



ADELAIDE

What was that about?

NATHAN

His wife's having a baby.

ADELAIDE

Why's he asking you?

NATHAN

He's nervous—it's his first wife. Look, Adelaide, I'm expecting a fellow and I know you're hungry—

ADELAIDE

Nathan, are you trying to get rid of me?

NATHAN

No, I just don't want your sandwich to get soggy. Fellows—

(He crosses ADELAIDE to BENNY, sees SKY approaching)

—Why don't you take Adelaide to the drugstore?

(To her)

You see, honey, you've got a cold, and it's across the street, and there're a lot of open manholes around—

LIGHT CUE

ADELAIDE

(As she is being borne away by BENNY and NICELY— they raise her up and exit R.1)

Nathan darling, you're so thoughtful. You're just the sweetest person. Goodbye.

(NATHAN is alone. He paces a moment, peers off. SKY Masterson enters L.1. #2 Street Traveller closes)

NATHAN

Hey, Masterson! Glad to see you, Sky!

SKY

Nathan! You old promoter, you!

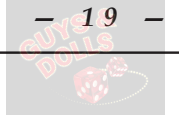
LIGHT CUE

NATHAN

How are you, Sky? You look great!

SKY

Feel great, Nathan. Two wonderful weeks out West in Nevada. Great place! Beautiful scenery, healthful climate, and I beat 'em for fifty G's at blackjack.



NATHAN

Fifty G's!—Going to be in town long?

SKY

No. Flying to Havana tomorrow.

NATHAN

Havana?

SKY

Yes, there's a lot of action down there. Want to come with me?

NATHAN

No, I got a lot of things to do— Meantime, how about dropping over to Mindy's for a piece of cheesecake? They sell a lot of cheesecake.

SKY

No, I'm not hungry— Tell me, how's Adelaide?

NATHAN

Oh, fine, fine. Still dancing at the Hot Box.

SKY

I suppose one of these days you'll be getting married?

NATHAN

We all got to go some time.

SKY

But, Nathan, we can fight it. Guys like us, Nathan—we got to remember that pleasant as a doll's company may be, she must always take second place to aces back to back.

NATHAN

(His mind on other matters)

Yeah—yeah.

(Back to business)

Tell me—you hungry yet? Maybe we could go into Mindy's and have a piece of cheesecake or strudel or something?

SKY

No. I think I'll go get the late results.

(Crosses to L. — takes scratch sheet from pocket)

NATHAN

Oh!

(Crosses to Sky)



(NATHAN)

But you will admit that Mindy has the greatest cheesecake in the country?

SKY

Yes, I'm quite partial to Mindy's cheesecake.

NATHAN

Who ain't? And yet there are some people who like Mindy's strudel.

(SKY seems disinterested)

Offhand, which do you think he sells more of, the cheesecake or the strudel?

SKY

Well, I never give it much thought. But if everybody is like I am, I'd say Mindy sells much more cheesecake than strudel.

NATHAN

For how much?

SKY

Huh?

NATHAN

For how much?

SKY

Why, Nathan, I never knew you to be a betting man. You always take your percentage off the top.

NATHAN

(Crosses to R.)

Well, for old times' sake I thought I'd give you a little action. I will bet you a thousand bucks that yesterday Mindy sold more strudel than cheesecake.

SKY

(Crosses to Nathan to R.C.)

Nathan, let me tell you a story —

NATHAN

Oh —

SKY

When I was a young man about to go out into the world, my father says to me a very valuable thing. He says to me like this: "Son," the old guy says, "I am sorry that I am not able to bankroll you to a very large start, but not having any potatoes to give you I am now going to stake you to some very valuable advice. One of these days in your travels a guy is going to come to you and show you a nice brand-new deck of cards on which the seal is not yet broken, and this guy is going to offer to bet you that he can make the Jack of Spades jump out of the deck and squirt cider in

your ear. But son, do not bet this man, for as sure as you stand there you are going to wind up with an earful of cider." Now, Nathan, I do not claim that you have been clocking Mindy's cheesecake —

NATHAN

You don't think that —

SKY

However, if you're really looking for some action —

(Crosses to Nathan, puts his hand across his chest hiding Nathan's necktie)

I will bet you the same thousand that you do not know the color of the necktie you have on.

(We can tell from NATHAN's expression that his entire life is passing before him as he fails to remember the color)

Well?

NATHAN

(Dismally)

No bet.

(SKY removes his hand. NATHAN looks disgustedly at the color of his tie)

Blue. What a crazy color.

(BENNY and NICELY enter)

BENNY

Nathan, we took Adelaide to the drugstore —

NATHAN

Don't bother me.

(He pushes BENNY who falls)

NICELY

Hi ya, Sky!

SKY

Good. How's it with you fellows?

BENNY

Not bad.

(Rises)

NICELY

Nicely, nicely. We took Adelaide to the drugstore, and she says for you to be sure to pick her up after the show at the Hot Box and *Don't be late.*