“Everyone’s a Critic”
by
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SYNOPSIS
On the brink of a famous food critic’s first bite, the restaurant staff has a traitor in the kitchen. It’s up to the audience to help figure out who it is. This four-act mystery dinner theater script is perfect for special events, fundraisers, drama clubs, or holiday parties, and could also set up a message on how the Body of Christ is made up of different abilities and talents.

CAST

Dave- Male (approx. 30’s). Professional and articulate; his weakness is placing too much faith in the “teamwork” of a sometimes less-than-dedicated “team”.
*Special requirements: This is a large role. Dave is in the middle of the dialogue throughout most of the play. While he can carry a clipboard/notepad, the actor should not be visibly dependent on it.

Anthony- Male (approx. early 20’s). Busboy; practical jokester trying to figure out his role in the family business.

Suzy- Female (approx. 30’s). Sous chef; headstrong and opinionated; seeks recognition for her ability and accomplishments.

Rochelle- Female (approx. 30’s). Pastry chef; attractive and proud of it; seeks the spotlight and is willing to compete for it.

Chevalier (pronounced “Sheh-VAHL-ee-ay”) - Male (approx. 50’s). Maître d’; after a 20-yr. investment, he seeks to preserve the restaurant’s French heritage at all costs.
*Special requirements: Actor for this role must be able to affect a believable French accent throughout the play and pronounce a few phrases in French.

Fiona - Female (approx. 50’s). Owner; materialistic and opportunistic; resents her husband’s obsessive involvement with the restaurant.

Wesley- Male (approx. 30’s). Farmer; reliable and romantic; seeks revenge after being spurned by Rochelle and minimalized by the restaurant.

Erin - Female (approx. 20’s-30’s). New hire for a head position; appears bubbly and naïve. (Smaller role; not a “suspect”)

Lawyer- (optional) played by an audience member (with script)

Bob- (optional) played by an audience member (with script)

Actress #9- Female (variety of ages).
*Special requirements: This role is exclusively comedic and the actress must be able and prepared to play all of the following characters:
-Delivery Woman: subject of Fiona’s bribes
-Callie: Wesley’s vengeful younger sister
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-Journalist: Over-eager reporter
-Estelle: Chevalier’s wife (must be able to memorize and pronounce conversational French)
-Ava: Sous chef’s apprentice
-Luna: Aspiring rock-band musician

PROPS

Acts 1-3:
Hostess desk and stool
Phone
Ladle
Clipboards/notepads
Large crates or sturdy cardboard boxes
Snack for Anthony (should resemble cake)
Electric guitar
Cell phone
Restaurant tables and chairs

Act 4:
Clipboard and delivery slip
Box of plants/herbs
Full garbage bag
Small recording device
Bottle of clam juice
Bass guitar case and amp
Paper and pencils for each audience table
Ballot box for each audience table

COSTUMES

Dave- Double-breasted chef’s jacket and dark (or neutral) pants. No hat.

Anthony- White button-down shirt, black pants, black waiter vest. Shirt is unbuttoned; an overall unkempt appearance.

Suzy- Fitted white chef’s jacket, black pants, and chef’s hat; hair pulled back.

Rochelle- Fitted chef’s jacket (any color); black pants, hair in French braid. No hat.

Chevalier- Tuxedo if possible; or black dress pants and vest, white button-down shirt, and bow tie; pristine appearance.

Fiona- Business-casual attire; attention-grabbing jewelry, shoes, and handbag/purse.

Wesley- Jeans, work boots, white t-shirt.
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Erin- Knee-length or tea-length flared dress and shoes with heels (i.e. celebrity chef who is not actually cooking)

Actress #9
- Delivery Woman: Single-color outfit with belt
- Callie: Jeans or overalls with white t-shirt
- Journalist: 3-piece suit or other business professional attire
- Estelle: Business casual attire
- Ava: Black pants and white button-down shirt, hair pulled back
- Luna: Any stereotypical “rock” look (i.e. ripped jeans, graphic tee, hair down and wool hat pulled over forehead).

STAGE DIRECTIONS

US = Up Stage
DS = Down Stage
CS = Center Stage
SR = Stage Right
SL = Stage Left
USR = Up Stage Right
USL = Up Stage Left
DSR = Down Stage Right
DSL = Down Stage Left

The written in stage directions are suggestions, hopefully helpful suggestions! But they are not essential for the production to work. Feel free to adjust the stage directions to fit your space and your director’s preferences.

