

ELAINE AND MORTIMER

MORTIMER: Hello, Elaine. Were you going somewhere?

ELAINE: I was just going over to tell Father not to wait up for me.

MORTIMER: I didn't know that was still being done, even in Brooklyn.

MARTHA: Just make yourselves at home! [*ABBY and MARTHA exit happily into the kitchen, ELAINE moves over to MORTIMER ready to be kissed*]

ELAINE: Well, can't you take a hint?

MORTIMER: No. That was pretty obvious. A lack of inventiveness, I should say.

ELAINE: Yes—that's exactly what you'd say! [*She walks away, ruffled*]

MORTIMER: [*Not noticing the ruffle*] Where do you want to go for dinner?

ELAINE: I don't care. I'm not very hungry.

MORTIMER: Well, I just had breakfast. Suppose we wait until after the show?

ELAINE: But that'll make it pretty late, won't it?

MORTIMER: Not with the little stinker we're seeing tonight. From what I've heard about it, we'll be at Polly's by ten o'clock.

ELAINE: You ought to be fair to these plays.

MORTIMER: Are these plays fair to me?

ELAINE: I've never seen you walk out on a musical.

MORTIMER: That musical isn't opening tonight.

ELAINE: [*Disappointed*] No?

MORTIMER: Darling, you'll have to learn the rules. With a musical there are always four changes of title and three postponements. They liked it in New Haven but it needs a lot of work.

ELAINE: Oh, I was hoping it was a musical. [*He gives her a look*] After a serious play we join the proletariat in the subway and I listen to a lecture on the drama. After a musical you bring me home in a taxi and you make a few passes.

MORTIMER: Now wait a minute, darling, that's a very inaccurate piece of reporting.

MORTIMER, ABBY AND MARTHA

ABBY: Well, with your fiancée sitting beside you tonight, I do hope the play will be something you can enjoy for once. It may be something romantic. What's the name of it?

MORTIMER: Murder Will Out!

ABBY: Oh, dear! [*She disappears into the kitchen, MORTIMER doesn't notice her absence and goes on talking. He is beside the window seat*]

MORTIMER: When the curtain goes up the first thing you see will be a dead body. . . . [*He lifts the window seat and sees one. Not believing it, he drops the window seat again and turns away. He looks back quickly toward the window seat, opens it again, stares in. He goes slightly mad for a moment. He drops the window seat again and sits on it, as if to hold it down. ABBY comes into the room. When MORTIMER speaks to her it is in a somewhat strained voice*] Aunt Abby!

ABBY: Yes, dear?

MORTIMER: You were going to make plans for Teddy to go to that sanitarium—Happy Dale.

ABBY: Yes, dear, it's all arranged. Dr. Harper was here today and brought the things for Teddy to sign. Here they are. [*She takes the papers from the sideboard and hands them to him*]

MORTIMER: [*Glancing through the papers*] He's got to sign them this minute! He's down in the cellar—get him up here right away.

MARTHA: Oh, no, Mortimer! That's not until after we're gone!

MORTIMER: Right away, I tell you!—right away!

ABBY: Mortimer, how can you say such a thing? Why, as long as we live we won't be separated from Teddy.

MORTIMER: [*Trying to be calm*] Listen, darlings, I'm frightfully sorry, but I've got some shocking news for you. [*The sisters stop work and look at him with some interest*] Now, we've all got to try to keep our heads. You know, we've sort of humored Teddy because we thought he was harmless.

ABBY: Mortimer, why have you suddenly turned against Teddy?—your own brother!

MORTIMER: You've got to know sometime. It might as well be now. Teddy's killed a man!

MARTHA: Nonsense, dear.

MORTIMER: [*He rises and points to the window seat*] There's a body in the window seat!

ABBY: [*Not at all surprised*] Yes, dear, we know.

MORTIMER: You know?

MARTHA: Of course, dear, but it has nothing to do with Teddy. [*Relieved, they resume setting the table*]

ABBY: Now, Mortimer, just forget about it—forget you ever saw the gentleman.

MORTIMER: Forget?

ABBY: We never dreamed you'd peek.

MORTIMER: But who is he?

ABBY: His name's Hoskins—Adam Hoskins. That's really all I know about him—except that he's a Methodist.

