

Fine Dining

By Burton Bumgarner

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STORY OF PLAY

This delicious comedy is made up of three scenes set in a restaurant during the time customers arrive, place their orders, and await their meals. The eight actors change roles with each scene, playing a spoiled toddler, a flustered waitress, pretentious customers, a celebrity-seeking opportunist, and a man who just might be a famous writer. Waiters, managers and customers all combine to make for a truly memorable culinary experience. Each of the scenes, "The Irritated Man," "Anxiety Dreams," and "Stephen King Goes to Lunch," may be performed separately or combined as a one act.

* * * * *

Dedicated to Sarah

The Playwright

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 4 w)

SALLY
ROBIN
JULIE
CINDY

FRANK
TOM
RICK
PETE

Setting: The time is the present. The stage is bare except for three tables, one UPC, one DSL, and one DSR, with several chairs around each.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene 1 - The Irritated Man

Frank, a diner

Sally, a waitress

Tom, the host

Robin and Julie, co-workers and diners

Rick, Cindy and Pete, a dad, mom, and child, also diners

Scene 2 - Anxiety Dreams

Frank, restaurant manager

Robin, a waitress

Julie and Sally, diners

Rick and Cindy, diners

Pete and Tom, diners

Scene 3 - Stephen King Goes to Lunch

Pete, a waiter

Robin, a waitress

Frank and Sally, diners

Rick and Cindy, diners

Julie and Tom, diners

The Irritated Man Scene 1

(AT RISE. FRANK is seated at the center table. He is looking over a menu. SALLY, the waitress, is impatiently waiting to take his order.)

FRANK: Now, what are the specials again?

SALLY: *(Impatient, SHE'S done this several times before.)*
Beef tips, vegetable lasagna, London broil, baked scrod,
and ham with raisin sauce.

FRANK: Hmm. I think I need a moment. *(SALLY sighs and rolls her eyes.)*

SALLY: How about a drink. Can I bring you something besides water?

FRANK: Hmm. *(Studies the menu intently.)* What are your drink choices again?

SALLY: Soft drinks, coffee and tea.

FRANK: Hmm. How about ... hmm.

SALLY: How about if I give you a few minutes to make up your mind ... again.

FRANK: I'll have coffee.

SALLY: *(Surprised.)* What? You actually made a decision? I'd better hurry before you change your mind ... again. *(SHE writes down the order and quickly exits.)*

FRANK: Yes. Coffee sounds good. Very good. Oh, make sure it's decaf. Now, back to this menu. *(Returns to the menu.)*

(TOM, the host, enters with ROBIN and JULIE. He leads them to the DSL table and hands them menus.)

TOM: Our specials are beef tips, vegetable lasagna, London broil, baked scrod, and ham with raisin sauce. Sally will be your waitress. She'll be with you shortly. *(ROBIN and JULIE look at their menus. HE pauses, waiting to be acknowledged.)* Yes, Sally will be here any minute now. *(No response from the ladies HE looks at his watch.)*

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TOM: *(Cont'd.)* I expect to see her any second now. Lovely day, isn't it? Except for all the wind and rain.

(HE gets no response. Pause.)

TOM: *(Cont'd.)* Did you know Sally, your waitress, once served time in prison for assaulting a rude customer? *(Still no response.)* Yes. She's out on good behavior. We've only had a couple of incidences since she's been here. Of course, we're afraid to fire her. She might hurt us.

ROBIN: I'll have water.

JULIE: Me, too.

TOM: *(Surprised.)* Water?

ROBIN: Yes.

JULIE: Water.

TOM: I'm the host, I'm not a waiter. *(Exits. SALLY enters with a cup of coffee which she slams down in front of FRANK.)*

SALLY: So, what's it gonna be?

FRANK: Hmm. How are the beef tips?

SALLY: Good.

FRANK: And the scrod?

SALLY: Very good.

FRANK: Hmm.

