



The Spoken and the Unspoken

“THIS STORE IS CLOSED AND OUT OF BUSINESS”

With great despair, Yitzchok Ber¹ knocked in the last nail of the sign announcing the close of his pharmacy and a world of financial concern quickly engulfed him. Forced to give up his store and with no job openings available elsewhere, he was despairing quickly. To add to his sorrow, his son-in-law had run away and now his daughter was an *aguna*.

Yitzchok Ber was a relative of the Tzemach Tzedek but did not consider himself a Chossid at all, so much so, that he dismissed the advice to go to Lubavitch and ask for a *bracha*. “Miracles, *tzaddikim*

stories... those are not for me,” he would exclaim.

His wife, however, was more stubborn than he and insisted that he make the trip.

When he arrived in Lubavitch he was told that he was put on the roster and would have to wait his turn. That turn was in a long time and his original hesitation about the trip had now turned to regret that he had given in.

During a conversation with the *gabbai*, he mentioned in passing that he was the Rebbe’s relative and the difficulties he was facing.

When the attendant found out who he was, he exclaimed, “You have nothing to worry about, you will see the Rebbe this very

night!” He was well aware how adamant the Rebbetzin was that all family members be taken in right away.

When he went into *yechidus* and introduced himself, the Rebbe was very happy and began asking him about the welfare of different family members and concluded with an invitation to join the family for dinner. Yitzchok Ber readily accepted this honorable opportunity. At the table the conversation continued but he did not have a moment to share his personal sorrow.

He asked the attendant for another *yechidus*. This time around, he told the Tzemach Tzedek all about his business troubles but did not mention a word about his missing son-in-law.

The Rebbe listened to him and said, “I read in a newspaper that there is a German man who lives in the city of Kiev; he just opened a pharmacy and is looking to hire someone. I am sure he will be able to hire you and compensate you handsomely for your work.” He concluded by giving Yitzchok Ber the money he would need for his trip and bid him well.

Yitzchok Ber was plagued with doubts and questions about this strange advice. Was the German man really waiting for him? When did the Rebbe read the newspaper...?

So skeptical was he that he had no intention of carrying it out. Once again, however, it was his wife who had the final

In memory of our loving uncle
Stuart (Shmuel Yisroel)
Ben Hersh Leib a”h

Dedicated by
Shaya and Miriam Rochester



say. She pushed, prodded and nagged him until he reluctantly agreed to make the trip.

Sure enough the job was waiting for him and he was an instant success. The boss was so pleased with his new employee that he paid him very well.

As Pesach neared he asked for permission to go home and spend a few weeks with his family.

His vacation was cut short when a telegram arrived from Kiev requesting that he return immediately. Yitzchok Ber was placed in charge of a magnificent birthday celebration for his boss. The event would be attended by many important and illustrious guests; all the “who’s who” in town would

be there and everything had to be just perfect.

He got right to work arranging every detail; renting a hall, putting together the entertainment and preparing the invitations. His efforts were compensated very nicely by his appreciative boss. On the day of the big party he was charged with the job of welcoming and ushering in all the guests. Everything was spectacular and going right on schedule until a new wave of guests arrived. Yitzchok Ber gave one look at the oncoming crowd and collapsed almost in a dead faint.


The boss quickly had him taken into a private room where he could collect himself. As he sat there calming down he explained

to the concerned boss the situation with his daughter. “Amongst the guests that just walked in I noticed a man dressed like a priest and I am sure that he is my rogue son-in-law. All I want from him is to sign a *get* so my daughter can get married and move on with her life. “Don’t you worry,” declared the grateful boss. “By tonight the matter will be settled.”

At some point during the festivities the priest was invited to a side room to ‘talk.’ Hearing the accusation against him, the brazen priest unequivocally denied the whole story. The brandishing of a pistol quickly refreshed his memory and he confessed that he was indeed the missing son-in-law.

However, he refused to go to a rabbi with the concern that this would be a blemish on his priesthood.

Instead, that night a rabbi, kosher witnesses, and a parchment were brought into the room where the *get* was signed and given over.

At that point Yitzchok Ber understood the true intention behind the Rebbe sending him to Kiev and to this particular gentleman who helped him with his daughter, even though he had not mentioned it to the Rebbe at all.² 

1. The name does not appear in the original. It was added here for the sake of clarity.

2. Based on Shmuos V’sippurim vol. 3, p. 176.