

BARBARA. I certainly do. Mother, I'd like you to meet Maurice Koenig. Maurice, my mother, Sophie Green-grass.

MAURICE. (*kissing her hand*) I am very, very happy to meet you.

DAVID. Sophie, you look ravishing.

SOPHIE. (*to MAURICE*) I heard all about you from my daughter. She was so nervous about tonight. I said, for what? Dinner is dinner.

MAURICE. Exactly.

BARBARA. Mother . . .

DAVID. The point is, here you are.

SOPHIE. Here I am. So let me just sit . . . (*DAVID helps MAURICE to sit. BARBARA helps SOPHIE.*)

Thank you darling. Who locked that door? Not me.

BARBARA. I might have locked it without thinking.

DAVID. We're too crime-conscious.

SOPHIE. (*to MAURICE*) Locked in my room. Like a *meshugena*.

BARBARA. Not at all.

MAURICE. Oh, no.

SOPHIE. Maybe if I was locked in, it was for my own good, right, Maurice?

MAURICE. Barbara and David are so fond of you, they over-protect you.

DAVID. There's been a wave of mother-snatching.

SOPHIE. Sure. (*to BARBARA*) Is he a doll.

BARBARA. I told you.

DAVID. Sophie, how about some wine?

SOPHIE. What a face.

DAVID. Sophie, wine?

SOPHIE. Why not, David. How often do I go to dinner parties?

MAURICE. Live it up.

SOPHIE. Live it up.

DAVID. White or red, Sophie?

SOPHIE. What?

BARBARA. *WHITE WINE OR RED WINE?*

SOPHIE. Maurice, what are you having?

MAURICE. Excuse?

SOPHIE. What kind of wine are you having? (*to BARBARA*) His hearing isn't so good.

DAVID. Amazing.

MAURICE. I am having white wine, and it is marvelous.

SOPHIE. Then that's what I'll have: white wine.

DAVID. (*going to the bar*) Done.

SOPHIE. (*moving closer to MAURICE*) A little birdy told me you're pushing a hundred.

MAURICE. That is an unchangeable fact.

SOPHIE. I would have said ninety, tops. You look fantastic.

MAURICE. I have had a very good life.

SOPHIE. That's the secret. "It's the circumstances, not the years." I read that in *Modern Maturity*.

MAURICE. *Modern*. . . ?

BARBARA. It's for senior citizens.

SOPHIE. An *alte kocker* magazine. But very interesting. Even Barbara looks at it.

BARBARA. What do you mean, "even Barbara?"

DAVID. Honey . . .

MAURICE. I am so busy. No time for magazines.

SOPHIE. You're still working?

MAURICE. Oh, yes.

DAVID. (*returning with SOPHIE's wine*) Maurice is a painter, Sophie.

SOPHIE. I know what he is. (*to MAURICE*) My son-in-law is some character, isn't he?

MAURICE. He is a very brilliant dealer of art. As is your daughter.

BARBARA. Thank you.

SOPHIE. I'm sure he is.

BARBARA. (to SOPHIE) "As is your daughter."

DAVID. Give up.

SOPHIE. My daughter lives like a queen here. He must be good.

BARBARA. We live well. A "queen . . ."

SOPHIE. That ability David has, that's something you're born with, am I right?

MAURICE. Good taste. Vision.

SOPHIE. Sure. (to BARBARA) You thought I couldn't make conversation?

BARBARA. I never said you couldn't make conversation, Mother.

DAVID. Heavens, no. We were counting on your conversational powers.

SOPHIE. (to MAURICE) My daughter and I had a little discussion before you arrived.

BARBARA. Mother.

MAURICE. Yes. A heart to heart?

SOPHIE. Exactly.

DAVID. Might I propose a toast?

BARBARA. Yes.

SOPHIE. (ignoring them, to MAURICE) You have a wonderful face.

BARBARA. This isn't happening!

DAVID. Might I propose a toast?

MAURICE. David?

DAVID. A toast. To this evening. To the four of us.

SOPHIE. Very nice.

DAVID. To our continued good health and creativity.

MAURICE. And to this wonderful idea, to have us all together with your wonderful mother, Barbara.

BARBARA. Thank you. (to no one in particular) I can hear my heart beating.

SOPHIE. You remind me so much of Sid, my late husband.

MAURICE. Yes?

BARBARA. He doesn't really look like Dad.

SOPHIE. He was a painter, too. A housepainter. (a look to BARBARA) I know that's not the same.

MAURICE. But it's an art.

SOPHIE. But it's an art. Bobbsy, remember what they used to call Daddy?

BARBARA. The Rembrandt of Dinettes.

SOPHIE. The Rembrandt of Dinettes—my Sid!

MAURICE. Yes? (to DAVID) This is true?

DAVID. I believe he even signed some of his dinettes.

SOPHIE. When Sid worked, apartments weren't like they are today. They had foyers, nooks, moldings. Sid was so dedicated, he'd stay up all night worrying. "That two-bedroom in Woodside," he'd say, "I don't know whether to go with a gloss or a semi-gloss."

MAURICE. He cared.

BARBARA. He really did.

SOPHIE. You know how much he cared, Maurice? And not just about painting. During the war—something about Hitler being a housepainter . . .

MAURICE. Yes? Upset him?

SOPHIE. Very much.

BARBARA. He had sort of a breakdown.

DAVID. Took to his bed.

SOPHIE. He just stopped painting. For years, wouldn't take a job.

MAURICE. Because of Hitler.

SOPHIE. He worked for a friend, Nat Meltzer, repairing radios. Then the Rosenberg case came along, and it turned out Rosenberg was a radio repairman.