

Well Deserved
by
Kaden Velasquez
and
Brian Fuller

FADE IN:

INT: APARTMENT KITCHEN

The modest kitchen/eating area of a grad student apartment.

As an undergraduate, clean-cut QUINN pledged Sigma Chi. Today, he left a Swiss diver's watch at home.

JESS is relaxed in thrifted weekend clothes. She spills five dice from a Yahtzee cup into the playing tray: two sixes and three other dice which, importantly, are not sixes.

QUINN

I told you. You shoulda zeroed out your Yahtzee two beers ago. Whatever happens now is your own fault.

JESS

Beating you is worth the risk, okay?

QUINN

Okay, but now you can't even take Chance. You got nothing else open. If you don't make this, I'm gonna win anyway.

JESS

Two more rolls. You don't think I can make it?

QUINN

I do not, as a matter of fact. You're not that lucky.

JESS

And how long's it been since you got lucky, Quinn?

QUINN

Damn. That was frosty.

Lifts and shakes a bottle to demonstrate its near emptiness.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Unlike this tepid domestic lager.

Jess stands and takes the bottle for recycling.

JESS

I got you.

Jess retrieves a green bottle of Yuengling Traditional from the fridge. At the sink, she removes the bottle cap. The position of her body blocks the beer from Quinn's view. She has no trouble smoothly dropping something like a tiny tablet into the bottle with a covert swirl.

JESS (CONT'D)

Odds of throwing three sixes in two more rolls are, I dunno, I got about a 3% chance, maybe. but I can make that.

Jess turns back to hand Quinn the lager. Quinn examines it a little hesitantly as Jess sits.

QUINN

You know Yuengling's supposed to be served in a pilsner glass, right? Keeps the carbonation from escaping too fast. Traps the oils of the hops for better aroma.

JESS

I'll keep that in mind, your majesty. Is it just me or is it getting narcissistic in here?

Quinn drinks intermittently as they converse.

QUINN

Uh-oh. It's NPD week in Abnormal Psych, isn't it? C'mon, Jess. Some people want — maybe some people even *deserve* — better things. That's not a disorder.

JESS

It could be.

Jess shakes the dice cup, then stops to speak.

JESS (CONT'D)
Especially if somebody's willing
to hurt other folks 'cause he
thinks he's entitled to a Ferrari...

Jess slams the cup down onto the game tray. She lifts it
to reveal one six.

JESS (CONT'D)
...or a woman.

QUINN
Okay. Now it's interesting.

It may not be clear whether Quinn is commenting on the roll
or on the conversation.

JESS
Are we eating after this?

Jess scoops up two dice and drops them back in the cup.

QUINN
You want take-out? You know
Norman's closed.

After another swig of beer, Quinn examines the bottle.
Except, he's not looking the bottle. He's eyeing the hand
holding the bottle, flexing his fingers as if he doesn't
fully trust them. His uncertainty plays out slowly as the
conversation continues.

JESS
Nah, I got some stuff in the
fridge. Not sure it's up to your
standards, exactly.

QUINN
C'mon, cut it out.

JESS
I'm just playing. But, seriously...
what's a good meal for you?

QUINN
A good meal?

JESS

A *great* meal.

QUIN

How great?

JESS

You know. Convicted criminal.

Death row. Last supper.

As he spins a starry-eyed menu, Quinn's speech becomes gradually less precise.

QUINN

I don't know. Kobe. Wagyu Filet. A5, obviously. Maybe a ten on the marbling scale. Rossini style, probably. Seared in butter to medium-rare. A *tournedos* on a crouton. *Fois gras* - goose, not duck. Shaved black truffle. Cognac and veal demi-glace. No. No, no. Wait. No. I take it all back. Lobster Newburg. No. Sorry. Thermidor. Thermidor. Final answer. Definitely Lobster Thermidor. Béchamel with brandy - not white wine. And don't even think about Parmesan, okay? It's Gruyère or it's nothing. Gimme a side of risotto. A spinach salad with strawberries and figs. And walnuts. Oh, and feta. Then just a drizzle of maple vinaigrette.

Jess exhales heavily, as one might in the awed silence after narrowly avoiding a car accident or blowing out the first drag of a deeply satisfying cigarette.

JESS

Damn, Hefner. You done?

Quinn nods, a little smug. Warming, he unfastens a button of his Oxford. He's just given a memorable performance. And he knows it.

QUINN
I guess. Yeah.

Recovered from their reverie, Jess shakes the cup.

JESS
That's a helluva dinner. I never
even heard of half that stuff.

She dumps out the last two dice. Both are sixes.

JESS (CONT'D)
And there it is, folks: Yahtzee.

Quinn leans quickly toward the center of the table,
stunned.

