No Reservations

By

Max J. Gabriel
INT. LARGE OFFICE - MORNING.

Jared Hasting, late-twenties tall and thoughtful walks up to a secretary’s desk.

JARED
Good morning, I’m here for my 9:15 with Mr. Whitlock.

The secretary barely acknowledges him as she checks her watch and goes back to her computer screen.

SECRETARY
It’s only 9:10, Mr. Whitlock and the partners are still finishing up with their 9:00 am. Have a seat.

Jared looks around the office in awe.

JARED
The men behind this door—they have the power to make careers with just a simple yes.

SECRETARY
Sir I promise you the hallway isn’t as comfortable a waiting room so please, quietly take a seat.

JARED
I didn’t mean to bother you I’m just excited--

The secretary turns the volume up on her desk radio. Jared takes his seat. As he sits he passes his hand over the white cardboard containers he brought.

Jared can’t contain his excitement as he looks over the mock-up of his menu. A smile barely appears.

The office doors swing open and a distraught man comes stumbling out carrying a prototype steering wheel.

MAN
Seven years WASTED! My marriage, my little princesses ballet recitals for what?

The man turns to Jared for sympathy.

MAN
So these rich fucks can call my magnus opus a lawsuit dressed in hobo rags.

(CONTINUED)
The man shoves the steering wheel into Jared’s hands.

JARED
What does it do?

The man presses the ridges along the back of the wheel.

MAN
It only solves the dangers of texting while driving that’s what! The key pad is placed on the steering wheel itself so you never have to take your eyes off the road.

JARED
I don’t know buddy, that still sounds kind of dangerous--

MAN
Don’t you start that highway safety bullshit with me too. You school-zone observing motherfucker!

He lunges for Jared. As Jared fights him off the secretary presses the intercom.

SECRETARY
(bored sigh)

The office doors open up and two hulking security guards cast an eclipse over the man as they pull him out.

Jared begins to straighten his coat and shirt.

SECRETARY
Mr. Whitlock and his associates will see you now.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER.

Jared has placed a sample plate of food in front of each of the chairs in the office. Mr. Whitlock, an older man in his 50’s wearing a cowboy hat and speaks with a thick accent, salts his food before tasting it.

MR. WHITLOCK
So what’s the name of the restaurant son?
CONTINUED:

JARED
ABC’s. I chose the name because it speaks to the simplicity of the menu.

One of the men takes a bite and likes it.

ASSOCIATE 1
What’s this?

JARED
Oh that’s our sweet potato cheesecake.

ASSOCIATE 1
Sweet potato, as in pie?

JARED
Exactly, see we combine unlikely pairs into a sum far greater than its individual parts.

MR. WHITLOCK
Are you a cook or a philosopher?

JARED
Philosophy was actually the second of my double majors.

MR. WHITLOCK
A philosopher chef. Well I like your concoctions, I’m sold. How much start up capital does your business plan call for?

Mr. Whitlock leafs through the pages in Jared’s business plan. The office is filled with the sound of forks on the plate as the other associates eat the samples excitedly.

JARED
Just a second Mr. Whitlock you haven’t even had the main dish yet.

Jared pulls the silver cover off of the plate.

JARED
Vegetarian steak.

Silence falls with a mute thud over the entire room as everyone’s eyes creep toward Mr. Whitlock.
MR. WHITLOCK  
What did you say?

The associate who was enjoying the cheesecake spits his last bite into a napkin, puts it back on the plate, then slowly pushes the plate away from him into the middle of the table.

JARED  
(nervously)  
Vegetarian steak. Sirloin in fact--

Mr. Whitlock holds his hand up.

MR. WHITLOCK  
I come from Texas son. If there’s one thing we don’t abide. It’s people messing with our football or our beef. Get out of my bulding.

JARED  
No! I’m not going anywhere. If we disagree on the menu items that’s one thing. But you’re not going to completely dismiss me just because you don’t like my taste in...

Mr. Whitlock pulls out a colt .45 revolver and lays it on the table as he turns to the man on his right.

MR. WHITLOCK  
Now how long do I have to wait before he’s legally considered trespassing?

Jared heads directly for the door.

JARED  
You gentlemen have a great day.

INT. KITCHEN CLASSROOM - LATE AFTERNOON.

We start on a close-up of a gas flame being ignited. As we pull back we see Jared Hastings, mid-twenties tall and thoughtful, shake the flame off of the match.

