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SCRIPT SAMPLE

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CHARACTERS:

MAN
WOMAN
BUSBOY
FIRE CHIEF/WAITER

TIME & PLACE: Last Tuesday at a small French cafe in Nymore, Minnesota.

AT RISE: The purposely dimmed lights reveal a well dressed, yet somewhat uptight MAN and his date, the lower class, yet altogether not very pretentious, young WOMAN dining by candle light. The BUSBOY, unkempt and bewildered, hovers in the background.

MAN

Woof! Mm-mm-mm! (Puts down silverware.) Well, that sure was one fine meal! Yes, sir. A sure fine heckuva meal! I'm stuffed! Urp. Whoof! Excuse me.

WOMAN

Oh, you pig! (Giggles.)

MAN

Oink, oink. (Laughs.) So I take it you've thoroughly enjoyed yourself tonight, my dear?

WOMAN

Oh yes, immensely.

MAN

Really?

WOMAN

Really.

MAN

Excellent.

WOMAN

Wonderful.

MAN

The play was to your liking?

(BUSBOY quietly sneaks up behind the MAN.)

WOMAN

The parts that I could understand, yes.

MAN

And the serene, romantic carriage ride through the park?

WOMAN

Other than those mildly amusing muggers, that rabid muskrat, and the resulting explosion, yes. Quite.

MAN

Oh. Yes. The explosion. I had forgotten about that.

WOMAN

I'll never forget that muskrat.

(BUSBOY snatches food from MAN's plate unnoticed, then hobbles back to his post, gobbling down the food.)

MAN

Yes, it was interesting, wasn't it?

WOMAN

(Sighs.) I guess so. . . .

(Pause.)

MAN

So. . . .

WOMAN

(With anticipation.) Yes?

MAN

Do you want some fresh calamari?

(Suddenly large squid-like tentacles burst out of the kitchen. The BUSBOY grabs a mop and fights it off.)

"SQUID"

Sqwuarlll! Sqwuarlll!

WOMAN

How fresh?

MAN

From the looks of it, quite fresh.

WOMAN

Mmm . . . I don't think so dear.

(BUSBOY groans, then beats the "SQUID" back into the kitchen, closing the door.)

MAN

Now, where was I?

WOMAN

You've been sitting there all this time, dear.

MAN

No, no, that's not what I meant. . . . Aha! Ahem. "So. . . ."

WOMAN

(On the edge of her seat.) Yes?

MAN

Ah . . . I mean to say . . . did you . . . ?

WOMAN

(Going over the table.) Yes?

MAN

Ummm. . . .

WOMAN

(Fully on the table.) What?

MAN

Did you enjoy your meal, my dear?

WOMAN

Oh. (Sits back down.) Yes. Immensely. Yes.

MAN

(Relieved.) Good.

(The BUSBOY makes a rude noise.)

WOMAN

Oh, yes, I've truly enjoyed myself tonight, other than that which I've mentioned before, of course.

MAN

Of course.

WOMAN

Yes.

MAN

Excellent.

WOMAN

Although. . . .

MAN

Yes?

WOMAN

Well. . . .

MAN

Please, tell me.

WOMAN

All right.

(Pause.)

MAN

Was it the food?

WOMAN

The food was bizarre, oddly presented, but fine, dear.

MAN

That long, drawn out incident with the old woman choking to death on that chicken bone earlier?

(BUSBOY giggles, makes choking sounds.)

WOMAN

No dear, I'd nearly forgotten all about that.

MAN

How about when that truly incompetent unwashed busboy there nearly pierced me with that flaming shish-kabob?

WOMAN

No.

(BUSBOY gives an "aw, darn" snap of the fingers.)

MAN

Oh. (Pause.) I know! The atmosphere! It's got to be the atmosphere! Am I right, dear? Am I right?

WOMAN

No, it's something entirely else.

MAN

Darn. Not the atmosphere? Darn.

WOMAN

Something more devastatingly . . . peculiar.

MAN

Peculiar? Devastatingly so? Really?

WOMAN

Yes, it's as if . . . (Stands.) Oh, I don't know . . .

(BUSBOY goes into spasms, collapses on the floor.)

