DINNER PARTY
An Original One Act

by
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Directed by Matin Movassate

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Dinner party

The set is composed of a kitchen with a wall adjoining a dining room. The living room can be small and on stage, or off stage. All enter through the living room to the dining room and then the kitchen. Matt is a TV chef for the local news station, and Kim is an anchor for the local evening news.

(Moving about the kitchen and dining room table frantically trying to get everything ready for a dinner party- arranging silverware, checking the oven.)

KIM
Honey, wear your pinstripe! You look so good in that.

MATT
(already has it on as he walks into the room adjusting his tie). I know sweetie. You told me already. (Walks over kisses her on the cheek.) How's the chicken looking?

KIM
Almost done. Can you do me a favor honey and just put on your cufflinks too?

MATT
Sweetie, they're not necessary. Listen, you just need to relax a little. I know you want to make a good impression, but we're already good friends. It's just a little dinner party.

KIM
But-

MATT
Stop worrying, it will all be fine, I promise. (kisses her).

KIM
I want this to go better than fine. This is my first dinner party. (sulks a little)

MATT
It'll go great. I promise. (she perks up a little) You know Steve and Jonathan- they're great guys. Besides, they love you from what they’ve heard.

KIM
I guess I really shouldn't be worrying. I did do a damn nice job setting up didn't I.

MATT
I'd have to agree with that. (kisses her, then looks at watch) They should be here any minute now.

KIM
You know, if this goes well, it could mean your own show, not just a segment.
MATT
I'd rather not think about it like that. It's just a dinner party with my producers. That's all. You haven't met them yet have you?

KIM
No, not yet, though I really should. Maybe they can get me on primetime...

MATT
Let's worry about one of us at a time here. You at least have your own show. Ooh, ok, remember, their names are Steve and Jonathan. Steve is the taller one. If they get here, let them in, I have to go to the bathroom (runs offstage).

(doorbell)

MATT
(from offstage) Oh, honey, that's them, could you get it? I'll be out in a minute. (grunting) Holy shit! That's huge! Make that two!

KIM
(openes door) Oh hi! You must be Steve and Jonathan. Please, come in. (they kiss her awkwardly on the cheek)

JONATHAN
Gosh, I love what you've done with the place.

Steve
Yes, it looks spacious. It is quite enjoyable to lay my eyes upon it for an extended period of time, especially without blinking.

KIM
Why... uhm, thank you. Oh, uh, please, won't you sit down? (she leads them to the dinner table)

JONATHAN
I love what you've done with this dinner table.

STEVE
Yes, it looks spacious.

KIM
Thank you... again. So, Matt tells me you've had quite an illustrious career in production.

JONATHAN
We don't like to brag about it.

STEVE
We don't like to brag about it at all. We've produced over 10 emmy award winning shows. And 6 grammy winning music videos. We're really good.
KIM
Wow, that's very impressive.

JONATHAN
We know. In fact, we're looking to produce another news show. We're in the market for a news anchor. Preferably female. So what's for dinner?

KIM
(becomes very interested)
Really? Well, actually, I don't know if Matt has told you this or not, but actually, I'm an award winning news anchor myself...

JONATHAN
Tacos? Fish stew? Open faced grilled cheese sandwiches? Eggs?

Steve
Steve already told us, like 70 million times. He also wanted us to ask what's for dinner.

KIM
Oh, why, uhm, we have a chicken in the oven-

STEVE
Oh, so, you're knocked up?

KIM
What?

JONATHAN
How did you find out so soon? Didn't it just happen like last week?

KIM
WHAT? What are you- oh, oh wait, I get it. Ha, that's a good one. No, we don't have any buns in the oven.

(Jonathan and Steve look at each other and laugh, which makes Kim slightly uneasy)

MATT
(trotting in from offstage, zipping up his fly)
Hey Steve, Jonathan- sorry I'm late , I was just- (he sees them and stops).

STEVE
Hi Matt, we were just getting ready to eat some chicken. Do you want the breast?

MATT
Uhm, honey, could you come in here for a minute and help me with the wine?
KIM
Sweety, the bottle's out on the counter.

MATT
Then, could you help me get the chicken out of the oven. (Steve and Jonathan look at each other and laugh)

KIM
Honey, you know how to do it-

MATT
(slightly exasperated)
Could you just help me cut the cheese for the platter!