JARED  
Alright everyone as soon as your burners are struck we can begin preparing the sauce.

Jared stands at the front of a large room addressing his class.

(CONTINUED)
JARED
Before we add the spices we need to lay down the base sauce with a red wine reduction.

Jared reaches for the bottle of cooking wine to his left. He turns the bottle over and barely a swallow falls into his pan. He has a confused look on his face.

His eyes shoot to the back of the class.

JARED
Frank, can I borrow some of your Merlot?

Frank, lout in his late forties with a flushed look permanently stapled to his face, sits in the back of the room holding his wine with a straw coming out of the bottle that is attached to his mouth.

As he looks up to answer a loud slurping sound comes from the bottle.

FRANK
I’d love to Mr. Hastings, but I just used it all up in my basil leaf reduction.

Jared looks through Frank as he takes a deep breath and uncorks another bottle.

JARED
Congrats Frank, two bottles down and no throwing up. I see your building back up to your old tolerance.

FRANK
Just trying to take it one day at time.

We cut to a short montage of the students in various stages of meal preparation.

Betty, early 50’s with a grandmotherly appeal, is mashing potatoes with her bare hands.

She stops only to clean out the potatoes from her fingernails, wipe the residue back into the bowl and begin mashing again. Jared hands her three new potatoes in a bowl and a proper potato masher.
CONTINUED:

Bobby and Justin, stoners in their late teens, while Justin is using the open flame to light up a joint Bobby is dicing vegetables.

Justin passes the joint to Bobby and receives the knife and cutting board in an elegant pothead ballet. Jared stands staring at them and Bobby offers him a hit.

Jared reflexively reaches for it but instead shakes his head no and holds up an ashtray for Bobby to put it out.

Shirley, early 30’s, used too much wine and a her wig caught on fire. Jared quickly uses the extinguisher and gives her a doggy bag to take her wig home in.

Anna, early 20’s beautiful and shallow, sits on a stool talking on her phone as her maid Beth, early 40’s with an "I hate my job" expression, does the cooking for her.

As Jared walks up to Anna puts the phone down. She unscrews the top off of the salt shaker and pours it into the pot that Beth is stirring. Beth’s shirt gets dirty while Anna gives Jared an awkward smile.

Jared hands Beth a napkin as he turns to Anna.

    JARED
    Phones off.

    ANNA
    Whatever you say Mr. Hastings.

Jared walks away, Anna finishes up her conversation.

    ANNA
    Gotta go, that cute teacher I was telling you about is looking at my buns again.

The person on the phone says something.

    ANNA
    I don’t know, maybe he wants to give me a chance to earn some extra credit. You know, show me his carving knife.

Beth looks at Anna.

    ANNA
    Beth dear, do you need more salt?

Beth quickly places the cover over the pot.
INT. KITCHEN CLASSROOM - EARLY EVENING.

Jared stands at the head of a table where everyone is displaying their dish. Jared walks down the line.

JARED
Good, for some of you it’s like night and day from when we first started a month ago.

Jared comes to Frank’s plate. Its empty save for a cork and a coupon book to Burger King.

JARED
Others...have just got to try harder.

BOBBY
One more thing Mr. Hastings, me and Justin have taken it upon ourselves to prepare a special treat for the class.

JUSTIN
What’s a meal without dessert right?

Justin steps forward with a plate full of brownies and cookies. Before the students can take any Jared grabs the plate and walks it over to the trash can.

JARED
Hold up their fellas, we appreciate the gesture but some of your classmates are still catching contact from last week’s dish.

BOBBY
What do you mean?

JARED
Tommy over there failed a drug test.

JUSTIN
That wasn’t our fault, poppy seeds should come with warning stickers.

JARED
Be that as it may lets give these treats an early retirement.

(CONTINUED)
JUSTIN
Mr. Hastings wait!

JARED
Why?

BOBBY
Because, Justin is my ride home.

JARED
So?

JUSTIN
So, I have early stage glaucoma.

JARED
You’re 19.

BOBBY
He said early didn’t he?

JUSTIN
If you throw those away you might as well be blindfolding me and putting me on the road.

BOBBY
Do you really want our deaths on your hands?

Jared hands the plate back to Justin.

JARED
"A" for effort gentlemen.

JUSTIN
Thank you sir.

JARED
Find Tommy some clean piss or I’m going to fail you.

BOBBY
Got you sir.

Justin and Bobby walk over to Tommy.

