

# The Importance of Being Earnest

Algy - Cecily Side

**ALGY:** You are my little cousin, Cecily, I'm sure.

**CECILY:** You are under some strange mistake. I am not little. In fact, I believe I am more than usually tall for my age. But I am Cousin Cecily. You, I see from your card, are Uncle Jack's brother - my cousin Ernest. My *wicked* Cousin Ernest.

**ALGY:** I am not really wicked at all, Cousin Cecily. You mustn't think I am wicked.

**CECILY:** If you are not, then you have certainly been deceiving us all in a very inexcusable manner. I hope you have not been leading a double life, pretending to be wicked and being really good all the time. That would be hypocrisy.

**ALGY:** Oh! Of course, I have been rather reckless.

**CECILY:** I am glad to hear it.

**ALGY:** In fact, now that you mention the subject, I have been very bad in my own small way.

**CECILY:** I don't think you should be so proud of that - though I am sure it must have been very pleasant.

**ALGY:** It is much pleasanter being here with you.

**CECILY:** I can't understand how you are here at all. Uncle Jack won't be back till Monday afternoon.

**ALGY:** This is a great disappointment, as I am obliged to go up on Monday morning.

**CECILY:** I think you had better wait till Uncle Jack arrives. I know he wants to speak to you about your emigrating.

**ALGY:** About my what?

**CECILY:** Your emigrating. He is sending you to Australia.

**ALGY:** I'd sooner die.

**CECILY:** Well, he said at dinner on Wednesday night you would have to choose between this world, the next world, and Australia.

**ALGY:** Oh, well. The accounts I have received of Australia and the next world are not encouraging. This world is good enough for me, Cousin Cecily.

**CECILY:** Yes, but are you good enough for it?

**ALGY:** I'm afraid I'm not. That is why I want you to reform me. You might make that your mission, if you don't mind, Cousin Cecily.

**CECILY:** I'm afraid I've no time this afternoon.

**ALGY:** Well, would you mind my reforming myself, this afternoon?

**CECILY:** It is rather quixotic of you - but I think you should try.

**ALGY:** I will. I feel better already.

**CECILY:** You are looking a little worse.

**ALGY:** That is because I am hungry.

**CECILY:** How thoughtless of me. I should have remembered that when one is going to lead an entirely new life, one requires regular and wholesome meals. Won't you come in?

**ALGY:** Thank you. Won't you give me a rose?

**CECILY:** A Maréchal Niel?

**ALGY:** No, I'd sooner have a pink rose.

**CECILY:** Why?

**ALGY:** Because you are like a pink rose, Cousin Cecily.

**CECILY:** I don't think it can be right for you to talk to me like that. Miss Prism never says such things to me.

**ALGY:** Then Miss Prism is a very short-sighted old lady. You are the prettiest girl I ever saw.

**CECILY:** Miss Prism says that all good looks are a snare.

**ALGY:** They are a snare that every sensible man would like to be caught in.