

## TEAR ALONG DOTTED LINE!

Sid sat down with Martha the Director. The BBC wanted to throwback to the carefree days of *Play for Today* and *Fawlty Towers*. The script wasn't really working, but Sid was conscious he had the outline of a good retro piece. The actors, Cambridge footlights sort, were in position. The film crew were ready. Martha focused herself behind the relay monitor ready to shout instructions.

'Ok dress rehearsal everyone. Take 1. No audience present. And.... Action!'

The Scene: The hotel manager, David is positioned at the reception desk stirring his tea whilst gazing over the runners and riders for a prestigious race at Doncaster. His wife, the agonisingly frustrated Sheila is culinary disaster and emerges from the kitchen.

'Breakfast all finished, dear. Managed to ensure the jam alighted from the burnt embers you call pop tarts?'

'That's not funny, David. How was I to know I should have adjusted the settings on the toaster. My, what the younger generation eat these days.'

'Why the long face dear? You are reminding me that I shouldn't be placing a bet on this afternoon's St Leger at Doncaster!'

'That's funny,' said Martha from her Director's chair. 'Keep going actors.'

'That Bookie will be retiring to the Bahamas the amount of money you have placed in the last few years.'

'Talking about booking Sheila, has Commandant Mitchell left yet? About time he paid for his papers!'

'May I remind you David, this is a hotel, not some prison. The times guests are complaining to me that they feel unappreciated.'

'Unappreciated? They are appreciated as long as they pay for their rooms! Not to mention the comedy in the dining room. I mean do you think I do this all for free? Anyway, isn't it time you had a lie down dear?'

'Audience will laugh at the sarcasm and the way David looks at Sheila,' said Sid.

'Sorry, Sid,' said Martha. Can we just go with the script and talk about the audience later? Carry on actors.'

'Now do I have everything?' said Sheila. She overstretches to David's desk.

'Sheila, your food guide to committing hurry-curry to the plate is alongside your fork and chisel.'

'My cooking isn't that bad, David.'

'True, though I think a bunch of meerkats as commie chefs could do better. At least the disaster zone could be explained away with meerkats! And what about your attempted cordon-bleu? More like Gordon Blair!'

'What a line that is! Great writing Sid,' said Martha. 'Very topical. Keep going actors please...'

'David, I'm planning a risotto tonight.'

'Ah yes, the leftovers from last night's Spaghetti Bolognese. This time it's personal.'

'Cut! cut!' said Martha. 'That's a wrap. Good scene. Let's move onto the dining room. David, should address the audience at this point.'

'Ah, ladies and gentlemen of the audience, you are invited to a vulgar vinegar tasting session at the Chateau Clumsy. Do follow me into the dining room, won't you...?'

'We should put that line into the script, Martha.'

'What line?'

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