

DR. GLAZER IN TROUBLE

It was a fine, sunshiny day when the ladies gathered together in the home of Phyllis Green, just before going on to a matinee in downtown District of Columbia. So pleased were they in the hors d'oeuvres and in their friendly conversation that they didn't notice that a young girl had slipped away to the bathroom. She was the only child that had been made to go to the play, and she wanted to complain about it to her best friend in a place where she wouldn't be heard.

She pulled the door shut, perhaps too softly because it swung open, so she pulled it again, this time perhaps too hard. The reverberation caused the hinges under the sink to give way, releasing can upon can of various foods and sending them bounding against the wall of the bathroom.

"Grandma"! screamed the girl with laughter, "there's food cans all over here!" A large can of Spam grumbled out to the door, narrowly missing her ankle, and went on to attack several ladies who had come to the door to see what happened.

The woman most upset by the event was Phyllis Green, whose house it was, and who had to explain what had happened. "Oh, Phyllis," said Madeline, "I haven't eaten Ravioli since college. It was so much fun gorging out of the can!" And another friend, Alice, was quite interested in "Dinty's

Beef Stew”, asking “whether it tastes differently after several years?”

Someone else, Esther, a very vague woman who can be irritating, asked, “What’s Spam? It’s familiar...” Then her eyes lit up. “Is it used to lubricate bicycles?”

Phyllis was furious; there was no doubt about it. She stood defiantly among the heap of cans, grinding her teeth, as she said that, “I laughed too, at first, when my cousin Zaide insisted we go to the cooking class of a very famous connoisseur from India. Well! What amazing dishes did he create of these humble things. I’ll show you sometime. But I’m so ticked off by Manfred Glazer, my brother. I can’t even think straight.”

“What’s wrong with Manfred?” asked Emma, a generally silent friend.

“He is, of course, an idiot.” She replied caustically. “You know him. He was once a great dentist, but now he’s got Alzheimer’s, and this is what they all do. They move all your things around so they can’t be found. It’s like they want to cause us trouble.”

“Oh, no!” interposed Alice, a very kind person. “He only wants to make things right, poor man. We must...”

“You just wait until you find a bag of potatoes among your underwear!” (not true, only intended by Phyllis to make a point), and the

ladies responded as she suspected. After recovering from the shock of such an enormity, they had then unanimously joined Phyllis's party when the door bell rang.

It was Manfred Glazer. A chubby man of eighty years, he was delighted to meet people whenever he could, with the exception of his sister, who was again scowling at him for some iniquity he had committed. "Manfred!" she intoned, "you alarmed all of the ladies here by placing tin cans beneath the sink, a place where they certainly didn't belong."

Dr. Glazer was taken aback by this sudden allegation, which was no doubt a serious matter if true. He tried to think hard about it, but the greater his effort, the more vague it became, like trying to seize clouds. He turned, therefore, to the boy who had come in with him, his assistant, Kraus, a young man of twelve, who had been taken up by Manfred upon learning that the boy had been badly neglected by his parents.

He had been of extraordinary importance from the beginning, and Manfred turned to him again with every confidence. "Kraus, what do you think?"

"It wasn't you, Dr. Glazer. It was her!" He pointed to Phyllis. "You said you wanted them there where they wouldn't be seen. We saw you were putting them under the sink."

“Was I?” She was stunned. “I don’t remember.” She paused there, wondering, murmuring, while everyone waited, until Alice came over, and took her arm.

“Oh, the hell with all this,” she said soothingly. “It doesn’t matter. Let’s go, or we’ll miss the show.”

And then they all began chattering again, and went on their way to the theater.

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