

## EAT YOUR HEART OUT

ACT I

no one else is about to ring their bell. Now he rings his bell. Simultaneously and loudly a bell is rung *Offstage*. CHARLIE rises.) Be back.

(Exits *Offstage*, away from the MAN. As CHARLIE rises the MAN relaxes happily back into his chair, but as soon as CHARLIE turns away in the opposite direction, the MAN rises, horrified, almost as if he would follow CHARLIE. He remains standing, picks up his menu, looks at it, and whimpers. Another faint ring *Offstage* somewhere.)

WOMAN. (Looking up.) I'll have . . . He left.

GIRL. He'll be back.

WOMAN. You're friends?

GIRL. No. Yes. I met him before—in another restaurant. He's an actor.

WOMAN. Oh. Is he good?

GIRL. I don't know I've never seen him. I guess.

WOMAN. I hope they use real potatoes here. Not the powder or the flakes, the ones you have to peel. I love mashed potatoes. Real mashed potatoes. With a thick, thick gravy. And peas. They have roast pork. I love roast pork with applesauce.

I could start with artichokes vinaigrette, but they're such hard work, and you never know about the vinaigrette. Seafood medley sauteed with white wine, lemon, and herbs. That's it. That sounds wonderful. I love seafood. Everything except scallops. Do you think a medley would include scallops? (The MAN, overhearing this, is frantic with hunger.)

WOMAN. Actually I could have the medley for an appetizer and then have the roast pork. Or the Chicken Kiev. All these choices. Lloyd used to choose for me. What do you think?

← END

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GIRL. I don't know. Whatever you want. I'm sure it's good.

WOMAN. (Showing the menu.) What would you get?

GIRL. Oh, you can't tell by me. I'd probably get a cheeseburger and fries.

WOMAN. They don't have it. You'll have to get something else.

GIRL. I'm not eating.

WOMAN. Oh. Well, I think I'll get the medley. Yes, definitely the medley. Or the goulash. (CHARLIE returns to the GIRL's table. He is beginning to look just the faintest bit harried. He poises to take the WOMAN's order.) I'm not sure. Give me another minute.

CHARLIE. Yes, Ma'am. (CHARLIE hunkers down, as before, beside the GIRL.) I'm hearing bells, bells, bells.

GIRL. Yeah. I'm not sure it's such a good idea.

CHARLIE. Y'know what I was talking about? Before?

GIRL. (Receptive.) Yes.

CHARLIE. We—ll, I shouldn't have . . . I mean, y'know, just forget it.

GIRL. Oh. Okay. Sure. (The WOMAN, having decided, rings her bell loudly. The GIRL is nearly knocked out of her chair. CHARLIE leaps to his feet.)

CHARLIE. What are ya' doing?

WOMAN. I'm ringing my bell.

CHARLIE. You only ring your bell if you want me to come to your table.

WOMAN. I want you to come to my table.

CHARLIE. I'm already here!

WOMAN. Are there scallops in the medley?

CHARLIE. What?

WOMAN. The seafood medley. Are there scallops in it?

CHARLIE. Yes, ma'am.

WOMAN. Oh, then I don't know.

CHARLIE. Well, when you decide what you want, ring your bell, and I'll get it. (To the GIRL.) Listen,

WOMAN #2