SALLY: I'm going to wait on those people over there.

FRANK: How is the ham and raisin sauce?

SALLY: *(Sarcastic.)* I haven't tried everything today.

FRANK: Hmm.

SALLY: *(Rolls HER eyes and crosses to ROBIN and JULIE. Bored.)* Hello. I'm, Sally. I'll be your waitress. I bet you guessed that already. Our specials are beef tips, vegetable lasagna, London broil, baked scrod, and ham with raisin sauce.

ROBIN: We know.

SALLY: You know? How could you possibly know?

JULIE: That man told us.

SALLY: What man?

ROBIN: Your host.

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SALLY: (*Sarcastic.*) How thoughtful of him. Could I bring you something to drink?

ROBIN/JULIE: Water.

SALLY: Just water?

ROBIN: Just water.

SALLY: (*Crossing to FRANK.*) Have you made up your mind yet?

FRANK: Tell me about the London broil.

SALLY: It's meat and it's ... from England.

FRANK: You know, this is very good coffee. If I didn't know better I'd think it was regular instead of decaf.

SALLY: You wanted decaf? Uh oh.

FRANK: I'm really curious about the ham and raisin sauce. I've never had raisin sauce.

SALLY: (*Writing.*) So, the ham and raisin sauce. What about sides?

FRANK: Sides?

SALLY: Yeah. It comes with two sides.

FRANK: What are the sides?

SALLY: You know. Veggies, fruits, salads. (*Points to menu.*) They're all listed right there.

FRANK: Oh, my. You DO have a lot to chose from.

SALLY: You sit there and think about it. I'll be back in a jiffy.

(SALLY exits. ROBIN and JULIE begin a long, irritating conversation into which FRANK is gradually drawn.)

ROBIN: You know, Julie, if you're going to get anywhere in the company you're going to have to put in those extra hours. There's no getting around it. You're going to have to work sixty hours a week. And you're going to have to make yourself known. You can't be bashful.

JULIE: I know all about that.

ROBIN: And you're going to have to travel.

JULIE: I love to travel.

ROBIN: Last month I traveled to fifteen different cities. And none of them were interesting.

JULIE: I can usually find something of interest wherever I go.

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ROBIN: With the company, you don't have time to find anything of interest. It's work, work, work.

JULIE: Yes, I know.

ROBIN: I spent last Christmas in Topeka. Do you have any idea how dull Topeka can be at Christmas?

JULIE: I can imagine.

ROBIN: Well, let me tell you. It was dull. One night I sat in a coffee shop and counted all of the Volkswagens that drove by. There aren't a lot of Volkswagens in Topeka.

FRANK: I thought you said you worked all the time. How can you sit in a coffee shop and count Volkswagens if you're working? *(ROBIN doesn't hear FRANK. SALLY enters with water glasses. She crosses to Robin and JULIE.)*

SALLY: Ready to order?

ROBIN: What were those specials again?

SALLY: *(Irritated.)* Beef tips, vegetable lasagna, London broil, baked scrod, and ham with raisin sauce.

ROBIN: *(Studying the menu.)* Hmm.

SALLY: Oh, for heaven's sake!

ROBIN: Is the scrod fresh?

SALLY: It used to be.

JULIE: What vegetables are in the lasagna?

SALLY: Green ones.

ROBIN: *(Closing HER menu and handing it to SALLY.)* I'll have a Greek salad.

JULIE: *(Closing HER menu and handing it to SALLY.)* Me, too.

SALLY: Couldn't talk you into a special, huh?

ROBIN: No. A Greek salad will be fine.

JULIE: I love Greek salad.

SALLY: *(Writing.)* Two Greek salads.

ROBIN: May I ask you a personal question?

SALLY: Shoot.

ROBIN: The man who seated us said ... well ... were you ever in prison?

SALLY: No. But the day's young. *(Crosses to FRANK.)* Okay. We got the ham and raisin sauce. How about sides?

End of Freeview

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