QUINN
No way!

JESS
All the ways.

QUINN
No way! How'd you do that?

JESS
I'm lucky as a leprechaun. That's
how.

QUINN
Un. Bee. Lievable.

Playfully disgusted, Quinn shoves his scorecard across the
table to Jess. He finishes the last swallow of beer and
regards the bottle wistfully. His posture is devolving to
match his slovenly pronunciation.

QUINN
You got a sommelier who knows
Bourgogne, he can bring me a demi
of Chardonnay with that lobster,
by the way. Now tell me, what did
I do?

Jess puts scorecards, dice, and tray back in the Yahtzee box, then moves the game to a nearby counter. The game shifts a disheveled sheaf of papers to reveal a stack of a half-dozen books like Pamela Donovan's *Drink Spiking and Predatory Drugging* and *Rohypnol: Roofies - the Date-rape Drug* by Colleen Adams as well as other titles on benzodiazepines, pharmacology, and substance abuse. The books abut a cutlery block of kitchen knives.

With calm stealth, Jess moves the papers back to hide the books.

JESS

What?

Quinn rocks his chair on its two back legs. Then decides perhaps he's not quite steady enough to pull off the maneuver.

QUINN

What did I do? How did I get on death row?

Jess crosses to the fridge to survey its contents.

JESS

The usual way, I guess. Homicide. Bank robbery. Rape.

QUINN

Oh, come on. You can't kill a guy for maybe pushing things a little too far.

JESS

"Pushing things"?

QUINN

Okay, sexual assault. Rape. He-said, she-said. Whatever. It's not a capital offense. Supreme Court says so. *Coke v. Georgia*. Even if she's a little on the young side, it's still not a death row thing. Look up Kennedy versus Louisiana.

Her back to Quinn, Jess reaches deep into the fridge, partially muffling her voice.

JESS

Huh. So you could slug some pal
at a bar... and get away with it?

QUINN

What?

INT: RESTAURANT

A Michelin Three-Star restaurant beyond space and time.

Jess, now dressed in chef's whites and a *toque blanche*, straightens and turns, bearing lobster Thermidor on a plate of luxury bone china. She stands with composure and patience, her posture as perfect as white tapers in a candelabrum.

JESS

I said "So you think you can drug
some gal at a bar... and get away
with it?"

Quinn is bewildered by his surroundings. He is startled to be wearing a suit and tie. He is suspicious of everything around him.

A starched napkin, folded primly on a silver charger, exactly matches the white linen tablecloth. Dazed, Quinn takes it and drapes it across his lap.

QUINN

Which gal?

Quinn discovers Chardonnay in a wine glass just above the tip of the dinner knife and slightly to the right of the water glass. He takes an approving sip. Jess lowers the plate to the silver charger.

JESS

Wow. "Which one?" Wrong answer.

Quinn's eyes, hungry with anticipation, are on the lobster.

QUINN

Oh, man!

Quinn savors a dreamy bite.

QUINN (CONT'D)

(mouth full)

You know, I'm not feeling so good
right now, but this is amazing.
What're you doing with a lobster
in the fridge? You can't possibly
afford that.

He loads another fork-full of food.

QUINN (CONT'D)

And where'd you learn to cook like
this?

INT: APARTMENT KITCHEN

Jess's hand pulls an eight-inch chef's knife from the
cutlery block.

JESS

I've been watching a lot of
Cutthroat Kitchen.

INT: RESTAURANT

A silver fork lifts a chicken nugget to Quin's mouth. He
relishes it with gusto. He is apparently unaware of the
switch between gourmet delight and ultra-processed crap.

QUINN

Never heard of it. But this is
incredible. See, this is exactly
what I'm talking about. It's okay
that some people deserve better
things.

Chef Jess moves to stand squarely behind suited Quin, her
right hand behind her back. Her free left hand rises...

INT: APARTMENT KITCHEN

...and lowers to pat his left shoulder in affirming assurance.

JESS

You're right, Quinn. And those people should definitely get what they deserve.

Jess's fingers flex around the handle of a chef's knife flattened against her spine.

Armed with plastic cutlery, Quin is hunched, ravenous, over a paper plate of chicken nuggets and a bottle of beer. His face is sweaty, rumpled sleeves rolled to mid-forearm. Quinn's having a rough night, courtesy of Rohypnol's signature symptoms.

QUINN

Dude, how'd you know I'd want lobster?

JESS

Turns out, tonight's actually my lucky night.

CUT TO BLACK

A STAB. A SQUISH. A SCREAM.

CREDITS

INDEX

INT: apartment kitchen -----	1
INT: restaurant -----	7
INT: apartment kitchen -----	8
INT: restaurant -----	8
INT: apartment Kitchen -----	9