(Steve and Jonathan laugh to each other again.)

KIM
Alright honey, here I come. (to Steve and Jonathan) excuse me. (she walks into the kitchen where Matt is waiting)

MATT
Honey, you didn't tell me you were going to have guests over too!

KIM
What on earth are you talking about?

MATT
Your guests who are sitting out there. I would have at least liked to have known they were coming. Did we even make enough food for everyone?

KIM
What are you talking about Matt? what? That's-

MATT
I mean, honestly, I'm embarrassed right now. You didn't even introduce me. You didn't even have the courtesy to tell me they were coming. Honestly.

KIM
What?

MATT
Well aren't you going to tell me who they are?

KIM
That's Steve and Jonathan

MATT
What?

KIM
What do you mean what?

MATT
That's not Steve or Jonathan

KIM
What?

MATT
I've never seen either of those two men before in my life

KIM
Oh my god

MATT
What the fuck? Why did you let in two total strangers?

KIM
Oh my god there are two total strangers in our house. Get your gun, quickly, I'll keep them busy.

MATT
We don't own a gun!

KIM
Why don't we own a gun?

MATT
Because we're not fucking Republican!

KIM
Oh my god

MATT
Calm down, just calm the fuck down!

KIM
Don't swear goddamnit! You're making me nervous!

MATT
What? I'm making you nervous? We have two complete strangers sitting at our fucking dinner table!- Ok, you know what? There's an easy answer. I'm going to go in there and ask them to leave. That's it. They will leave. Ok?

KIM
But- wait- What about dinner?

MATT  
Dear god. (walks into the dining room) Alright-

JONATHAN  
So what's for dinner? Cucumber salad?

MATT  
What?

STEVE  
Well, I just figured, because your wife definitely likes cucumbers.

MATT  
What?

(Pause- with knowingish looks and winks and nods from Steve and Jonathan)

JONATHAN  
My I love what you've done with yourself.

STEVE  
Yes, you look so spacious.

MATT  
Excuse me. (walks back into the kitchen) What the hell did you tell them.

KIM  
What?

MATT  
Did it just come up in casual conversation?

KIM  
What?

MATT  
"Oh, I just loving having anal sex with cucumbers!"

KIM  
What?!

MATT  
I mean why would you tell anyone that, especially these creeps! Gosh I was only in the bathroom- dear god you didn't tell them about the blumpkins did you?
KIM
That's disgusting! What are you talking about?! How could you ever accuse me of anything like that?! That's terrible. That makes me mad - legitimately mad at you. And this was supposed to be a lovely dinner party, and I was going to be a hostess, and now it's ruined, and you don't love me-

MATT
Well then how the fuck do they know about the cucumber thing?

KIM
They know about the cucumber?

MATT
Yes! That's what I've been saying! At least, that's what I'd interpret “Your wife certainly loves cucumbers,” (with the winks and nods) to mean! Dear god. They're probably trying to blackmail us. Who are these people? Where did they- FUCK!

KIM
Do you think they know about the carrot?

MATT
Oh god- I wasn't even thinking about the carrot! What are we going to do?!

KIM
Calm down. Just calm down. Everything's going to be fine. Dear god this could ruin my career! If that ever gets leaked,

MATT
What about my career?

KIM
Oh, who cares about a chef on TV? You can find other work.

MATT
That's terrible. Are you just thinking of yourself?

JONATHAN
Hey, where's our food? I'm very hungry. (from other room)

STEVE
His stomach is very spacious. Do you need help tossing the cucumber salad? We'd love to eat it now. It looked terribly tasty last time we saw it. (from other room)

MATT
We'll finish this later. Right now I just think we should find out what they know and what they want.
KIM
Fine. (they return back to the dining room with the chicken)

MATT
Alright, what do you want?

JONATHAN
The breast?

MATT
What?

JONATHAN
Oh, unless you want the breast. You seem like a breast man.

STEVE
I like legs.

MATT
Shut up, cut the crap. Just tell us how much you want.

JONATHAN
Do you have another chicken?

MATT
Stop it. Just-

JONATHAN
Because two breasts are better than one.

STEVE
And those legs look so spacious.

KIM
Jesus! Stop this!

