoon and whatever hell comes next. All my fault.

BRACK: You never even liked the place?

HEDDA: Not a bit! The outside is vulgar and the inside stinks of lavender and rose petals – though I suspect ‘Aunt J’ is the culprit there.

BRACK More likely the previous occupant, the minister’s widow.

HEDDA: Hence the sickly stench of death. Flowers after the ball. God, I’m dreading the boredom of living here!

BRACK: There must be something you could do, to keep yourself occupied?

HEDDA: No, I’ve no talent for life, there’s nothing. *(Slight pause.)* Well…

BRACK: Mmm?

HEDDA: It’s only a whim.

BRACK: Spit it out.

HEDDA: I wonder if I could persuade Tesman to go into politics?

BRACK: *(Snorts)* Ha! He’d get eaten alive!

HEDDA: True, but is he persuadable?

BRACK: Possibly. But since he’s not up to it what’s the point?

HEDDA: For the relief from boredom! Imagine the hilarity of watching him fail?

BRACK: Don’t be wicked. Actually, *do.*

HEDDA: Think – seriously – why couldn’t he become a cabinet minister?

BRACK: Lesser mammals have managed it. But you’d need limitless funds.

HEDDA: Always the money! That’s the horror – our wretched *poverty* – this humiliating scrimping and saving, it’s all so *puny*. That’s what makes life so unbearable.

BRACK: Or might the reason lie elsewhere?

*Hedda stares at him.*

You’re privileged. You’ve never had to struggle. Or fight for a cause.

HEDDA: I’m trivial?

BRACK: One could make a case. But supposing life has plans for you? Suppose it intends you to suffer and to deepen accordingly?

HEDDA: How?

BRACK: What would happen if life burdened you with a solemn responsibility? What then, dear Hedda?

HEDDA: Never. It won’t happen.

BRACK: I’ll remind you of that next year.

HEDDA: I won’t make something that makes demands. Nor will I be depended on.

BRACK: Women often discover it’s their true calling.

HEDDA: *(angrily)* If you knew me at all you’d know my calling.

BRACK: Oh, do tell?

HEDDA: To bore myself to death!