

TWO CUPS OF COFFEE

(SCENE: RESTAURANT. TABLE. CHAIRS)

(ENTER: SCHEFF AND AVERA. SIT AT TABLE)

SCHEFF:

YOU'RE SURE WE CAN TALK IN THIS RESTAURANT QUIETLY?

AVERA:

CERTAINLY, MR. POE. I ALWAYS COME TO THIS PLACE TO DISCUSS MY BIGGEST DEALS. YOU ORDER A CUP OF COFFEE AND YOU CAN SIT HERE AS LONG AS YOU LIKE. IN THIS RESTAURANT, NOBODY DISTURBS YOU.

SCHEFF:

THAT'S FINE. THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT DEAL AND I WOULDN'T WANT ANY INTERRUPTIONS.

AVERA:

DON'T WORRY. YOU'LL BE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON BUSINESS JUST AS THOUGH WE WERE IN MY OWN OFFICE. HERE WE ARE.

SCHEFF:

GOOD! LET'S GIVE AN ORDER AND GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. WAITER! ... WAITER! ...

AVERA:

WAITER ... WAITER ... THIS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE. USUALLY HE'S JOHNNY ON THE SPOT.

SCHEFF:

WELL, HE'LL COME AROUND. NOW, LISTEN, LAKE ... YOU KNOW YOU'RE ASKING TOO MUCH FOR THAT PARCEL ON BURNSIDE AVENUE!



AVERA:

EXCUSE ME, MR. POE, BUT I THINK YOU'RE CRAZY
... FORTY TENANTS ... ALL RENTED, FINE MORTGAGE,
A-ONE TERMS ... IT'S A STEAL!

(CAESAR ENTERS)

CAESAR:

HOW DO YOU DO, GENTLEMEN?

AVERA:

OH, HELLO. BRING US TWO CUPS OF COFFEE AND
SOME COOKIES.

CAESAR:

NO COOKIES.

SCHEFF:

ALL RIGHT, BRING US COFFEE CAKE.

CAESAR:

"TWO CUPS OF COFFEE AND TWO COFFEE CAKES."

SCHEFF:

SO, I'LL TAKE THOSE TWO LITTLE HOUSES IN
BENSONHURST ...

CAESAR:

PARDON ME ... WHAT KIND OF COFFEE CAKE?

SCHEFF:

COFFEE CAKE!!!

CAESAR:

COFFEE CAKE? WE GOT SIX KINDS OF COFFEE CAKE.
WE GOT WITH OR WITHOUT RAISINS ... WITH OR
WITHOUT CINNAMON ... WITH OR WITHOUT PRUNES.
WHAT KIND DO YOU LIKE?

AVERA:

WHAT KIND OF COFFEE CAKE? ANY KIND!

(TO SCHEFF) NOW, LOOK, THOSE HOUSES IN
BENSONHURST ARE PRACTICALLY SOLD AND I ...

SCHEFF:

PRACTICALLY SOLD? YOU DIDN'T EVEN SIGN A
CONTRACT YET.

CAESAR:

GENTLEMEN, I'M STILL WAITING FOR THE ORDER.

SCHEFF:

WHAT?

CAESAR:

WHAT KIND OF COFFEE CAKE? WITHOUT OR WITH
RAISINS ... WITH OR WITHOUT CINNAMON ... WITH
OR WITHOUT PRUNES?

AVERA:

BRING US "WITHOUT PRUNES" ... NOW, GO!

CAESAR:

"TWO CUPS OF COFFEE AND TWO COFFEE CAKES WITHOUT
PRUNES."

SCHEFF:

YES, YES! SO WITH THOSE TWO LITTLE HOUSES IN
BENSONHURST AND ...

CAESAR:

GENTLEMEN, PARDON ME ... CREAM ON DE SIDE?

SCHEFF:

WHAT?

CAESAR:

I SAID, YOU WANT CREAM IN DE COFFEE OR CREAM
ON DE SIDE?

SCHEFF:

IN DE COFFEE, ON DE SIDE, ON DE SIDE, IN DE
COFFEE ... WHO CARES?

CAESAR:

I CARE. SUPPOSE I BRING YOU CREAM IN DE
COFFEE AND YOU WANT IT ON DE SIDE? YOU'LL
SEND ME BACK TO THE KITCHEN AND I'LL HAVE
TO SPILL OUT DE COFFEE, WHICH MEANS THAT THE
PROPRIETOR WILL SAY I'M WASTING HIS PROFITS,
WHICH MEANS HE'LL BE ANGRY WITH ME, WHICH
MEANS HE'LL CALL ME NAMES, WHICH MEANS I'LL
CALL HIM NAMES, WHICH MEANS WE'LL GET INTO A
TERRIBLE ARGUMENT, WHICH MEANS MAYBE HE'LL FIRE
ME. YOU WOULDN'T WANT I SHOULD GET FIRED,
WOULD YOU?

