

NO WIFI

Written by

Gerald Williams

303-828 Gilford Street, Vancouver, BC, V6G2N6
604-417-0714 geraldwilliamsperforms@gmail.com

Characters

Cary male late twenties. Restaurant customer.
Les server. Any age, gender.

Synopsis

Cary arrives early for a reservation and reveals things about his life, including that he may no longer need the reservation.

A TABLE IN A RESTAURANT. A MAN IS SEATED ALONE AT A TABLE SET FOR TWO. HE IS TALKING TO THE SERVER.

CARY

I guess it's not normal to arrive this early for a reservation.

LES

The table's free, so it's not a problem.

CARY

This is a great table. I did the layout.

LES

Oh? Do you build tables?

CARY

No? Do you want a table?

LES

No, but...you said you did a layout and the table is great?

CARY

The placement of the table in restaurant. It's perfect for the time of day. With a 7:45 arrival, the sun will just be setting, so there'll be a glow but no glare, and the night view of the city will be perfect by 8:40, making it the best time to show a ring and propose, and most importantly the distance to the rest room is only 19 paces, meaning if I have to go, then I'll only be away from the table one minute ten seconds at most, unless I have to go number two, but I'm pretty careful about that.

LES

Oh.

CARY

What's your name?

LES

My name's Les, and I'll be your server this evening. Is there anything I can get you while you're waiting?

CARY

Les? That's a pretty unusual name.

LES

Thank you sir. I'll be right back.

Les goes to a side table.

Cary looks at the menu. He pulls a notebook from his backpack and begins making notes from the menu. He pauses and gets a calculator and his smart phone. He inputs some calculations, looks at his phone and begins looking something up.

CARY

Les! Les!

LES

Yes sir?

CARY

What's your wifi password Les?

LES

I'm sorry we don't have wifi?

CARY

You don't?

LES

No sir.

CARY

I go to a coffee shop near my house every day. In the morning. They have wifi. Sometimes it's not strong, weak sometimes, very weak. Which is frustrating, you know.

LES

Right.

CARY

It's pretty typical to have wifi in public places, don't you think?

LES

Right.

CARY

But you don't have wifi?

LES

Right.

CARY

I guess I'll have to use my own data plan. But for the price you charge for dinner, wifi isn't a lot to ask.

LES

I'm sorry.

CARY

It's not your fault. If you have the address of the owner I'll write him a letter and explain to him that wifi is common nowadays.

LES

The address is on our web page.

CARY

Les....

LES

You mentioned that the other party isn't arriving until 7:45, and it's still before 7, can I get you something while you're waiting.

CARY

You got the list when I made the reservation.

LES

Yes sir, everything will come as you asked for.

Pulls a laminated piece of paper out of his bag and hands it to Les.

CARY

I made this chart of when everything should come and how it should be arranged.

LES

Thank you.

CARY

The red time line indicates 15 minutes prior to table delivery, the yellow is the five minute warning and the green is the "go".

LES

It's very detailed.

CARY

It's probably unnecessary, now.

LES

Probably, sir.

CARY

People don't understand the importance of planning. As a professional server you should be aware that planning is the key to successfully managing a large number of tables and needs of individual customers at those tables.

LES

I see.

CARY

(Begins to break down during this speech) You need to always be thinking two or even three steps ahead to make sure that you don't falter, are in charge. You need to make sure you're in charge of your world otherwise everything gets off balance and then your weakness gets exposed and things fall apart. And that would be a tragedy wouldn't it Les. A tragedy when our world begins to crumple and there's nothing we can do about it, nothing, no matter how hard we try, how reasonable we are, how much we plan, and things don't work out, like you know, you come to a nice place like this and you try and look something up on the Internet and you figure a nice place like this would have free wifi, but there isn't any, then you wonder what am I even doing here, you know, what's the point, the whole point is missing.

LES

So, you don't want anything from the bar?

CARY

I have a confession Les.

LES

I just have to check on other
tables, so -

CARY

Sit with me Les. Just for a few
minutes.

