TWO KOOKS IN A KITCHEN

By Ian J. Courter

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LORRAINE SANCHEZ (40), pretty and well-dressed, sits at a desk looking over notes. MAGGIE (40s), attractive, but unadorned, walks up. Lorraine gives her a tired look.

MAGGIE

(hurried) Carl went home sick, but he's supposed to do a live show for the six o'clock news. Do you want to do it?

Lorraine gets an "Oh" face.

LORRAINE

That's...

She glances at her watch.

LORRAINE (CONT'D) ... in a half hour.

MAGGIE I need a yes or no... quickly.

LORRAINE What do I have to do?

MAGGIE

You interview a chef while he whips up a dish. It'll only be a few minutes.

Lorraine hesitates.

MAGGIE (CONT'D) It's an chance to prove you can do something besides field reporting.

LORRAINE (quickly) I'll do it!

Maggie smiles and nods.

MAGGIE

Great. Head over to make-up. I'll come get you when it's time. INT. STUDIO #2 - LATER

Maggie leads Lorraine onto a busy set. PETE TREVINO (30s), a handsome Latino in chef's clothes, stands behind an kitchen "island" cooking. Food SIZZLES and wisps of smoke waft.

MAGGIE Lorraine, this is Pete. Pete, this is Lorraine. She'll be interviewing you tonight.

Pete is surprised.

PETE

(Spanish accent) What happened to Carl?

MAGGIE

He got sick.

Crewmember #1 pins a wireless lavalier microphone on Lorraine.

LORRAINE (reassuring smile) Got it covered, Chief.

PETE

Chef, not Chief.

Lorraine loses her smile. Maggie quickly intervenes.

MAGGIE Hey! We have to do the teaser.

Maggie moves O.S. as the FLOOR MANAGER (50s) walks up wearing a headworn microphone.

FLOOR MANAGER Places everyone. Thirty seconds.

People scramble to their places as the operators move their cameras into position. Pete continues cooking as Lorraine checks her clothes.

FLOOR MANAGER (CONT'D) In four... three...

A light on top of one of the cameras turns ON.

NEWS CAMERA POV

Lorraine and Pete smile at the camera.

LORRAINE Tonight on "Carl's Corner", we have chef Pete Trevino cooking up a wonderful dish. So, join us for something delicious.

Lorraine keeps smiling until... the light on the camera turns OFF.

FLOOR MANAGER

We're clear.

RESUME SCENE

Pete smiles at Lorraine.

PETE (in Spanish) What are you doing later?

LORRAINE I have no idea what you just said.

PETE

(back to English) How is it you have a Latino last name and you don't speak Spanish?

LORRAINE It's my exes' last name... how is it you're Latino and have an Anglo first name?

Face-off.

The floor manager leans close to Maggie.

FLOOR MANAGER

(softly)
I heard about the ventriloquist
and the bigfoot fiasco. She screws
up this time... here... now...
you're both outta here.

Maggie hurries over to Lorraine and ushers her away.

MAGGIE (to Pete) We need to go to the powder room... it's a girl thing. INT. GREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maggie closes the door, isolating herself and Lorraine. She rubs her temples for a moment then lightly put hands on Lorraine's shoulders.

> MAGGIE No. No. No. Lorraine? This is live T-V. You can't lose your cool. You'll be done... gone... and you'll take me with you.

Lorraine is taken aback.

MAGGIE (CONT'D) Can you just do the interview and not hurt him if he gets lippy?

Lorraine nods emphatically.

INT. STUDIO #2 - LATER

Maggie and Lorraine hurry back onto the set. Pete nonchalantly cooks as everybody hurries around him.

FLOOR MANAGER Places please!

Everybody moves into place as Lorraine stands next to Pete. Maggie gives Lorraine a "thumbs up".

MAGGIE

You can do this.

Lorraine nods.

The floor manager wags a hand in the air and looks around.

FLOOR MANAGER We're live in four... three...

The light on one of the cameras turns ON.

NEWS CAMERA POV

INTERCUT between news camera POV and the others as needed.

Lorraine smiles into the camera. Pete lifts an eyebrow like a playboy.

LORRAINE We're here tonight with Chef Pete Trevino. What's for dinner, Pete? It smells yummy.

PETE I am making carne asada...

Lorraine wrinkles here forehead.

LORRAINE Carne espada? What's that?

Pete grins.

PETE No. No. Espada is Spanish for "sword", so you just said "meat sword". You do something else with that.

