

LE CAFÉ INTERNATIONALE

by Ken Bradbury

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SYNOPSIS: New owners have to wait tables in their international restaurant. A famous food critic is their first customer.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 either)

PEYTON (m/f).....a very nervous owner of the Café
Internationale. *(54 lines)*
MICKY (m/f).....Peyton's business partner. *(44 lines)*
DORIAN (m/f).....a famous restaurant critic. *(26 lines)*

AT START: *The café on the evening of its opening.*

PEYTON: *(Entering in a nervous hurry.)* Over there! No! Put it over there! You can't put the cash register in the restroom! And be careful with those plates! Where are the flowers? Has anybody seen the flowers?

MICKY: *(Entering quickly.)* We ready?

PEYTON: Ready? Are you crazy? No, we're not ready! Good grief! We open our new restaurant in five minutes and nothing's in place! *(Shouting to an employee.)* You knocked over the menus, you numbskull!

MICKY: It's worse than that.

PEYTON: What're you talking about?

MICKY: The waiters. There's a transit strike. None of the busses are running and all our waiters are coming by bus.

PEYTON: You're kidding me?

MICKY: It'll be hours before they get here. We've gotta cancel the grand opening.

PEYTON: We can't cancel the grand opening! The city's most important food critic will be here any minute! You want her to write, "The Café International, the first restaurant in the city to give you a choice of three different nationalities, now gives you a fourth choice: stay home." That'll kill us!

MICKY: Then what'll we do?

PEYTON: We can wait tables.

MICKY: We had six waiters! Two for each type of food!

PEYTON: We'll move fast.

MICKY: We'll what?

PEYTON: Move fast. She'll never know. We've got all those waiters' outfits in the backroom and we can... I don't know... change our hairstyles... add a moustache... something.

MICKY: But...

PEYTON: There she is! Dorian Gastronomy! The toughest food critic in town! She's coming in! She's coming in! Quick! Give her the best seat in the house. I'll go change.

MICKY: Are you out of your mind?

PEYTON: *(Exiting.)* Yes! Now do it!

MICKY: (*Turning and coming face to face with DORIAN.*) Welcome to the Café Internationale! The only restaurant in the city to offer a choice of three different cuisines!

DORIAN: (*Not impressed.*) Charming. Now give me a table.

MICKY: In which room?

DORIAN: I'll try the French.

MICKY: Oui! Oui!

DORIAN: That is so authentic. Just give me a seat.

MICKY: French it is! (*Arranging a chair and table.*) Mademoiselle, may I present ... Ze Bistro! (*Seats DORIAN.*) Your waiter, Pierre, will be weeth you in just a moment.

DORIAN: I can't wait.

PEYTON: (*As MICKY rushes to the back area.*) Where'd you put her?

DORIAN: The Bistro. She wants French.

PEYTON: Then French it is! (*PEYTON begins quickly changing clothing.*) We can do this, Micky! We can do this! Just watch this.

MICKY: Without pants?

PEYTON: (*Looks down.*) Oh. Hand me that apron! (*MICKY gets an apro. PEYTON quickly whips it on and enters the Bistro.*) Mademoiselle! Welcome to zee Bistro! Have you had time to look at zee menu?

DORIAN: Is your escargot better than your accent?

PEYTON: Oui! Oui! (*PEYTON quickly zips into the back area.*) An order of snails in garlic sauce. Quick! (*To MICKY.*) Go out and keep her occupied.

MICKY: Do what?

PEYTON: Don't let her look around at the place! It's not decorated yet. Keep her distracted.

MICKY: Great. Gimme that apron. (*Whips it off PEYTON and puts it on.*) (*Entering the Bistro.*) Mademoiselle! Eez everything to your liking?

DORIAN: (*With absolutely no enthusiasm.*) Hunky dory. Where's my escargot?

MICKY: Oh, no doubt zay are steel sweemming around in zee leetle pond. Everything eez fresh at zee Bistro!

PEYTON: (*Entering with a flourish.*) Viola! Madame, your escargot!

DORIAN: Are they always served without pants?

