

(ANNA has started at the mention of DANILO's name, and suddenly seems in graver mood.)

ANNA (frowning): Count Danilovitsch? . . . Whatever makes you mention him?

ZETA (embarrassed): Well, now—er—oh, not because I thought for a moment—er—oh, no—certainly not—

ANNA (almost sadly): The Count and I . . . Oh, it doesn't matter . . . It doesn't matter in the least. It was nothing, anyway.

ZETA: What was nothing?

ANNA: After all, why should there have been anything?

ZETA: My dear Madame, I've no idea why there should have been anything! I thought you said there was nothing.

ANNA: So there was! Nothing at all!

ZETA: I see. (To himself.) So there was something—!

No. 5. MELOS. BALLROOM WALTZ.

(Played once only—starting mezzoforte, and, as before, fading down under dialogue and dying away.)

ST. B.: Ah—music! (To ANNA.) Madame, may I escort you to the ballroom? (Offers his arm.)

CASCADA: No—please, Madame, allow me—

MEN (ad lib.): No, Madame, please allow me . . . allow me! . . . etc.

ANNA (gay again now): So many escorts! . . . Gentlemen, please! . . . (To ZETA.) Baron—you look rather less dangerous than the rest . . . (As ZETA reacts.) Oh! That wasn't very tactful of me, was it? (Laughs.) Oh, well—it's the truth, anyway! Come along—

ZETA: Delighted!

(ANNA takes ZETA's arm, and together they stroll off, upstage L.)

(The MEN, chatting among themselves, follow eagerly—leaving ST. BRIOCHE and CASCADA, who are arguing.)

ST. B.: I tell you I'm going to marry the Widow! (Exit angrily after the others.)

CASCADA (calling to ST. BRIOCHE as he goes): And I tell you—so am I! (Exit after ST. BRIOCHE.)

VALEN. (still talking to CAMILLE): And I say you shall marry her, Camille! I want you to! You must!

CAMILLE: But, Valencienne . . . (Music dying away.)

VALEN.: You'll be very happy—and I shall remain a respectable wife . . .

CAMILLE (resigned—escorting her off): Oh, very well . . . To please you, I'll marry her . . . The sooner the better!

VALEN. (indignantly): Well! . . . There's no need to be in such a hurry! . . .

(Exeunt.)

(Enter DANILO, upstage R., escorted by an excited bevy of LADIES. They are laughing delightedly and making a great fuss of DANILO as they bring him to downstage C.)

At the discretion of the Musical Director, the introduction to No. 6—DANILO's opening song—can be used in advance here to cover DANILO's entrance with the LADIES.)

LADIES (ad lib.): Danilo! . . . We're so glad you've come! . . . Now the party will really start! . . . My, you're looking handsome to-night, Danilo! . . . Danilo, will you dance with me? . . . Promise you'll save a dance for me, Danilo! . . . etc.

DANILO (protesting, laughingly): Ladies . . . ladies! What a reception! . . . But it won't do at all, you know! I'm not here to enjoy myself . . .

(Exclamations of incredulity and dismay from the LADIES.)

. . . oh dear me, no! The stern call of Duty—

(The music of No. 6—"YOU'LL FIND ME AT MAXIM'S"—begins.)

LADIES: Duty—?

DANILO: Apparently the Fatherland needs me. Not that I approve of overtime, mind you!

No. 6 . . . "YOU'LL FIND ME AT MAXIM'S"

(DANILO and the LADIES)

The duties of an Attaché
Are very onerous indeed—
For fully half an hour each day
My letters I'm supposed to read;
I quickly file 'em all away—
Some private life a man must lead!—
And there's a certain cabaret
That has exactly what I need . . .

You'll find me at Maxim's,
Where all the girls are dreams!
They dance in line so neatly—
Embrace you indiscreetly!
Lolo, Dodo, Jou-Jou—
Clou-Clou, Margot, Frou-Frou . . .
One kiss, and I completely
Forget the Fatherland!

I find the Diplomatic Corps
About as boring as can be;
Official parties I ignore—
They're not at all my cup of tea.
The girls I like to entertain
Can never boast a fam'ly tree;
Nor, from a host who buys champagne,
Do they expect diplomacy . . .

GIRLS:
DANILO:

(bouche fermée): Mmmm . . .
A dancer is content, they say,
If she can please her gentleman;
The ladies of my cabaret
Indubitably can can-can . . .