

START

GLORIA You're a genius.

BERNARD I know- it's lovely, isn't it? Now hadn't you better rush?

GLORIA You want to get rid of me?

BERNARD Darling, of course I hate to see you go. But time passes. Planes take off.

BERTHA (*Entering*) Here's your coffee.

BERNARD Thank you, Bertha.

GLORIA Bertie, dear? Will you do me a favour?

BERTHA Depends.

GLORIA It's Mr. Bernard. Will you take good care of him till I get back on Monday?

BERTHA I'll do my best. But he's a big boy now, you know.

GLORIA Yes, but they're all just kids at heart.

BERTHA I don't know about that. There aren't too many like Monsieur. He's in a class of his own.

BERNARD Yes. Yes. Very good. That'll do, Bertha.

GLORIA See how much she appreciates you, darling?

BERTHA Oh, I spend my life appreciating Monsieur.

BERNARD Well, could you appreciate me somewhere else?

BERTHA She asked me a question and I answered it.

BERNARD And we're all very grateful.

GLORIA Well, don't appreciate him too much. You could end up falling in love with him, and I'll be very jealous.

BERTHA I doubt it'll come to that.

BERNARD Mercifully. And you'd better hurry, darling.

GLORIA I'll go and get dressed. (*She exits stage right.*)

BERNARD What's for lunch?

BERTHA The American's flying out?

BERNARD Yes. Well?

BERTHA I'm waiting for my orders. Monsieur has his timetables. And the menus change according to the timetables. All the time! They change. They change round all the time.

BERNARD All right. Take it easy. Now then, Mlle Gabriella will be here for lunch.

BERTHA Ah! Well, that's all right then. Think I can cope with that one. But it isn't easy you know. I find it very difficult to keep track of them all. I don't know how you manage it. It isn't easy.

BERNARD I know it isn't easy. You don't have to keep reminding me.

BERTHA Well, as long as you appreciate me. That's all I ask, just a little appreciation. So what do you want for lunch?

BERNARD You're the cook. You please yourself.

BERTHA Mlle Gabriella? What about saltimbocca alla romana?

BERNARD We had a saltimbocca last Saturday.

BERTHA Of course we did. Mlle Gabriella was here last Saturday. She liked it. She told me so.

BERNARD All right, you win. Saltimbocca alla romana.

BERTHA And what about dinner? A nice roast? Lamb, perhaps?

BERNARD Roast Lamb? Yes, excellent.

BERTHA With olives?

BERNARD *(gets his notebook out)* Yes- er, no, no, wait a minute. Can't be done.

BERTHA No olives?

BERNARD No. No roast lamb either. Near thing that, Bertha. You see it's Mlle Gabriella for lunch, but it's Mlle Gretchen for dinner. She arrives at 19.06.

BERTHA I see. No need to say any more. No roast lamb. Back to sauerkraut and frankfurters.

BERNARD I'm afraid so. Sorry about that.

BERTHA Just one thing after another. I don't know. *(BERTHA exits)*
(GLORIA enters in her TWA uniform.)

END