PEYTON: Madame! Zee leetle snail, he wears no pants!

DORIAN: I mean yours.

PEYTON: Oh. Sacre Bleu! (*PEYTON runs off to backstage area.*)

MICKY: Something new in zee world of food, Madame. We believe in a natural eating experience!

DORIAN: Yeh. (*And she begins eating.*)

MICKY: (*Running to the rear area.*) Idiot!

PEYTON: Sorry. I forgot! You took my apron!

MICKY: Look! She's getting up! (*Running out to her.*) Finished Madame?

DORIAN: I'd like to try your Mexican cuisine.

MICKY: Oh, no.

DORIAN: What?

MICKY: I mean. O ... le! Ole! (*Shouting off to PEYTON.*) The Café Sombrero! (*MICKY begins singing or humming a Mexican tune as he escorts DORIAN in a small circle and PEYTON dashes out to rearrange the table, indicating another section of the restaurant.*) Bueno! Bueno! Please, senorita, take this seat. (*Grabbing a menu.*) Your menu. Your waiter will be right with you. (*Running back to PEYTON.*) Find something?

PEYTON: (*Putting on an imaginary costume.*) Is she going to try every room in the restaurant?

MICKY: Who knows? You ready?

PEYTON: No.

MICKY: (*Pushing him out to the café.*) Great.

PEYTON: Senorita! Buenos Noches! Como esta?

DORIAN: Fine. How are your nachos?

PEYTON: Oh! El nachos! Ay-yi-yi-yi-yi! Muy delicioso! Coming right up! (*Runs back to PEYTON.*) Nachos, quick! You think she recognized me?

MICKY: No, you were wearing pants this time. How does she like it? Is she smiling?

PEYTON: I don't think that's possible. You seen the face on that woman?

MICKY: It's face that'll make or break us. (*Handing him a plate.*) Here. Your nachos, senor.

PEYTON: (*Appearing at her table with the plate.*) Viola!

DORIAN: Viola?

PEYTON: Uh... (*Setting the plate before her.*) ...Whoopee!

DORIAN: Dip?

PEYTON: No, he's in thee kitchen.

DORIAN: Dip for my nachos.

PEYTON: Oh. Sorry. Uh ... excusimemente! (*Hurries to the back.*) You forgot her dip!

MICKY: (*Grabs something quickly.*) Here!

PEYTON: (*Grabbing the plate and hurrying to out front.*) Dip! Dip! Dip! Your dip is here!

DORIAN: (*Looking at him.*) He certainly is. (*PEYTON runs back to kitchen area.*)

MICKY: Does she like it?

PEYTON: How should I know? I'm too scared to breathe.

MICKY: Oh, no.

PEYTON: What? What?

MICKY: (*Holding something.*) This is the dip. You just gave her the roach killer.

PEYTON: Me? You just ... (*But MICKY has pushed him out front. To DORIAN.*) Wait! Wait! (*Grabs the dip.*) Have you deeped?

DORIAN: Have I what?

PEYTON: Deeped! Deeped! Have you deeped?

DORIAN: I just got here.

PEYTON: Please ... please try el nacho weethout thee deep. It eese perfecto all by eetself.

DORIAN: (*Takes a bite.*) Not bad. How about the western section?

PEYTON: The Barbecue Corral? Pecos!

MICKY: (*Sticking his head in.*) Yeh, Pedro?

PEYTON: To thee Barbecue Corral! (*The two switch places as PEYTON runs back to change and MICKY runs out to escort her in a small circle with PEYTON rearranging the table as he exits.*)

MICKY: (*Singing.*) "I'm an old cow hand ... from the Rio Grande ... And my barbecue don't taste like sand!" Here we are, little lady. Howdy and welcome to the Barbecue Corral. Your waiter's gonna mosey on out here in just a minute so you jist rest your tired old toes and sit a spell. (*Running back to PEYTON.*) Go to it, Tex.

PEYTON: I can't find my chaps! All we have are cowgirl outfits!

MICKY: (*As he quickly slaps the cowgirl outfit onto PEYTON.*) Well then get your tail out there, you cute little thing.

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