

behind on my rent every month since then. My landlord has been understanding but it's embarrassing. I have never been behind in my rent for as long as I've lived on my own. That is until now.

KADAR. Amalia, I'll pay it all back on the first, I promise...gentleman's word of honor. But this once, please help me. I'll never ask you again I swear. I'm very worried about my sister, she may have to go into the hospital.

AMALIA. Last time you said it was your little brother who was sick. You don't have a little brother.

KADAR. Of course I do. Well...actually...he's my nephew. He's like a little brother to me. And wouldn't you know it, he AND my niece are coming up from the country tomorrow to visit me, their uncle in the big city and here I am completely broke.

AMALIA. That family of yours, it just keeps growing minute to minute.

KADAR. Amalia darling, I swear I'll pay you back on the first.

AMALIA. Doesn't matter. I don't have that much money with me anyway.

KADAR. How much do you have?

AMALIA. I probably have five in my purse.

KADAR. Could you borrow the rest from someone else?

*(AMALIA stares at him.)*

AMALIA. You've got to be kidding. No one has any money around here anyway.

KADAR. How about Mitzi or Betty...they usually have, that is to say they might have something they could spare.

AMALIA. Ask them yourself.

KADAR. I can't take money from women.

*(Pause.)*

Oh, I didn't mean... You're an exception. To me, you're not a woman, you're my friend, my pal, you're like...like a gentleman.

AMALIA. Um, thank you... Go away now?

*(SIPOS returns from stockroom carrying quite a large Christmas tree.)*

KADAR. Sipos, old boy...

SIPOS. Don't bother asking... I have no money.

*(Stands the tree in the window, then goes into the window himself and starts making cotton snowballs from a big wad of cotton.)*

*(AMALIA exits to stockroom. The phone rings.)*

KADAR. *(Picking up receiver:)* Hammerschmidt's Parfumerie... Mr. Hammerschmidt?... Who's calling please?... Just one moment, please...

*(Puts down phone, goes to office and opens door.)*

Mr. Hammerschmidt?...hmmm, not here.

*(Opens stockroom door.)*

Miss Molnar, will you please tell Mr. Hammerschmidt that he's wanted on the phone...

*(Goes behind the counter.)*

MISS MOLNAR. *(Just her voice, in the stockroom:)* Mitzi, please tell Mr. Hammerschmidt that he's wanted on the phone.

MISS RITTER. *(Her voice, still farther away:)* Mr. Horvath, Mr. Hammerschmidt is wanted on the phone.

*(SIPOS works on in the window. KADAR lounges behind the counter. Pause to justify Mr. Hammerschmidt's walk.)*

HAMMERSCHMIDT. *(Enters.)* Who is it?

KADAR. He wouldn't say, sir...he wants to talk to you personally.

HAMMERSCHMIDT. *(At the phone:)* Hello?... Hammerschmidt...