

Racetaurant

By

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Based on a short story by Zachary Brown

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1 EXT: OUTSIDE RESTAURANT - EVENING 1

SPENCER and ADAM, both middle-aged men with impeccable grooming, attired in bespoke suits, along with EVELYN, an pre-teen girl sporting a sundress and iPhone, approach the weathered door of a dingy building.

ADAM

This is it? Are you sure?

SPENCER

My dear Adam! It doesn't look like much, but trust me, this is it.

SPENCER opens the door, ushering in ADAM and EVELYN.

2 INT: LOBBY 2

CHARLOTTE, a young woman in an elegant dress leans over a hardwood podium facing the door, smiling warmly.

CHARLOTTE

Hello. Welcome to The Restaurant.  
May I see your membership cards,  
please?

SPENCER

There you are.

SPENCER hands her a glossy gold card engraved only with "Spencer Mayhew".

SPENCER

I've brought my two guests, as  
promised.

Adam rests his hand on Evelyn's shoulder. Evelyn purses her lips, and pulls away, returning to the refuge of her phone. Charlotte inspects the card, glances downward, then smiles warmly at Spencer as she returns it to him.

CHARLOTTE

Welcome back, Mr. Mayhew. It is  
very nice to meet you, Mr. Felix,  
Miss Felix. My name is Charlotte,  
and I will be taking care of you  
this evening. Please, come this  
way.

Charlotte leads the three through an archway into a dining room.

3

INT: DINING ROOM

3

Four tables are staggered throughout the small dining room. At two of the four candle-lit tables, elegant couples engage in whispers of conversation over crystal goblets of fine wine and porcelain plates decorated with gourmet fare. Charlotte seats Spencer's party at an unoccupied table. Adam pulls a chair out for Evelyn who squats with indifference. Charlotte passes the men a pair of slender wine menus.

CHARLOTTE

I'll give you a moment to peruse  
our wines.

CHARLOTTE redirects her attention to another table.

ADAM

(leaning towards Spencer)  
What kind of restaurant requires a  
membership?

SPENCER

Only the most exclusive restaurant  
in the world. It's never in the  
same place twice. My first time was  
in Malta. Clarence brought me.

ADAM

Clarence? From prep school?

SPENCER

Yes, when we were yachting in the  
Baltic he was just raving about  
this place. It was only a short  
flight and I wanted to show him my  
new jet. The food - absolutely  
transformative, I'm telling you -  
wait until you try it, Adam.

ADAM

Sounds like we're in for a treat,  
Evelyn.

EVELYN

(Not looking up from her  
phone)  
Yeah, okay.

Adam glances apologetically to a suddenly distracted  
Spencer.

CHARLOTTE  
Have we made a selection?

Adam busies himself with the rather expensive wine menu.

SPENCER  
We'll have a bottle of the '96  
Cheval Blanc Bordeaux, my treat.

Adam looks up, nods, and slumps back in relief.

CHARLOTTE  
Right away. And for Miss Felix?

EVELYN  
A Sprite?

CHARLOTTE  
Of course.

Charlotte arrives alongside a LANKY COOK with eyes as large as his stubble-lined grin. The cook presents a plate of three crostini topped with beef tartar, fresh sage, and a balsamic reduction.

CHARLOTTE  
Compliments of the chef. I'll be  
back with your drinks. Enjoy.

The cook sets the dish on the table and follows Charlotte back to the kitchen.

ADAM  
(rubbing his hands)  
Wow, nice start.

Adam holds the plate out to Evelyn who eyes the food with disgust and returns to the oblivion of her phone, earbuds commanding her attention. Adam lowers the plate in defeat.

ADAM  
Spencer, I am so sorry.

SPENCER  
Nah, don't worry about it. Kids are  
kids. We used to be like that,  
remember? Except without the cell  
phones.

CHARLOTTE returns and pours the wine, leaving the bottle on the table. She gives EVELYN a glass of soda, then hands them each a menu.

CHARLOTTE

Feel free to take your time with  
the menu. I'll be back in a little  
while.

CHARLOTTE leaves. ADAM, SPENCER, and EVELYN take their  
menus.

ADAM

What, no specials?

SPENCER

Adam, at The Restaurant, everything  
is a special.

EVELYN

(Pulling one ear bud out of  
her ear)

Really? A children's menu?

ADAM

(Leaning over to read her  
menu)

Come now, Evie. These look good.  
German bratwurst and peppers.  
Italian meatballs and spaghetti.  
Mmmm, Japanese Gyudon, that sounds  
interesting!

EVELYN

(Rolling her eyes, shrugging)

Whatever, Dad.

EVELYN puts her headphones back in and looks intently at her  
phone. ADAM sighs and picks up his menu. He scans the menu,  
and furrows his brows in slight confusion. He chuckles a  
little.

ADAM

What is this? A themed restaurant?  
Greek Thigh, Male, Aged 37, in a  
balsamic reduction? Chinese  
Filletted Forearm? Toddler Tartar?  
Really?

SPENCER

Oh, no, it's legit. Exactly as  
advertised. Like I said, food like  
you've never had before.

ADAM

But this is... and you've... and...

ADAM looks at the remaining canapé. He slowly grows horrified.

ADAM  
Oh, my God. Oh God. I'm going to be sick.

ADAM stumbles out of his chair and rushes to the bathroom. EVELYN pulls a ear bud out of her ear and looks at SPENCER.

EVELYN  
Is Dad OK?

SPENCER  
He'll be OK, he's just not feeling well. Probably still carsick from the limo. I'll go check on him. Just wait here.

