

WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PLASTER OF PARIS

Dr vHZ sits in a tiny Italian restaurant in French Lick, Indiana, sipping a beer. A waiter approaches.

WAITER

(speaking with Italian accent)
May I bring you another *Solo Per la Gravidanza*, Sir?

DR. VHZ

Whoost, mein little furry-lipped friend, already my teeth are loose in mein head. How much of ze alcohool is in zis bier?

WAITER

If I might just consult the bottle, Sir? Thank you. It says.... *niente*, Sir.

DR. VHZ

Vat is zat, like nine? Nine perzent? No vunder I am feeling a bit hazy, eh? Vell, zis will teach me to be eggspperimental.

WAITER

Certainly, Sir. Do you know how soon your dining partner will be arriving?

DR. VHZ

(zuzpicious)
Unt vy do you vish to know, mmmm?

WAITER

To free up the table, of course! We are very busy, Sir.

DR. VHZ

Busy? Explain zis "busy"! I am alone in zis place.

WAITER

I didn't say we were busy serving food, Sir. We have lives, you know.

DR. VHZ

How very odd. Mein guest is chust 15 minutes late. Perhaps I may haf anozer 15 minutes before you are shooshing

me out ze door?

WAITER

I believe that can be arranged. You'll have to eat quite quickly, however.

DR. VHZ

It is 4:15 pm on a Tuesday unt no one is hier.

WAITER

I'm sorry, I really don't have time to chat, Sir. As you can see, there are 15 other tables.

DR. VHZ

Tables, yes, but zere are no peoples at zem.

WAITER

Will those tables serve themselves, Sir? Will they launder their own cloths, place their own silver, fill their own water glasses, hmmm?

DR. VHZ

I haf had zo many strange converzations in my life. Zis is one of zem.

WAITER

I apologise for the strangeness strewn about your life, Sir. If you'll excuse me?

DR. VHZ

(calling after him)

If I could perhaps haf a menu? It appears not. Very well.

FLOWER LADY

(approaches)

Flower for the lady, Sir?

DR. VHZ

Ehhhh... lady? I'm not sure who will be choining me...

FLOWER LADY

Sir! How very ungallant of you!

DR. VHZ

Ve haf only communicated over ze emailz...Perhaps I should haf worn a tie....

FLOWER LADY

And what about the lovely lady across from you now?

DR. VHZ

I'm terribly zorry, Madam, perhaps my English iz not zo gut. I believe I am alone at prezent.

FLOWER LADY

You brute! There, there, dear, no tears. They're not all so cruel as this one. Here. If he won't buy you a flower, I shall. No, please, I insist. It's only a day's wages....

DR. VHZ

Please, please, I vill pay. Zis is not a flower, iz it? Again, my English.... But I am quite zertain in English that is called a "twig."

FLOWER LADY

Have you no decency, Sir? Not only do you trifle with this poor child's emotions, but now you cast aspersions upon my occupation!

DR. VHZ

I am terribly zorry, Madam. And apologies to you, my invisible dining companion. As I zuspect you will not be ordering the lobster, pleeze allow me to buy you, zis beautiful, delightful,

(sniffs)

fragrant ... ztick. How much, good lady?

FLOWER LADY

That'll be 11 pounds forty, Sir.

DR. VHZ

Pounds? I am sure I am in ze United Ztates today? But zen, I vas alzo sure zat I vas sitting alone, so vat do I

know, eh? Do you take dollars?

FLOWER LADY

With an accent like this?

DR. VHZ

It is all I haf, I fear.

FLOWER LADY

Fine. Your fellow don't exactly come prepared, does he, dearie? Good to know for future.

DR. VHZ

How much is it in dollars, zen, please?

FLOWER LADY

Hang on a tic.... Comes to... forty-seven dollars eighty-eight.

DR. VHZ

What?! Zat cannot be right.

FLOWER LADY

Men aren't so good with the maths, are they? Goodness, what a tidy wallet. I spy a fifty in there, don't I? Lovely Ulysses S. peeking his head above the leather? Thank you. Ta ta!

DR. VHZ

Did she even give you your stick? Madam! I am zorry, my dear. We can go to ze park after, and I will build you a bouquet of ztick- I am talking to a chair.

WAITER

I see your dinner partner has still not arrived.

DR. VHZ

Are you sure? Could you look very closely?

WAITER

I am quite sure, Sir. Is Sir feeling well?

DR. VHZ

Fine. Foolish, perhaps, but fine. May I haf a menu, please? I fancy a little nibble.

WAITER

Another one, Sir?

DR. VHZ

Another one what.

WAITER

Another menu. I've handed you three already. Is Sir squirreling them away beneath the tablecloth?

DR. VHZ

Look, mein odd little fellow, I haf just bought a ztick for fifty American dollars, BUT! as you can see, there is no ztick hier. My dinner partner is now 22 minutes late or possibly on time but both invisible and very quiet. I am zuddenly unsure what country I am in, and I am peckish, you zee?

WAITER

Clearly, Sir. I shall return with menu number four *al momento!*

DR. VHZ

(calling after him)

Could you perhaps bring me some breadsticks? Unt just a smidgen of zauzage? Hmmm? Hello? Perhaps some good German mustard and a spoon?

cell phone rings, Dr. vHZ answers, irritated

Yes, Dr. von Haber Zetzer, who is there?

listens

No, ze ... package has not arrived. Have you heard from... ze Federal Express?

listens

Ze Federal Express. Ze ones who send
ze packages. Vat is hard to understand
about zis? I am only continuing ze
metaphor- Yes, very well, I shall
continue to wait. You could perhapz
order me a paprika schnitzel mit
spaetzle- hello? Fine. I am terribly
zorrry, my dear, you must be zo very
hungry. Perhaps we could poke
something with your stick, if only we
had it.

