

Dinner for Three

By Michael Zielinski

The curtain rises on SAM and PEG MORRIS, both in their 40s, seated at a restaurant table.

SAM MORRIS

I'm glad your schedule finally freed you up for dinner.

PEG MORRIS

Most nights I don't have time for dinner. I'm getting sick of inhaling a protein bar before I meet one of my interior decorating clients.

SAM MORRIS

You have little time for me. If I wanted to live in a monastery, I would shave my hair on top of my scalp like a monk.

PEG MORRIS

Someday male pattern baldness will take care of that for you. I have little time for myself. Sometimes when I look in the mirror, I see a stranger staring back at me.

TIFF THOMPSON, in her 30s, pulls up a chair and joins them.

TIFF THOMPSON

Sam, why don't you ask her for a divorce right now?

PEG MORRIS

I beg your pardon.

TIFF THOMPSON

I'm Tiff Thompson. Your husband has been screwing me for over a year, promising me he'll get a divorce.

SAM MORRIS

This is neither the time nor the place.

PEG MORRIS

So, you've been cheating on me, you bastard! I guess all your bitching about me never being there for you was just a cover. I work my ass off while you screw her ass off.

SAM MORRIS

I felt neglected.

PEG MORRIS

Do you love her?

SAM MORRIS

It's complicated.

TIFF THOMPSON

Screw you. You've told me you love me so many damn times it's a wonder I don't have a tin ear.

SAM MORRIS

I love both of you.

TIFF THOMPSON

You don't love her. You love your financial security.

PEG MORRIS

You don't love her. You love using her.

TIFF THOMPSON

I was dumb enough to believe you were just waiting to get your finances in order before asking her for a divorce. I would have been better off waiting for Godot.

PEG MORRIS

You can have Sam. I'm divorcing him and taking him to the cleaners. When I'm done with him, he won't have enough money left to go to the cleaners.

TIFF THOMPSON

Mrs. Morris, I apologize for screwing your husband. He told me it was over between you two. That you only shared a house, not a life, because you work all the time. I was never comfortable being the other woman. I always felt dirty.

PEG MORRIS

You should have taken more showers. By the way, call me Peg. You're pretty enough without making me feel like I'm an old hag with the Mrs. Morris. crap. Yes, I do work a lot. But I dearly loved my soon-to-be ex-husband until you sat down for dinner.

A WAITER approaches, menus in hand.

WAITER

Will it now be dinner for three?

PEG MORRIS

Absolutely. I just hope the cuisine is as delicious as this conversation.

SAM MORRIS

What's so delicious about it?

PEG MORRIS

Watching you squirm.

TIFF THOMPSON

Agreed. I sat down, hoping to force Sam's hand. I thought he would do the right thing and leave you for me.

PEG MORRIS

From my perspective doing the right thing would be for him to dump you and beg me for forgiveness.

TIFF THOMPSON

I despise you, Sam. You may divorce but you won't have me.

PEG MORRIS

He just wanted to have his cake and eat it, too.

TIFF THOMPSON

Men are pigs. They all should eat at a trough instead of a table.

SAM MORRIS

(Turns to Tiff)

While Peg says she still was in love with me, she didn't walk the talk. We haven't had sex in over two years. That's why I rationalized that I technically wasn't cheating on her with you. Peg may love me, but she is not in love with me. I love her, but I am in love with you.

PEG MORRIS

You're splitting pubic hairs, Sam. When I was in the mood, you were as limp as a wet noodle. Even when we listened to James Brown singing *Get on up*, it didn't help.

TIFF THOMPSON

With me, he always was as hard as a medieval battering ram.

PEG MORRIS

It was either the lust or he was loading up on Viagra.

TIFF THOMPSON

At times I wanted to say: Don't play it again, Sam.

The waiter approaches again.

WAITER

Have we decided?

PEG MORRIS

Surf and turf for her and I and arsenic for the gentleman.

WAITER

Ma'am?

SAM MORRIS

I'll have the filet. Medium rare. And another bottle of wine.

PEG MORRIS

Make that two bottles.

TIFF THOMPSON

Make that three.

WAITER

As you wish. But I hope one of you has an Uber app.

SAM MORRIS

So, I'm the bad guy in this?