SOUND CUES AND SPECIAL EFFECTS

These sounds effects can easily be found online. If you don’t have a sound system, feel free to make these effects offstage using simple props (ex. Bell, Guitar, etc.)

Electric Guitar
Fire Alarm
Cell Phone Ring
Buzzer / Doorbell (Select Endings)
Smoke- A smoke machine would help create the illusion of something burning in the kitchen. Visually, it would also add to the suspense! However, if you don’t have a smoke machine, the characters can simply cough and mime as if there is lingering smoke.

TIME

The actual script is a little over an hour. However, the entire production, including breaks for food, should be a little over 2 hours. Depending on the extent of your audience participation, this script could be as long as 2½ hours. We strongly suggest that you don’t make it any longer than 2½ hours!
ADDITIONAL NOTES

Dinner theater is a unique genre of acting that requires improvisation and flexible actors. Make sure, above all else, that your actors are having fun!! This will allow the audience to loosen up and more readily participate. Many times, dinner theaters allow the actors to seat the guests as they enter. Have your actors stay in character and mingle with the audience before the play. This adds to the whole experience and makes each live performance unique.

Food

Have fun with the menu! Ideally it would be great to have some French cuisine, however any type of food will work. It might be fun to have Chevalier introduce each course. Even if it’s spaghetti and meatballs, have him translate it into French and/or announce it in a French accent. ALSO! You can make this a dessert theater. As long as you have three distinct breaks, one after each Act, feel free to serve whatever you want to eat!

Optional Scene

There are two optional characters (Lawyer and Bob). These characters enter at the end of Act 3. Including this scene allows for two audience members to join the cast for a short time. It’s a great way to encourage audience participation… and it’s usually pretty funny! These two audience members should be chosen prior to the show. Usually the director chooses these roles as he/she watches the audience enter. These two people should be discreetly approached, asked if they would like to be part of the production, and given the script. Don’t give them the whole script! You don’t want to give the ending away. Just give them their scene (the last part of Act 3 – a copy of this scene included at the end of the script. This way they absolutely know which lines they should say). Make sure you go over their cue line (the line before they should stand up). Remind them to be loud, articulate, and to have fun. If the audience member forgets or is a little shy, the director should feel free to help them out when it’s their turn to speak.

Collecting Ballots

There are many ways to collect the audience’s votes. We strongly suggest a secret ballot.

Option 1: Have paper and pencils on each audience table, along with a ballot box. At the end of Act 3, the actors can simply collect the ballot boxes. (The script is written for the second option. If you choose to have the ballot boxes on the table, simple change Dave’s line to “put your ballot in the box in the center of your table.” Rather than, “hand me the ballot.”)

Option 2: If you have a smaller crowd, the individual ballots can be handed to Dave.

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Option 3: One final suggestion would be to simply have the audience raise their hands after each suspect’s name is called. This would require some improvisation on the part of Dave and, obviously, would not allow for a secret vote.

If your cast is not fully prepared to perform any one of the 6 endings:

A) be sure to have a secret ballot so that, if need be, the cast can pick the ending that they feel most comfortable performing, and/or

B) do not include the final poem that states that the audience’s guess is always right.

**An example of a secret ballot is included at the end of the script

Endings

The script is written so that whomever the audience decides is the culprit, is the actual culprit. However, if you prefer one ending over another, simply choose which ending you want to perform. This would require secret ballots and/or the removal of the final poem which states that the audience’s guess is always right.

NOTE: Chevalier’s ending REQUIRES language interpretation. There are a few ways to accomplish this, the easiest being the use of multi-media. Another option would be to have the cast or stage crew hold up signs with the translation of Estelle’s lines. If you cannot translate Estelle’s lines well, we suggest choosing an alternate ending.
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ACT 1

Lights up on an empty restaurant foyer. At the front desk DSL, the phone rings. Anthony enters SR. Looking annoyed he walks to the desk and picks up the phone.


Dave and Erin enter, in conversation, and stop USR. Dave notices Anthony at the phone and frowns; Anthony does not notice Dave.

Anthony: Right. Okay, I'll put you right through.

Anthony pushes a few buttons and hangs up. He starts to exit. The phone rings again; Anthony answers it.

