

BEETHOVEN

What? What? What? Out with it! You've been sulking the whole way home. Just say it.

SCHINDLER

*(He looks at Beethoven accusingly but says nothing)*

BEETHOVEN

Those people want the music I make but they don't understand what it takes to make it. I had an idea. I needed to get to the carriage to write down the idea so I could make it into something!

*(Schindler is silent. He hangs Beethoven's coat up.)*

Speak.

SCHINDLER

How will you pay your rent this month?

BEETHOVEN

You'll figure something out.

SCHINDLER

If you had just tipped your hat to the Count he would have given us a commission.

BEETHOVEN

He wanted to talk to me! That's an hour of my time. He doesn't hold a conversation! He is like a woodpecker attached to a gargantuan tree hammering on the hollow trunk for hours! I need to find an ending to the variations.

SCHINDLER

You may be evicted. Would it have been so difficult for you to stop and greet him the way one ought to greet a Count?

BEETHOVEN

I was thinking! I didn't notice him!

SCHINDLER

Master, everyone saw you pull your hat down below your eyes and ignore him. *(Beethoven laughs to himself)* You think that's funny?

*(A ringing, distorted sound effect representing Beethoven's hearing problems occurs during Schindler's line)*

The Count was humiliated in front of all his friends! They were all shocked by your behavior.

BEETHOVEN

If I show respect for a person, it will be because that person earned my respect with his deeds. Not because of his title.

SCHINDLER

I think that's wonderful.

I'll tell the Landlord when he comes for the rent.

BEETHOVEN

They want me to be a dancing monkey in their courts.

The Counts, the Countesses, the Dukes and Duchesses, the Barons and Baronesses, there are thousands of them. There's only one Beethoven!

No wonder their heads are rolling all over Europe.

SCHINDLER

Master! Please, you mustn't say such things! Schubert was arrested yesterday for saying much less.

BEETHOVEN

Let them arrest me! I will not bow down to this paralytic regime.

*(Ringing sound returns. It hurts even more)*

SCHINDLER

*(pause)* Master your ears are bothering you, aren't they? Is it the ringing?

BEETHOVEN

That's not important. *(He shows him a sketch pad)* This is what I was thinking about when that man started talking to me.

*(Schindler walks away)*

SCHINDLER

It's not important what you –

BEETHOVEN

Come and see this!

Here's the first trill in Diabelli's waltz, yes?

*(trill plays)*

SCHINDLER

Yes.

BEETHOVEN

Now look at what I've done. I've taken these four notes *(four notes play)* and used them in this variation.

*(Beethoven shows Schindler different sketches he's been working on. The pianist plays part of Variation 11)*

And in this one. *(The pianist plays part of Variation 16)*

And in this one. *(The pianist plays part of Variation 6 and continues to end of scene)*

And that's all with four notes. Now, you can have that music, or you can have me talking with the Count.

*(Ringing, distorted sound occurs again, but louder. Beethoven holds his ears. The pain is great; the loud ringing sound tormenting. Then, the pianist plays Variation 20)*