

SCENE EIGHT

LATER THAT NIGHT. BACKSTAGE

(Lights up on HARVEY, alone, drinking whiskey, working on new gags)

HARVEY

My Aunt Gladys is so fat — c'mon, Feldman. How fat is she? She's so fat, it takes two busses and a ferry to get on her good side. OK. Good. She's so fat, her passport picture is an aerial view. Better. My Aunt Gladys is so fat, her Hebrew name is Mount Sinai.

(Puts down the pen)

Now THAT'S fat.

(ESTHER ENTERS)

ESTHER

Look at you, all nice and relaxed, while the rest of us are workin' like crazy to get this place in shape for Sunday night!

HARVEY

Whatta ya mean? I am working! I'm workin' on a cigar, I'm workin' on my second glass of Scotch...

ESTHER

For once, could you try to act decent? Or don't you do impressions?

HARVEY

Esther, you're not yourself tonight...and I've noticed the improvement!

(They both laugh good-naturedly)

ESTHER

All right, all right — uncle! Pour the old lady a drink, will ya.

(Pulls out an accounting ledger)

I been going over the books, Harv, and it ain't pretty. To fix that air conditioning whatsit-along with the busted stove, the leaky boiler and that giant crack in the tennis court — is gonna cost me \$8,000 dollars. So tell me: Why am I throwin' money away buyin' you a birthday present?

HARVEY

You remembered my birthday?

ESTHER

Of course.

(Hands him a gift)

I hope you like it, lunkhead.

(HARVEY opens the gift: it's a rubber chicken. ESTHER laughs)