

CAPTAIN

Just two. Herr Detweiler –

FRANZ

Ah, Herr Detweiler.

CAPTAIN

And Frau Schraeder.

*(He exits downstage right.)*

FRANZ

Who wanted me on the telephone?

FRAU SCHMIDT

It was the post office. They've got a telegram for you. It will be delivered at seven o'clock.

FRANZ

Seven o'clock? That gives me five hours to be nervous.

FRAU SCHMIDT

*(Going up the stairs.)*

With that scatterbrained boy delivering telegrams –

FRANZ

Well, that's one thing people are saying – if the Germans did take over Austria, we'd have efficiency.

FRAU SCHMIDT

Don't let the Captain hear you say that.

*(The CAPTAIN whistles offstage. FRAU SCHMIDT stops short, bristling.)*

He didn't whistle for us when his wife was alive.

FRANZ

He's being the captain of a ship again.

*(The CAPTAIN whistles again.)*

FRAU SCHMIDT

I can't bear being whistled for – it's humiliating.

FRANZ

In the Imperial Navy, the bosun always whistled for us.

*(We hear the doorbell.)*

FRAU SCHMIDT

But I wasn't in the Imperial Navy.

FRANZ

Too bad. You could have made a fortune.

*(He exits into the hallway toward the outer door. FRAU SCHMIDT comes down the stairs and exits into the library downstage right. FRANZ re-enters, followed by MARIA.)*