SOMMELIER

I'm sorry, Sir, who are you
addressing?

DR. VHZ

Gah! And who might you be?

SOMMELIER

I am your sommelier. I suspect you
might be wanting some wine with your
food?

DR. VHZ

I am wanting some food with my food,
just at ze moment.

SOMMELIER

Yes, I'm sorry, the kitchen is
terribly busy tonight.

DR. VHZ

Doing what? I am ze only one hier!

SOMMELIER

I didn't say they were busy cooking.
Would you care to see the wine menu?

DR. VHZ

Yes, fine, hand it over, why not. Or
perhaps you are going to tell me
you've given me three already but zey
as invisible as my companion!

SOMMELIER

I have given you exactly none, Sir, an
oversight I mean to correct
immediately! I don't have it with me,
Sir, but I shall return with it *post*
haste!

DR. VHZ

calling after him

Vy does everyone run away and leave me alone vis nothing to nibble? My dinner partner is so starved she has completely disappeared.

SOMMELIER

I'm back.

DR. VHZ

Gah! Perhaps you could varn me ven you do ze creeping up from behind?

SOMMELIER

We're nearing closing time, Sir, and it appears you've been stood up-

DR. VHZ

Closing time? 4 pm?

SOMMELIER

I believe you'll find it's very nearly half four, Sir. And we don't wish to risk losing our liquor license.

DR. VHZ

Zis is abzurd. I shall leave when my guest has arrived and ve haf eaten of ze little nibbles and had some lovely wine or perhaps anozer bier, and zat is all! My guest, I am sure, vill be arriving shortly!

SOMMELIER

Or perhaps ... she has been here all along!

DR. VHZ

Zat chair is empty, I tell you! Vy does everyone- Oh. You mean you. My goodness. Zooooo.... I guess that means zere is no wine, eh?

MRS. SHEFFIELD

As I was also the waiter AND the flower lady, there's no food nor flowers either!

DR. VHZ

Zat iz zo imprezzive! I would applaud you if I were not zo weak from hunger. Zere is no food hier?

MRS. SHEFFIELD

I think I have some Tic Tacs in my handbag....

DR. VHZ

Never mind. Why are you playing zese games, whoever you are?

MRS. SHEFFIELD

I am Mrs. Sheffield. May I sit?

DR. VHZ

Fine. Hand over ze Tac Tics, I haf changed my mind.

MRS. SHEFFIELD

All right, but do go carefully. If they start to fizz, spit them out immediately.

DR. VHZ

I vill regret asking zis kwestion, but why?

MRS. SHEFFIELD

I'm not entirely sure which box of Tic Tacs came from the 7-Eleven and which from ... eh... work.

DR. VHZ

And your work is with?

MRS. SHEFFIELD

MI 18. Ostensibly. We get some very tricky weapons that do entirely unpleasant things, and honestly, I'm not sure where those Tic Tacs originated.

DR. VHZ

spits out candies

18, eh? Dat is a great many of ze ems unt ze eyes. And vat does zis zooper zecret agency do?

MRS. SHEFFIELD
Protects the UK from... aliens.

DR. VHZ
Ah, I am haffing my green card hier
zumwhere....

MRS. SHEFFIELD
Not that kind of alien, Dr. von Haber
Zetzer. More green men than green
cards, if you catch me.

DR. VHZ
Mrs. Sheffield-

MRS. SHEFFIELD
Clara.

DR. VHZ
Clara, zen.
(a little dreamy, as he is
noticing her eyes)
Vy would you wish to talk vis me about
green eyes? Ehhhh ... green men,
rather.

MRS. SHEFFIELD
Because you work for Gated Galaxies,
do you not?

DR. VHZ
I do, yes; zis is not yet against the
law, I think?

MRS. SHEFFIELD
Come on, Freiderich....May I call you
Freiderich?

DR. VHZ
Mmmmmm.....

MRS. SHEFFIELD
You and I both know G2 is up to some
funny business not far from here, hey?
To do with sulfur springs and whatnot?

Dr. vHZ's phone rings, startling them both

DR. VHZ
WHAT? Oh, yes, all right, go on. Chust
... be gentle, eh?

snap as he closes cell phone

MRS. SHEFFIELD

And who was that? Who should be gentle?

DR. VHZ

Ehhhh... ze cleaning lady. No! Ze movers. Hang on... zat vas ze muzeum that vill be showing mein art. Zere. Zat is good, we can go with zat.

MRS. SHEFFIELD

I think perhaps I should be off.

DR. VHZ

Ehhhhhhh.....

MRS. SHEFFIELD

Yes?

DR. VHZ

I'm trying to dezide.

MRS. SHEFFIELD

Good bye, Freiderich.

DR. VHZ

But Clara... What about ... us?

MRS. SHEFFIELD

Perhaps another time... another life. Until then, we'll always have ...

Sound of footsteps approaching -- very militaristic and threatening

DR. VHZ

Ah, welcome, chentlemen. I am afraid you are too late. She has already gone. No no! Zere is no point in going after her, she is long gone. Tic Tac?

FINIS