

*(GEORG crosses to AMALIA'S table. SIPOS watches — leaving after a few moments. GEORG pretends surprise)*

Miss Balash!

AMALIA

*(Really surprised)*

Mr. Nowack! What are *you* doing here?

GEORG

Celebrating. How about you?

AMALIA

I'm waiting for someone.

GEORG

Anyone in particular?

AMALIA

Well — of course! What kind of girl do you think I am?

*(Changes her mind)*

Never mind, Mr. Nowack. I know.

GEORG

May I sit down for a minute?

AMALIA

No. I'm afraid not.

GEORG

You won't help me celebrate?

AMALIA

Celebrate?

GEORG

My freedom, Miss Balash! Just think of it! Tomorrow's Wednesday, and I can sleep late as I like.

*(GEORG sits down at the table and picks up the extra glass)*

AMALIA

*(Upset)*

Mr. Nowack — I told you — that chair — happens to be reserved.

GEORG

You won't even have one quick drink with me?

AMALIA

I can't!

GEORG

One small, farewell drink?

AMALIA

*(Looking around nervously)*

Well — if it's very small — and very quick.

*(GEORG pours himself a drink. HE also fills AMALIA'S glass, which was half empty)*

GEORG

Thank you, Miss Balash.

*(Toasting)*

Well, here's to Maraczek's Parfumerie — and the people who work there — and the people who used to work there — and all the customers —

AMALIA

*(Quickly)*

And that covers everything!

*(AMALIA drinks. GEORG drinks)*

GEORG

Good wine.

*(Takes another sip)*

AMALIA

Mr. Nowack, are you spying on me?

GEORG

Spying?

AMALIA

Did you come here to make sure I really have a date — that I wasn't just inventing an excuse not to work tonight?

GEORG

Miss Balash, who would I be spying for? Maraczek?

AMALIA

*(Very determined)*

Mr. Nowack — if you don't leave this table immediately, I'm going to have to call the waiter.

*(The WAITER, who has been hovering uneasily nearby, takes this as his cue to approach)*

WAITER

Yes, madam?

AMALIA

*(Taken aback)*

Oh — ah — *there* you are.

WAITER

May I put a word in?

*(AMALIA nods)*

The Café Imperiale is a rendezvous for *lovers*. Look around you. We try to preserve a romantic atmosphere. And I find it very difficult, madam, when you and your husband insist on fighting right in the middle of it. Can't you argue at home?

AMALIA

This is *not* my husband! This is a — business associate.

WAITER

Well — talk business someplace else, please.

*(WAITER EXITS)*

46 *Tango Tragique* (Orchestra)

GEORG

You say you're meeting someone here? Someone you've known very long?

AMALIA

Mr. Nowack, will you leave?

GEORG

It doesn't seem right for a man to keep a girl waiting — all alone... in such a public place.

AMALIA

Will you please leave?

GEORG

Even if he's an old friend — a dear friend...

AMALIA

I don't wish to discuss it with you, Mr. Nowack.

GEORG

*(Re: "Tango Tragique" which has been playing in the background)*  
What's the name of that tune?

*(No answer from AMALIA)*

My mother used to sing it when I was a baby.

AMALIA

So did mine.

GEORG

Miss Balash — do you realize? We've just found something in common. At one time — we were both infants.

AMALIA

But I grew up.

GEORG

I think it's called "Tango Tragique."

AMALIA

*(Looking around the café)*  
What if he's already been here and seen us together — and gone? I'll never forgive you!

*(GEORG notes the book on the table. HE picks it up and looks at it)*

GEORG

What's this?

AMALIA

Put that back!

GEORG

"Anna Karenina"...

AMALIA

Yes. It's a book. By Leo Tolstoy. A Russian. Now will you please put it back.

(GEORG looks at the rose)

GEORG

What's this for?

AMALIA

That's none of your business!

GEORG

Miss Balash, is it possible you've never even *met* this man?

AMALIA

That's ridiculous!

GEORG

Of course it is. And yet, you know, some girls — and some men — do make appointments with strangers. And sometimes it turns out rather well. And — on the other hand — sometimes it turns out not so well. I remember a girl I used to know. She started writing to someone through a Lonely Hearts Club. They corresponded for a while — then decided to meet. I seem to recall she was to have a flower in her book — and he would have the same flower in his buttonhole. And they did recognize each other, I guess. The next day the police found her left leg floating in the Danube. And, you know — they never did find the rest of her. Or her book.

#37 *Mr. Nowack, Will You Please... (Amalia, Waiter)*

~~AMALIA~~

~~AT THE COUNT OF FIVE, I'LL SCREAM  
SO YOU'D BETTER GO — AND SOON!~~

One!

~~GEORG~~

~~I just want to talk to you —~~

~~AMALIA~~

~~DON'T FORGET I'VE HAD SOME WINE AND  
NOTHING TO EAT SINCE NOON.~~

Two!

~~GEORG~~

~~We could go somewhere and have a sandwich maybe...~~