JONATHAN
Jesus wasn't a vegetarian. I don't think he's going to help now. Besides, he hasn't been around for ages. You know he's dead right?

MATT
Listen, we're prepared to pay you however much you want.

KIM
Honey!

MATT
Let's just see what they want!

STEVE
Uhm, gosh, we weren't really prepared for this.

JONATHAN
Yes, actually, we thought we should probably pay you. After all, it looked so good, so sexy, so tasty... The chicken.

MATT
The chicken looks sexy?

JONATHAN
Yes, I'd like to violate it.

STEVE
I as well, if you'd like to join in, we can all violate it together. We just need a knife.

MATT
Oh dear god... (runs back into kitchen, Kim follows).

JONATHAN
If you'd like, you can carve the chicken yourself? (from other room)

MATT
They definitely know everything. Shit! Fuck! Motherfucking shit!

KIM
God, oh god.

MATT
Wait, you don't think they have the tape do you?

KIM
I thought you said you erased it.

MATT
Jesus, I thought I did, I know I did. I did. I did. But then how the fuck do they know?

KIM
That tape cannot get out. You need to fix this. It was your idea and now you need to fix it.

MATT
It was my idea to have sex in the studio? Ok, yeah, that was my idea. But who wanted to use my produce as sex toys?

KIM
But who wanted to videotape it?

MATT
Hey, that was a mutual decision. I thought we agreed that the studio cameras would make it that much more exciting?

KIM
Excuse me, I distinctly remember feeling just a little bit of pressure.

MATT
Don't give me that bullshit.

KIM
Bullshit!? You get that tape. Or we will never have sex ever again.

(MATT dashes back into the other room with the chicken this time)

MATT
Alright, give me the fucking tape.

STEVE
What tape?

MATT
I'm really fucking serious. If you don't give me the tape I will beat you both to death with this goddamn chicken.

JONATHAN
What about dinner?

MATT
Fuck dinner!

STEVE
What about the chicken?

MATT
Fuck the chicken!

JONATHAN
What about your wife?

MATT
Fuck my wife!

JONATHAN
Yes, so are you going to beat us with your meat now?
MATT
Dear fucking god! (grabs chicken and starts beating Jonathan. Goofy fight scene ensues).

KIM
Honey! (runs into the room). Stop it! My god, stop it!

JONATHAN
Alright! Alright! We have your tape!

MATT
Then give it to me now and we can forget the whole thing. (stops hitting them)

STEVE
We want stuff in return.

MATT
You son of a bitch. You come into my house extorting and blackmailing and-

KIM
Honey, just see what they want.

MATT
Alright, fine, tell us what you want.

JONATHAN
That chicken.

MATT
What?

JONATHAN
I'm still very hungry and I want that chicken.

MATT
So, in exchange for that video, you want this chicken.

STEVE
Yes.

MATT
Give me one sec. Honey, can you come here? And bring the chicken. (they both walk into the other room).

KIM
Honey, why won't you just give them the chicken and we can just get on!

MATT
Something doesn't make any sense here. Why do they just want the chicken?

KIM
Honey, who cares, they're really goddamn weird. Maybe they have a chicken fetish. Maybe they're actually humanitarian. Who the fuck knows, but we don't need that chicken. We need the tape.

MATT
Something just isn't right. (starts ripping through the chicken, and eventually comes out with a large gemstone). Holy shit.

KIM
Is that for me?

MATT
This is what they want. How the fuck did a huge ass diamond get in our chicken?

KIM
(realization) Oh my god.

MATT
What?

KIM
I did a report this evening on that diamond. It's called the chicken diamond, it was just stolen this afternoon. That thing is worth a shitload of money.

MATT
Well wonderful, now we have it.

KIM
No! We have to get rid of it! They're staging a full-scale manhunt! We'll get jail for life! Just give it to them and get our tape back, please. I don't care about the diamond, I still have the one you gave me right here on my finger. It's the only one I'll ever need.

MATT
I'll hold you to that.

KIM
Let's just make the trade and call the police.

MATT
Should we try to stall them too? Alright, that's what I'll do. You make the phone call, and I'll handle those two. (walks back into the kitchen as KIM calls the police).

JONATHAN
Can we have our chicken now?
MATT
I want the tape first, then I'll give you the diamond.

