

She Loves Me

TONIGHT I'LL WALK RIGHT
UP AND SIT RIGHT DOWN
BESIDE THE SMARTEST GIRL IN TOWN
AND THEN IT'S ANYBODY'S GUESS.
MORE AND MORE I'M BREATHING LESS AND LESS.

IN MY IMAGINATION
I CAN HEAR OUR CONVERSATION
TAKING SHAPE TONIGHT AT EIGHT.
I'LL SIT THERE SAYING ABSOLUTELY NOTHING
OR I'LL JABBER LIKE AN APE, TONIGHT AT EIGHT.

2 MORE MINUTES, 3 MORE SECONDS, 10 MORE HOURS TO GO!
I'LL KNOW WHEN THIS IS DONE
IF SOMETHING'S ENDED OR BEGUN
AND IF IT GOES ALL RIGHT, WHO KNOWS?
I MIGHT PROPOSE TONIGHT AT EIGHT!

#18 *Step To The Back Room* (Orchestra)

(BLACKOUT.)

*The workroom. AMALIA and RITTER are sitting at a long table,
Christmas-wrapping packages.)*

RITTER

This is fun. I love Christmas-wrapping.

AMALIA

It's certainly a pleasant change. You know — for the last month, I've done practically nothing but fill those darn tubes of Mona Lisa.

RITTER

Well — what do you care? You're in love with some nice, eligible young man. Pretty soon you'll be able to kiss all this goodbye. Tell me — what's he like? Tell me all about him. I love to suffer.

(AMALIA hesitates noticeably)

AMALIA

Well —

RITTER

Is he tall?

AMALIA
(Evasively)
So-so.

RITTER
So-so six feet? So-so five feet?

AMALIA
I never measured.

RITTER
Color of hair? Color of eyes?

AMALIA
Eh — sandy hair. Not really light. Not really dark.

RITTER
And the eyes —?

AMALIA
Bluish — greenish —

RITTER
(Beginning to smell something fishy)
Brownish?

AMALIA
A little.

RITTER
Is he handsome?

AMALIA
It's difficult to say. I mean — at times he is — and then again at times he's not.

RITTER
Well-built?

AMALIA
Oh — average.

RITTER
Would you like a piece of good advice?

She Loves Me

(AMALIA nods)

Don't lose him in a crowd.

(There is a brief pause)

AMALIA

Why — oh, why — am I such an unconvincing liar? The fact is I've never met him — ever, really.

RITTER

Never?

AMALIA

(Nodding)

That's why I don't know if he's tall, wide, short, narrow, pink or green — or even what his name is.

RITTER

You mean all of this fuss is just for a blind date? My God, you're even more desperate than I am.

AMALIA

It's not a blind date! I *know* him!

RITTER

How?

AMALIA

Letters. Many, many letters.

RITTER

You belong to a Lonely Hearts Club?

AMALIA

(Shaking her head)

I've never *done* that sort of thing. I used to read the advertisements in the papers...

RITTER

Who hasn't? Young man wants young lady. Young lady wants young man.

Act I Scene 2

#19 *I Don't Know His Name* (Amalia, Ritter)

AMALIA

But I never took them seriously. Until — one day — I saw his advertisement. Even then, I tried not to answer it. Really. But it kept calling out to me..."

RITTER

He could be seventy-five!

AMALIA

(Shaking her head)

The advertisement said: "Young man."

RITTER

You haven't even asked for a photograph?

AMALIA

I know him so well, Ilona. I know that he's a very successful person and terribly well educated. And he's gentle and kind, soft spoken... I know all this about him! And so much more! I've just never *met* him — that's all.

(The perfume shop. KODALY has a CUSTOMER GEORG is at the cash register. SIPOS is arranging the music boxes into a pyramid. MARACZEK ENTERS and approaches GEORG)

MARACZEK

Mr. Nowack — perhaps you can help me...

GEORG

Yes, sir?

MARACZEK

I'm looking for the Christmas decorations. I don't see them.

GEORG

We haven't started them yet. I meant to talk to you about it in a day or two...

MARACZEK

I'm sick and tired of your running to me — like a baby — on every little matter that comes up!