Lorraine blushes.

PETE (CONT'D) Barbecue with vegetables... hand me the... aceite, eh olive oil.

Lorraine grabs a bottle of olive oil... and promptly upends it over her shoes. She manages to keep a grip on the bottle and hurriedly rights the bottle. She smiles sheepishly while offering it to him.

LORRAINE

Sorry... there's some oil on it... made it slippery... tried to hold on, but... um, here.

He scowls as he takes the bottle from her and... it slips in his hands too. He catches it, but jostles a pan on the stove. He grabs at the pan and burns a finger.

Lorraine grabs at the pan handle and misses. He smacks her hand. She smacks his hand in return and steps back.

There is a strangled YELP. Lorraine jumps slightly and looks down.

LORRAINE (CONT'D) (whispering) Oh, sorry!

Lorraine looks back at the camera and smiles.

Floor manager emphatically motions to crewman #2 crouched behind the island. Crewman #2 tries to sop up the spilled oil with a towel while shaking a hand in pain.

LORRAINE (CONT'D) Mmm. So, Pete, what else you got cooking?

Pete sucks on his hurt finger for a moment and eyes her cautiously.

PETE Well, we also have canelones.

LORRAINE Canelones or cannelloni? I thought that was Italian.

PETE

It is. A...

Lorraine squawks as a pair of feet momentarily pop up from behind the island and a bunch of 8"X11" paper flies up. There is a muffled THUD.

LORRAINE (looking down) Are you alright?!

Pete lifts the pan towards the camera and point inside it with a spatula.

PETE So, I have fried the canelones in the olive oil. They are a nice golden brown.

A hand rises up behind the island and grabs the countertop edge, only to slip off. After a moment, crewman #2, oil staining his clothes crawls on hands and knees from behind the island and moves 0.C.

Floor manager puts his face in a hand and rubs the bridge of his nose. Crewman #2 rises to his feet and stands next to him. He gives floor manager a disgusted look and walks off.

Pete slides the pan to the side and grabs a hand juicer and a half of a lime.

PETE (CONT'D) Now, we juice a lima, eh a lime.

He places the lime half on the juicer and pushes down... squirting Lorraine in the eye.

LORRAINE

Ah! Ow!

Pete drops the lime and grabs a towel off the countertop, slapping it over her face. She pushes his hand and towel away.

The mascara on one of her eyes runs like black watercolor paint on plastic. Pete suppresses a laugh. She grabs a glass of water.

> LORRAINE (CONT'D) Hey, Pete. I have a little recipe of my own. Dont' worry. It's real simple... just water...

Maggie looks horrified, but stops herself from running on-set.

Lorraine splashes the water in Pete's face.

LORRAINE (CONT'D) ... and flour.

She tosses a handful of flour in his face. A look of satisfaction crosses hers.

LORRAINE (CONT'D) Pretty tasty, huh, <u>chiquito</u>?

Pete sputters and blinks as he shakes his head slightly.

PETE Yea, Lori... that's pretty good... Here. Let me dry off your face for you.

Pete tosses flour in her face. She does it back. Back and forth they go... until... flour goes all over everything.

Floor manager's expression goes completely blank... then slowly turns to scowl at Maggie.

MAGGIE

Uh,...

Floor manager holds up a finger for silence and cups the other hand over his ear piece, listening.

Maggie worriedly looks back at Lorraine and Pete.

Pete and Lorraine look each other up-and-down for a moment, then... bust out laughing.

LORRAINE Wow, Pete. I'd like to see what you do for the holidays.

He looks in her eyes and smiles warmly.

PETE How about I come back and you can find out... if you do the show with me.

She makes eye contact and holds it for a moment.

LORRAINE

I'd like that... uh, (to the camera) Hey, that's it for the night. I hope you enjoyed cooking with Chef Pete. Back to you, Fred.

Lorraine and Pete smile and look into the camera until the light on it turns OFF, then they turn back to each other.

LORRAINE (CONT'D) Aside from my eye burning, that was fun.

PETE Wasn't it?! Carl isn't half the fun you are. So, you never gave me an answer...

As their conversation fades into the background, Maggie turns and shuffles toward the door. Floor manager stops her halfway.

> FLOOR MANAGER Lorraine... social media's gone crazy... and the station owner just called... he thought that was the funniest thing out of this station in years... He wants Lorraine to replace Carl... at least temporarily...

Maggies grins as Lorraine and Pete talk and flirt in the b.g.

FADE OUT:

THE END