BOBBY
Now Tommy does it have to be human urine...

Jared stands at the head of the table.

(Continued)
JARED
Great job tonight people, if anyone is interested in extra credit you can help me load some food into my van.

Anna grabs Beth by the arm and leads her quickly to the front of the room.

EXT. PARKING LOT – NIGHT.

Jared and Beth load up the van while Anna stands off to the side holding the back door open.

ANNA
You’re a really good cook Jared.

JARED
Please, call me Mr. Hastings.

ANNA
Whatever you want, Mr. H.

Beth rolls her eyes as she hands Jared a pot.

ANNA
I never knew how sensual food can be. I just love to take something like a baby corn and roll it around on my tongue, you know.

Jared looks over to Beth. Beth is holding in a laugh.

JARED
Not really, no.

ANNA
Oh, never mind then. Have you ever thought about giving private lesson? You know in home instruction.

Jared puts a hotplate into the van.

JARED
Does your husband want to learn how to cook?

He points to the wedding band on her hand. Anna curls her fingers into a fist.

(CONTINUED)
ANNA
Who Manny? God no, he isn’t cultured like you and me. His idea of fine dining comes with a wet nap at the end.

JARED
Oh, I’m sorry to hear that.

Beth hands Jared the last box.

ANNA
Don’t be, his busy schedule leaves me with plenty of time to entertain all of my friends.

Jared loads it in and closes the van door.

JARED
That’s it, I’m all done. Thanks for the help ladies.

ANNA
Glad to be of help Mr. H. So listen this family friend’s throwing this get-together and it would be great if you could come.

JARED
I don’t know Anna, I’m not really the party type.

ANNA
Oh don’t worry about it, It’s going to be full of foodies so you’ll definitely be in your element.

Jared heads for the driver’s seat.

JARED
I’m really busy this weekend but I’ll see what I can do. Bye.

ANNA
Great, I’ll mail you an invite.

Jared jumps into the van and pulls off leaving Anna and Beth standing in the parking lot.

ANNA
I’m gonna sit on that man’s face one day.

Beth looks over to Anna in shock. Anna looks back.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ANNA
What, and why aren’t you fetching the car?

Beth walks toward the Mercedes.

INT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT.

Jared pulls up to the back a homeless shelter and knocks on the door.

Benny, early 20’s short stature and street smart, opens the door and pokes his head out.

BENNY
Took you long enough, we was about to order out for Dominees.

JARED
Oh yeah? Well don’t let me stop you. I don’t think they substitute smart-ass joke for tips though.

BENNY
Whatever J. Get in here we’re hungry.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER CAFETERIA - NIGHT.

Jared and Benny stand behind the glass divider and serve everyone as they walk by.

HOMELESS MAN 1
Thank you Jared.

JARED
You’re welcome Harold.

Benny serves another man.

HOMELESS MAN 2
When you going to teach this one a trade?

BENNY
Eddie I done told you about getting slick with me. I’mma set your cardboard box on fire you keep fucking with me.

(CONTINUED)
HOMELESS MAN 2
Oh yeah, who’re you going to borrow the step ladder from so you can reach the matches you pinched-off toilet loaf.

Benny slams his serving spoon into his pot.

BENNY
That’s it. I’m making ICU your new place of residence.

Jared grabs him and calms him down.

JARED
Let it go Benny. Dammit Eddie apologize or I’m not bringing any beats anymore.

EDDIE
I need those. They keep my skin full of collagen.

JARED
Then apologize.

EDDIE
I’m sorry, that God was in a shitty mood when he made you Benny.

BENNY
Fucking mutt!

JARED
Hey, Eddie!

EDDIE
I’m sorry Benny.

Jared hands Eddie a can of beats.

JARED
Here you go now move on.

Eddie and Benny watch each other as he makes his way to the deserts.

BENNY
I got something for nasty planned for him.
JARED
Just let it go man.

Jared yawns deeply.

BENNY
J, you tired?

JARED
Yeah, I was up late working on this new recipe.

BENNY
Shit go home and get some rest I can hold it down on this end.

JARED
Yeah?

BENNY
I got it man, get out of here.

JARED
Ok great, thanks Benny.

Jared walks out leaving Benny serving the rest of the food. A woman walks up to the counter.

BENNY
Pearl if you want this food you gotta show me some areola.

Pearl looks at him surprised and then begins to reach for her blouse.

