

TOM AND SUSAN'S RESTAURANT

[Scene: Family restaurant-type table with place settings for two, stage center. Customers, husband and wife, arrive, and are after a few seconds met and seated by a Waitress. She reappears shortly with menus and covers and conversation commences.]

Mr: Thanks for giving us this table near the window so we can take advantage of the beautiful day. This is our first time on this part of the Cape.

Waitress: Oh, is this your first time at Tom and Susan's?

Mrs.: Yes, it is.

Waitress (lowers voice): Look, I haven't been working here too long, and I just wanted to warn you. It's a little ... *unusual* here.

Mr : *(exchanging looks of concern with Mrs.)* Unusual? What do you mean, unusual?

Waitress: Well, you'll find out. *(Reassuringly)* It's not unpleasant or anything, nothing to worry about, believe me. The food here is great ... *(voice drops again)* ... it's just an unusual restaurant.

Mr.: *(concerned but in control)* Look, as long as the food is good, who cares! I mean, right now we're so hungry we could put up with almost anything, right, honey? *(Mrs. agreeing)* Give us a couple of minutes with the menu, Miss ... what did you say your name was?

Waitress (hesitating): I didn't tell you yet. My name is ... *(cringes slightly)*

Chorus (off-stage; tune is "Freunde", beginning of "Ode to Joy", ff)

DEBBIE! DEBBIE!

(Couple are startled; drop menus; bump table; few utensils clatter to floor. Waitress hastens to assist. Embarrassed look when she faces couple.)

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Mrs. (*obviously shaken*): What in heaven's name was that?

Waitress: Look, I warned you that this is an unusual place...

Mr.: My gosh, your background music is awfully loud!

Waitress (*looking nervously over her shoulder from time to time*): Uh...yes, it certainly can be. But I...uh...think it's okay now. Sorry about that. (*Produces pad from apron.*) Now what would you like to have?

Mrs.: What would you recommend? We usually like a starter of some kind and I don't see any listed on the menu.

Waitress (*nervously*) Of course ... well, here's what we have today ... (*makes uncertain introductory gesture with arm*)

Chorus (*Soup Song = "Ode to Joy"*)

**CREAM OF SPINACH, MUSHROOM BARLEY
LOBSTER BISQUE, POTATO LEEK
PEA SOUP, CHILI, SEAFOOD CHOWDER
MINISTRONE* IS FINE THIS WEEK! (* 3 syllables)
CHICKEN NOODLE, KALE AND ONION
ALL HAIL TO OUR VARIETY!
JUST ONE THING WE MUST ADVISE:
WE'RE OUT OF CREAM OF BROCCOLI!
ASK FOR CRACKERS, ASK FOR CROUTONS
ASK FOR EITHER CUP OR BOWL
AND IF YOU LIKE VICHYSOISSE
WE SERVE IT WITHER HOT OR COLD!**

(At conclusion Mr. and Mrs. stare at one another, dumbfounded. After a few seconds Waitress coughs slightly.)

Mr. (*coming to*) Oh...uh...yeah...okay. Cup of kale for me, please. Are you having soup, honey?

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Mrs. (*still shell-shocked*) No, no...no soup for me. I think I'd rather have a salad. What kind of dressings have you?

(*Waitress says nothing but makes same half-hearted gesture as before.*)

Chorus (*tune of "Row Row Row Your Boat"*)

**FRENCH, ITALIAN, CREAMY HERB
WE HAVE RUSSIAN TOO!
THOUSAND ISLAND, PARMESAN,
RO-QUE-FORT AND BLUE!
AVOCADO VINAIGRETTE
CHIVE AND FENNEL SEED
ANCHOVIES ARE ON OUR LIST
IF THEY'RE WHAT YOU NEED!
SOUR CREAM AND BACON BITS
YOGURT AND PLANTAIN
BUT MAYBE YOU'RE THE TIMID TYPE
WHO LIKES HER SALAD PLAIN!**

(*Couple stares at Waitress, as if awaiting an explanation*)

Waitress: I know, I know ... you don't have to say anything. But the funny thing is that you almost get used to it after a while.

Mrs.: I ... uh ... I guess I'll have the creamy herb. By the way, do you have any specials today? **(*when speaking last few words, lifts herself slightly off chair and looks in general direction of the Chorus*)**

Chorus (*tune = "Volga Boatman"*)

**WE HAVE MEATLOAF ...
LOVELY MEATLOAF ...
WE HAVE MADE FOR YOU ...
FINEST MEATLOAF!
ALL INGREDIENTS ARE FRESH AND PURE
MEAT IS MOSTLY BEEF, YOU MAY BE SURE**

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**ADD EGGS AND BREADCRUMBS
MIX TILL THE DAWN COMES
BAKE ALL DAY WITH LOVING CARE
SPECIAL MEATLOAF
GLORIOUS MEATLOAF ...**

Mr. (*with certain air of resignation*): Okay, meatloaf for me then.

