

## MIRROR

“Just tell us you didn’t use your salad fork to eat your soup...”

Chuckling softly, Darryl Martinson shakes his head. “No, Vince, but getting those peas on that butter knife was no small feat I’ll tell you.”

Gentle laughter greets Ace’s response.

“So, what did you shoot?” Walt Robinson asks.

“76.”

“Hey ... not too shabby, my friend.”

“Well, I doubt Tiger’s in a panic checking the want ads, but I played well. I was happy with the round.”

“You didn’t throw any clubs, drive the cart over the green, kick the caddy, did you?” Walt asks, chuckling softly.

“No, ‘Hammer’, nothing like that. I even replaced all the divots and fixed all the ball marks. Would’ve made dad proud.”

“Darryl, how do you qualify for this executive position?” asks Rabbi Josh. “I mean, besides being a pilot yourself?”

“Well, I got an M.B.A. before going into the service. So, in addition to flying, I have the academic qualifications and business experience they’re looking for.”

“And the guys interviewing you were impressed, I take it?”

“Enough to offer me one more interview.”

“Another one?” “Pretzels” asks, his tone betraying some confusion.

“Yea, Bobby. Along with their wives, they want to have dinner with Kristi and me at Antoinette’s Saturday night.”

“Dinner ... with Kristi ... at Antoinette’s? Heck, Ace, with your credentials and the day at the golf course, you’d think that would have been enough for them. Why dinner with Kristi?”

Ace just smiles, saying nothing.

Rabbi Josh sets down his wine glass; an understanding look in his eyes and a gentle smile on his face.

“Because, Bobby, it gives them a chance ...

... to peek in the mirror.”

**Hi, I’m Tony Baggz. We’re in the cocktail lounge at Mike’s Place; ‘Mike the Russian’s’ nightclub. It’s Thursday evening happy hour and “oldies” night, and a number of the gang can be found here on any given Thursday. Tonight, Darryl Martinson, Rabbi Josh, Father John, Bobby “Pretzels”, Vinnie “Bullets”, and Walt “Hammer” Robinson dropped by for a drink after work. And Mike will probably stop by the table from time to time.**

**Darryl, known affectionately as “Ace”, is in the process of interviewing for a top position with the executive jet division of a major airline. He’s already had three interviews, lunch, and a round of golf today with three of the company executives.**

**Seems some of the guys are aware of Darryl’s opportunity and are interested as to how the day’s events went. So, they decided on a drink or two with their friend before heading home for dinner. Everyone’s rooting for Ace, it’s a plum of an opportunity. Seems the last interview, and maybe the biggest, though is still to come. Several of the senior executives together with their wives, want to have dinner with Darryl and Kristi and I think the Rabbi just pointed out why.**

**I sense an interesting conversation in the offing.**

**What say we listen in ...?**

Ace pushes back his chair. “I’d like to stay fellas, but Kristi’s expecting me home. It’s been a long day for both of us and I know she needs some help with the kids. Sorry ... gotta run. Thanks for the drink, padre.

“My pleasure, Darryl,” Father John says. “Say hi to everyone for me.”

“Will do.”

As Darryl leaves, Pretzels turns to Josh. “What did you mean, Rabbi ... peek in the mirror? Seems to me if they’re willing to take Ace and Kristi to the nicest restaurant in town, he’s got it in the bag.”

“Not so fast, Bobby,” Josh chuckles. “What’s happening next might be the biggest test of all.”

“You mean to see if Kristi knows which fork to use with the shrimp cocktail?”

“In a way, yes. I’m sure they want some idea about the social graces of a couple they’re going to entrust the public face of the corporation with.”

“But I get the feeling you’re saying there’s something more.”

“There is,” Josh says softly.

“And that is...?”

“The key to the man’s character.”

“I don’t get it,” ‘Pretzels’ says.