SCHEFF:

NO, NO, OF COURSE NOT.

CAESAR:

DEN WHAT DO YOU WANT? CREAM IN DE COFFEE OR
CREAM ON DE SIDE?

AVERA:

IN DE COFFEE, IN DE COFFEE. ALL RIGHT,
NOW GO!

TWO CUPS OF COFFEE -----

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SCHEFF:

BUT I LIKE MINE ON DE SIDE.

AVERA:

BUT IN DE COFFEE IS LESS BOTHER.

SCHEFF:

BUT ON DE SIDE IS BETTER COFFEE.

CAESAR:

AM I GOING TO STAND HERE ALL DAY FOR TWO
LOUSY CUPS OF COFFEE?

SCHEFF:

ON DE SIDE. ON DE SIDE. NOW LEAVE US ALONE!
THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT IS GOING TO REDUCE THE
VALUE OF THE BURNSIDE AVENUE PROPERTY.

AVERA:

WELL, THAT'S A LONG WAY OFF YET AND BESIDES ...

CAESAR:

"TWO CUPS OF COFFEE WID CREAM ON DE SIDE ...
TWO COFFEE CAKES WITHOUT PRUNES."

SCHEFF:

YES ... YES... YES!

AVERA:

HOW MANY TIMES MUST WE TELL YOU THIS?

CAESAR:

DON'T GET EXCITED. I'M ONLY CHECKING UP,
THAT'S ALL. I WANT TO BRING THE RIGHT ORDER.
IF I BRING THE WRONG ORDER YOU'LL CALL ME A
ROTTEN WAITER, WHICH MEANS MAYBE I'LL GET FIRED.
YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO GET FIRED, WOULD YOU?

AVERA:

NO, NO, OF COURSE NOT.

CAESAR:

(YELLS) THEN DON'T GET EXCITED! TWO CUPS OF
COFFEE, CREAM ON DE SIDE. TWO COFFEE CAKES
WITHOUT PRUNES. I'LL BRING IT IN A JIFFY.

(STARTS TO LEAVE)

SCHEFF:

DON'T RUSH! WE GOT BUSINESS TO TALK.

(CAESAR STOPS)

CAESAR:

I SHOULDN'T RUSH? DIS MEANS I'LL GIVE YOU
LOUSY SERVICE, WHICH MEANS DIS IS A ROTTEN
RESTAURANT, WHICH MEANS ...

AVERA:

LISTEN, I DON'T CARE IF YOU RUSH, DON'T RUSH,
BRING IT, OR DON'T BRING IT. LEAVE US ALONE!

CAESAR:

GENTLEMEN, I THINK YOU ARE TRYING TO CONFUSE ME.
FIRST YOU SAY, "RUSH" ... THEN "DON'T RUSH" ...
THEN BRING IT" ... THEN "DON'T BRING IT." FOR
HEAVEN'S SAKE, MAKE UP YOUR MINDS.

SCHEFF:

SO, RUSH! RUSH!

CAESAR:

"TWO CUPS COFFEE. CREAM ON DE SIDE ... TWO
COFFEE CAKES WITHOUT PRUNES. RUSH!" I'LL
BRING IT IN TWO SECONDS.

SCHEFF:

ACCORDING TO THIS STATEMENT, THE INCOME ON THE
BURNSIDE AVENUE PARCEL IS TWELVE DOLLARS A
ROOM ... WHICH MEANS ...

CAESAR:

GENTLEMEN ... I WOULDN'T RECOMMEND THE COFFEE
CAKE WITHOUT PRUNES. IT'S THE LAST TWO PIECES,
WHICH MEANS IT'S FROM DE END, WHICH MEANS IT'S
BURNT, WHICH MEANS YOU WOULDN'T LIKE IT, SO I
WOULDN'T RECOMMEND IT AND ... IF I DO RECOMMEND
IT, THE BOSS WILL FIRE ME ... NOW, YOU WOULDN'T
WANT I SHOULD GET FIRED, WOULD YOU?

SCHEFF:

THIS IS THE LAST STRAW! COME ON! LET'S GET
OUT OF HERE.

AVERA:

DON'T GET EXCITED, POE.

CAESAR:

CERTAINLY. WHAT ARE YOU GETTING EXCITED
ABOUT? TAKE IT EASY, POE.

