

From A MAN'S WORLD by Rachel Crothers  
Excerpt from Act III  
1F, 1M

*Fritz, a Dutch violinist, confesses to his friend Frank, a female writer, that he has concerns about the honor of Malcolm Gaskell, the man she loves.*

FRITZ: I would like to see you.

FRANK: Come in. (She goes to sit in arm chair below the fire and Fritz closing the door goes to couch.)

FRITZ: You tink I haf broken my promise? You tink I haf been -- dot I haf talked about you to Lione. Dot iss true, but not in de way that you tink. I was very foolish and I argue wid her and I say a very foolish ting, but it was not a bad ting --I mean it was not about you at all. It was about you, but it wasn't. I don't tink anything but what I always haf and dot iss dot you are de best and most honest woman in de world. Do you believe dot?

FRANK: I want to believe it -- but, Oh, Fritz, how could you discuss me at all? I thought you were so different from the others. I've told you every thing. How could you talk about it?

FRITZ: I know. I know I was one big fool, but I lose my head and I said a ting I wish back.

FRANK: And something else that disappointed me awfully this afternoon. Why on earth didn't you take the chance Mr. Gaskell gave you to play?

FRITZ: I couldn't.

FRANK It can't be because of Malcolm Gaskell himself, can it?

FRITZ You must not ask me.

FRANK: For goodness sake, speak out. I'm sick of suspicion and curiosity. How dare they take Kiddie's picture down and try to squeeze something out of it? How dare they? Of course they decided that he looks like me. Isn't it a joke? Let's not have any more made up scandals. If you have anything against Gaskell, go and tell him so like a man.

FRITZ: You would like to believe in him above any man in the world?

FRANK: I do.

FRITZ: Den I will ask him someding -- somebody has got to do it for you -- but if anything bad should come of dis--

FRANK: Oh, I'm not afraid and he wouldn't lie to you!

FRITZ: You are very sure of him. Don't – don't let it – don't let it mean too much to you if -- if he is not de man you tink. It would mean everything to you, won't it? Frankie, don't – don't break your heart about a man. I -- I couldn't bear it if anybody hurt you. (He raises her hand to his lips and she slowly puts her other hand on his head. )

FRANK: You – you've been so good to me, Fritz.

FRITZ: Don't tink I don't want to find him worthy of you -- I want you to be happy. You know dot, don t you?

FRANK: I do.

FRITZ: He iss a strong man -- he iss a success. He can take care of a woman -- he has not failed.

FRANK: Neither have you, Fritz.

FRITZ: I haf nodding to offer a woman.

FRANK: You have to offer her what money can't buy for her.

FRITZ: No, the devotion of a lifetime don't count unless a man can say, "I can protect you from hunger and cold and keep you safe for always. " But -- but I would like to know dot some man will do dot and dot he is worthy of you.

FRANK: You dear old Fritz! Your friendship is the most beautiful thing in my life. Oh, Fritz, life is so hard! Love is such a sad, mad, awful thing. It is the greatest danger in the world, isn't it -- the love of men and women. If we could only get along without it. We you and I must be friends always, Fritz. (Her voice breaks. He tries to speak, but turns and goes quickly out. )