BENNY
I’m just fucking with you Pearl, don’t nobody wanna see them rusty silver dollars.

INT. JARED’S APARTMENT - NIGHT.

Jared walks into his small apartment. There are pots and pans everywhere and poster’s of his favorite chefs all over the walls.

He opens the refrigerator to check on a salmon that is marinating in a bowl.
INT. JARED’S BEDROOM – NIGHT.

Jared gets undressed and before he goes to sleep he looks through a rough manuscript on the nightstand next to his bed. The cover reads The ABC Cafe.

He looks over the pages of handwritten recipes and polaroid’s of the finished dishes on every page.

He yawns once more and pulls the cord on the lamp shade.

INT. LIVING ROOM – MORNING.

Jared opens the door to find his little brother Matt sitting on his couch, Matt early twenties with a smart-ass grin laminated on his face, digs through a pair of jeans.

MATT
Morning Jared, how did the meeting with the investment group go?

JARED
I don’t want to talk about it.

MATT
Like that? I keep telling you man, not everybody’s palate is as liberal as yours. Burgers and fries would have had you in business already.

JARED
It’s more than just the money little brother, I put a piece of myself into every one of my dishes.

MATT
Yeah whatever Ghandi. I made you some breakfast, that should cheer you up.

Matt points to the burnt french toast and scrambled eggs with shell fragments dotting the plate.

Jared yawns deeply as he scratches his stomach.

JARED
What time is--why the hell are you digging through my pants!?  

Stops to check his watch.

(CONTINUED)
MATT
8:30 and to the second question. This is where you keep your money and I’ve got to pay the cabbie.

Jared rubs his face and stands over Matt.

JARED
Mom’s house is three blocks down why are you taking cabs here?

MATT
I pulled a hammie dunking on this dude when I was playing ball yesterday.

JARED
You can’t dunk.

MATT
Alright, an aggressive lay-up then whatever. Bottom line is a dimepiece was out there watching me ball out. You already know, I got the number, now I need to borrow some money for our date.

A loud horn honks from outside.

MATT
Oh yeah don’t forget about the cab fare.

Jared holds his hand out and Matt tosses him the wallet. Jared pulls out some bills.

JARED
Here.

MATT
What about the tip? I’ve never been a cheapskate.

JARED
That’s because you never have any money--here. I wish I was an only child.
INT. KITCHEN - MORNING.

Matt walks out of the door as Jared dumps the food into the waste basket.

As he goes to the kitchen he pulls out tupper-ware containers full of freshly diced vegetables, peppers, and mushrooms.

He takes a large glass milk jug out and pours some into a bowl as he mixes up batter. He tastes it and notices something off.

A quick trip to the massive spice rack hanging over the stove and the recipe is perfect.

Jared looks at total peace over the stove.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER.

Matt returns with the mail in his hands.

MATT
Damn something smells good.

Jared places a plate down in front of him. It looks like the cover of a food magazine complete with garnishing.

JARED
Here’s yours.

MATT
Real talk J. You can fucking cook.

JARED
Whatever, what you want now?

MATT
I’m serious man, all jokes aside the McDonalds dollar menu ain’t got shit on my big brother. Not a thing.

JARED
Matthew stop the ass-kissing, what do you want?

MATT
This.

Matt holds up an ornately decorated envelope.

(CONTINUED)
JARED
What is this?

MATT
I found it in your mail.

JARED
Oh so you’re going through my mail now, you plan on helping me out with these bills?

MATT
Fuck all that, how did you get invited to Miami Flame?

JARED
What?

MATT
Flame, Miami Flame. The International food festival.

Jared reads the invitation.

MATT
For such a good cook you don’t know shit about the food industry bro.

JARED
One of my students Anna, she said she’d send me an invitation.

MATT
Hold up, Anna Winters.

JARED
Yeah, you know her?

Matt falls back into the couch.

MATT
Do I know--Hell yeah I know her. Her husband and his partner are the biggest VC’s in the city. They put money into anything. Have you seen those high-heel shoes with the roller skates that pop out of the bottom?

JARED
Yeah.
MATT
Where you think they got the money from to fund that dumb ass idea.

Jared points to the letter. Matt playfully pushes his head.

MATT
Duh! They invest their cash into start-ups because they can’t put it in the bank.

JARED
Where do they get all this money from?

Matt puts his hands up palms flat and shrugs his shoulders.