Les doesn't sit.

LES

I have other customers-

CARY

Do you think I'm attractive?

LES

Physically or personality.

CARY

You're right, I'm very attractive,
and smart. Do you know I received
the Scientific Academy Genius Award
when I was in my first year at
university.

LES

Oh.

CARY

Not my second year, my first year.

LES

Ah.

ROGER

Undergrad, not grad school.

LES

Oh.

CARY

Got a job with the National
Academic Scientific Research
Centre...a prestigious job.

LES

I'll be right back.

CARY

She left me Les! She left me.

LES

I'm sorry?

CARY

Tonight. The other party. I was going to ask her to marry me tonight. She told me she never wanted to see me again.

LES

Oh?

CARY

She won't be here at 7:45 to see the sun fill this room from this perfect table. She won't drink the champagne or share the plate of hors d'oeuvres, or even pay the bill.

LES

Excuse me?

CARY

I know what you're thinking, you don't need to tell me a thing, because I was thinking exactly the same thing: she's got cold feet and she'll get over it. But that's not the case. It's not the case Les. Her restraining order made it very clear; she will not be seeing me again.

LES

She was paying the cheque?

CARY

Asking her to pay the bill would seem a little insensitive at this point Les.

LES

You didn't cancel your meal?

CARY

When a man goes through a crisis reason is the first thing to be executed.

LES

You ordered the shared platinum platter.

CARY

You'd agree this is a crisis, wouldn't you?

LES

It may turn into one.

CARY

I've lost my job, the woman of my dreams has dumped me after more than a full month of seeing each other, and my finances? Well, thanks to my parents cutting me off my finances are in ruins.

LES

The platinum platter is ninety-five dollars a person. It takes three hours to prepare.

CARY

When I met her I knew for a fact she would be perfect for me; she's got money, she's quite plain looking, she has very few close friends. Perfect.

LES

The champagne vintage you requested had to be special ordered.

CARY

You do all that and you still don't have wifi. Your standard of service is kinda uneven, don't you think?

LES

I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

CARY

What? Why?

LES

Sir, you've indicated that you don't have any money, you've pre-ordered very expensive items, and it seems you're unable to pay.

CARY

Why do you think I can't pay?

LES

You indicated the woman you're waiting for was going to pay and she's not joining you this evening.

CARY

I shared with you some pretty personal stuff, Les. I didn't think you were going to use it against me.

LES

If you can't pay, I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

ROGER

I didn't say I wasn't going to pay. That's a pretty harsh conclusion you're jumping to.

LES

Oh, I am sorry. I must have misunderstood.

CARY

Is it normal for you to go so negative on someone when they share devastating personal news?

LES

I thought tonight was an engagement dinner, and...oh my, I am sorry.

CARY

That's all right Les. I guess I expected a more professional attitude from you, considering you're a professional server.

LES

I am sorry sir. I apologize.

CARY

I was kinda hoping you'd be more understanding considering all I shared with you.

LES

Can I offer you a complimentary drink while you're waiting. A glass of wine perhaps?

CARY

That's kind of you. I like that. But I don't feel right about messing up the table.

LES

Messing up the table? Why is that a problem?

CARY

Well, I'm not eating here.

LES

But you just said-

CARY

You're getting me a little confused.

LES

I asked you to leave before because you said you weren't going to pay the bill, and you said it's no problem.

CARY

It isn't a problem. I'm not eating here so there is no bill, so I can't pay it can I?

LES

But you didn't cancel anything.

CARY

Why do you think I got here so early?

LES

(Angrily) Because you are odd!

CARY

Les. Do you think you should talk to a customer like that?

LES

No. But you're not a customer. Now get out! Get out now!

Cary gets up from his chair and begins to exit.

CARY

I don't think I'll come back to this restaurant.

LES

Fine.

CARY
And you can be sure I'll mention
your lack of wifi in my online
review.

Cary exits.

LES
Oh.

Blackout.