

**SIPOS**

No, no, no. Let me think — more than anyone else, I'd say she looks like someone in the shop...

**GEORG**

In our shop?

**SIPOS**

As a matter of fact — you know who? Miss Balash. She looks very much like her.

**GEORG**

*(Stunned)*

Miss Balash? Amalia Balash? But I thought you said “attractive.”

**SIPOS**

Well — I think so. But, of course, if you don't care for Miss Balash, you're certainly not going to like *this* girl.

**GEORG**

They're that similar?

**SIPOS**

See for yourself.

*(GEORG moves to a spot from which he can see AMALIA. The minute HE spots her, his body droops. The rose drops from his hand and falls to the floor. Then he starts to EXIT)*

You're just going to *leave* her there?

**GEORG**

What do you suggest? You want me to tell her *I'm* the poor fool who's written all those letters? She'd make me the laughingstock of the city!

**SIPOS**

How? She wrote some too. “Dear Friend: I took you out of the box — I cut you open...” And so on...

**GEORG**

It's impossible!

**SIPOS**

What?

**GEORG**

She never wrote those letters! She couldn't have!

**SIPOS**

You think it's just a coincidence? She just happens to like this cafe — she just happens to be reading “Anna Karenina” — she just happens to be using a rose as a bookmark — in December!!

**GEORG**

But it's Miss Balash! I can't be in love with Miss Balash!

**SIPOS**

How do you know until you try?

*Act I Scene IV*

**GEORG**

I know her. There's some mistake, Ladislav. There's got to be.

**SIPOS**

Then, talk to her. Find out.

**GEORG**

*(Nodding in agreement)*

She's not Dear Friend. She's not. She can't be!

*(Suddenly terrified)*

Can she?

*(GEORG crosses to AMALIA'S table. SIPOS watches — leaving after a few moments. GEORG pretends surprise)*

Miss Balash!

**AMALIA**

*(Really surprised)*

Mr. Nowack! What are you doing here?

**GEORG**

Celebrating. How about you?

**AMALIA**

I'm waiting for someone.

**GEORG**

Anyone in particular?

**AMALIA**

Well — of course! What kind of girl do you think I am?

*(Changes her mind)*

Never mind, Mr. Nowack. I know.

**GEORG**

May I sit down for a minute?

**AMALIA**

No. I'm afraid not.

**GEORG**

You won't help me celebrate?

**AMALIA**

Celebrate?

**GEORG**

My freedom, Miss Balash! Just think of it! Tomorrow's Wednesday, and I can sleep late as I like.

*(GEORG sits down at the table and picks up the extra glass)*