

ADA. Yes thank you eversomuch. Each of our evenings together replaces the last as my favorite.

CHARLES. Thank you both for your company and patience amidst my increasingly regular fits of rage at the incompetent.

Start ADA. Once you've seen the future it's born. We've seen it in the Engine. And thus it will be. I'm sure of it. Good night.

*Ada bows gorgeously, winks at him, before prancing off.*

*Mary goes to Babbage—very serious.*

SOMMERVILLE. It won't work.

CHARLES. The Difference Engine already works in theory, and if they'd give me the money—

SOMMERVILLE. Not the engine, the *girl*. You're a brilliant man, you can't play the fool if you tried.

CHARLES. Of what exactly am I being accused?

SOMMERVILLE. She's too young for you. She's too...storied. You'll make a mockery of yourself.

CHARLES. I will do no such thing as I have no intentions in that direction whatsoever.

SOMMERVILLE. Good. She's not going to be your wife.

CHARLES. Have I ever said as much? I have *not*.

SOMMERVILLE. No you have never *said* as much. But you write her, you invite her to private dinners, you...manage her mother. That's quite beyond the pale for a friend very much her senior.

CHARLES. A friend indeed. And only that. She's an...effervescence for...the mind.

SOMMERVILLE. Oh dear.

CHARLES. Leave me be, she helps me think.

SOMMERVILLE. Your mind has needed neither help nor fizz before.

CHARLES. You introduced her to me. You mentor the child. You speak so well of her.

SOMMERVILLE. I do. As I do of you. And for both your sakes pursue her not.

CHARLES. You know me well enough to know better.

SOMMERVILLE. I do Charles. I know you. You cannot resist your next best idea.

CHARLES. I will kindly request that we only speak of mathematics for the foreseeable future, Mrs. Sommerville.

SOMMERVILLE. Alright then. (*Meaning: "Don't fall for her."*) Don't carry the one, Charles. Good night.

*Mary leaves him. Babbage alone.*

*He reaches for whatever wine was left and downs it.*

End

*As we hear Ada's letter to Babbage...*

*Babbage starts to sketch on his drafting table—he is on to something. A new idea. A better idea...*

ADA. Dear Mr. Babbage, I will not delay thanking you for Lardner's Trigonometry. I have had quantities of formulae to work out and have destroyed a great deal of paper in this pursuit. What can I do to help you and your marvelous machine? I do hope to see you soon. Yours truly—

*While Ada reads Babbage's letter she prepares the room for her intended, trying to become wifely...*

CHARLES. At our last dinner you spoke of "the future." The idea of foresight has lodged itself in my temple from that evening on and I find myself in a state of intense thought. A new idea forms in me. It feels as though I stand in a valley thick with fog. I can't see where I am much less where I'm going. But the fog is lifting. A path is revealed. One step at a time I go forward into the future. I thought you would understand. Yours—

ADA. Yours,

CHARLES. Babbage.

*Which smacks into...*