Anthony: Goût de Paris. (Pause) Yup. Four o'clock.

Anthony hangs up. He starts to exit. The phone rings again; Anthony answers it.

Anthony: Thank you for calling the Dumpster Diner. You toss it, we sauce it! What can I do for you today?

Dave suddenly stops talking and rushes to the front desk.

Dave: (Grabbing the phone from Anthony) This is Goût de Paris, the home of authentic French cuisine. May I help you? Hello? Hello?

Pause. He puts the phone down and glares at Anthony.

Dave: Hung up.

Anthony: Hate it when that happens.

Dave: Right. You and I will discuss this incident, (aside, so Erin can't hear him) and all the others (normal speaking voice), at another time. Anthony, this is Erin. You'll be seeing her around the kitchen.

Erin: (Extending a hand) Hi, how are you?

Anthony: Livin' the dream.

Dave: Anthony, big day here. I'll put someone else on phones.

Anthony: Yes, sir.

Dave and Erin exit SR. At the same time, Suzy and Rochelle enter SL, arguing.
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Suzy: I'm not saying I don't like the dessert. I'm saying Dave doesn't want it on the menu tonight.

Rochelle: Oh, sure. The biggest night we've ever had and you're taking my specialty off the menu?

Suzy: It's not coming off the menu. It's just not going to be featured tonight. Talk to Dave, this wasn't my decision.

Rochelle: (Sarcastically) I'm sure it wasn't. Those cherry-amaretto petit fours are the reason people stay for dessert in the first place! Are you crazy?

Suzy: Dave's really pushing the "farm to fork" concept tonight and petit fours don't cut it.

Rochelle: The cherry curd comes from cherries which come from a farm and end up on your fork.

Suzy: Talk to Dave.

Rochelle: No, you talk to Dave. Why can't you ever just tell him what you think?

Suzy: (Fed up) Okay, here's what I think. Your petit fours are too dry and too purple. And amaretto is so last summer. Everyone's doing apricot now.

Suzy exits SR, leaving a stunned Rochelle behind her.

Rochelle: Too purple?!

Rochelle turns and stomps SL, then notices Anthony, who is still seated at the front desk and snacking on something.

Anthony: (With his mouth full) Little tense today?

Rochelle: I graduated from Le Cordon Bleu in London. I had job offers from [insert names of celebrity chefs or local chefs]. I've done pastry in three different continents. Who does she think she is?!

Anthony: Sous chef.

Rochelle: One of these days, she's going to get it. I just hope I'm around to—

An offstage scream from Suzy interrupts.

Anthony: And there you go.

Rochelle: Huh? What did you—

Anthony: Cayenne in her coffee.
He takes a bite of a petit fours.

Rochelle: Anthony! How do you get away with stuff like that?

Anthony: I don’t know.

Rochelle: Yes, you do.

Anthony: Being the boss’s son has its perks.

Rochelle: Well, tone down the pranks tonight, ok? It’s a big night.

Anthony: You guys need to lighten up. Everything’s going to be fine.

Rochelle: Anthony. This is Gerald Fitzgerald we’re talking about. He’s pretty much the biggest name ever in food writing.

Anthony: I’ve heard of him.

Rochelle: If he likes it here, we start making waiting lists for tables. If he doesn’t like it, we lay off half the staff.

Anthony: Yup. Bad critique, and dad would finally sell this place and finance our new album. We’re gonna need some studio time after we win Battle of the Bands.

Rochelle: Who’s “we”?

Anthony: My band. The Angry Pesto People.

Rochelle: You really think your dad’s going to finance a band called “The Angry Pesto People?”

Anthony: Hey, don’t be knocking it. And yeah. Dad’s been saying that for years; someday he’ll help me get started. You coming to the show Friday? It’s gonna rock.

Anthony takes another bite of the petit fours.

Rochelle: Seriously? If Chevalier saw you eating at the front, he’d kill you. (Looking closer) Wait a minute. Is that my—


Rochelle: See? That’s what I’ve been trying to tell them.

Anthony: Interesting flavor. What is this, apricot?

Rochelle makes a frustrated sound and exits SL.
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Suzy enters SR, holding a mug of coffee. Her face is flushed.

Suzy: Anthony. Did you mess with my mug?

Anthony: Suzy! Yeah, I thought you might want to sample my Mexican coffee. A little chocolate, a little spice…

Suzy: A little spice?

