

THE MERRY WIDOW

ACT III

DANILO : It's really the Fatherland that forbids you ! (*More soberly.*) If you take your millions out of the country, Pontevedro is bankrupt.

ANNA (*after a little pause—lelly*) : I see . . . So that's it . . . Very well. I certainly can't allow the Fatherland to be ruined. The marriage to Camille will not take place.

DANILO (*rising quickly—delighted*) : You mean it ?

ANNA : I mean it.

DANILO (*suddenly remembering—sobering again*) : But—but there's the awkward little matter of your rendezvous in the summerhouse—

ANNA (*impatiently*) : I didn't have any rendezvous in the summerhouse ! It was—somebody else.

DANILO (*astounded*) : Somebody else ? Who ?

ANNA : A married woman. To get her out of a compromising situation I stepped into the breach at the last moment. And that's that.

DANILO (*beside himself with joy—and yet furious with ANNA*) : And you're only just telling me this now ?—after letting me go black in the face with misery and frustration . . .

ANNA (*moving close to him, lifting her face to his, and speaking very challengingly*) And why did you go black in the face with misery and frustration ?—"Because"—?

DANILO (*his lips very close to hers—in a very feeble voice*) : Yes . . . because . . .

ANNA (*desperately*) : Oh, why won't you admit that it's because you love me ?

DANILO : Anna, please ! . . . I don't want to have to do my half-witted laugh again—ANNA : Then don't ! Just tell me why you went black in the face—for love of me, or of the Fatherland ?

DANILO (*gulps*) : The Fatherland.

ANNA (*sincerely reproachful*) : And I suppose it's also for love of the Fatherland that you go to Maxim's every night ?

(DANILO nods, miserably.)

ANNA (*angrily*) : I don't believe you ! You're—you're—

DANILO (*eagerly*) : What ? What ? What am I ?

ANNA : You're—you're absolutely—

DANILO : Tell me—tell me—

ANNA (*almost weeping*) : Oh, why won't you tell me the truth ?

(*The music of No. 24—"THE MERRY WIDOW WALTZ"—begins.*)

DANILO (*tenderly*) : Anna . . . !

ANNA : Yes ?

DANILO : You know the truth, don't you ? And if I can't say it . . . won't you let this melody say it for me ?

ACT III

THE MERRY WIDOW

No. 24 . . . "THE MERRY WIDOW WALTZ."

(ANNA and DANILLO)

Music playing,

Hear it saying

"I love you"

Vows unheeding,

Softly pleading

"Love me too !"

Can't you hear it whisper

All your heart would know ?

You could be

The world to me—

I love you so !

ANNA :

When now you touch my hand

I seem to understand ;

My heart is full of joy—

The sweetest joy I've ever known ;

Ever dear to me shall be

The memory of the melody

That tells me you are mine,

And mine alone !

(*As the orchestra begins the repeat of the melody, DANILLO takes ANNA in his arms, and they move together to the languorous waltz-rhythm. After sixteen bars they stop waltzing and sing the last half of the refrain:*)

ANNA } Can't you hear it whisper

DANILO } All your heart would know ?

You could be

The world to me—

I love you so !

(*At the end of the song, ANNA gives a happy little laugh, and exits R.*)

(DANILO stands looking longingly after her. His expression changes quickly to one of formality as ZETA, KROMOV, BOGDANOVITSCH and PRITSCH re-enter L. ZETA takes DANILLO by the arm.)

ZETA : Well ? Well ? How did you get on ?

DANILO (*with satisfaction*) : Madame Clavari's marriage to de Rosillon is—off.

ALL : Bravo !

ZETA : Danilo—you're a diplomatic genius !

(VALENCIENNE enters R. with a number of GUESTS.)

KROMOV : But what made her compromise herself in such a way ?

DANILO : She didn't ! Not the slightest little bit ! She only stepped into the breach for another woman.

ALL : Another woman ?

DANILO : A married woman, naturally . . .