

Hilda
Satch
Maggie

Page 8

THE CHRISTMAS EXPRESS

Act I

Act

SATCH. We could get you a possum. That's close to a kangaroo.

HILDA. Would you stop?

SATCH. They're both marsupials.

MAGGIE. What is a marsupial, anyway?

SATCH. A supial from Mars, I guess.

HILDA (*shows a brochure to MAGGIE*). Look, Maggie, look at that countryside, isn't that gorgeous? And here. (*She takes out another pamphlet.*) Is that quaint?

MAGGIE. Where's that?

HILDA. Vienna.

MAGGIE. Yeah? (*She looks at the brochure.*)

SATCH. They got great food there.

HILDA. Now, what would you know about the food in Vienna?

SATCH. I've had Vienna sausages.

HILDA. Ahhh! (*She crosses to the double door, opens one and looks out.*)

SATCH. They come eight to a can, unless you get the camp-out size, which has about twenty five. (*He looks at MAGGIE.*) Well, they do.

MAGGIE. She's really got it bad this time.

SATCH. Yeah, I figger it's about time for the standard "the whole town's dying" speech.

MAGGIE. What time is it, anyway? (*HILDA looks back, disgustedly, at MAGGIE.*) Shut the door, will you? It's freezing in here.

HILDA (*shuts the door*). There it is again. The whole town's dying and all you two can ask is what time is it?

SATCH (*memorized*). I remember the old days...

HILDA. I remember the old days. People used to come here, thick as crowds can get, coming to town, going places, businessmen, salesmen, ladies with stacks of boxes eight

1

1

SA

HI

(

s

MA

(

HI

1

s

MA

1

1

1

s

SA

1

MA

s

(

i

HI

MA

s

(

(

(

HI

LE

HI

1

feet high. It took four porters just to handle one car. It was grander then, more genteel, more civilized.

SATCH. Back when Pop ran this place...

HILDA. Back when Papa ran this place, it was the hub of the city. This waiting room was full of laughter and cigar smoke. I know it may sound ridiculous but I miss that.

MAGGIE. Oh, if that's all you want...*(She takes out a long cigar and starts to light it.)*

HILDA. Will you go outside if you're gonna smoke that thing? *(She moves back to MAGGIE.)* And don't you have some more mail to deliver?

MAGGIE *(dryly)*. Naw, I always save this place for last. *(She puts the cigar back in her pocket.)* I so look forward to this happy time of the day. Why don't you put up some decorations in here? There's this thing called Christmas, a big seller in the East.

SATCH *(going along)*. Is that the one where they decorate a bush?

MAGGIE. A whole tree! They pluck one up and put it in one side of the room. *(She crosses D of the long table.)* Say, over here, and then put all sorts of tinsel and ornaments on it...

HILDA. Keep it up. *(She moves behind the counter.)*

MAGGIE. And then, up at the top of the thing, they put an angel.

(Just then, one of the double doors opens and LEO enters, carrying a satchel. Everyone turns and looks at him.)

~~HILDA. Where'd you come from?~~

~~LEO. Me?~~

~~HILDA. Naw, those three wise men who just came looking for a stable. Yeah, you.~~