MORTIMER: That's all you know about him? Well, what's he doing here? What happened to him?

MARTHA: He died.

MORTIMER: Aunt Martha, men don't just climb into window seats and die.

ABBY: No, he died first.

MORTIMER: But how?

ABBY: Mortimer, don't be so inquisitive! The gentleman died because he drank some wine with poison in it.

MORTIMER: How did the poison get in the wine?

MARTHA: We put it in wine because it's less noticeable. When it's in tea it has a distinct odor.

MORTIMER: You put it in the wine?

ABBY: Yes. And I put Mr. Hoskins in the window seat because Dr. Harper was coming.

JONATHAN AND EINSTEIN

JONATHAN: Come in, Doctor. This is the home of my youth. As a boy, I couldn't wait to escape from this house. And now I'm glad to escape back into it.

EINSTEIN: Yah, Chonny, it's a good hideout.

JONATHAN: The family must still live here. There's something so unmistakably Brewster about the Brewsters. I hope there's a fatted calf awaiting the return of the prodigal.

EINSTEIN: Yah, I'm hungry. [*He sees the fatted calf in the form of the two glasses of wine*] Look, Chonny! Drinks!

JONATHAN: As if we were expected! A good omen. [*EINSTEIN almost scampers to the table, passing JONATHAN, also on his way to the table. As they start to reach for the glasses, ABBY speaks*]

ABBY: Who are you? What are you doing here? [*EINSTEIN and JONATHAN turn and see the two sisters*]

JONATHAN: Aunt Abby! Aunt Martha! It's Jonathan.

MARTHA: You get out of here!

JONATHAN: I'm Jonathan! Your nephew, Jonathan!

ABBY: Oh, no, you're not! You're nothing like Jonathan, so don't pretend you are! You just get out of here!

JONATHAN: Yes, Aunt Abby. I am Jonathan. And this is Dr. Einstein.

ABBY: And he's not Dr. Einstein either.

JONATHAN: Not Dr. Albert Einstein—Dr. Herman Einstein.

ABBY: Who are you? You're not our nephew, Jonathan!

JONATHAN: I see you're still wearing the lovely garnet ring that grandma Brewster bought in England, [*ABBY gasps, looks at the ring and then looks toward MARTHA*] And you, Aunt Martha, still the high collar—to hide the scar where Grandfather's acid burned you. [*MARTHA'S hand goes to her throat. The two sisters stare at each other, then back at JONATHAN*]

MARTHA: His voice is like Jonathan's.

ABBY: Have you been in an accident?

JONATHAN: No. . . . [*His hand goes up to his neck*] My face. . . . [*He clouds*] Dr. Einstein is responsible for that. [*The two sisters look at EINSTEIN*] He's a plastic surgeon. [*Flatly*] He changes people's faces.

MARTHA: But I've seen that face before. [*To ABBY*] Remember when we took the little Schultz boy to the movies—and I was so frightened. It was that face! [*JONATHAN grows tense and looks toward EINSTEIN*]

EINSTEIN: Chonny—easy! [*He goes quickly between JONATHAN and his aunts*] Don't worry! The last five years I give Chonny three faces. I give him another one right away. The last face—I saw that picture, too—just before I operate. And I was intoxicated.

JONATHAN: [*With a growing and dangerous intensity*] You see, Doctor— what you've done to me. Even my own family. . . .

EINSTEIN: [*To calm him*] Chonny—you're home!—in this lovely house! [*To the aunts*] How many times he tells me about Brooklyn—about this house— about his aunts that he loves so much! [*To JONATHAN*] They know you, Chonny. [*To the aunts*] You know it's Jonathan. Speak to him! Tell him so!

EINSTEIN: Well, Chonny, where do we go from here? We got to think fast. The police! They got pictures of that face. I got to operate on you right away. We got to find someplace—and we got to find some place for Mr. Donati, too.

JONATHAN: Don't waste any worry on that rat.

EINSTEIN: But, Chonny, we got a hot stiff on our hands.

JONATHAN: Forget Mr. Donati!

EINSTEIN: But we can't leave a dead body in the rumble seat! You shouldn't have killed him, Chonny. He's a nice fellow—he gives us a lift—and what happens . . . ? [*He gestures strangulation*]

JONATHAN: He said I looked like Boris Karloff! That's your work, Doctor. You did that to me!