STEVE
What about the chicken.

MATT
Sure, the chicken, whatever you want to call it.

STEVE
Good. Here's your tape. (produces a tape from behind his back which he had taken from a table sitting in the living room. This is a random tape- it can be grabbed at any point while MATT and KIM are in the kitchen together. It is unimportant).

MATT
Oh, alright, well here's your diamond.

JONATHAN
And our chicken.

STEVE
Yes, our spacious chicken.

MATT
Whatever you want to call it. Your chicken.

STEVE
We're serious. Get the chicken.

MATT
Fine! Dear god! (walks into kitchen, grabs the chicken, and walks back into the room, and slams it down on the table next to the diamond).

JONATHAN
Thank you. It's been a pleasure talking with you. It was so good to see you again Matt.

STEVE
Yes, you're very spacious. (They walk out with the diamond and the chicken, and Kim comes barging back into the room just finished on the phone, as MATT is just sitting at the table alone semi-relieved).

KIM
Did you get the tape?

MATT
Yes, there it is. (points to where it lies on the dining room table).
KIM
Did you watch it to make sure?

MATT
uhm...

KIM
Grab a video camera quick! (Matt runs to a closet and pulls out a video camera and pops in the tape).

KIM
Matt.

MATT
...

KIM
This is our wedding tape.

MATT
Don't you look as nice then as you do today…

KIM
You didn't get the tape. (doorbell rings)

MATT
I'll get it. (Rushes away as to avoid her anger and his own guilt at having failed- opens door where his two real bosses are standing) Steve! Jonathan!

KIM
What?! (yelling) I swear I'm going to kill those sons of bitches! The nerves of showing their faces here again! Give me my tape you fucking assholes!

MATT
Honey! I'd like you to meet my producers, Steve and Jonathan. Steve and Jonathan, this is my wife, Kim. (Kim sees that it's different people and stops).

KIM
Oh, why, hello, it's so nice to meet you both.

REAL STEVE
It's nice to meet you too. Funny you mention tape, I had this dropped off at my office a few hours ago with a note which said I should watch it with you two?

REAL JONATHON
Yes, I must say, it was hard to resist, but the note said we'd get a kick out of watching it with you.
MATT
(realizing that that is the tape in question) No!

REAL STEVE
Well, look, there's a video camera, let's just pop it in and watch it now.

KIM and MATT
No! (real Jonathan starts to load the tape in, and gets it in, but then through the door burst the two real jewel thieves, both masked).

THEIF 1
Alright sons of bitches! Put your hands up! (waves gun around).

MATT
(everyone puts their hands up except for Matt, apparently on the brink of losing it) Listen up you less than intelligent fuckers, I am in no mood to be fucked with, you already have what you want, so just get out of my house now.

THIEF 2
Give us our fucking jewel. (Kim motions for Real Steve to start recording this scene using the tape in the camera).

MATT
We don't have your fucking jewel, we already gave it to you. Get out now (ice cold).

THIEF 1
(obviously nervous - a first time thief/criminal) We know you have it because we saw you walk out of that store with the chicken where we stashed the goddamn jewel, so we know you have the goddamn jewel, so don’t try to tell us you don’t have the goddamn jewel, because, then you’re just lying to us about the goddamn jewel. If you don't give us the goddamn jewel, we're gonna kill you all!

THIEF 2
(Whispering) Say motherfuckers.

THIEF 1
Motherfuckers!

MATT
(Matt is basically on the brink of insanity now, as he has just had enough for one evening - pretends to go along with them) Alright, fine, Let me just... (grabs a pepper shaker off the table and peppers the thieves eyes. A wacky fight ensues, which Matt will ultimately be the victor of, but in the meantime, the two thieves and Matt fight while Kim begins giving a news report into the camera).

KIM
Hello America, I'm Kim Salami. I'm reporting to you live from my very own home where my husband, Matt Salami is currently wrestling the two bandits who stole the Chicken Diamond. The Chicken Diamond was stolen this afternoon when two masked thieves heisted the diamond from the National Museum, where it was on display. Just minutes ago, these two masked bandits broke into my home demanding the diamond. The two are clearly delirious from guilt associated with their crimes, and as their subconsciouses work to disarm their conscious, my husband works likewise to disarm their guns and help the police apprehend these two vicious criminals. (Matt finally finishes fighting, ending up with both guns. The police simultaneously come busting in, after many knocks on the door during the fight scene go unanswered).

