

How is this on your busiest day?

SAM. My brother and his friend, Pinkie, can take care of the store. Sometimes there are more important things than business.

BUBBIE. I'm sure you know what you're talking.... You like your work?

SAM. Very much. There was a time — when I was in college — I went for two years — I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I wanted to study literature. My father said, whatever I wanted, fine. He never pushed me. — I thought I might be a teacher or poet.. You have these dreams when you're a child.

BUBBIE. I worked, I worked all my life. What else is there? In the depression you see the poor fellows out of work, hungry, tired, from looking for work they come into the Horn & Hardart cafeteria where I am cleaning the tables. My job is to walk around and pick up the trays, the dishes, after the customer finishes eating. The lucky ones who got a nickle to buy a bowl of soup, a quarter for a plate of corned beef, they eat what they want and leave over, you know? And at the next table somebody is looking like this— *(She makes a face.)* So what do I do? I walk around picking up here, putting down there. That way nothing is wasted. Everybody who comes in, goes away with something in his belly. This was a job.

SAM. *(Puts down his fork.)* So, Mrs. Kantor, tell me, did you receive the package?

BUBBIE. What kind?

SAM. It was a box — maybe this big — with a cake... and — I didn't put a name inside. I thought—

BUBBIE. Oh, this was from *you*. Very nice, Sam. It must

have been 3 ... 4 eggs, half pound butter — good quality chocolate. Nothing cheap here.

SAM. Zalmen the baker made it for me. A special request.

BUBBIE. Very tasty. (*Points to his plate.*) You're not eating, Sam.

SAM. And the hat? Was Isabelle here? Did she see the hat?

BUBBIE. The hat?

SAM. There was a hat — inside.

BUBBIE. Ah, yes, yes. She looked at it.

SAM. Did she like it? Did she put it on?

BUBBIE. Vas?

SAM. *The hat.*

BUBBIE. Yeah — sure.

SAM. Thank you for the kugel, Mrs. Kantor. (*He gets up.*) I'm going back to my stand.

BUBBIE. Sam! — (*She motions for him to sit.*) Please. Sit down. (*He sits.*) Sammy, listen good. I'm gonna give you something you should chew on. — You want to catch the wild monkey, you got to climb up the tree. — F'shtast?

SAM. (*nodding, not sure that he does*) Yes.

BUBBIE. This is Isabelle I'm talkin' here, Sam. This one you gotta be smart to catch. She's got too many fellas chasing after her. It makes her dizzy. She doesn't know which one to take.

SAM. I can understand that.

~~BUBBIE. (*Glances at the door, but doesn't move to answer*)~~