Anthony: Well, like they say: “If you can’t handle the heat, get out of the kitchen—”

He breaks off as Dave enters, accompanied by Erin. Suzy straightens immediately.

Suzy: Dave. I made some changes to tonight’s menu. The sea bass for the swordfish, steak au poivre replaces the steak Diane; we’re not going to run the petit fours tonight. I’ll have Rochelle do something a little more fruit-forward.

Dave: Perfect. What’d you decide on for the roast chicken?

Suzy: I’m going with a warm mango-curry salsa.

Dave: Excellent. Erin, meet Suzy Lansky, our sous chef.

Erin: Oh, hey, I get it! Sue the sous chef.

Suzy: (Pretends to laugh, then breaks off abruptly) Yeah, no. That’s really my name. And you are…?

Dave: Suzy, this is Erin. We’re going to bring her on as head chef.

Suzy: (Blind-sided) What?

Dave: When I move to executive chef, we’ll need a head chef. Erin will fill that for us.

Suzy: But I thought— (breaks off awkwardly)

Pause.

Anthony: Well, this is awkward.

Dave: (Continuing, oblivious to Suzy’s intent) We’re not planning on making any other staff changes once we bring Erin on, so you won’t have to worry about your job.

Suzy: (Defeated) My job as sous chef.

Anthony: As long as tonight goes well. (Checking his watch) I’m on break.
Suzy: You just got here 15 minutes—

Anthony: Gotta practice my solo. Battle of the bands, people! Gonna make y'all proud!

*Anthony exits SR.*

Suzy: *(Yelling after him)* Try and keep it down. The break room isn't—

*Sounds of an electric guitar come from offstage right.*

Suzy: *(Defeated)* —a concert venue.

Dave: *(To Suzy)* As I was saying, Erin's been the chef de cuisine at Mahi in L.A. for a couple years. You two will make a great team. Erin, any initial thoughts on tonight's menu?

Erin: Well, that mango-curry salsa sounds intriguing. What did you say that was for?

Suzy: Roast chicken.

Erin: Oh. Hmm. No, I don't like that at all. *(To Dave)* I would take out the mango and put in some nice bright apricot. That's what everyone wants this year.

Suzy: Apricot. Who would've thought?

*A slamming door is heard. Enter Fiona SL, walking quickly, and Chevalier following.*

Suzy exits SR.

Dave: Good afternoon, Fiona.

Fiona ignores Dave and determinedly keeps walking.

Dave: I hope things are going well…?

Fiona: Oh, they're going.

Dave: Fiona, meet Erin, our new head chef. Erin, this is Fiona Beckett. Bob and Fiona are the owners here.

Fiona: *(To Erin)* Delighted. *(To Dave)* Where's Bob?

Dave: Haven't seen him since this morning.

Fiona: He was here this morning? Just how early are we talking?
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Dave: He... came in with the bake staff.

Fiona: Knew it. I knew it. He was supposed to be helping me pick out patio furniture.

Dave: Patio furniture? Today?

Fiona: (Annoyed) Yes, today. It's a one-day sale, and we're not passing it up just because some big-wig feels like eating here tonight.


Fiona: Mm-hmm. My husband finally agrees to hand off some control to an executive chef, and you create more work for him. You invited Fitzgerald.

Dave: As executive chef, I want to start putting this place on the map. After Fitzgerald’s review, we'll be working off a six-month waiting list.

Fiona: And if he doesn't like it, that review could put us out of business.

Dave: Doesn't like it? Goût de Paris’ is the best in town, probably the best French restaurant in the state. Bringing in Gerald Fitzgerald is going to generate sales like we've never seen.

Fiona: Well, you better hope it does. If it doesn't, it'll be the first and last "executive" decision you make.

Dave: Yes, ma'am.

Awkward pause.

Dave: Oh! Sorry. (Indicating Chevalier) Erin, this is the Monsieur himself. He's been Maître d' since day one. We couldn't do any of this without him.

Chevalier: (Extending hand to Erin, who takes it) I am Monsieur Chevalier. Pleased to make your acquaintance.

Fiona: Chevrolet—

Chevalier: Madame, we have been through this. It is “Chevalier.”

Fiona: But Chevrolet is so much easier to say.

