

START

ELSA: *(Rising, taking his arm, crosses D.C.)* Georg, those mountains—they're magnificent!

CAPTAIN: Yes, they're not like any other mountains—they're friendly. Look, that green stretch of woods over there—when the wind moves through it, it's like a restless sea.

ELSA: And that sweet little village.

CAPTAIN: That's not a village. That's a town.

ELSA: Oh, I'm sorry—I didn't mean to hurt its feelings.

CAPTAIN: *(Crosses in to her)* It's fun being with you. You're quite an experience for me.

ELSA: You're quite an experience for me, too. Somewhere in you there's a fascinating man. Occasionally I catch a glimpse of him, and when I do, he's exciting. *(She sits L. of table.)*

CAPTAIN: *(Crosses up to L. of her)* Exciting? I've never been called exciting before.

ELSA: I'm beginning to understand you better now that I see you here— You know, you're a little like those mountains—*(He crosses D.L.C.)* except that you keep moving. How can you be away from this place as much as you are?

CAPTAIN: Maybe I've been searching for a reason to come back here to stay.

ELSA: Georg, I like it here very much.

CAPTAIN: *(Embarrassed)* Max can't still be on the telephone. *(Crosses above coffee table—R. of ELSA.)* I know he's desperate about getting singers for the Kaltzberg Festival but— *(To ELSA.)* You like it here?

ELSA: Oh, we'd have to spend some time in Vienna. I have Heinrich's estate to look after.

CAPTAIN: I thought that was a corporation now.

ELSA: It is, and I'm president.

CAPTAIN: You president of a corporation!

ELSA: After all, I managed Heinrich's affairs for years before he died.

CAPTAIN: I can't see you sitting behind a desk. *(He sits R. of coffee table.)*

ELSA: Well, of course, I wear a business suit and smoke a big cigar. *(FRANZ enters from the house.)*

FRANZ: Excuse me, Captain, Herr Detweiler would like his coffee.

CAPTAIN: While he's telephoning?

FRANZ: He just finished.

(FRANZ pours a cup of coffee. MAX DETWEILER enters. He is charming and vital. He carries a small notebook and pencil.)

MAX: I'm sorry I took so long.

CAPTAIN: Any luck?

MAX: How would you like this for the Kaltzberg Festival—the finest choral group in Austria, the greatest mixed quartet in all Europe—and the best soprano in the world?

ELSA: Max, that's something I'd love to hear!

MAX: So would I. *(MAX sits on stool D.L.)* All I've got up to now is a basso who isn't even profundo.

(FRANZ exits into the house.)

ELSA: Max, you always come up with a good Festival Concert.

(The CAPTAIN takes MAX a cup of coffee with a piece of pastry on the saucer.)

MAX: And why? Because my motto is: "Never start out looking for the people you wind up getting." That's why I've been telephoning Paris, Rome, Stockholm, London—

ELSA: On Georg's telephone?

MAX: How else could I afford it? Why am I up here?

CAPTAIN: I hoped it was because you liked me.

MAX: Of course I like you. Why shouldn't I like you? You live like a king. You have an excellent wine cellar—

ELSA: Max!

MAX: I like rich people. I like the way they live. I like the way I live when I'm with them. *(We hear the Abbey bells.)*
Speaking as a government official, I—Georg, is there a cathedral around here?

CAPTAIN: That's our Abbey—Nonnberg Abbey.

MAX: Do they have a choir?

CAPTAIN: A beautiful one.

MAX: Good! In the next few days I have to visit all these towns around here and listen to saengerbunds, choirs, quartets—

CAPTAIN: You'll be here for meals, won't you?

MAX: Oh, yes! *(MAX rises and looks off over the heads of the audience, where MAX plainly sees a mountain village.)* It was in a town just about that size—Watzmann—where I discovered the St. Ignatius Boys Choir. In 1930 they won the Festival, became very famous, toured all over the world.

ELSA: Oh, yes—whatever became of them?

MAX: By the time their voices changed they were rich enough to live in America. *(Indicating.)* Who lives in that dilapidated castle down there? Rumpelstiltskin?

CAPTAIN: Baron Elberfeld. The oldest family in the valley.

ELSA: I'd like to meet him. I'd like to meet all your friends. Georg, why don't you give a dinner for me while I'm here? Nothing very much—just something lavish.

CAPTAIN: I wouldn't know whom to invite. Today it's difficult to tell who's a friend and who's an enemy.

ELSA: This isn't a good time to make enemies. Let's make some friends.

(Wishing to change the subject, the CAPTAIN goes up-stage and looks off.)

CAPTAIN: I can't understand what's happened to the children.

ELSA: You're not worried about them, are you?

CAPTAIN: They should have been here to welcome you.

ELSA: It couldn't have been an intentional slight because they haven't met me yet.

CAPTAIN: Forgive me, I'll try to find them. *(He exits U.L.)*

MAX: Elsa, have you made up Georg's mind yet? Is he going to marry you?

ELSA: Oh, yes! He hasn't admitted it yet. There seems to be something standing in his way.

MAX: *(Crosses C.)* You don't know what it is?

ELSA: No.

MAX: I do.

ELSA: *(Rises)* What?

MAX: It's very simple. It's money. *(Takes her arm, crosses D.C.)*

ELSA: Money?

MAX: Yes. He's rich and you're rich *(We sing, D.C. ELSA crosses D.R.)*

In all the famous love affairs
The lovers have to struggle.
In garret rooms away upstairs
The lovers starve and snuggle.
They're famous for misfortune which
They seem to have no fear of,
While lovers who are very rich
You very seldom hear of.

CAPTAIN: *(Enters U.L. and crosses D.R.C. Speaking)*
Not a sign of them anywhere. . . *(MAX pushes ELSA towards CAPTAIN.)*

ELSA: *(Clutching CAPTAIN)*

No little shack do you share with me,
We do not flee from a mortgagee,
Nary a care in the world have we—

(She crosses to MAX.)

MAX: How can love survive?