

*the JUDGES as they consecutively spit the chewed pickle into the pail. [The ASSISTANT "plunks" the bottom of the pail as each JUDGE spits, effecting the sound of the chewed pickle landing in the pail. See "spit" cues in score.] The ASSISTANT with the atomizer follows, spraying into the open mouth of each JUDGE, who then takes a napkin from the table to dab his/her mouth. Among the SPECTATORS are the FRAKES on one side of the stage, and MRS. METCALF, a snooty matron, and her FRIENDS on the other. CHARLIE is also present to one side; PAT enters to him.)*

PAT

Hiya, shutterbug. Sorry I'm late.

CHARLIE

So tell me, which dainty homemaker is the cause of our presence here?

PAT

Have you ever known me to go for the type that cooks?

CHARLIE

You've gone for every other type - it was only a matter of time. Say, before I forget -  
*(Taking a Western Union envelope from his pocket.)*  
 - This wire came for you.

PAT

Uh-oh, who died?  
*(He opens it and reads; music out.)*

HEPPENSTAHL

Ladies and gentlemen, we have completed the pickles and will now move on to the mincemeats, after which time the winners in both categories will be announced.  
*(The ASSISTANTS clear the pickle jars from the table to the shelves and replace them with crocks as the JUDGES turn upstage to confer.)*

PAT

Eureka! There's an opening on the Chicago Tribune - the Managing Editor wants to see me Monday for an interview!

CHARLIE

*(Slapping PAT on the back.)*  
 There ya go! Looks like this could be your ticket out.

PAT

Charlie, if I was to dream up something I wanted, I couldn't do better than this.  
*(The JUDGES begin tasting the mincemeats.)*

MRS. METCALF'S FRIEND

So, Mrs. Metcalf, going to win all the prizes again this year?

## MRS. METCALF

*(Grandly)*

Well, I have been winning both pickles and mincemeat for so many years now that I'm almost embarrassed.

*(She and her FRIENDS laugh giddily.)*

## MARGY

*(Clutching her mother's arm.)*

Don't pay any attention to that pompous old biddy!

## ABEL

She thinks she's the only one who knows her way around a cucumber.

## MELISSA

*(Rigid with suspense and worry, fanning herself with the fair schedule.)*

This is the last year I enter anything and I mean it.

## MARGY

Oh, you say that every year.

## ABEL

Now hold tight, Mother. They're comin' up to yours and I got a hunch it's gonna send 'em to the promised land!

*(The JUDGES each dip into MELISSA'S crock with a small spoon and take a taste, their eyes widening with delight. They share a look, and immediately dig in for another spoonful; they smack their lips in unison. The LADY and GENTLEMAN JUDGE turn upstage to confer while HEPPENSTAHL hangs over the crock shoveling in spoonful after spoonful.)*

## WAYNE

They must like it - they sure are wolfin' it down.

*(The ASSISTANT offers HEPPENSTAHL the pail, which he pushes away, continuing to eat the mincemeat. He lets escape an involuntary belch, much to the disdain of the LADY JUDGE, who indicates that he join them in deliberating; the JUDGES confer; HEPPENSTAHL turns to the noisy CROWD and loudly clears his throat for their attention.)*

## HEPPENSTAHL

Ah-hum -

*(An instant hush falls over the CROWD as they turn to him in rapt attention.)*

We are now ready to announce the winners. Sweet pickles. Second place to... Mrs. Dorothy Boxhorn of Osceola.

*(Applause from the CROWD as she receives her red ribbon.)*

And first place to... Mrs. Edwin Metcalf of Pottsville.

*(Applause, especially animated from MRS. METCALF'S FRIENDS, as she receives her blue ribbon with a haughty wave of her hand to the CROWD. HEPPENSTAHL is by now in fine fettle, the effects of the brandy becoming apparent.)*