Chevalier: Yes, but—

Fiona: (Interrupting, still trying to make her point) Between you and Bob, have either of you taken a vacation since you opened this place?

Chevalier: No, Madame. My place is here.
Fiona: See? This is what I’m talking about. *(To Erin)* Bob and I didn’t have a honeymoon because he was saving for the restaurant. I bought him plane tickets to Hawaii for our first anniversary, and, what do you know? The day we were supposed to fly out, the health inspector showed up and he just couldn’t get away. When our son was born, Bob graced us with his presence for a whole hour before he had to get back to the restaurant. The restaurant, the restaurant. He may as well be married to the restaurant.

Chevalier: The restaurant is his baby. You must understand.

Fiona: It was “his baby” twenty years ago. Now he needs to let it grow up.

Chevalier: Madame, please calm down. French cuisine is served best in a ‘paisible atmosphère.’ Fitzgerald is coming in just a few—

Fiona: *(Bristling)* I’m going to check Bob’s mail.

Dave: *(To Chevalier)* It’s okay. I’ll go find her something to decorate.

**Fiona and Dave exit SR.**

Erin: *(To Chevalier)* Sounds like you’ve been invested in this thing from the beginning. Tell me about the restaurant.

Chevalier: Well. We are a French restaurant, with roots in the classical style.

Erin: I noticed some of that on your menu.

Chevalier: But it is changing. It used to be all French. *Chateaubriand, homard thermidor, pate maison.* Now, it is this “French fusion.” There are foods we never used in France.

Erin: It’s a newer way of looking at food, isn’t it?

Chevalier: I do not understand. Why do we need a new way of looking at our food?

Erin: I think people today want something different than they wanted twenty years ago.

Chevalier: Perhaps so. But it is our responsibility to preserve the great culinary traditions, no? We should not give up our standards because people today do not know how to eat.

Erin: I don’t think it’s about giving up our standards, exactly…

Chevalier: I will speak plainly. This "French fusion," I do not like it. Food had rules, now there are no rules. It is not "fusion", it is confusion.
Erin: Really? Maybe you could give me an example of—

Rochelle: *(Offstage, yelling)* I still have no idea what you mean! “Fruit-forward”? If my cherry curd doesn’t count as “fruit-forward”, I don’t know what you want!

*Rochelle and Dave enter SL. Chevalier throws up his arms as if he has been vindicated.*

Rochelle: *(To Dave)* Not featuring my signature dessert is a mistake! Dave, it’s a mistake. Why would you decide to—

Dave: Suzy made the decision. I thought she discussed it with you?

Rochelle: She told me YOU decided against—

Dave: Suzy suggested we showcase our emphasis on fresh local produce. I liked the idea. Just use whatever comes on the truck.

Rochelle: Right now, I don’t care about fresh local produce, unless they want to bring me twenty pounds of grass-fed organic butter.

Erin: *(To Dave)* In L.A., we’re getting away from saturated fats. I’ll introduce your pastry chef to an avocado oil I’ve started using.

Rochelle: *(To Dave, suspiciously)* Who is that?

Dave: Rochelle, meet Erin, our new head chef.

Rochelle: *(To Dave)* Our new head chef doesn’t believe in butter?!

Chevalier: God have mercy!

Rochelle: Do you believe in Julia Child?

Dave: All right, all right, calm down.

*Offstage, a horn beeps.*

Dave: Oh good, there’s Wesley. *(To Erin)* That’s our produce delivery. Follow me.

*Dave and Erin exit SL.*

Rochelle: *(To Chevalier)* Oh, if Wes asks for me, I’m not here.

Chevalier: What do you mean? Where are you?

Rochelle: At the dentist’s. In Bermuda. In a coma. I don’t care.
Chevalier throws his hands up in the air in resignation. Rochelle starts to exit SL, but runs straight into Wesley, who is holding a large box.

Wesley: Rochelle.

Chevalier: Ah, Wesley. Rochelle is not here.

Rochelle glares at Chevalier, who is obviously enjoying himself.

Rochelle: Good morning, Wesley. Now if you gentlemen don’t mind, I have a dessert to create.

Rochelle sweeps past Wesley and exits SL.

Chevalier: I did not know about the two of you.

Wesley: What?

He gives a bitter laugh and drops the box on the ground.

Wesley: There’s no "two of us." She said no.

Chevalier: Ah. Then please accept my sympathy. She is a lovely girl.

