

**From Emily Bronte, Teenage Necromancer by Don Zolidis**

CHARLOTTE BRONTE, 19, a teacher at a boarding school  
 GEORGE WADSWORTH, her suitor, who is not very good at this.

*Charlotte is playing piano for George. Poorly.  
 George is listening attentively.  
 She finishes with a flourish.*

GEORGE

Capital! Capital!

CHARLOTTE

I apologize – that was truly awful.

GEORGE

Not at all! You have a... very sprightly way with your fingers. Like little elves. They dance above the keys.

CHARLOTTE

They didn't so much dance, as stumble across the keys. And not elves, but rather ogres.

GEORGE

If your fingers are ogres I would still cherish them.

CHARLOTTE

Mr. Wadsworth, I confess that I find your imagery troubling.

GEORGE

I need only a strong editor. And help. So much help.

CHARLOTTE

Yes.

GEORGE

Which is what a good wife would be for.

CHARLOTTE

Editing your imagery?

GEORGE

Among other things. Oh I am giddy today.

CHARLOTTE

I cannot imagine why.

GEORGE

Because I get to be in your delightful presence.

CHARLOTTE

Have you ever courted a woman before?

GEORGE

No, never.

CHARLOTTE

I suppose I knew that answer to that question before I asked it.

GEORGE

Then instruct me in how to woo you properly. You are an educator.

CHARLOTTE

I have a hard enough time educating small children. How much more difficult would it be to educate a full-grown man?

GEORGE

You could try. I am a ready student. I confess I received poor marks in school, but surely... I would do excellently under a teacher such as yourself.

CHARLOTTE

Oh dear.

GEORGE

I have distressed you.

CHARLOTTE

No.

GEORGE

I have... annoyed you?

CHARLOTTE

Quite right.

GEORGE

My heart aches to have given you offense.

CHARLOTTE

All right. First lesson: Lower your temperature.

*George is puzzled.*

You are trying too hard. It's terrible. I do not need to be praised for every little thing I do. My fingers are quite plain. They do not need to be exalted like angels or elves or fairies or ivory digits or whatever else you've been ceaselessly inventing for the past fifteen minutes.

GEORGE

They are beautiful though.

CHARLOTTE

Stop. They are fingers.

GEORGE

Your face, though is –

CHARLOTTE

No no no – too much.

GEORGE

Your face is... fine? And your personality –

CHARLOTTE

Make conversation, man. I understand that you are drawn to me –

GEORGE

Like a moth to the flame.

CHARLOTTE

Oh dear.

GEORGE

You burn me.

CHARLOTTE

I do not. I am quite unflammable.

GEORGE

I disagree.

CHARLOTTE

Mr. Wadsworth –

GEORGE

George –

CHARLOTTE

Mr. Wadsworth -

GEORGE

Instruct me. I am putty in your hands.

CHARLOTTE

Perhaps you could begin by asking me simple questions.

GEORGE

Will you marry me?

CHARLOTTE

*NOT* that question!

GEORGE

When do you suppose you will become headmistress?

*Charlotte is a bit thrown by this*

CHARLOTTE

Um... I do not know that I shall ever become headmistress.

GEORGE

Miss Woolton is quite old and with the difficulties the school is experiencing, you are her natural successor.

CHARLOTTE

The difficulties?

GEORGE

With the... um... the difficulties.

CHARLOTTE

Which difficulties?

GEORGE

Earlier today I saw a carriage picking up some of the younger children. That seems like a poor omen.

CHARLOTTE

Did the Headmistress speak with you?

GEORGE

Yes, and she mentioned...

CHARLOTTE

She mentioned what?

GEORGE

You know, the phantom. Fear not, though I appear fragile, I am brave.

CHARLOTTE

You would fight it?

GEORGE

I will take arms against a sea of troubles.

CHARLOTTE

Shakespeare.

GEORGE

Yes.

CHARLOTTE

Hm. I believe I need to go, Mr. Wadsworth.

GEORGE

But we've only just begun! And I have many sweets for you.

*He produces a box of chocolates.*

My mother made them. Chocolates.

CHARLOTTE

I am sure they are delightful, but -

GEORGE

Some may not be suitable for consumption.

CHARLOTTE

It is a nice gesture -

GEORGE

Actually, let me remove a few that are unwise to taste.

*He takes a few chocolates out.*

My mother tries, but she is quite dreadful at this sort of thing.

CHARLOTTE

I do need to be going, Mr. Wadsworth.

GEORGE

But my mother wrote you a note!

CHARLOTTE

How does your mother know of me?

GEORGE

I have described you to her. In very minute detail. She finds my description most enchanting. Here, read it.

*Charlotte takes out a note.*

CHARLOTTE

‘Dearest Charlotte, I feel that I may use your first name since we are destined to be good friends. Your love for George is inspirational. Your work amongst orphans is commendable and I especially wish you success with your plan to produce many babies with George.’

GEORGE

I may have embellished.

CHARLOTTE

I never want babies.

GEORGE

Not a problem I hate them.

CHARLOTTE

You hate babies?

GEORGE

They have abominable manners.

CHARLOTTE

They are babies.

GEORGE

I do not believe in excuses.

CHARLOTTE

Thank you for the chocolates, but I must go.

GEORGE

I shall be whatever you wish. Nine babies. Zero babies. Any number any between. A group of wolfhounds instead. Merely agree to be my bride and you shall have whatever you wish. I am not wealthy, but have a modest income, and honestly, in your position, you can do no better.

CHARLOTTE

Good day, Mr. Wadsworth.

GEORGE

Charlotte –

*George is blocking the exit.*

CHARLOTTE *(with more force)*

Good Day, Mr. Wadsworth.  
*A moment.*

GEORGE

Good day.