**LOVBORG AUDITION TEXT:**

LOVBORG: I have to know: did you love me?

HEDDA: I’m not really sure. We were close, I remember that. And I recall that we shared some secrets. You especially.

LOVBORG: You *asked* me to.

HEDDA: I suppose there was something quite delicious – even brave about our covert friendship.

LOVBORG: Do you remember? I used to come to your house. In the afternoons. Your father would read the newspapers…

HEDDA: While we sat together in the corner sofa…

LOVBORG: Pretending to be engrossed in a magazine…

HEDDA: Yes…

LOVBORG: And I confessed to you – you alone – my sins – my drinking – my shame. You had such power. I was helpless, compelled to tell you everything.

HEDDA: I had power?

LOVBORG: Yes. Despite your age. And I remember the intimate questions you asked with such discretion.

HEDDA: Do you?

LOVBORG: I was charmed by your boldness.

HEDDA: I preferred ‘discretion’.

LOVBORG: How could you ask those things?

HEDDA: How could you answer?

LOVBORG: I still don’t know. And you’re saying it wasn’t love? What we had? Weren’t you trying to save me?

HEDDA: Not in the least.

LOVBORG: Then what?

HEDDA: I was a girl. You had secret knowledge. I want it. I wanted to know everything I was forbidden to know.

LOVBORG: That’s all it was?

HEDDA: Yes. I think so.

LOVBORG: Whatever you claim, what we had was extraordinary. Why didn’t it last?

HEDDA: Well, you’re to blame.

LOVBORG: It was you who ended it.

HEDDA: Because you endangered me. I liked the talking, I loved it. But then you ‘imposed’ yourself on your bold young friend. You broke the rules. You ruined it. And you know it.

LOVBORG: You should’ve killed me. As you threatened. Why didn’t you?

HEDDA: I dread a scandal.

LOVBORG: So it was cowardice?

HEDDA: Of course. But it’s all turned out for the best; you’ve recovered and now you have a whole new friendship up at the Elvsteds.

LOVBORG: I know she told you.

HEDDA: And did you tell her about us?

LOVBORG: She wouldn’t understand.

HEDDA: Why not?

LOVBORG: *(shrugs)* You’ve met her.

*Pause.*

HEDDA: *(moves close to him)* Hear my confession… when I threatened to shoot you… It wasn’t my greatest act of cowardice that night…

LOVBORG: Hedda… I understand…

HEDDA: Good. But don’t rely on me.