

JOSEPH: Your grandparents?

HERMES: Meinselb, ich bin fon Toronto. Forgive please mine Canadian accent. You remember Shima and Sheindel?

JOSEPH: So long ago. Himmel, Himmel. The name is familiar. Well, welcome. Of course, welcome.

HERMES: In New York, here, in Manhattan, with mine tante, Hannah Himmel, on Eighty-Fourth Street, I'm staying. You know her?

JOSEPH: I don't think so.

HERMES: She tells me she knows you. Joseph Levy from Cellar Books. "To the same synagogue, we're going," she says "Beth Shalom."

JOSEPH: Himmel. Yes, that is where I heard the name. Ida was on a committee with your aunt, I believe. Please sit down. Take off your coat. Beautiful hat. Unusual, uh, cane.

*(Hermes removes his hat and coat. He wears a Russian-type blousy shirt and baggy black pants)*

HERMES: Oh, mine walking-stick. See, I turn it over. A hockey stick. Everywhere, I'm carrying it. Also mine puck. *(takes a hockey puck from his coat pocket)* You all here carry the club for golf. No? Und mit the ball putt? I do same. See? *(shoots the puck gently across the floor with his "hockey stick")* Such a nice, homey apartment. Your wife decorated?

JOSEPH: It would be considered very old-fashioned, now. Every piece has a story. Ida passed away two years ago. I live with her memory.

HERMES: I'm sorry to hear that. But she is in heaven, now.

JOSEPH: I'd like to believe that.

HERMES: I know it. I mean, I feel sure of it. Tante Hannah says you are such good people.

JOSEPH: Would you like some tea? A little cake?

HERMES: Most kind, but no thank you. Mister Levy?

JOSEPH: Please, call me Joseph. And you are?

HERMES: Herman Himmel. Herman.

JOSEPH: So nice of you to visit me, Herman.

HERMES: Actually, my aunt, you say, aunt, sent me to see you. For your advice. She has been approached by a very important gentleman. On financial matters. From Europe.

JOSEPH: Really? What country? I happen to be expecting a gentleman on important business. I hope you don't mind. He should be here in a few minutes. On a confidential matter.

HERMES: What I wanted with you to talk. My aunt's gentleman is fon Switzerland. A Zurich lawyer.

JOSEPH: *(excited)* A Swiss lawyer? Do you know his name?

HERMES: I think she said, Mister Chopping. From something frozen.

JOSEPH: Mister Axel von Icebergen?

HERMES: I... I believe so. A fine gentleman, Hannah said. And is coming with a large sum of money.