

EVA: What?

There I really do love her, you know.

EVA: That is no longer either here or there.

(Trade out.)

ACT II
SCENE 1

SIDE D

Eva + Olivia

EVA and OLIVIA. *A table set for tea.*

EVA: Oh, Olivia, this dampness is terrible, every bone in my body aches. (OLIVIA lights a cigarette.) That is an awful habit.

OLIVIA (gleefully): Yes.

EVA: What do you have for us this afternoon? Is it scrumptious, is it special?

OLIVIA: See for yourself. (Tilts a cake from the table toward her.)

EVA (mildly disdainful): Yes. Well . . .

OLIVIA: You're in a mood.

EVA: Mmm . . . Have I told you of *shneekens*? And *hörnchen*? With real whipped cream?

OLIVIA: Often.

EVA: Yes. Well, I miss them. It is to be tea, I suppose.

OLIVIA: Always tea.

EVA: I long for demitasse.

OLIVIA: I can do that.

EVA: But the spoons, the spoons, the *macher* spoons—they are somewhere in a basement in Cologne. How can you have demitasse when the spoons are elsewhere?

OLIVIA: Huh!

EVA: Some nights my dreams are filled with tiny spoons . . . and *shnecken* and *hörnchen* . . .

OLIVIA: You come through a war and grieve for the lost whipped cream—I won't figure it out.

EVA: And what do you miss and what do you long for? (*OLIVIA smiles.*) You are a Sphinx, there is no getting it out of you. Aren't there nights when you are lonely and long to tell someone something?

OLIVIA: Yes. But if I did, I think I'd end up lonelier for the information I'd given away.

EVA: Hm. Yes. (*Beat.*) I am hearing him again.

OLIVIA: Mr. Adler . . .

EVA: . . . Walking up and down the hallway, hour after hour . . .

OLIVIA: Those were bad years.

EVA: The years in which someone tries to die always are . . . They killed him. As if with a knife. As if with a gun.

OLIVIA: So you say . . .

EVA: What else can you call it? To do that to a genius . . .

OLIVIA: I never understood all that business; I never knew why they did that to Mr. Adler . . .

EVA: Do you remember the joke, "After the war the Jews were so popular they were trying to get their old noses back?"

OLIVIA: Yes.

EVA: It was a joke. (*Beat.*) Oh, they were so discreet, so tactful. They said to him, "Yes, we will manufacture your invention. Sign the contract and you will have everything in the world." We were so happy, we celebrated. Then—three weeks? A month? They told

him, "This can be an enormous thing, a breakthrough! But we must not give way to sentimentality. You must see that Walter Wilson—the partner he had taken on who had done virtually nothing—Walter Wilson with his smooth voice and his smooth history—you must see that he is the better man for all this—for the conventions and the advertisements, for the conferences and the symposia. This is a time of plenty," they said, "not of sad faces with leaky eyes. Oh, but why do you protest? We give you all the money in the world and all you have to do is disappear a little . . ." These men . . . these men who come with their generous offers to take away everything you possess. But why do you stare at me?

OLIVIA: I like that boy, that Nick.

EVA: Do you? And you are such a shrewd judge of character. Tell me—why do you like him?

OLIVIA: Because Lili does.

EVA: And do you think he loves her?

OLIVIA: I have no reason to believe otherwise.

EVA: But does it seem *likely*?

OLIVIA: Anything that's already happened is likely—that's my opinion.

EVA: Yes . . . Oh, but, Olivia, I fully agree—I was *testing* you! Have I been in anyway discouraging?

OLIVIA: Not yet.

EVA: Then relax. (*OLIVIA keeps looking at her.*) Oh, I am stiff again . . . please? I would appreciate it. (*OLIVIA puts out her cigarette, rubs Eva's shoulders.*) You are wonderful at this. I love you dearly.

OLIVIA: Oh, don't.

EVA: Then I won't. See how amenable I am? It is a quality in myself I am surprised is so seldom remarked.

OLIVIA: I don't believe I've ever heard anyone mention it.

END