

Extra Garlic

by

Joseph Arnone

Copyright © 2022

www.MonologueBlogger.com

All rights reserved. No part of this ePlay may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any other storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the author or publisher.

Cast of Characters

MARIO:

40's

SORRINO:

40's

Place

Italian restaurant

Time

Closing hours

Setting: The play takes place inside an authentic Italian restaurant. Tiled flooring, grape vines decorating the red brick walls, opera music softly playing in the background. There are pictures of Italy and family portraits framed on the walls. The place is empty except for Mario, the owner/chef and Sorrino, a gangster. Must be the early hours of the morning and the place is closed to the public. The lights are dim and contain a romantic flair.

At Rise: The play opens with Mario and Sorrino sitting at a white clothed table. A bottle of wine rests on the table with a bread basket beside it.

SORRINO: I don't care Mario, just add the extra garlic. Yeah.

MARIO: (*makes a face*) It spoils the sauce.

SORRINO: Since when does garlic spoil sauce?

MARIO: You want me to go overboard.

SORRINO: I want it the way I like it.

MARIO: But the way you eat it, you complain two hours later.

SORRINO: I don't complain.

MARIO: Last time you woke me up out of a dead sleep. Calling me and sayin' you couldn't stop -

SORRINO: Shhh - not so loud.

MARIO: There's nobody here.

SORRINO: That was one time.

MARIO: The one time you made me add a glass full of garlic and I warned you. You with that spicy sauce, it's gonna burn right through your insides again and what, I gotta hear you moan. I gotta feel bad about my cooking. I like the way I cook good food, GREAT food, I cook GREAT food, but you make me spoil it and I gotta tell ya, if you don't like the way I make my sauce, then why eat it for? You embarrass me and you suffer. Nobody wins. Am I right or what?

SORRINO: I embarrass you?

MARIO: ...Yeah, it's my pride Sorrino.

SORRINO: Your pride.

MARIO: Yeah. I put my soul in my food, you know that.

SORRINO: You blame yourself on my account?

MARIO: Of course I do. You eat what I make. I don't wanna, I don't want what I make in my kitchen to be a bad experience for you or anybody. That's what I'm sayin'.

SORRINO: What if I told you I don't hold you responsible?

MARIO: Whaddya mean?

SORRINO: By cooking the sauce the way I like it, afterwards, when if I have a bad stomach, I won't blame you. In fact I never blamed ya.

MARIO: But you're still in pain after.

SORRINO: Yeah.

MARIO: But how is that not gonna make me feel bad?

SORRINO: Cause I'm tellin' you not to.

MARIO: You're tellin' me not to.

SORRINO: I'm tellin' you not to. Look, you have no way of knowing this time around cause if something does go bad I won't ever tell you about it.

MARIO: That's worse.

SORRINO: How's that worse?

MARIO: Cause I won't know.

SORRINO: I know.

MARIO: Yeah, but I'm gonna wonder..about it afterwards..

SORRINO: Don't.

MARIO: But you're my friend.

SORRINO: I appreciate that.

MARIO: But I don't...my mind will play on me. Which is worse..I'll think horrible things and I'll feel uncomfortable around you because I'll feel as though there's somethin' unspoken between us and I don't like that, I don't want that, I can't see you and not speak about the things that I'm thinking about.

SORRINO: What things?

MARIO: If you have trouble, you know, with your stomach.

SORRINO: That's my business.

MARIO: No, it's not.

SORRINO: Of course it is.

MARIO: Sadly, it's not. You see, as your chef, I need to know such things.

SORRINO: Since when? You don't know the outcome of all your other customers that leave your restaurant. What difference does it make, Mar?

MARIO: Hey, we're friends, I need to know you enjoyed the meal. I need to know you were thoroughly satisfied the whole way through. Soup to nuts. Beginning to end. First twisted fork to the last. You know what I'm sayin'?

SORRINO: That's intrusive.

MARIO: Not at all.

SORRINO: Even my wife doesn't know about my stomach, about my bowel movements! You losing your mind or what?

MARIO: You put this on me by making me cook sauce how you want me to cook sauce, therefore, it's your obligation to inform me the outcome. I'm entitled.

SORRINO: You know what? This is getting pretty fucking weird over here.

MARIO: Is it?

SORRINO: You don't think?

MARIO: There is a solution.

SORRINO: What's the solution, Mario?

MARIO: The solution is simple...Let me make you my dish the way I make my dish..no interference..no instruction..and in return, when you leave here, your business is your own.

SORRINO: My business is my own no matter what.

MARIO: Come on, you know what I'm tryin' to say here.

SORRINO: Why you so difficult? If I want extra garlic, gimme the extra garlic.

MARIO: It's an insult to me.

SORRINO: How so?

MARIO: Cause you're basically sayin' that the way I make my dish, isn't good enough for you.

SORRINO: I'm only asking you to add extra garlic for chrissakes.

MARIO: No, you're not. You were specific. You even measured the amount by placing your finger (*demonstrates on a wine glass*) THIS HIGH on the glass. That's a ton of garlic, just like last time and it's wrong.

SORRINO: But, as your customer, if that's what I want, don't you wish to satisfy me, make your customer happy?

MARIO: It's not the same thing.

SORRINO: Why not?

MARIO: It's not all about what they want, sometimes they don't even know what they want until they taste it. When I'm in the kitchen making my food, it's my domain, it's the one place where I feel important, feel like I actually have a place in the world. I can't have customers telling me how to cook. Think about that. What good am I if I'm taking orders from my clients? Do I believe in customer satisfaction? Absolutely. I bend over backwards to feed my people. But it has to be on my terms, it has to be with freedom, love, that's where it means somethin' to me, that's what makes the whole experience worth it. I'm trusted. And when I see people finish their meal, and they've got that feeling of...fulfillment, there's no greater reward I could ask for. It keeps me going over here, what else I got going for me? I've lost everything I put my love into, but this, this is different, this kitchen will never leave me. It gives me purpose.

SORRINO: That's beautiful.

MARIO: That's how I truly feel about it.

SORRINO: Am I breaking your trust?

MARIO: I would say so, yes, unintentionally, but yes.

SORRINO: I didn't realize.

MARIO: Nah, I know, I'm not, listen, I don't expect you to -

SORRINO: No, no, don't explain, I get it, you already made your point. Makes sense.

MARIO: Does it?

SORRINO: It's not like I don't like the taste of your food.

MARIO: Good.

SORRINO: I ask for extra garlic because I heard it kills cancer cells.

MARIO: Cancer cells?

Sorrino looks at Mario.

SORRINO: What can I say Mario? We all gotta go sometime.

MARIO: ...

SORRINO: Been undergoing chemo. Still have a shot.

MARIO: Does Barbra know?

SORRINO: Nobody knows...just you. How's that for trusting my chef?
(smiles)

*Mario hugs Sorrino and kisses him
on the cheek.*

MARIO: When did you find out?

SORRINO: Doesn't matter.

MARIO: I'm sorry.

SORRINO: Don't be sorry. I ain't dead yet.

MARIO: I'll add some extra garlic.

SORRINO: Don't go crazy.

MARIO: I'm gonna make you the best spaghetti and meatballs you've
ever had in your life.

SORRINO: Your food is the only food I can still taste. (smiles)
Why do you think I'm here almost every night? Your food is the best.

MARIO: You keep coming here. We'll get you well.

SORRINO: We'll see. (smiles)

MARIO: Lemme go make you my best dish.

*Sorrino grabs his wine glass and gestures
to Mario before drinking.*

Mario leaves the room.

END OF PLAY