Wesley: Are you kidding? She’s heartless.

Chevalier: Our Rochelle? No…

Wesley: I’ve been at the farm every day, sun-up to sun-down, sweating years of my life away so I could offer her the kind of life she wants. She’s been flirting with me for a year and a half. I finally ask her out, and suddenly she has to "step back and focus on her job". And the next day she "steps back" into the arms of one of her baker boys.

Chevalier: She does not know what she wants.

Wesley: Oh, she knows exactly what she wants. But thanks. Is Bob around? He should have a check for me.

Chevalier: Fiona is in the office. Why don’t you go on back?

Wesley: Thanks. Hey-- the guys are unloading the rest, but that box is for Miss Pastry Chef’s illustrious dessert tonight. Make sure she gets it.

Chevalier: I will make sure. What did you bring her?

Wesley: (As he exits offstage right) Artichokes.

Dave enters with notepad and addresses Chevalier.
Dave: Team meeting time. Let's get everyone out here and get this thing started.

Chevalier: I will spread the word.

**Chevalier exits.**

Dave: All right, guys, hustle! Two hours to opening. Let's move!

Rochelle enters SL, followed by Anthony, whose electric guitar is still strapped around his shoulder. Suzy enters SR, followed by Chevalier.

Chevalier: Erin will be along presently. I invited her to taste in the kitchen.

Dave: All right, that's fine. So, here's what's happening in the meantime. Suzy's going to go over the menu—

**Dave is interrupted by Fiona and Wesley, who enter SR.**

Fiona: *(To Wesley)* I'll make sure Bob knows for next Friday to have that check ready. Unless of course you want to wait—

Wesley: I'll wait.

Fiona: It might be a few minutes.

Wesley: You forgot to pay me last time. And the time before that. I'll wait for the check today.

Fiona: Very well. If you insist— *(suddenly noticing Anthony)* Young man! This is totally unacceptable!

**Fiona crosses to Anthony. She painstakingly straightens his collar, completely ignoring the guitar on his chest.**

Anthony: *(Groaning)* Mo-ommm…

Erin enters from SR.

Erin: Delicioux! Merveilleux! Oh, wow! Those sauces are just divine, Dave, I mean, they're unlike anything I've ever tasted. And those petit fours! Parfait! *(Laughing at her own joke)* I mean literally, parfait! Perfect!

Rochelle: *(Aside)* Mmm-hmm. Too bad they're not on the menu tonight.

Erin: You're sure to receive the highest accolades.

Dave: Well, we couldn't do it without this team, right, guys? *(To Erin)* Let me walk you out and we'll be sure to let you know how it goes tonight. *(To
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staff as he exits) I'll be back in just a minute to finish our team meeting. Wes, can you stay for one second? I want to go over our menu options for next week.

Wesley: Are you going to pay me for this week’s menu options?

Dave and Erin exit.

Rochelle: (Mocking) Divine. Those sauces are just divine.

Suzy: (Mocking) Oooh! Petit fours! They're so per-fect! I mean, pur-ple!

Chevalier: Ladies! Please.

Rochelle: At least they're not—

She looks into the box that Wesley has brought her.

Rochelle: Artichokes? (To Wesley) You brought me artichokes? I said fresh fruit.

Wesley: They're fresh.

Rochelle: But this isn’t…what am I supposed to—

A fire alarm rings.

Suzy: Is that the fire alarm?

Rochelle: What's burning?

Suzy and Rochelle rush off to the kitchen, which is offstage right.

Chevalier: On today of all days.

Chevalier rushes off to the kitchen, which is offstage right.

Fiona: Well. If this place goes up in smoke, it's not taking my Chanel bag with it.

Fiona exits toward her office by way of the kitchen.

Anthony: I feel like we shouldn’t be running into the kitchen at a time like this.

Wesley: Is there really a fire? It's probably just a malfunction.

Anthony: Either way, I'd think running out of the building is the better option.

Suddenly, a shriek comes from the kitchen, followed by a clatter of utensils. Anthony and Wesley stare for a second, then bolt toward the kitchen.
The fire alarm stops.

Dave returns from SL.

Dave: What's going on in here? Where's—

He exits into the kitchen (SR).

Coughing and swatting the wafting smoke, Suzy and Rochelle enter from the kitchen.

