

Lindo / Waverly

(Lena doesn't move for a second; then she shakes her off.)

~~LINA. I'll call you when dinner's ready, okay? *(Runs from the room, leaving Ying sitting alone. Blackout. Lights up on Lindo sitting at a restaurant table. Waverly, wearing a fur coat, enters and crosses to join her.)*~~

Start

WAVERLY. Hi, hi ... sorry I'm a little —

LINDO. *(Interrupting.)* Ai-yaa! What's happened to your hair?

WAVERLY. What do you mean? I had it cut.

LINDO. Looks chopped off.

WAVERLY. Let's just have a nice lunch, okay? *(Lindo examines the menu.)*

LINDO. Not too many good things, this menu. *(Picks up chopsticks. She takes a Kleenex from her handbag and wipes them.)*

WAVERLY. So, Ma. Did I tell you Rich took Shoshana to the zoo last Tuesday? She had the best time. He showed her this one animal where they ...

LINDO. Oh. I didn't tell you. Your father, doctors say maybe need surgery.

WAVERLY. *What!?*

LINDO. But no, now they say everything normal. Just too much constipated. *(Examines her rice bowl.)* Ai-yaa! *(Pours tea in it to wash it out.)*

WAVERLY. Ma ...

LINDO. You wash out bowl, too. Go ahead. *(To people at other table.)* Full of dirt. Wash. You, too.

WAVERLY. Ma. I wanted to show you what Rich bought me for Christmas. *(Shows her coat.)* Isn't this something?

LINDO. Why fur coat? We in California.

WAVERLY. I know. I mean, it's sort of silly. But mink seems to be the latest fad.

LINDO. This is not so good. Just leftover strips. And the fur is too short, no long hair.

WAVERLY. How can you criticize it? He gave me this from his heart!

LINDO. That is why I worry.

WAVERLY. But you haven't even met him! You don't even know him! *(Lindo squints at the menu.)*

LINDO. Ai-yaa. Two dollar for chrysanthemum tea? *(As she clucks over the menu, Waverly reconsiders her strategy.)*

End

WAVERLY. Ma. Did I tell you Rich and I were in North Beach

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Male
as
Rich

yesterday?

LINDO. Hmm.

WAVERLY. I noticed we were right near Auntie An-Mei's, so we decided to drop in. She was making dinner. *(She has Lindo's attention.)*

LINDO. She ask you stay?

WAVERLY. Of course. And you know she's such a good cook.

LINDO. Hahn. What she make?

WAVERLY. Well, we started with her black sesame-seed soup.

LINDO. I know that soup. Too much oil.

WAVERLY. You know her *chaswei*? She made that, too. And then a whole trayful of incredible finger goodies. And some wonderful eggplant and shredded pork, and rice noodles, and this fantastic spicy bean-curd ...

LINDO. An-Mei only cook looking at recipe. My instructions are in my fingers!

WAVERLY. *(Deliberately.)* Well, Rich did say it was the best Chinese food he ever ate in his life. And he's been to some of the top restaurants in ... *(Lindo stands up.)*

LINDO. Maybe you should bring this man over our house. Eat food even better than best! *(Lights out on Lindo. Waverly silently pumps her fist in victory. As she gets up and crosses, Rich joins her. He wears a suit and carries a bottle of wine in a bag.)*

RICH. Why so nervous? Don't you trust me?

WAVERLY. Of course I trust you. It's my mother I worry about.

RICH. I'll be on my best behavior. What'd you say their names were?

WAVERLY. Lindo and Tin. But you should probably call them Mr. and Mrs. Jong, just to be safe.

RICH. Okay, okay.

WAVERLY. And tell my mother how much you like her cooking. And make sure you eat a lot.

RICH. Don't worry. Everything will be fine. I promise. *(Lights up on the Jong dinner table. Rich and Waverly join Tin and Lindo.)*

WAVERLY. Mom? Dad? I'd like you to meet Rich Shields. Rich ... these are my parents. *(Tin gets to his feet. He and Lindo bow their heads in greeting, but Rich grips each by the hand and pumps heartily.)*

RICH. Linda ... Tim ... great to meet you. I've heard so much about you from Waverly. *(He produces his bottle with a flourish.)* A little something for dinner. *(Struggles with the cork.)*

WAVERLY. Rich, my parents aren't big wine drinkers. Why don't

we just save it for another time?

RICH. Nonsense! It's a '83 Meursault. Not their best year, but pretty underrated, don't you think? *(He tries filling Tin's glass.)*

TIN. No, no, too much. Just for taste. *(Rich fills Tin's glass. He tries to fill Lindo's, but she demurs.)*

RICH. Waverly?

WAVERLY. No, thanks.

RICH. No? Well ... suit yourself. *(Pours Waverly a full glass, and lifts it.)* Well ... chin-chin! *(He drinks heartily, then picks up his chopsticks.)*

WAVERLY. Rich, how about I get you a fork?

RICH. No, it's okay. These are fine.

WAVERLY. Are you sure? You don't have to use them, I don't want you to feel ...

RICH. No, I'm fine. I've been using chopsticks since I was a kid. Really. *(He sends a dumpling flying. Lindo passes a plate.)* Mmm-mm! Thanks, Linda. This looks great!

WAVERLY. Maybe you should ... why don't you pass the ... here, let me ... *(Rich shovels most of it onto his plate, and passes the nearly-empty dish to Tin.)*

LINDO. Wave-ly. *(Hands Waverly a dish, and nods at her to serve some to Rich.)*

RICH. Oh, no thanks. Think I'll pass.

WAVERLY. These are sauteed new greens. They're a special delicacy, Rich, I think my mother went to a lot of trouble ...

RICH. I'm not a greens man. Thanks anyway.

TIN. Maybe you like pork? *(He holds out a dish.)*

LINDO. *(False modesty.)* Aii! This dish not salty enough, no flavor. It is too bad to eat. *(Rich takes a taste.)*

RICH. You know, all it needs is a little soy sauce. *(He pours half a bottle of soy sauce all over the plate, to everyone's horror.)* Ummmm ... well, that was great! *(Rich pumps Lindo's hand and slaps Tin on the back.)* Well, Linda, Tim — we'll see you again soon. *(He winks at Waverly, and is gone. Tin exits, leaving Lindo and Waverly to clear away the dishes.)*

WAVERLY. Ma? Ma! *(She is close to tears.)* I wanted to talk to you ... I wanted to tell you ... Rich and I are getting married.

LINDO. I know.

WAVERLY. You do? *(Lindo shrugs.)* I know you hate him. I know you think he's not good enough, but I ...

End

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