



sehensdungen zu erleben - to experience telecasts in his own home. Ein Freund von ihm, einer der Operateure am Fernsender - one of his friends, a telecaster - hatte ihm diesen Floh ins Ohr gesetzt - had put this bug in his ear. Trotzdem, man brauchte kein Prophet zu sein, um vorauszusagen, daß in einigen Jahren fast in jedem Heim ein Fernsehempfänger sein wird - it didn't take a prophet to forecast that some years ahead a teleceiver will be in almost all homes. Joe stimmt ab - tunes in. Da, ein altes, bekanntes sentimentales Lied - an old, well-known, and sentimental song -

I'll be loving you, Always  
 With a love that's true, Always  
 When the things you've planned  
 Need a helping hand,  
 I will understand  
 Always, Always

Days may not be fair, Always  
 That's when I'll be there, Always  
 Not for just an hour,  
 Not for just a day,  
 Not for just a year  
 But Always.

Joe's Gewissen regt sich - Joe's conscience is stirring. Noch eben auf dem Nachhauseweg hat er wieder mit flirtenden Augen den schlanken Beinen einer schönen Frau nachgesehen - he turned to admire with flirty eyes the slender legs of a beautiful woman -, die gerade aus einem Automatenrestaurant kam - who just stepped out of a cafeteria. Wenn das "Honey", sein Frauchen wüßte!

Ein Rundfunkwerber mit rauher Stimme preist ein neues Zahnpulver an - a huskyvoiced radio headliner advertizes a new dentifrice - und das Melodien-Potpourri - melody roundup - geht wieder weiter - continues. Joe ist glücklich. Die Tonwiedergabe ist ausgezeichnet und angenehm für das Ohr - the tone reproduction is swell and pleasing to the ear. And pleasing to the ear and heart is the next tune, too:

Let me call you sweetheart, I'm in love with you.  
 Let me hear you whisper that you love me, too,  
 Keep the lovelight glowing in your eyes so true,  
 Let me call you sweetheart, I'm in love with you.

Joe hat dieses Lied schon zum x-ten Male gehört - Joe has heard this song for the umpteenth time - aber es gefällt ihm immer wieder. Jedoch - all these songs are sentimental. Joe tries to get something more amusing. What he needs is a laugh. Mir ist nach einem richtigen, verrückten Schlager zumute - I feel like a real, crazy song hit - denkt er. Da! - Da ist schon einer. Und was für einer! O Kid, what a song shot!

Mistress Murphy gave a party just about a week ago,  
 Ev'ry thing was plentiful - the Murphy's are not slow.  
 They treated us like gentlemen, we tried to act the same,  
 Only for what happen'd, well it was an awful shame,  
 When Mistress Murphy dish'd the chowder out she fainted on the spot,  
 She found a pair of overalls at the bottom of the pot;  
 Tim Nolan he got ripping mad, his eyes were bulging out,  
 He pumped up on the piano and loudly he did shout:  
 "Who threw the overalls in Mistress Murphy's chowder?"  
 Nobody spoke so he shouted all the louder:  
 "It's an Irish trick that's true, I can like the Mick that threw  
 The overalls in Mistress Murphy's chowder."

They dragged the pants from out the soup and laid them on the floor,  
 Each man swore upon his life he'd ne'er seen them before.  
 They were plastered up with mortar and were worn out at the knee,  
 They had their many ups and downs as we could plainly see,  
 And when Mistress Murphy she came to she 'gan to cry and pout,  
 She had them in the wash that day and forgot to take them out,  
 Tim Nolan he excused himself for what he said that night,  
 So we put music to the words and sang with all our might:  
 "Who threw....."

Das genügt Joe. Seine Finger tasten zum Knopf - his fingers fumble for the knob. Er geht die Skala auf und ab - he goes up and down the scale - aber weder der Ortssender - neither the local station - noch die ferneren Stationen - nor the distant stations - bringen etwas, was ihm jetzt paßt - that suits him. Im Gegenteil - die unvergleichliche Reinheit des Tones - the matchless purity of tone - die tadellose Aufnahme - the flawless reception - sind aus einem unerklärlichen Grund dahin - have faded away for nor plausible reason. Joe glaubt sich zurückversetzt in die ersten Tage des Rundfunks - Joe imagines to be back in the early days of broadcasting - wo die Sendungen meist unter Unterbrechungen und Tonschwund litten - when Broadcasting was mostly stutter and fading - und wo der Empfang eine Sache von "Katzenhaaren" (gemeint sind die feinen Tastdrähte bei einem Detektor-Empfangsgerät) und Kristallen war - when reception was a matter of cat's whiskers and crystals.

Joe versucht alles, den Empfänger wieder einzustellen - to readjust the receiver -, die Nebengeräusche zu verbannen - to ban the background murmurings -, den Lärm und das Gefiedel verschwinden zu lassen - to let disappear the fuss and fiddling.

Nichts zu machen - he doesn't succeed. Es ist jammerschade - it's a thousand pities. Die Stationen werden gestört - the stations are jammed. Er dreht das verdammte Ding ab - he turns off the damned thing - zündet sich eine letzte Camel an - lights a last Camel - und geht zu Bett - and goes to bed - hits the sack - hits the hay.

(Aus: Müller-Hesse: *Talking American with Joe. Bummel durch den Newyorker Alltag und die amerikanische Alltagssprache.* Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag 1948.)