

**Mad Margaret:** Poor Margaret has been driven insane by the consequences of the curse. Her love for “evil” Despard has tipped her over the edge. Her role is certainly broadly comedic, but there are also flashes of self awareness and a real melancholy which makes it a challenge to portray.

ROSE A maiden, and in tears? Can I do aught to soften thy sorrow? This apple – (offering apple).

**MAR.** (Examines it and rejects it.) **No!** (mysteriously) **Tell me, are you mad?**

ROSE I? No! That is, I think not.

**MAR.** **That’s well! Then you don’t love Sir Despard Murgatroyd? All mad girls love him. I love him. I’m poor Mad Margaret – Crazy Meg – Poor Peg! He! he! he! he!** (chuckling).

ROSE Thou lovest the bad Baronet of Ruddigore? Oh, horrible – too horrible!

**MAR.** **You pity me? Then be my mother! The squirrel had a mother; but she drank and the squirrel fled! Hush! They sing a brave song in our parts – it runs somewhat thus:** (sings)

“The cat and the dog and the little puppee

Sat down in a – down in a – in a –”

**I forget what they sat down in, but so the song goes! Listen – I’ve come to pinch her!**

ROSE Mercy, whom?

**MAR.** **You mean “who”.**

ROSE Nay! it is the accusative after the verb.

**MAR.** **True.** (Whispers melodramatically.) **I have come to pinch Rose Maybud!**

ROSE (Aside, alarmed.) Rose Maybud!

**MAR.** **Aye! I love him – he loved me once. But that’s all gone. Fight! He gave me an Italian glance – thus (business) – and made me his. He will give her an Italian glance, and make her his. But it shall not be, for I’ll stamp on her – stamp on her – stamp on her! Did you ever kill anybody? No? Why not? Listen – I killed a fly this morning! It buzzed, and I wouldn’t have it. So it died – pop! So shall she!**

ROSE But, behold, I am Rose Maybud, and I would fain not die “pop.”

**MAR.** **You are Rose Maybud?**

ROSE Yes, sweet Rose Maybud!

**MAR.** **Strange! They told me she was beautiful! And he loves you! No, no! If I thought that, I would treat you as the auctioneer and land-agent treated the lady-bird – I would rend you asunder!**

ROSE Nay, be pacified, for behold I am pledged to another, and lo, we are to be wedded this very day!

**MAR. Swear me that! Come to a Commissioner and let me have it on affidavit! I once made an affidavit – but it died – it died – it died! But see, they come – Sir Despard and his evil crew! Hide, hide – they are all mad – quite mad!**

ROSE What makes you think that?

**MAR. Hush! They sing choruses in public. That's mad enough, I think! Go – hide away, or they will seize you! Hush! Quite softly – quite, quite softly!**