

MITCH: I wonder if you could help me.

MELANIE: What?

MITCH: I said I wonder if you could help me.

MELANIE: Yes, what was it you were looking for, sir?

MITCH: Lovebirds.

MELANIE: Lovebirds, sir?

MITCH: Yes. I understand there are different varieties, is that true?

MELANIE: Well ... yes, sir, there are.

MITCH: These are for my sister ... her birthday you see. As she'll be eleven and ... well, frankly, I wouldn't want a pair of birds that were too demonstrative.

MELANIE: I understand completely, sir.

MITCH: At the same time, I wouldn't want birds that were aloof, either.

MELANIE: No, of course not.

MITCH: Do you have a pair that are just friendly?

MELANIE: I think so, sir. Now then, let me see.

MITCH: Aren't these lovebirds?

MELANIE: No, sir, those are ... redbirds.

MITCH: The sign says strawberry finches.

MELANIE: Yes, we call them that too. Ahhh, here we are ... Lovebirds ...

MITCH: Those are canaries, Miss. Doesn't this make you feel awful?

MELANIE: Doesn't what make me ... ?

MITCH: All these innocent little creatures caged up like this?

MELANIE: Well, we can't just let them fly around the shop, you know.

MITCH: I suppose not. Is there an ornithological reason for keeping them in separate cages?

MELANIE: Oh, certainly. It's to protect the species.

MITCH: I imagine that's very important. Especially during the moulting season.

MELANIE: Yes, that's a particularly dangerous time.

MITCH: Are they moulting now?

MELANIE: Some of them are.

MITCH: How can you tell?

MELANIE: Well ... they get a sort of hangdog expression.

MITCH: Yes, I see. About those lovebirds, Miss ...

MELANIE: Are you sure you wouldn't like to see a canary instead? We have some very nice canaries this week.

MITCH: All right. All right, may I see one, please?

MELANIE: Here, birdie. Here, birdie, birdie.

MELANIE: Oh! Ohhhhh!

MRS MACGRUDER: What is it? Oh! Oh my, one of the birds is loose!

MITCH: Shhh! Shhhh!

MELANIE: There we are!

MRS MACGRUDER: Oh, good! Oh, wonderful.

MITCH: Back into your gilded cage, Melanie Daniels.

MELANIE: What did you say?

MITCH: I was merely drawing a parallel, Miss Daniels.

MELANIE: But how ... how do you know my name?

MITCH: A little birdie told me. Good day, Miss Daniels. Madam.

MELANIE: Hey, wait a minute!

MELANIE: I don't know you.

MITCH: Ahhh, but I know you.

MELANIE: How?

MITCH: We met in court.

MELANIE: We never met in court or anyplace else.

MITCH: That's true. I'll rephrase it. I saw you in court.

MELANIE: When?

MITCH: Do you remember one of your practical jokes that resulted in the smashing of a plate glass window?

MELANIE: I didn't break that window!

MITCH: No, but your little prank did. The judge should have put you behind bars!

MELANIE: What are you? A policeman?

MITCH: I simply believe in the law, Miss Daniels, and I'm not too keen on practical jokers.

MELANIE: What do you call your lovebird story if not a practical ...

MITCH: Ahhh, but I really do want those birds.

MELANIE: You knew I didn't work here. You deliberately ...

MITCH: Right. I recognized you when I came in. I thought you might like to know what it felt like to be on the other end of a gag. What do you think of that, Miss Daniels?

MELANIE: I think you're a louse.

MITCH: I am. Good day. Madam.

MELANIE: And I'm glad you didn't get your lovebirds!

MITCH: I'll find something else. See you in court some day.

MELANIE: That ... that ... who was that?

MRS MACGRUDER: I have no idea.

Close shot – MELANIE seething as she stares after him. Suddenly, she gets an idea. MELANIE going down the steps and to the front door of the shop. She looks through the glass.

Long shot – MITCH – MELANIE's point of view – getting into his car at the curb.

Close shot – MELANIE looking after the car at the curb. The license plate.

Close shot – MELANIE seeing the plate, giving a brief, determined, angry nod. She begins to repeat the numbers to herself as she turns. MELANIE as she comes up the steps again and walks toward the counter. MRS MACGRUDER's point of view as she comes up to the counter.

MELANIE: Have you got a pencil?

MRS MACGRUDER: What? Oh, yes, certainly. *(As MELANIE begins writing:)* They said the myna bird would be here later this afternoon. If you'd care to come back ...

MELANIE: No, you'd better send him. May I use your phone?

MRS MACGRUDER: *(bewildered by everything)* Yes, certainly. *(She puts phone on counter.)*

MELANIE: *(As she dials)* Do you have any lovebirds?

MRS MACGRUDER: No, not in the shop. But I can order them for you.

MELANIE: How soon?

MRS MACGRUDER: Well ... well, how soon would you want them?

MELANIE: Immediately. *(into phone)* Is this the Daily News? melanie Daniels. Would you get me the city desk, please?

MRS MACGRUDER: I might be able to have them by tomorrow morning. Would that be all right?

MELANIE: *(with an edged anger)* That would be just fine. *(into phone)* Hello, Charlie, this is melanie. I want you to do a favour for me. *(pause)* No, this is a small one. *(pause)* Pressure you? Why, Charlie darling, would I try to pressure you? Will you call the Department of Motor Vehicles for me and find out who owns this license plate? DKQ dash one seven six. *(pause)* Yes, a California plate. *(pause)* No, I'll stop up there in a little while. Is daddy in his office? *(pause)* Oh. No, no, I don't want to break in on a meeting. Just tell him I'll see him later. Thank you, Charlie. *(She hangs up.)*
(Close shot – MELANIE. Icy determination on her face.)