

[Homey, the Vegetable and Fruit Man]

FRANK BYRD New York Dup. "HOMEY, THE VEGETABLE AND FRUIT MAN"

The 133 Street block between Lenox and Seventh Avenues is one of the most thickly populated in Harlem. Of a late Summer afternoon the place is a squalidly-picturesque sight with housewives leaning out of the windows, ragged, unkempt little dusky skinned urchins playing carelessly in the street, vegetable men hawking their wares, "corn (liquor) salesmen walking up and down the block with their kitchen manufactured intoxicating beverages weighting down their persons, all day party goers whooping it up in the upstairs buffet flats and the music machines going full blast far into the night.

"Homey", the vegetable man comes through the block every afternoon about one or two o'clock. Seldom does he vary from this schedule, and his daily visit is eagerly looked forward to by the buxom, colorful housewives. Homey's song is vaguely reminiscent of one known as the "I Got Um Man", previously turned in by this worker. The tune is a little different, however, and even Homey, himself, is not certain what theme the lyrics will follow from day to day. But the following is typical of his long drawn-out sing-song wail: "Ah got green peas for duh baby, Got cabbage for duh ol' lady-ee Got string beans for duh ol' man..nn.nn.n!

The next day his song will probably take this turn: Got blackberries today fo'ks!
Blackberries for duh baby Blackberries for duh ol' lady, Blackberries for duh ol' man!

Then he'll pause and say: "If you ain't got no ol' man, take me."

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The women, their vanity tickled by this little amorous sally, will giggle and buy an extra pound of potatoes or cabbage. Homey is a born salesman when it comes to the ladies. He can always think of something to catch or stimulate their interest.