

LEROUX. Daisy?

WIDOW. Thank you!

MADAME BATHILDE. (*Exiting:*) Monsieur Leroux!

MADAME CARON. (*Exiting:*) Dear Monsieur Leroux!

WIDOW. Come kiss me for his sake, dear.

(*WIDOW and MARIE embrace and kiss, sitting on the couch.*)

MARIE. François couldn't be better off than he is now, could he?

WIDOW. Not imaginable.

MARIE. I love to have you kiss me, Daisy.

WIDOW. Do you, dear?

MARIE. It's just the way François used to do it his own self.

WIDOW. Is it?

MARIE. Exactly. And he hugged me the same way. Just exactly. Isn't it strange?

WIDOW. I guess it must run in the blood.

MARIE. You remind me of him in oh so many ways. You look like him, you act like him, you have his dear voice, you almost walk like him.

WIDOW. Do I?

MARIE. François was more graceful.

WIDOW. Hmp!

MARIE. But in woman's clothes I think he wouldn't have been. I don't think he would have kicked his skirts around the way you do sometimes. Still—he might because he was an impetuous creature. These three months it's almost as if I was *with* him.

WIDOW. I am glad that I remind you of him.

(*WIDOW gives MARIE a long kiss. MARIE pulls back in shock.*)

MARIE. *Daisy!* I do wish you wouldn't smoke!

WIDOW. Just a little corncob once in a while, in memory of *him*.

MARIE. He used to forget himself and swear. You do that, Daisy, and it's very naughty. Promise me you won't.

WIDOW. I'll be da—hanged if I will. But I promise for you.

MARIE. And he wasn't as—as queer as you, Daisy. He wouldn't be dressed the way you are if it was his funeral.

WIDOW. He certainly wouldn't. He'd be in a suit. I know, I know. I'm made all wrong.

MARIE. Of course you've made all of dear François's friends rich. How sweet that was of you! And they all worship you, just as they did him.

WIDOW. It's no merit in me, child. I did it for his sake.

MARIE. It's more merit in you than it would have been in him, a hundred times over. For they were his friends, not yours. But you don't treat poor Monsieur André right.

WIDOW. Monsieur André is a bad man and he tried to ruin your father.

MARIE. He is bad, but there is good in everybody somewhere. He's never had the right influences around him. It hurts me so to see him hopeful a week, and then miserable a week and then hopeful again. You know it's cruel. And he loves you, Daisy.

WIDOW. You poor innocent, he's only after my money.

MARIE. It's no such thing.

WIDOW. How do you know?

MARIE. Because he told me so.

WIDOW. That settles it.

MARIE. Marry him, Daisy.

WIDOW. You really think I should, dear heart?

MARIE. It would uplift him, and save him. Do it, Daisy, for my sake.

(*Raised voices, CHARLIE's and ANDRÉ's, off left.*)

ANDRÉ. (*Offstage:*) I won't wait a moment longer.

CHARLIE. (*Offstage:*) Please be patient, sir...

ANDRÉ. (*Offstage:*) I will not be patient! I will see her now!

MARIE. I hear voices now. I don't wish to meet anyone. It's too sad.

WIDOW. Rest in my bedroom, darling. And do try to bear up.

(*WIDOW leads MARIE off up right. CHARLIE enters up left.*)

CHARLIE. Monsieur André says he'll wait no longer, Madam.