Mrs.: Oh, I don't know ... I think I'd rather go for seafood. After all, this is Cape Cod! (*all chuckle*)

Chorus (*tune = "Send in the Clowns"*)

**WE CAN DO SHRIMP
WE CAN DO SCROD
WE CAN DO QUAHOGS OR SCALLOPS
OR EVEN SALT COD
HADDOCK OR HAKE
WON'T TAKE LONG TO MAKE
IF YOU'RE IN THE MOOD!
JUST WHEN YOU THINK
IT'S TIME FOR A CLAM
BUT STILL YOU'RE NOT SURE - YOU MIGHT ORDER
THE ROAST LEG OF LAMB
WE'LL MAKE YOU THINK SEAFOOD AGAIN
IN OUR USUAL WAY -
WITH A WHIFF OF THE BREEZE
OVER FAIR BUZZARDS BAY ...
WE CAN DO CRAB
MUSSELS OR TROUT
COLE SLAW AND FRIES IF YOU LIKE
EAT IN OR TAKE OUT
SEAFOOD WE'LL DO
SPECIAL FOR YOU ...
SEAFOOD WE'LL DO!**

Mrs.: ... or maybe some kind of pasta ...

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Chorus (tune = "Both Sides Now")

**BOWS AND SHELLS AND ANGEL HAIR
FETTUCCHINI UP TO THERE
LINGUINI PILED HIGH IN THE AIR
PLAIN OLD SPAGHETTI TOO**

**IF RAVIOLI IS YOUR DISH
WE'VE GOT AS MUCH AS YOU COULD WISH
LASAGNA'S REALLY QUITE DEELISH
MADE BY OUR KITCHEN CREW**

**YOU'VE GOT TO LOOK FROM BOTH SIDES NOW:
IS PASTA WHAT YOU'D LIKE FOR CHOW?
WE'D NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU HURT
YOU'VE GOT TO LEAVE SOME ROOM ...
FOR DESSERT!**

Mrs.: Hmmm ... okay, I think I've made up my mind.

(Dumb show involving waitress and couple while Chorus sings next song softly in the background. Waitress leaves and returns within seconds with imaginary tray, then pantomimes distribution. Couple mimes actions of beginning dinner.)

Chorus (tune = "Cradle Song")

**TIME TO EAT
WHAT A TREAT
HERE AT THOMAS AND SUSAN'S
TAKE YOUR TIME
AS YOU DINE
BACKGROUND MUSIC HERE FOR YOU!
AS YOU FEED
YOU'LL NOT HEED
OUR INNOCUOUS DITTIES
TO ADVERTISE
IN DISGUISE**

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AND YOU WON'T KNOW A THING!

(few measures of wordless humming, then)

CASH IS FINE

CARDS DIVINE

MASTER, AMEX, OR VISA

(solo, gruff bass voice)

SUE OBJECTS

TO PERSONAL CHECKS

SO PLEASE DON'T WASTE HER TIME!

(tutti, pp)

TIPS ARE GOOD

AND YOU SHOULD

LEAVE A HEALTHY PERCENTAGE

THIRTY PLUS?

FINE WITH US -

WE'LL BE GRATEFUL INDEED!

(solo female voice)

SERVICE SLOW?

FOOD SO-SO?

NOT AT TOM AND SUSAN'S:

(tutti, mf)

DINER TRANCE

SO HERE'S OUR CHANCE

TO CONVINCING YOU WE'RE THE BEST!

(more humming, diminuendo, out)

(Mr. and Mrs. pantomime meal completion. Mr. fold hands across tummy and smiles.)

You know, honey, in spite of everything, I think that's one of the best meals I've had in a long time. That was really fine meatloaf.

Mrs.: Yes indeed. My scallops were excellent too. And ... and I feel so *good* about eating here, like we were doing something marvellous. Did you feel the same way?

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Mr.: Now that you mention it, I did. I know it's silly, but I felt kind of warm and cuddly. haven't felt like that since I was very small and had a puppy that ...

(Couple continues to chat in pantomime while Waitress re-enters from stage left and proceeds to pantomime table clearing.)

I hope you folks enjoyed your meal.

Mr.: We were just talking about how good it was!

Waitress: Can I interest you in dessert? Coffee?

Mrs.: I really shouldn't, but let's hear what you have.