EINSTEIN: Now, Chonny—we find a place somewhere—I fix you up quick!

JONATHAN: Tonight!

EINSTEIN: Chonny, I got to eat first. I'm hungry. I'm weak.

TEDDY

TEDDY: Hello, Mortimer! [*He goes to MORTIMER and they shake hands*]

MORTIMER: [*Gravely*] How are you, Mr. President?

TEDDY: Bully, thank you. Just bully. What news have you brought me?

MORTIMER: Just this, Mr. President—the country is squarely behind you.

TEDDY: [*Beaming*] Yes, I know. Isn't it wonderful? [*He shakes MORTIMER'S hand again*] Well, good-by. [*He shakes hands with ELAINE*] Good-by.

ELAINE: Where are you off to, Teddy?

TEDDY: Panama.

TEDDY: I found it! I found it!

JONATHAN: What did you find, Teddy?

TEDDY: [*Descending*] The story of my life—my biography. [*He goes to EINSTEIN*] Here's the picture I was telling you about, General. Here we are, both of us. [*He shows the open book to EINSTEIN*] "President Roosevelt and General Goethals at Culebra Cut." That's me, General, and that's you.

EINSTEIN: [*He looks at the picture*] My, how I've changed!

TEDDY: [*TEDDY looks at EINSTEIN, a little puzzled, but makes the adjustment*] Well, you see that picture hasn't been taken yet. We haven't even started work on Culebra Cut. We're still digging locks. And now, General, we will go to Panama and inspect the new lock.

O'HARA

O'HARA: You do? Say, you're not Mortimer Brewster, the dramatic critic? [*MORTIMER nods*] Say, I'm glad to meet you. We're in the same line of business.

MORTIMER: We are?

O'HARA: Yes, I'm a playwright. This being on the police force is just temporary.

MORTIMER: How long have you been on the force?

O'HARA: Twelve years. I'm collecting material for a play.

MORTIMER: I'll bet it's a honey.

O'HARA: Well, it ought to be. With all the drama I see being a cop. Mr. Brewster, you got no idea what goes on in Brooklyn.

O'HARA: . . . there she is, lying unconscious across the table—in her lingerie—the man is standing over her with a hatchet . . . [*He takes the pose*] . . . I'm tied up in a chair just like you are. . . . The place is an inferno of flames—it's on fire—great effect we got there—when all of a sudden through the window—in comes Mayor La Guardia! [*MORTIMER is startled into consciousness, then collapses again, O'HARA is pacing with self-satisfaction. EINSTEIN pours himself a drink*] Hey, remember who paid for that—go easy on it.

EINSTEIN: Well, I'm listening, ain't I?

O'HARA: How do you like it, so far?

EINSTEIN: It put Chonny to sleep [*EINSTEIN goes over and shakes JONATHAN*] Hey, Chonny, want a drink?

O'HARA: [*Pouring drink*] Let him alone—if he ain't got no more interest than that—he don't get a drink, [*O'HARA tosses a drink down, ready to resume his story*] All right. It's three days later, I been transferred and I'm under charges—that's because somebody stole my badge—all right, I'm walking my beat on Staten Island—forty-sixth precinct—when a guy I'm following, it turns out is really following me. [*There is a knock at the door*] Don't let anybody in. [*EINSTEIN hurries to the landing window and looks out*] So I figure I'll outsmart him. There's a vacant house on the corner. I goes in.

ROONEY

ROONEY: What the hell are you men doing here? I told you I was going to handle this.

KLEIN: Well, sir, we was just. . . . [*KLEIN'S eyes go to the prostrate JONATHAN and ROONEY sees him*]

ROONEY: What happened? Did he put up a fight?

BROPHY: This ain't the guy that blows the bugle. This is his brother. He tried to kill Klein.

ROONEY: [*ROONEY gives them a look*] Turn him over!

BROPHY: We kinda think he's wanted somewhere. [*KLEIN and BROPHY turn JONATHAN over and ROONEY takes a look at him*]

ROONEY: Oh, you kinda think he's wanted somewhere? If you guys don't look at the circulars we hang up in the station, at least you could read True Detective. Certainly he's wanted! In Indiana! Escaped from the Prison for the Criminal Insane—he's a lifer. For God's sake, that's how he was described— he looked like Karloff!