PEG MORRIS

I won't even give such an insane question the dignity of an answer.

TIFF THOMPSON

Despite your infidelity to your wife, I always thought you were a saint.

PEG MORRIS

You're kidding. The Sam I know is a scoundrel.

TIFF THOMPSON

That definitely is not my Sam.

PEG MORRIS

He never was your Sam. Or evidently my Sam.

TIFF THOMPSON

Maybe he's bipolar.

PEG MORRIS

Or has multiple personalities.

SAM MORRIS

I find myself acting like an entirely different person when I'm with you (*turns to Tiff*) than I do with you (*turns to Peg*). Am I two-faced? Or do I have contradictory traits that are magnified by the person I'm with? At times I don't really know if I know myself. It makes me feel dishonest about who I am.

PEG MORRIS

So, you're an asshole around me because I'm an asshole? And your mistress here is Saint Teresa, so you deserve to be canonized when you are around her? Except, of course, for the effing adultery.

SAM MORRIS

Yes. By the way, effing adultery is redundant.

PEG MORRIS

I'd stab you with your steak knife right now, but you're not worth me rotting in prison.

TIFF THOMPSON

I believe we all act differently around different people.

PEG MORRIS

Perhaps to a degree. But not to Sam's personality extremes.

SAM MORRIS

You're making me out to be Jekyll and Hyde. I have different strokes for different folks.

PEG MORRIS

You're a louse to both of us who doesn't deserve either one of us.

TIFF THOMPSON

I see that now.

PEG MORRIS

Besides sharing Sam, what else do you think we have in common?

TIFF THOMPSON

He snorts like a pig when he laughs. It's annoying as hell. Makes my teeth ache.

PEG MORRIS

Oh my God. It's enough to make you want to cut off your ears. I would never go see a comedy with him.

TIFF THOMPSON

I avoided watching sitcoms when he was over at my apartment. I would only watch horror movies with him. They're not as frightening as his laugh.

PEG MORRIS

And he doesn't use deodorant because he's allergic to all brands. So his armpits smell like an Italian hoagie polluted with onions.

TIFF THOMPSON

It's nauseating. Who wants to inhale that when you're making love? I once forced him to use deodorant and his underarms wound up itchy, bumpy and red as a firetruck. Then they began to blister, peel, flake and ooze. It was like being in bed with a leper.

PEG MORRIS

What else annoys you about him?

TIFF THOMPSON

Not to bring up sex around his wife, but he always keeps his socks on while making love. A naked man with socks on looks ridiculous.

PEG MORRIS

I always thought it was hysterical. But then I took a closer look at his feet. His ugly, gnarly toes would make a mountain goat gag. He needs a chainsaw to cut his toenails.

Sam Morris laughs, punctuated with pig snorts.

TIFF THOMPSON

Please, Peg. Don't make him laugh again.

SAM MORRIS

I'm done with both of you. I'm not going to sit here and be abused because my wife is so cold she must be part Eskimo and I sought some comfort with someone I eventually planned to marry if she hadn't crashed our dinner tonight.

TIFF THOMPSON

I realize now that you never would have married me. I never want to see you again.

SAM MORRIS

Trust me, Tiff. You won't. See you in court, Peg.

PEG MORRIS

Gladly.

SAM MORRIS

Don't be so eager. I have pictures of you and our cleaning lady having sex on our dining room table.

Sam gets up and walks away.

TIFF THOMPSON

Now that's intriguing. Tell me a little more about yourself.

PEG MORRIS

I've said bye to bisexuality. I'm strictly gay now. Perhaps it was Sam's socks.

TIFF THOMPSON

I've never been with a woman. But I've fantasized about it at times.

PEG MORRIS

May I come over to your apartment tonight?

TIFF THOMPSON

Let's skip dinner and get on with it.

PEG MORRIS

I'm so glad you joined us for a dinner we never ate.

TIFF THOMPSON

There are other appetites besides food. Just a hunch, but I believe your breasts are more succulent than Sam's penis.

PEG MORRIS

I can't wait to make love to my husband's lover.

TIFF THOMPSON

It will be quite the Morris family affair.

PEG MORRIS

I promise to take off my stockings.

TIFF THOMPSON

In your case, please keep them on.

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF PLAY)