Chorus *(tune = "Some Enchanted Evening")*

**YOU CAN GET A BROWNIE
DROWNING IN HOT FUDGE SAUCE
YOU CAN GET A SUNDAE
WHIPPED CREAM AND CHERRY, TOO!
AND BLUEBERRY PIE
MIGHT JUST CATCH YOUR EYE
OUR INDIAN PUDDING
WOULD CERTAINLY DO ...
BOSTON CREAM'S A MOVER
LOVE THAT CHOCOLATE ICING!
SOMETHING MORE EXOTIC?
THERE'S RHUBARB AND KEY LIME
AND NOW YOU SHOULD KNOW
SOMETHING ELSE SURE TO PLEASE:
OUR COOKS HAVE REMOVED
ALL THOSE BAD CALORIES!
OUR TAPIOCA'S
ALWAYS WORTH A TRY
EVEN OUR POUND CAKE
CAN MAKE A STRONG MAN CRY
FOURTEEN KINDS OF ICE CREAM**

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**SEVEN TYPES OF SHERBET
TRY A BAKED ALASKA
YOU'RE CERTAIN TO ENJOY
AND PLEASE KEEP IN MIND
WE HAVE JELLO TOO
ALL FLAVORS AND COLORS
INCLUDING DARK BLUE!**

Mrs.: Well, that's certainly a great selection, but I think I'll stick with a dish of plain old vanilla ice cream..

Mr.: I'll go for the Indian pudding. I'm not sure I'm ready for dark blue jello.

Waitress: Coffee for either of you?

Mrs.: No, we're tea drinkers. Do you have herbal tea here?

Waitress: Funny you should ask ...

Chorus (*tune = "Tea for Two"*)

**TEA FOR TWO
WE'D LOVE TO BREW
WILD PEPPERMINT
AND PARSLEY TOO
LEMON GRASS
OR SASSAFRAS
FOR YOU!**

**CATNIP OR TURNIP
ROSEHIP OR ALOE
THEY SMELL A BIT ODD
AND TASTE A BIT SHALLOW
CINNAMON, ORANGE,
NUTMEG AND CLOVER TOO:**

SO WE SUGGEST A POT OF TEA

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**STRAIGHT FROM LIPTON'S FACTORY
NO STRANGE VEGETATION
IN ANY POTATION
WE SERVE!**

Mr.: Well, I guess that answers your question, honey!

(Waitress exits and returns with pantomime teapot, cups, etc., then proceeds to pour.)

Well, I hope you enjoyed your meal here today. As I said before, this is a kind of ... unusual place. But it grows on you after a while ...

Mrs.: Is this restaurant part of a chain?

Waitress: No, there really are a Tom and Susan. She and her staff run the restaurant and he conducts the chorus.

Mr.: And does he write the words of those songs?

Waitress: I don't think so. If I understood correctly, they have this really weird friend who does all of that. I've never met him myself but they tell me he's a real doozy.

Mr. (*glancing at watch*) Well, Debbie, time for our check, please.

Waitress: Coming right up. (*Reaches into apron, pulls out imaginary check and leaves on table, pantomimes clearing off table. Exit stage left with tray.*)

(Mr. looks at check and mimes payment process. Couple then stand up to leave.)

Mr.: Well, honey, what did you think of this place?

Mrs.: I guess I liked it. It's certainly ... different.

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Mr. (reflectively) Yes indeed - different. (Louder, with wave) Thanks, Debbie!

(Both exit pantomiming departure, coats, waves, etc.)

Chorus (tune = "Jamaica Farewell")

**FAREWELL FRIENDS WHO HAVE STOPPED TO DINE
AT TOM AND SUSAN'S RESTAURANT
WE HOPE THAT EVERYTHING WAS FINE
AND THAT WE SATISFIED YOUR EVERY WANT
BUT NOW WE'RE ...**

**SAD TO SAY THAT YOU'RE GOING AWAY
HOPE TO SEE YOU BACK SOME OTHER DAY
NEXT TIME YOU'RE DOWN
OR JUST TRAVELLING AROUND
COME BACK AND VISIT US
IN FALMOUTH TOWN!**

**TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS THAT YOU HAD FUN
IN THIS PLACE OF SEA AND SAND AND SUN
WE WELCOME VISITORS, YOU SEE
ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH LOTS OF DO-RE-MI
BUT WE'RE ...**

(repeat "Sad to say ..." once then "We welcome visitors ..." repeatedly while fading)

(Female managerial type in red vest emerges from stage right carrying clipboard. Comes to mid-stage facing audience and addresses Chorus in a loud voice.) Okay, good job, people. See you all at eight-thirty tomorrow morning. And please try not to be late! (She exits. Curtain.)

The End