

CAPTAIN

I was calling the housekeeper and she didn't answer. Do you know why?

FRANZ

Sometimes she doesn't hear, sir.

FRAU SCHMIDT

*(Entering downstage right.)*

I'm sorry, sir, I was answering the telephone. Good day, sir. We're happy to have you home again.

CAPTAIN

Why did the last governess leave?

FRAU SCHMIDT

Who knows? She just said, "I've had enough of this," and walked out.

CAPTAIN

Why? Was Louisa playing tricks again? Putting toads in her bed?

FRAU SCHMIDT

She didn't complain of that, sir.

CAPTAIN

*(Crossing left, reading letter.)*

Well, there's another one coming today. And this one can't walk out.

FRAU SCHMIDT

Oh?

CAPTAIN

She's coming from Nonnberg Abbey with orders to stay until September.

FRAU SCHMIDT

I hope you'll be at home for a time, sir.

CAPTAIN

Just until tomorrow. The telephone call – was it for me?

FRAU SCHMIDT

No, sir, it was for Franz. Before you arrived there was a call from Vienna – a Frau Schraeder. I have the number in the pantry.

CAPTAIN

*(Crosses downstage right.)*

I know the number. Oh, I shall be back in about a month with some guests.

FRAU SCHMIDT

Yes, sir. Do you know how many, sir?