EVELYN puts in her headphones and goes back to her phone. SPENCER sighs and stands up to follow ADAM to the bathroom.

4 INT: MEN'S BATHROOM

4

ADAM stands in front of the mirror, leaning on the sink, breathing heavily. He splashes water on his face, trying not to panic. SPENCER opens the door and leans casually against the wall.

SPENCER  
Seriously, Adam? You're overreacting.

ADAM  
(Desperately)  
It's a joke, right? You're just joking with me. Spencer, please tell me you're joking.

SPENCER  
No, I'm not.

ADAM  
But... but you're eating people!  
You... I ate a person! Oh my God, I ate a person. I'm going to be sick.

ADAM leans against the wall, his head in his hands, off balance, barely able to stand. SPENCER strolls over to him, grabs him by the shoulders, and gives him a small shake.

SPENCER

Pull yourself together, man! I vouched for you, damn it! My reputation is on the line here. I spend half a million dollars a year on my membership, and by God, if I lose it, I'll never get it back - and I don't mean the money. I mean I'll never eat here again.

ADAM grabs at SPENCER and leans on him for support and balance.

ADAM

But... they're cannibals! We're cannibals! I mean... oh, my God, Toddler Tartar?!

ADAM pulls away from SPENCER in renewed shock. SPENCER takes a few causal steps backwards.

SPENCER

OK, I'll admit, that one grosses me out. I mean, eating people is one thing, but raw meat? Ick. And I know it's safe 'cause it's prepared very fresh and all, but... it's so slimy.

ADAM

Prepared... fresh?

SPENCER

Oh yes, very fresh.

ADAM hesitates, then dashes out the bathroom door.

SPENCER

Damn it, Adam!

5 INT: RESTAURANT

5

ADAM dashes across the back of the restaurant and bursts into the kitchen.

6 INT: KITCHEN

6

ADAM steps into the kitchen. Two CHEFS with knives in white, bloody aprons are moving arms and legs onto cutting boards, chopping meat. The CHEFS are relaxed and jovial, enjoying their jobs. When they touch body parts, they are cavalier. They don't notice ADAM in the doorway. ADAM is horrified. A DELIVERY MAN holding a living BABY walks in the back of the kitchen.

DELIVERY MAN  
I've got two more in the truck.  
Where do you want them?

CHEF 1  
Oh, next week's rotisserie special!  
Put them in the back. We'll prep  
them later.

ADAM stumbles backwards out of the door.

7

INT: RESTAURANT

7

ADAM stumbles into the table nearest the kitchen door. He  
slams his hands down onto the table. The guests at the table  
look at him in surprise.

ADAM  
(Intense whispering)  
Do you know what you are eating?!

WOMAN AT TABLE  
(Slightly flirtatious)  
Yes! Sinful, isn't it? And so good.

The woman smiles and puts a bite of meat into her mouth. Her  
friends all laugh. ADAM pulls away.

MAN AT TABLE  
(To his friends)  
Must be his first time.

The table laughs again. SPENCER puts his hand on ADAM's  
shoulder. ADAM spins around and slams SPENCER into a wall.

ADAM  
They are killing people back there!  
And not just people, babies! How  
could you bring me here? How could  
you bring my daughter here! Oh, my  
God, my daughter!

ADAM hurries back to the table, SPENCER trailing him. ADAM  
tries to look relaxed and calm as he sits down. SPENCER sits  
down, wary. EVELYN is eating a large plate of spaghetti and  
meatballs. Her phone is set aside, and she is not listening  
to headphones anymore.

EVELYN  
Hi, Daddy. Feeling better?



ADAM  
Oh, yes, sweetie, much better.  
(Beat) What are you eating?

EVELYN  
Spaghetti and meatballs. Daddy,  
it's so good. You were right. I  
didn't know food could taste this  
good.

EVELYN eats another bite. She smiles angelically at her father. ADAM sits stiffly in his chair, his hands gripping the seat of the chair, knuckles white.

ADAM  
(Nodding)  
Good. Good. I'm glad.

EVELYN  
Here Daddy, try a meatball.

EVELYN, smiling sweetly, hands ADAM a meatball on a fork. ADAM stiffens, taking the fork slowly. ADAM shoots a glance at SPENCER. SPENCER nods slightly and makes a small "try it" motion with his hands. ADAM hesitates, then takes a small bite of the meatball.

ADAM  
(Sincerely)  
Mmmm... oh... that is good. God,  
forgive me, but it's so good!

ADAM'S body relaxes, then he eats the rest of the meatball in a huge bite. SPENCER relaxes and smiles.

ADAM  
(Leaning over to EVELYN,  
pointing over her shoulder)  
Say, is that... Justin Bieber?

EVELYN snaps her head in the direction ADAM is pointing. ADAM smiles and quickly stabs a meatball off her plate. EVELYN turns back to ADAM just in time to see him pop the meatball into his mouth.

ADAM  
Mmmmm!!!

EVELYN  
(Shrieking and giggling)  
Daddy!!!

ADAM hands EVELYN back the fork while giving her a quick hug. She's still giggling while she starts in on her food. ADAM picks up the menu, smiling as he reads it. SPENCER chuckles as he waves CHARLOTTE over. She comes to the table.

ADAM

I'd like to order the German Schnitzel, please. Oh, and a side of Kansas City Ribs.

CHARLOTTE

Yes, of course, Mr. Felix. Anything else I can get you?

ADAM

Yes. Could I get a membership application?

FADE OUT