

ALNM - SIDE – FREDRIKA and MADAME ARMFELDT

- FREDRIKA: If you cheated a little, it would come out.
- MADAME ARMFELDT: Solitaire is the only thing in life that demands absolute honesty. As a woman who has number kings among her lovers, I think my word can be taken on that point.
- What was I talking about?
- FREDRIKA: You said I should watch.
- MADAME ARMFELDT: Watch – What?
- FREDRIKA: It sounds very unlikely to me, but you said I should watch for the night to smile.
- MADAME ARMFELDT: Everything is unlikely, dear, so don't let that deter you. Of course the summer night smiles. Three times.
- FREDRIKA: But how does it smile?
- MADAME ARMFELDT: Good heavens, what sort of nanny did you have?
- FREDRIKA: None, really. Except Mother, and the other actresses in the company – and the stage manager.
- MADAME ARMFELDT: Stage managers are not nannies. They don't have the talent.
- FREDRIKA: But if it happens – how does it happen?
- MADAME ARMFELDT: You get a feeling. Suddenly the jasmine starts to smell stronger, then a frog croaks – then all the stars in Orion wink. Don't squeeze your bosoms against the chair, dear. It'll stunt their growth. And then where will you be?
- FREDRIKA: But why does it smile, Grandmother?
- MADAME ARMFELDT: At the follies of human beings, of course. The first smiles at the young, who know nothing. (*She looks pointedly at FREDRIKA*). The second, at the fools who know too little, like Desirée.
- FREDRIKA: Mother isn't a fool.
- MADAME ARMFELDT: Um-hum. And the third at the old who know too much – like me. Frid, time for my nap.
- FREDRIKA: Grandmother, might it really smile tonight?
- MADAME ARMFELDT: Why not? Now, practice your piano, dear, preferably with the soft pedal down. And as a treat tonight at dinner, I shall tell you amusing stories about my liaison with the Baron de Signac, who was, to put it mildly, peculiar.