Rochelle: (To Suzy) It's not a fire. Stop your screaming.

Suzy: Which of you amateurs burned a baguette?

Rochelle: You are the sous chef.

Suzy: I didn't put it in the oven.

Rochelle: Well, don't look at me.

Chevalier re-enters, followed by Anthony.

Chevalier: You know I do not touch any equipment without permission.

Anthony: I don't know how to work an oven.

Fiona re-enters, followed by Wesley.

Fiona: Well! That's quite enough excitement for today. I'm going to go lie down.

Wesley: Ma'am, I think you're forgetting something.

Fiona: Aren't you sweet, but my bag's right here. Safe and sound.

Wesley: Actually, I really need that check. Today.

Dave enters from the kitchen, holding a ladle.

Dave: Well, team. Consider that our initiation. Nice try, fire alarm, but we will not be defeated!

He raises his ladle in a dramatic flourish.

Dave: Vive Gout de Paris!

All: (With varying degrees of sincerity) Vive Gout de Paris!
Dave dips a finger in the ladle and raises it to his mouth. Suddenly, he begins sputtering and gagging.

Chevalier: Monsieur?

Dave: Sauce—is—

Suzy: *(Shocked)* Huh? Give me that.

She takes the ladle out of his hands, dips her finger in, and tastes it. She drops the ladle onto the floor.

Suzy: Holy smokes, that's disgusting. How—?

Dave stumbles toward the kitchen.

Dave: Water…! Water…! *(As he exits SR)* How much cinnamon did you use?

Suzy: There shouldn't be any cinnamon in that sauce.

Dave: *(Offstage)* And I suppose there isn't a cup of vinegar, either?

Suzy: Vinegar?

Dave: *(Offstage)* Is this mustard in the cherry curd?

Rochelle: What?!

Dave: *(Offstage)* This is inexcusable!

Dave re-enters carrying a different ladle.

Dave: And what on earth is this brown slop that tastes like pineapple?

Everyone remains frozen in place, as if bewildered.

Dave: Hold on. We've had an excellent reputation for nearly twenty years. We've won all kinds of local and national awards. Now what is going on here? These cannot be the same sauces Erin just tasted a few minutes ago.

Fiona: What are you saying?

Dave: I'm saying someone intentionally ruined the sauces.

Chevalier: It cannot be! Which sauces?

Dave: The béchamel, the bordelaise, the cherry curd, the mango-curry—all of them!
Rochelle: What? Who would do that?

Dave: Someone in this room!

Anthony, Suzy, Rochelle, Fiona, Chevalier, and Wesley stare at each other, shocked. Then everyone starts talking at once.

The following lines are spoken simultaneously and may be ad-libbed.

Anthony: Noooooo way. No way would I pull something like that. That's way too obvious.

Suzy: Come on. My career is on the line here. None of us would do anything that stupid.

Rochelle: You really think I would sabotage my own cherry curd? The cherry curd you're not even using tonight? Dream on.

Fiona: Are you out of your mind? You'd better not be considering me in this. I'd like to think I've earned some respect around here.

Chevalier: Je n'ai rien fait! You must not accuse me of such horrible things. Take a minute, we will sort all of this out.

Wesley: Whoa, time to get out of here. Hold on, really? You don't really think I would go in your kitchen and put stuff in your food, right?

Dave: (Yelling above the noise) All right, all right! Everyone listen up.

Silence.

Dave: There's no time and no tolerance for this kind of garbage. We have an esteemed guest coming tonight and we open in less than two hours. That gives us approximately two seconds to figure out who's pulling this and to get that person out of our kitchen. The six of you were the only ones who had access to the kitchen from the time that Erin tasted the sauces until I tasted them. So, who did it?

Silence.

Dave: I said, who did it?

Silence.

Dave flings his notepad onto the floor.

Dave: All right. Then we're going to do this the hard way. No one's going anywhere until we get the truth.
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Lights down.

ACT 2

Lights up. Dave, Anthony, Suzy, Rochelle, Chevalier, Fiona, and Wesley are standing in the same positions as at the end of Act 1.

Fiona walks quickly to Dave, grabs hold of his arm, and starts to lead him DSR.

Fiona: Please don’t find me presumptuous, David, but I think we need to talk.

David: Yes, Ms. Beckett, with all due respect, we do. And right now.