MATT
Hey, I learned a while ago. Don’t ask questions you can’t plead the 5th to. Besides, you focusing on the wrong thing here. You’ve got an invite to a party full of rich people who would love to brag to their friends about how they own a stake in the hottest restaurant in town.

JARED
I don’t know.

MATT
What’s to know! Best case scenario you find an angel investor and you start putting all these recipes to work. Worst case, we go to a party in a huge mansion with an open bar, beautiful women and you get to see what these so-called professional chefs are whipping up.

JARED
Yeah but I’m not good at the whole small-talk party mingling BS stuff.

Matt motions for the invitation and reads it.

MATT
It says plus 1.
INT. MANSION - NIGHT.

The large estate is filled with guests. Waiters weave through the sea of people holding up trays of finger foods and hors d’oeuvres.

Jared and Matt walk and take in the entire scene. Jared can’t stop adjusting his collar.

MATT
Hey, relax. You make me wanna warn security to keep an eye on you.

JARED
Man shut up. It’s just that I hate party’s with all of these strangers.

MATT
Just picture them all wearing their checkbooks and you’ll be fine.

JARED
OK. I got it. Just stay close by.

MATT
Come on, man. I got you.

A beautiful waitress walks by and catches Matt’s eye.

MATT
As soon as I get her.

Matt walks off right after the woman.

JARED
Matt! Come back--fuck.

Jared looks around trying not to seem out of place. He adjusts his collar again and awkwardly smiles at a group of women.

EXT. BUFFET TABLE - NIGHT.

Jared has found himself at the table and is sampling the items with a small group of people around him.

JARED
You see the Kobe sashimi is a day and a half old which is why the chef used a little too much coriander to dampen the gamey taste of the beef.

(CONTINUED)
Jared holds out a sample for a woman to eat. Renee’, early 20’s, smart with a graceful beauty.

JARED
Did you notice the sesame seeds?

RENEE’
Why yes I did.

JARED
See they aren’t the white variety most commonly used. These come from Burkina Faso. Much harder to find but they give the sauce that extra personality.

RENEE’
I taste it.

JARED
It almost smiles on your tongue.

WOMAN
Yes, it does.

A man walks by the group and steps forward. Price, a gentleman in his late 40’s.

PRICE
There she is.

Price puts his arm around Renee’ and gives her a kiss.

PRICE
Where have you been?

RENEE’
Getting a quick lesson in west African sesame seeds from our undercover chef here.

Renee’ motions to Jared. Price turns toward Jared. He looks him up and down taking an account of him but addresses his next question to Renee’.

PRICE
Really? And what does he think about the Lobster bisque?

JARED
He’s refused to try it, seeing as it was garnished with the Italian White Alba truffle.
Price takes his arm away from Renee’ and Jared now has his full attention.

PRICE
Good eye.

JARED
Thank you, but the mushroom just went out of season ten hours ago.

PRICE
That fungus is nearly $1000 an ounce, who cares when it went out of season?

JARED
The peak period for flavor is only three weeks out of the year. I hope whoever paid for it kept the receipt.

PRICE
I paid for it. I paid for all of this in fact.

JARED
Oh. (beat) Well in that case consider it a tax write-off.

Price stares at Jared and busts out laughing as he throws his arm around Jared and holds his hand out.

PRICE
Price Jefferies, what do you do?

Jared shakes his hand.

JARED
Jared Hastings, nice to meet you. I teach a cooking class.

Jared hands Price his business card.

PRICE
Great, then you can come to the house and give me and my fiance’ a private lesson.

JARED
I’d love to Price, but between classes and my volunteer work I can’t spare the time.
Price stares at Jared with the look of a man who rarely hears the word no.

**PRICE**
A man who sees his obligations through to completion. A rare thing in this world.

Renee’ smiles at Jared.

**RENEE’**
I’ll get the people from the Guinness Book on the phone.

**PRICE**
No need love, I’m sure me and Mr. Hastings will bump into each other again.

**JARED**
I look forward to that Mr. Jeffries.

Price takes Jared’s hand and shakes it.

**PRICE**
Enjoy the party Jared, and my old mushrooms of course.

Price gives a huge laugh as he walks off with Renee’. Matt had been watching the whole scene play out and now walks up excitedly.

**MATT**
Bro do you know who that was?

**JARED**
Price Jefferies.

**MATT**
Yes. As in the Jefferies Group, worth just over a billion in liquid assets. What did you say to him?

**JARED**
I told him he overpaid for his truffles.

Matt shakes his head.