“Well, I would imagine by this time they have all the answers they looking for concerning Ace’s qualifications. Now what they want to see is something more fundamental about the man himself.”

“And they figure they’ll find that in Kristi?”

Josh nods. “Precisely. They’ll find it in her background, her interests, her children, how she believes in raising them ... what she does as a career or if she’s a stay-at-home mom. What she values most.”

“And a stay-at-home mom would weigh against her?” Bobby asks.

“No, probably just the opposite.”

“Really, how so?”

“Well, a career outside the home is all well and good, and important. However, the presence of children shows a couple puts great emphasis on both

life and love, the two greatest values we humans hold. And secondly, a solid marriage and family life is a window on the character of both husband and wife. It shows commitment to the maintenance of a solid and stable relationship, and the raising of strong and healthy children. Qualities necessary in raising healthy kids: patience, dedication, vision, and persistence ... all traits necessary in a good business executive.”

“So ... that’s what you mean when you say ‘a peek in the mirror?’” Bobby asks, a look of understanding growing in his eyes.

“Exactly,” Father John says, joining the conversation. “The key to a man’s character is found in the woman he marries. Why? Because that woman is a living reflection of his deepest values. His ‘sacred honor in living form’ as Father Bob likes to say. They want to hear her talk about her work, what interests her, her children.”

“So, this isn’t just some nice, ‘let’s all chat about ... whatever,’ evening. You’re saying these guys are looking for maybe the most important information they can learn about Ace? And it’s in Kristi their answers lie?”

“Precisely, Bobby. A man who lives a life of truth, respect, and love seeks out those qualities in a woman. The man who lives only by the whim of the moment, with no set values and sees getting through the day or night by whatever means possible, will invariably reflect that in the woman he pursues. She is not an expression of his values, but a mirror of his lack of them.”

Father John pauses to sip his coffee. “Bobby,” he says, “it’s fair to say a man’s wife may be the most important resume’ he’ll ever offer.”

“A mirror” ... Pretzels says quietly, his words trailing off. “I see what you mean.”

“It’s a Jewish tradition that as God created, as put forth in Genesis, his creation took on greater dignity,” Josh says. “And the last thing He created was woman ... created from Adam, the only thing in creation God held as sacred. The Torah tells us Adam was created from the dust of the earth. Yet by infusing His own image and likeness, God made man sacred, a creation of great honor and dignity, and in a manner not reserved for anything else. And from Adam, He created Eve ... His most prized creation. Something a man hopefully realizes in the woman with whom he chooses to spend his life.”

A quiet, serene look of understanding crosses ‘Pretzels’ face. Softly, to no one in particular, he says ...

**“... His sacred honor in living form ...”**

**Have you ever met a solid, honest, hardworking man of high moral character; a loving and faithful husband; a devoted father dedicated to building a healthy home and the environment necessary to raise his children to become strong, productive adults, who was despised by his community?**

**I haven't.**

**Wife, in the Church's eyes, a term of great honor and dignity. It was through a woman, a wife, that God himself took on human form to redeem all mankind.**

**Wife, a woman consecrated to a man in a sacred union, matrimony; a lifelong bond, rooted in love and respect, and the expression of a man's deepest and most cherished values.**

**As Rabbi Josh pointed out, woman, Eve, was created from the only thing in all creation sacred to God, Adam ... made in God's own image and likeness. And such things as apathy, contempt, lust, and all forms of abuse, physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological are the filthy sandals that desecrate her. God's sacred ground.**

**Woman, God's partner in the creation of new life. Mother, the only human career choice Heaven, God Himself, needs ... a new life for Him to love eternally. All women are sacred ground.**

**When Moses met God on Sinai, he was instructed to remove his sandals. Why? Because he stood on sacred ground ... in the presence of God Himself. To walk on sacred ground in dirty sandals was an affront to God.**

**Gentlemen ... be careful where you walk.**

**Thinkaboutit ... I'm Tony Baggz.**

