

# WALT

By Ferne Karns, '37



WALT looked over his stock of raisins. "Seeded raisins—  
—hmm—let's see—seeded raisins—yea, we got seeded  
raisins." He ambled aimlessly before the shelves,  
hands behind him, looking idly at the boxes.

Aunt Cora Bristo leaned heavily against the cluttered counter, back to Walt, and looked listlessly at the bread rack, from time to time reassuring him that he was right—It was seeded raisins she wanted.

Walt finally took a package from the shelves to examine it more closely. "Nope, now that there's prunes—it sure ain't seeded raisins, anyhow." When he replaced the package on the shelf he knocked two others down. "Well, now look at that."

Removing his yellowed straw hat he laid his pencil and charge book down and scratched his head in bewilderment.

"Humm—well." He picked the packages up and piled them in an open bucket of lima beans. "Say, Cora,—whad 'ja think of the band concert last night? Now I was tellin' Jake that there was the best—," his voice trailed off. Aunt Cora couldn't make out what he was saying as he walked around baskets of apples and crates of oranges to the other side of the store. She was getting nervous. Her fingers tapped the counter restlessly and she regarded Walt with good-humored disgust. She might have known he wouldn't have ordered seeded raisins. Lumbering around the counter she searched the shelves Walt had left.

"My law, Walt, I don't see how ya ever expect to find anything—ya got cocoa and tapioca all mixed in with yer prunes and raisins. Now lemme see."

Walt looked absently out the bay window trimmed with green crepe paper and smiled. "Yea, now me and Jake was a sayin' it was the best concert we'd nearly ever heard!"

Giving up the search he shuffled back across the store, stopping midway to grab a dried apricot from a wooden keg, then stopped again at the raisin shelf. "Yea—well now I declare! Look here— Seedless raisins. Anything else today, Cora?"

"Walt Conn, you know blamed well I don't want seedless raisins. I want them big seeded ones. You don't mean to tell me you ain't ordered them fer me yet?"

"Ordered—mmmm—ordered—seeded raisins—yea, I—it— Now, Cora, lemme see here now, they must be somewheres."

"Walt, you've forgot that there order—no, you haven't forgot, you stingy old fool you. You're jest sa hide-bound ya won't order 'em when it wouldn't cost ya a cent more."

**W**ALT looked up toward the candy counter and a dim smile flickered at the corners of his pale lips. "Now about them raisins, Cora. Ya could use seedless ones jest this time, couldn't ya?" And he put a box by her butter on the counter. "Anything else today, Cora? Got some real nice cabbage."

"Walt, now you're a hedgin'. I want some seeded raisins fer my fruit cakes next month, and it won't hurt ya to order 'em fer me."

"Next month—see that's—N'vember? Well, where's my order book? Jake's had thet book now. Never can keep track o' things when he's around."

Aunt Cora raised her eye-brows and pursed her lips knowingly. "Lemme see, Walt. The last time I had ya order 'em ya found it over under the apricot keg. Now—there it is. Great law, man, don't ya ever order? Here's the last one. 'July 15—seeded raisins.' Well, all ya'll have to do is change the date, Yea, to October 10— Think I'll jest wait while ya put it in a envelope— There now!"

Aunt Cora peeked back at Walt from the door-way. He was leaning back against the counter, charge book in hand, looking up at the raisin shelf. He whistled vaguely.