

UNEXPECTED GUESTS

written by
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INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

JEFFREY and KELLY, both in their 40s, scurry back and forth across the house, setting the table for an expensive meal. They shout to each other from opposite sides of the house.

JEFFREY

Jesus. Honey, the little fork goes on the outside, right?

KELLY (O.S.)

Pretty sure.

Jeffrey exits. Kelly enters, folding napkins.

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Can you get the wine out?

KELLY

Out of where?

Kelly exits. Jeffrey enters with wine glasses.

JEFFREY

I put it in the garage.

Jeffrey exits. Kelly returns with the wine bottle.

KELLY

Honey, do you want wine?

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Yeah, this is Chuck Kovack coming tonight, I'm gonna need it.

A timer goes off in the kitchen.

KELLY

The bread's ready, hun!

JEFFREY (O.S.)

Yeah, I know, I'm right in front of it.

Jeffrey enters with the bread.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Sorry, honey, I'm just, uh, a little exasperated because I'd honestly rather not be putting on a show to impress some pretentious producer FOR THE BILLIONTH TIME!

KELLY

Honey --

JEFFREY

Does this only happen with film people? Do coal miners need to know where the little fork goes so they can keep getting work?

KELLY

Honey, you know that no matter what, I still love you.

JEFFREY

Yes, but if I don't get a job soon I can't afford the house. Love you, too.

The doorbell rings.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Christ Almighty, he's on time!
Doesn't he know this is Malibu?

Jeffrey and Kelly go to the front door, putting on their biggest smiles. Jeffrey opens the door.

On the other side stands ERNEST (60s), pointing a gun.

ERNEST

Alright, no funny business. Get up against the wall.

Jeffrey and Kelly back up. Ernest pats them down.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

Okay, take a seat.

KELLY

What are you doing here?

ERNEST

Your husband here has invested some of my boss's money very unwisely. And he has not reimbursed us according to our agreement.

KELLY

What?

JEFFREY

Really, I don't know what you're talking about.

ERNEST

You can play dumb for now, but my boss will be here momentarily and we'll see what he has to say about it.

JEFFREY

Well, I'm afraid that can't be. We're having dinner tonight --

ERNEST

Business is business. Forgive us for putting a damper on your evening.

(seeing the bread)

Do you mind if I have --

JEFFREY

I'd rather you didn't --

Ernest takes a piece anyway.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

(horrified)

Oh, god.

The doorbell rings. Jeffrey screams.

ERNEST

That'll be the boss now.

Ernest opens the door. CHUCK (50s) stands on the other side.

CHUCK

Jeffrey!

Ernest slams the door. A vase on a high shelf teeters.

JEFFREY

At least he remembered my name.

ERNEST

Jeffrey?

JEFFREY

Yes?

Ernest flips through a notepad.

ERNEST

You're not Leslie?

JEFFREY

No.

ERNEST

And you don't owe money to Boss Esposito?

JEFFREY

I certainly do not.

ERNEST

Is this 4639 Greenwater Road?

JEFFREY

No, this is Greenwater Avenue.

ERNEST

Oh. My gosh. I'm sorry about this. And the bread. It was very good, though.

KELLY

Thank you.

ERNEST

(dismissing himself)

Ma'am.

Ernest opens the door. Chuck charges inside, closing the door before Ernest can get out.

CHUCK

(to Ernest)

Jeffrey, Sue told me all about your meeting and I think you've got fabulous potential!

JEFFREY

I'm Jeffrey.

CHUCK

Of course you are!

Chuck goes to Jeffrey and shakes his hand.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

And your butler --

JEFFREY

Oh, he was just leaving.

ERNEST

Yes, just going now --

CHUCK

To have him answer the door in character, how excellent!

ERNEST
In character?

CHUCK
You're a fantastic actor. Have you ever had any training?

ERNEST
Well, yes, actually, when I --

JEFFREY
He was just going.

CHUCK
Waving a prop gun around like a man on the edge!
(to Kelly)
And you! The damsel in distress!

KELLY
Excuse me?

Ernest opens the front door a crack. Chuck walks over and slams the door, taking Ernest's gun hand. The vase on the shelf threatens to fall.

CHUCK
Here's the villain, threatening our hero with the ultimate choice - does he save the world as we know it, or the love of his life?

ERNEST
Those are high stakes.

CHUCK
(to Jeffrey)
And, him, what's his name?

JEFFREY
Oh, uh, Mike?

CHUCK
Yes, but the character is named... Siegfried. Siegfried points the gun at the damsel. Scream, damsel!

KELLY
You mean me?

CHUCK
Yes, you're a pawn in the hands of Siegfried! Scream like your life depends on it!

KELLY
 (not really into it)
 Ah...

CHUCK
 Perfect! And the hero, what does
 he decide to do?

JEFFREY
 Well, he goes for the love of his
 life.

CHUCK
 Yes! Perfect Jeffrey, perfect!
 And he...
 (wrestling the gun from
 Ernest)
 Give it to me, Mike. Give me
 the...

ERNEST
 Uh, my character doesn't just give
 up a loaded weapon.

CHUCK
 Very good, Mike, he has to fight
 for it! Action!

Chuck punches Ernest, taking the gun from him.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
 And our hero flies into the
 fortress, cartwheels here, spinning
 kick there...

Chuck points the gun at Jeffrey and Kelly. They duck in
 terror.

JEFFREY
 Christ!

CHUCK
 Bang! Bang! Bang!

Chuck drags Ernest to the other side of the room.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
 The henchmen have been vanquished
 but Siegfried holds the damsel
 hostage. What does the hero do
 now?

ERNEST
 Am I the damsel now?

JEFFREY

He calms the villain down and they sit down and have a nice dinner?

ERNEST

The damsel escapes!

Ernest moves for the front door, but Chuck hangs on.

CHUCK

No, good try, Mike. The villain sees that all is lost. He lets go of the girl and commits suicide.

Chuck puts the gun to his head.

ERNEST/JEFFREY/KELLY

No!

Chuck lowers the gun.

CHUCK

Is this dangerous somehow?

Chuck pulls the trigger. The bullet hits a clock, which falls, sending a book flying to the floor, which catapults a soccer ball flying at a book shelf, which falls onto the dining table, sending the plate of bread straight at Ernest's head.

Ernest ducks. The plate hits the wall.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

My god!

Jeffrey is terrified.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

That's hot stuff!

JEFFREY

Yeah it is.

CHUCK

You and Mike are such thrill seekers. Planned to the last detail! Brilliant! I love a filmmaker who pays attention to details! And takes such bold risks! Who needs dinner? This evening has been an adventure enough!

Chuck walks to the front door. Kelly and Jeffrey push Ernest after him.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
You've got the job, Jeffrey! On one condition!

Jeffrey and Kelly back away instinctively.

JEFFREY
What's that?

CHUCK
You keep Mike in the movie.

Chuck slams the door before Ernest can exit. The vase falls off the shelf, shattering on Ernest's head and knocking him unconscious.

Jeffrey and Kelly go to the table and each take a long drink of their wine.

THE END