

FREDRIKA Oh, I do agree that life at times can seem complicated.

HENRIK Complicated! If only you knew! Oh, Miss... Miss...

FREDRIKA Armfeldt. I am not legitimate.

HENRIK I see. Oh, Miss Armfeldt, all my life, I've made a fiasco of everything. If you knew how poor an opinion I have of myself! If you knew how many times I wish I had been one of the spermatozoa that never reached the womb. *(He breaks from her)* There, there! You see? I've done it again!

FREDRIKA Mr. Egerman, I have toured with mother, you know. I'm broadminded.

HENRIK You are? Then in that case, might I make a confession to you?

FREDRIKA Of course.

HENRIK I hate to burden you on so slight an acquaintance, but bottling it up inside of me is driving me insane. *(Pause. With great effort)* Oh, Miss Armfeldt, for the past eleven months, although I am preparing to enter the Ministry, I— *(He can't get it out)*

FREDRIKA What, Mr. Egerman?

HENRIK I have been madly, hopelessly in love with my stepmother. Do you realize how many mortal sins that involves? Oh, damn everything to hell! I beg your pardon.