

VLADIMIR. And don't forget tomorrow. Busy day in Piccadilly Circus, lots of people enjoying themselves, unaware, feeling safe and secure...

VERLOC. You want me to come and report?

VLADIMIR. Thanks, no. If you're successful, it won't be necessary. Tomorrow they must not laugh.

(Music: Crescendo.)

OUR ANNOUNCER. Ted, Winnie and Stevie arriving at Simpson's Restaurant, one of the finest in all of London.

(Music: Transition, then underscoring the scene.)

WINNIE. Have you ever been here at Simpson's before, Ted?

TED. No, never.

WINNIE. All this is very expensive, isn't it?

TED. Yes, it looks like it, doesn't it?

WINNIE. I've got a pound note if you want it.

TED. It's all right. *(To STEVIE:)* Now, Stevie, setting aside the steak for a moment, we have here before us oysters, caviar, smoked salmon, fried, grilled or boiled sole. Roast saddle of mutton, Kentish chicken pudding, boiled silverside...

WINNIE. I think Stevie'd like a nice poached egg on toast and I'll have a mixed salad.

TED. What?! Poached egg here at Simpson's? Why, that's enough to make the roast beef turn in its gravy. *(Calling out:)* Waiter!

WAITER. May I take your order, sir?

TED. *(To the waiter:)* Sirloin for three, please.

WAITER. Very good, sir. Right away.

TED. When did you come over from America, Mrs. Verloc?

WINNIE. About a year ago. Business wasn't too good over there.

TED. That's funny. People used to go to the States because business wasn't too good over here. How are things here now, not too good?

WINNIE. Not terribly.

TED. I hadn't noticed you turning people away. It's hard to make a one-man business pay these days, unless you run a sideline. Has Mr. Verloc a sideline?

WINNIE. No, but we're quite satisfied with things as they are.

TED. Just one happy little family?

WINNIE. Just one happy little family. Mr. Verloc's *(Pause, genuine:)* very kind to Stevie.

TED. And that means a lot to Stevie's sister.

WINNIE. It means everything.

(Sound effect: The food arrives.)

TED. Now here we are.

(Sound effect: Sharpening of knife.)

WAITER. No fat for you as usual, sir? You haven't been in for a long time, but I don't forget.

TED. Do I look as though I don't like fat?

WINNIE. What's the big idea?

TED. What idea?

WINNIE. You said you'd never been here before but that waiter obviously knew you.

TED. Come to think of it, there's a mystery about most people. What goes on in that cinema of yours after hours?

WINNIE. *(Playing along:)* Deeds of darkness.

TED. Does your husband go on mysterious journeys?

WINNIE. He does—wearing false whiskers.

TED. A-ha! That means there's another woman in his life.

WINNIE. *(With a giggle:)* If only you knew him.

TED. What's the joke?

WINNIE. He's the quietest, most harmless person you've ever met.

STEVIE. I'm finished! What's for dessert?

WINNIE. Oh, Stevie!

(Music: Transition.)

(Sound effect: Birds.)

(Sound effect: Door with bell opens and shuts.)

OUR ANNOUNCER. Meanwhile, Mr. Verloc visits the address he was given by Vladimir, which just so happens to be that of a bird shop. Behind the counter stands the proprietor, who goes by the name of the Professor—you remember, the kind old man who