WOMAN

As if there's something very odd going on . . . (Puts foot on top of BUSBOY, "adjusts" herself.) About this place . . . (Crosses back to table.) I just can't . . . put my . . . finger on it. (Sits.) Heh.

MAN

Literally or figuratively?

WOMAN

Both.

MAN

Ooh. Theory and retrospect. Hmm.

WOMAN

It is most unsettling.

MAN

Oh. That.

WOMAN

You do know what I mean, don't you?

MAN

Yes, yes I do. Absolutely. It's been bothering me all night. (Pause.)

WOMAN

Well?

MAN

Oh! Well, I really don't know, to tell the truth.

WOMAN

You don't know?

MAN

I think I do. I . . .

WOMAN

Well?

MAN

No. Not a clue, I'm afraid. Sorry.

WOMAN

Oh.

MAN

Heh. Oh well, maybe it'll come to me later. (Leaning over.) Much, much, much later.

WOMAN

(Giggling.) Oh, my!

MAN

Yes. Let's say we settle our check and head off to the . . . hotel. Immediately.

WOMAN

Do you really mean it?

MAN

Yes, I really do mean it.

WOMAN

Will you whisk me away, my dear?

MAN

Whisk, whisk, my dear! Whisk, whisk!

WOMAN

That'd be great! Finally!

MAN

Finally!

WOMAN

Yes, let's go! Quickly!

MAN

Waiter! Oh, waiter! (Pause.) Waiter?

(In bursts the FIRE CHIEF who quickly pulls up a chair from a nearby table and seats himself down between the MAN and the WOMAN as the BUSBOY bounds up and returns to his station, removing the table's center piece.)

FIRE CHIEF

(In a heavy French accent.) 'Allo. Mind if I join you?

WOMAN

Uhhh. . . .

MAN

No!

FIRE CHIEF

No? Good! (Sits.) Ah, yes.

MAN

Ahhh. . . .

FIRE CHIEF

Yes. Nize weather we are having, no? (Tosses hat.) Buzboy?

BUSBOY

Hm? (Hat goes by BUSBOY.)

FIRE CHIEF

Catch!

MAN

Uh. . . .

FIRE CHIEF

I myself greatly enjoy ze humidity.

MAN

Uhhh. . . .

FIRE CHIEF

(Starts to stand.) Ezpecially ze way it clings to your. . . .

MAN

Uh . . . yeah! Yes, nice weather. Very . . . nice . . . weather. Don't you . . . don't you agree, dear?

WOMAN

Oh. Yes. Nice. Very nice.

FIRE CHIEF

And sticky. Do not forget sticky!

(Awkward pause.)

MAN

Ah . . . sir?

FIRE CHIEF

Yesssss?

MAN

I don't mean to be entirely rude, but. . . .

FIRE CHIEF

Yesssss?

MAN

Just who the heck are you anyway?

FIRE CHIEF

(Stands dramatically.) Moi? You wish to know who moi is? Moi?

MAN & WOMAN

Yes!

FIRE CHIEF

I . . . I am ze fire chief, ze greatest, most par excellence fire chief Nymore, Minnesota, haz ever seen and shall ever have! Ha! Verily. . . . (Looks into the audience.) Oh, look . . . people! (He points at the audience.)

WOMAN

People?

FIRE CHIEF

(With relish.) People.

MAN

Where? I don't see any "people".

FIRE CHIEF

Zut alors! What, are you blind? Over zere, you unobzervant little twit, over zere! And zere! And zere! And even . . . rowr . . . over zere! (He gives a little wave.) People.

WOMAN

Really? But I don't see anyone . . . do you dear?

MAN

Great gobbledegook in the morning, no, no I don't. Just that off-set spackled wall with the grease spots and that adorably delightful painting of the dogs playing poker hanging upon it.

WOMAN

My, it's so cute! So classic! So . . . so. . . .

BUSBOY

Unnhhhhhh.

MAN

(Tugging at FIRE CHIEF.) I'm afraid sir. . . .

FIRE CHIEF

Call me "Chief".

MAN

"Chief"?

FIRE CHIEF

"Chief".

MAN

All right, "Chief" . . .

END SAMPLE