POLICE OFFICER
Police! Freeze! Drop your weapons! Hands on your heads now! Everyone!

KIM
And this seems to conclude our harrowing tale, as my wonderful husband becomes the hero of the Chicken. I'm Kim Salami, goodnight America.

MATT
Officer! These are the two men who stole the Chicken Diamond!

POLICE OFFICER
Whose house is this?

MATT
Mine.

POLICE OFFICER
Explain what happened here.

KIM
It’s all on this tape. It clearly shows those two men (points) assaulting myself and my husband and demanding some sort of diamond.

POLICE OFFICER
Is this true? (to the thieves)

THIEF 1
Yes. I mean no! Shit, I always get that wrong.

THIEF 2
Asshole.

POLICE OFFICER
Take them into custody (to other officer). Get them into interrogation rooms. They'll talk. I’m afraid we’ll also have to take you four down for questioning as well.

KIM
I understand. Thank you officer. (to Matt) Honey you were wonderful! (runs to him).

REAL STEVE
You really were son.

REAL JONATHAN
Yes, you were. In fact, we just talked it over, and we're prepared to offer you your very own show. Martial Chef. What do you think?

MATT
My god! That would be amazing! I don't know what to say! What about my wife?

REAL JONATHAN
We were just getting to that. We were very impressed with how she handled herself just now. Kim, we'd like to offer you the position of lead anchor for the 7 o'clock national news on our network.

KIM
Oh my god! Yes! (Matt and Kim embrace) Thank you so much.

MATT
Yes, really, thank you both. Oh god, dinner! I'm so sorry, but our chicken has, um, gone off.

REAL JONATHAN
Oh, don't even worry about that. We've had quite an evening all of us, in a very short time.

REAL STEVE
Yes, quite enough excitement. Besides, you put on quite a show. That was a brave thing you did.

MATT
Thank you. I honestly don’t know what to say. I’m just glad everything turned out ok. Let’s just get down to the station, answer their questions, and be off.

REAL STEVE
That sounds like a great idea.

MATT
Honey, grab your coat. (Real Steve and Jonathan walk out the door, Matt and Kim trail slightly). Everything did turn out ok, didn’t it honey?

KIM
What?

MATT
What happened to the tape?
KIM
We taped over it, and it's now the newscast of the century, and you're the star.

MATT
Perfect. I hope we never see that diamond again, or those two weirdos. How the hell did they change clothes so fast, and why the hell did they even come back? And why were they asking for the diamond? Wait, you don’t think it was two different sets of guys who had very similar physical characteristics, do you?

KIM
I don't care. I don’t even want to know or think about it.

MATT
I love you Kim.

KIM
I love you too honey. (they exit. Jonathan and Steve enter a now stage holding the chicken).

JONATHAN
(walking across now empty stage while talking) Man, that one took a really long time.

STEVE
All that for a lousy chicken-just wish it had held up better than this.

JONATHAN
Next time, let’s just get to the store earlier, before they’re sold out of chickens. Honestly, this whole thing, it’s a little embarrassing for me. But every time I say “hey let’s go,” It’s always, “oh, just one more minute.” And then they run out. Every time. I mean, and then the research we have to do. Although I mean, honestly, that tape thing, that was a great score. I haven’t had that much fun with one of those in a while.

STEVE
Thanks.

JONATHAN
But that was the last time! Alright?

STEVE
Yeesh, fine. So what should we do about this diamond thing?

JONATHAN
Housewarming gift?

STEVE
Yup. (door opens offstage and a random female voice speaks).

FEMALE
Tim! Rich! What a surprise! We didn't expect you so soon!

JONATHAN
Gosh, I love what you've done with the place! (stepping off stage).

STEVE
Yes, it looks so spacious.

END

ALTERNATE SURREALIST ENDING:

JONATHAN
Ready?

STEVE
Yup. (door opens offstage and a random female voice speaks).

FEMALE
Tim! Rich! What a surprise! We didn't expect you so soon!

JONATHAN
Gosh, I love what you've done with the place! (stepping off stage).

STEVE
Yes, it looks so spacious.

END