KLEIN: Was there a reward mentioned?

ROONEY: Yeah—and I'm claiming it.

BROPHY: He was trying to get us down in the cellar.

KLEIN: He said there was thirteen bodies buried down there.

ROONEY: Thirteen bodies buried in the cellar? And that didn't tip you off he came out of a nut house?

O'HARA: I thought all along he talked kinda crazy. [*ROONEY sees O'HARA for the first time*]

ROONEY: Oh—it's Shakespeare! Where have you been all night—and you needn't bother to tell me!

REV. DR HARPER

DR. HARPER: That's very gratifying, Miss Brewster.

ABBY: Have another cup of tea, Dr. Harper?

DR. HARPER: No, thank you. I must admit, Miss Abby, that unhappiness and violence seem far removed from these surroundings.

ABBY: It is peaceful here, isn't it?

DR. HARPER: Yes—peaceful. The virtues of another day—they're all here in this house. The gentle virtues that went out with candlelight and good manners and low taxes.

ABBY: [*Glancing about her contentedly*] It's one of the oldest houses in Brooklyn. It's just as it was when Grandfather Brewster built and furnished it—except for the electricity—which Mortimer persuaded us to put in.

DR. HARPER: [*Dryly*] Yes, I can understand that. Your nephew Mortimer seems to live for bright lights.

ABBY: The poor boy has to work so late. I understand he's taking Elaine to the theater again tonight.

DR. HARPER: Well, it's a new experience for me to wait up until three o'clock in the morning for my daughter to be brought home.

ABBY: Oh, Dr. Harper, I hope you don't disapprove of Mortimer.

DR. HARPER: Well...

ABBY: We'd feel so guilty if you did—sister Martha and I.

DR. HARPER: Of course, Miss Abby. And so I'll say immediately that I believe Mortimer himself to be quite a worthy gentleman. But I must also admit that I have watched the growing intimacy between him and my daughter with some trepidation. For one reason, Miss Abby.

ABBY: You mean his stomach, Dr Harper?

DR. HARPER: His stomach?

ABBY: His dyspepsia—he's bothered with it so, poor boy.

DR. HARPER: No, Miss Abby, I'll be frank with you. I'm speaking of your nephew's unfortunate connection with the theater.

KLEIN AND BROPHY

BROPHY: [*To TEDDY*] Colonel, you promised not to do that!

TEDDY: But I have to call a Cabinet meeting to get the release of those supplies. [*He wheels and exits*]

BROPHY: He used to do that in the middle of the night. The neighbors raised Cain with us. They're a little afraid of him, anyway.

DR. HARPER: Oh, he's quite harmless.

KLEIN: Suppose he does think he's Teddy Roosevelt. There's a lot worse people he could think he was.

BROPHY: Damn shame—a nice family like this hatching a cuckoo.

KLEIN: Well, his father—the old girls' brother—was some sort of a genius, wasn't he? And their father—Teddy's grandfather—seems to me I've heard he was a little crazy, too.

BROPHY: Yeah—he was crazy like a fox. He made a million dollars.

DR. HARPER: Really? Here in Brooklyn?

BROPHY: Yeah—patent medicine. He was kind of a quack of some sort. Old Sergeant Edwards remembers him. He used the house here as sort of a clinic—tried 'em out on people.

KLEIN: Yeah, I hear he used to make mistakes occasionally, too.

BROPHY: The department never bothered him much because he was pretty useful on autopsies sometimes, especially poison cases.

GIBBS

GIBBS: I understand you have a room to rent.

ABBY: Yes. Won't you step in?

GIBBS: Are you the lady of the house?

ABBY: Yes, I'm Miss Brewster. This is my sister, another Miss Brewster.

GIBBS: My name is Gibbs.

ABBY: Oh, won't you sit down? I'm sorry we're just setting the table for dinner.

GIBBS: May I see the room?

MARTHA: Why don't you sit down and let's get acquainted?

GIBBS: That won't do much good if I don't like the room.

ABBY: Is Brooklyn your home?

GIBBS: Haven't got a home. Live in a hotel. Don't like it.

MARTHA: Are your family Brooklyn people?

GIBBS: Haven't got any family.