**MATT**
Man, you’re crazy. So check it, me and the pretty waitress want to get (MORE)

(CONTINUED)
MATT (cont’d)
to know each other a little better
tonight so I’m gonna need to borrow your bed.

Jared screws his face up at Matt.

MATT
Ok then, how about just the couch?

Jared throws his arm around Matt and leads him into the party.

JARED
Come on.

INT. KITCHEN CLASSROOM - LATE AFTERNOON.

The classroom is full of the eager students. Jared walks in and immediately begins to write on the board.

JARED
Hello everyone, now tonight’s lesson will be an exercise in making the best out of a bad situation.

Jared writes the word NECESSITY on the board in large lettering. He turns and digs into his bag pulling out items.

JARED
I’m going to show you to make a restaurant quality meal using only Spam, Top Ramen noodles, and some ketchup packets. Any questions?

As Jared scans the classroom he has to keep his jaw secured as he stares at the man in the back row with one hand raised and a pen in his other.

PRICE
Yes, can you spell Spam for me?

INT. RESTAURANT - DUSK.

Jared and Price sit at a corner table in a well-decorated South Beach restaurant. Price twists the cork out of a bottle of wine.

(CONTINUED)
PRICE
Did you know that there were six
Jared Hastings in Miami?

JARED
Only six? Allapatah Jared must have
hyphenated.

Price laughs as he pours the wine into the decanter.

PRICE
Nice. All jokes aside I’ve been
checking into you.

JARED
May I ask why?

PRICE
Before I enter into any business
relationship I always make sure my
partners clean.

JARED
So how did I check out?

Price pulls out a little notebook.

PRICE
You’re clean, a little eccentric it
says but most passionate people
are.

JARED
In this world its usually the
passionate who do anything worth a
damn.

Price slams his hand down on the table.

PRICE
Exactly! I agree 100%.

A beautiful waitress brings the meals to the table. Remy,
early 20’s and smoldering sex in a too tight uniform.

REMY
Here you are gentlemen.

Jared reads the name tag.

JARED
Thank you Remy.
Price locks eyes with Remy as she places the meals on the table. She returns the gaze. Jared watches the display with curiosity.

PRICE
Thank you.

REMY
Want anything else?

Price looks her up and down and slowly shoves his fork off of the table.

PRICE
I dropped my fork.

Remy slowly leans over arching her cleavage into Price’s full view and retrieves the fork.

REMY
There you are sir.

By the time she gets back up there is a $100 bill waiting for her on the edge of the table.

REMY
Thank you sir.

She takes it and twists her hips seductively as she walks away.

PRICE
The one saving grace of this dump is the high quality ass you see from ear to rear.

Jared looks around.

JARED
Yeah, so how’s Renee’ doing?

Price is snapped out of the hypnotic swaying of Remy’s waist.

PRICE
Huh! Oh fine, she’s fine. What was I saying again?

JARED
High quality ass.
PRICE
Yes of course, that and the wine selection.

Price pours Jared a glass.

PRICE
Well what do you think?

Jared tries it.

JARED
It's good.

PRICE
It better be, that's bottle's 43 years old.

Jared takes another huge gulp.

PRICE
That's right drink up. Listen Jared I want to stop beating around the bush with you alright?

JARED
Ok, shoot.

PRICE
What do you think about this restaurant? Honestly.

Jared takes a deep breath as he surveys the establishment.

JARED
It's beautifully decorated, the wait-staff is top-notch, it's in a prime location at a cross-roads for tourist dollars and local wealth, and as you've stated the wine selection is exceptional.

Price's face is beaming.

JARED
The menu however, it's the same overpriced and underdeveloped excuse for cuisine you find in almost any restaurant on Ocean Drive.

Price's face drops.
PRICE
I know. I should probably sell the place but I hate to admit defeat.

JARED
You own this?

PRICE
Yes.

JARED
I didn’t mean to be so harsh.

PRICE
Don’t worry about it you can make it up to me by saying yes.

JARED
To what?

PRICE
I want you to run this place for me. Your menu, your vision, our profits. What do you say Jared?

Jared leans back in the chair as the weight of the question is crushing him. He stares down at the plate of food before him for a long moment then suddenly looks up.

JARED
Order another bottle, we’re celebrating tonight.

Jared raises his glass and Price holds up the decanter. They clink containers and down the contents.

PRICE
Remy! Champagne!