SCHEFF:

(YELLS) I THOUGHT THIS WAS A QUIET PLACE!

CAESAR:

(YELLS) IT WAS QUIET TILL YOU CAME HERE!

SCHEFF:

WHAT?

CAESAR:

CERTAINLY. WHO'S MAKING ALL THE NOISE? YOU!
AND WHY? 'CAUSE I WANT TO GIVE YOU GOOD SERVICE.

AVERA:

SIT DOWN, POE. NOW LOOK, WAITER ... I WANT TO
MAKE THINGS VERY CLEAR TO YOU. MR, POE AND I
CAME IN HERE TO DISCUSS A BUSINESS DEAL.

CAESAR:

WELL?

AVERA:

WE KNOW YOU CAN'T COME INTO A RESTAURANT WITHOUT
ORDERING SOMETHING ...

CAESAR:

SO?

AVERA:

SO ... WE ORDERED COFFEE AND CAKE. ACTUALLY
WE DON'T CARE WHAT KIND OF COFFEE AND WHAT
KIND OF CAKE YOU BRING.

CAESAR:

WELL?

AVERA:

WE DON'T CARE IF YOU DON'T BRING ANY COFFEE
OR ANY CAKE?

CAESAR:

SO?

AVERA:

JUST LEAVE US ALONE. WE'LL PAY THE CHECK
ANYHOW.

CAESAR:

HE'LL GET BLOOD PRESSURE. SO, YOU WANT I
SHOULD BRING YOU NOTHING?

SCHEFF:

THAT'S RIGHT. BRING US NOTHING.

CAESAR:

ALL RIGHT, I'LL BRING YOU NOTHING.
(PICKS UP WATER GLASSES) BUT YOU'LL PAY
THE CHECK. (EXIT)

AVERA:

YES...YES...WE'LL PAY THE CHECK. GET OUT OF
HERE. NOW, POE ... WHAT WERE YOU SAYING ABOUT
THE INCOME?

SCHEFF:

(HEAD IN HANDS) BUT NOW I FORGOT.

AVERA:

YOU SAID SOMETHING ABOUT TWELVE DOLLARS A ROOM.
(CAESAR ENTERS)

SCHEFF:

YES...YES... TWELVE DOLLARS A ROOM ...

CAESAR:

PARDON ME ... ONE OR TWO CHECKS?

SCHEFF:

WHAT?

CAESAR:

SHOULD I PUT IT ON ONE OR TWO CHECKS?

AVERA:

ONE CHECK ... ONE CHECK ...

CAESAR:

CRAZY PEOPLE.

AVERA:

I THOUGHT I EXPLAINED IT TO YOU BEFORE. WE
WANT TO TALK BUSINESS.

CAESAR:

"WE WANT TO TALK BUSINESS." SO IT'LL HURT
YOU TO TALK WITH COFFEE.

SCHEFF:

IT HURTS US TO TALK WITH YOU.

CAESAR:

WHAT DID YOU SAID?

AVERA:

QUIET. SIT DOWN, POE. TAKE IT EASY, POE.
IT'S A VERY SIMPLE PROBLEM ...

SCHEFF:

MAYBE YOU CAN STAND THIS BUT I'M GETTING OUT
OF HERE.

AVERA:

BUT, POE, WHAT ABOUT THE PARCELS?

SCHEFF:

YOU CAN TAKE THE PARCEL, TAKE BURNSIDE AVENUE
AND YOU CAN JUMP IN THE LAKE! (EXIT)

AVERA:

BUT...POE NOW, SEE WHAT YOU DID TO ME?
YOU WENT AND SPOILED A GOOD DEAL.

CAESAR:

I SPOILED? I'M ONLY A WAITER.

AVERA:

YES, YOU SPOILED A BEAUTIFUL APARTMENT ON
BURNSIDE AVENUE ... FORTY TENANTS ... ALL
RENTED ... A FINE MORTGAGE ... AND A WONDERFUL
DEAL FOR ME, TOO!

CAESAR:

EH? AN APARTMENT ... FORTY FAMILIES ...
ALL RENTED? I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR A PARCEL
LIKE DIS FOR A LONG TIME. NOW, I'VE GOT A
COUPLE BUNGALETTES IN FAR ROCKAWAY. MAYBE
WE CAN MAKE A SMALL SWITCH. LET'S GET A CUP
OF COFFEE AND TALK DIS OVER ...

(BOTH SIT. CAESAR TURNS TOWARD KITCHEN
AND YELLS) HEY, WAITER!

BLACKOUT