



Uncle Ebby and Uncle Reese's Slot Machine

On their bar, beside the bourbon and vodka, the slots. And a crock of buffalo nickels. Uncle Ebby—he'd always tell you what he thought, good or bad. That's a decorator for you. Uncle Reese, he used to relax with a Pall Mall and a vodka tonic before cooking. He'd set the table with the best china, silver, and crystal. Wine with dinner and a stinger afterwards. Their seven-year-old niece played the slots. A green machine with three spinning reels out of Atlantic City. She'd spend summers in their central A/C, watch their TV with more than three channels. Every Christmas, the uncles had two trees. One full of antique ornaments, the other upstairs, white flocked, red velvet ribbons and birds. Ever the gift, the winter coats, for her and her brothers. Later, she'd stand at the bar drinking quinine, sliding the coins into the slot—Bell Fruit Bell Fruit Bell Fruit. Jackpot.