Fiona: (Shocked) Why, David. Don’t tell me you think— (hushed) don’t tell me you think that Anthony did it?

David: I’m not drawing any conclusions until I hear from everyone.

Fiona: Anthony’s a good boy. Sometimes he lacks a little ambition, but he’ll grow out of that.

David: Ms. Beckett—

Fiona: Beneath all that rock-star paraphernalia, he has a real entrepreneurial mind!

David: I’m sure he does, but—

Fiona: Sure, there have been issues—the whipped cream in the shoes, and of course that experiment with the vanilla extract. But for heaven’s sake, he’s not a criminal!

David: I’m not calling anyone a criminal. I just want to know what happened.

Fiona: Well, if you want to know about Anthony, talk to Anthony!

David: I will. But right now, I want to talk to you about you.

Fiona: Ex-cuse me?

David: I wasn’t in here when the alarm went off. I don’t know what happened. Can you tell me?

Fiona: The alarm went off. Everyone went outside.

David: But that’s just it. No one went outside.

Fiona: What?
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Dave: Erin and I were outside when the alarm went off, and no one else came out. I didn’t know what was going on until I came back in.

Anthony: You came back IN? Was that the best—

Dave: Well, no one came out, so I figured it was a malfunction.

Fiona: Listen, I wasn’t paying attention to who went where. All I know is that I followed standard procedure. I made sure everyone was safe. I found the code to reset the alarm. Then I called the fire department. Then I called Bob. Then I grabbed my bag and came out here.

Dave: And you didn’t see anyone in the kitchen?

Fiona: I was in the office. Not the kitchen.

Dave: You have to go through the kitchen to get to your office.

Fiona: Well, I walked through, I didn’t stay in. It was smoky and hard to see.

Dave: But you saw enough to understand that everyone was safe.

Fiona: Exactly what makes you think I would try to ruin tonight? I own this place.

Chevalier suddenly begins to laugh as if a thought has just occurred to him.

Fiona: And what are you laughing at?

Chevalier: Je suis désolé, Madame, I am sorry. It seemed so funny just now.

Fiona: What seemed funny?

Chevalier: You were so upset that you and Bob never took vacation. How funny if you were to spoil the food, lose the restaurant, and, voila! You have vacation!

Chevalier laughs again, then breaks off as he realizes he is being taken seriously.

Suzy: I don’t think that’s funny.

Fiona: I don’t, either. And I expect an apology.

Chevalier: I am sorry, Madame. Truly, I was not thinking.

Anthony steps forward and slings an arm around Fiona, who does not respond.

Anthony: Come on, people, leave her be. Haven’t you heard, “If Mama ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy”?
Dave: Haven't you heard, "When the food's bad, the chef gets really ticked off"?

*Anthony stares blankly. He drops his arm.*

Anthony: Let's work on that one. How about, "when the food's bad, the chef gets mad"? Rhymes, rolls off the tongue better. Hold on, let me get my guitar.

Dave: You don't understand how serious this is, do you?

Anthony: No, really, I get it. I just don't think it's smart to question the owners.

Dave: Tell me where you were when the alarm went off. Why didn't you go outside?

Anthony: You said to stay put for the team meeting.

Dave: That's protocol, Anthony. You hear the fire alarm, you get out.

Rochelle: That's common sense, Anthony. You hear the fire alarm, you get out.

Anthony: Okay. Next time, I'll get out.

Rochelle: Besides. It makes you look less suspicious if you're the one who set off the alarm.

Dave: *(To Rochelle)* Did you see Anthony set off the alarm?

Rochelle: No. He's just always doing stuff like that. It wouldn't surprise me.

Anthony: Really? Way to throw me under the bus.

Dave: Anthony, she has a point. If this was someone's idea of a practical joke, well, there's only one practical joker around here.

Anthony: But this isn't a practical joke. This is more like sabotage.

Dave: Anthony, I'm going to ask you a very simple question. Did you set off the alarm?

Anthony: No.

Suzy: Did you burn the baguette so that the alarm would go off?

Anthony: No.

Dave: No?

Anthony: No.
Dave: All right. Did you tamper with the sauces?

Anthony: No.

Dave: No?

Anthony: No.

Suzy: Wait a minute. You’re not going to believe him, are you? Anthony, how about you tell Dave about your “Mexican coffee”?

Anthony: (After a very brief pause) No.

Suzy: Not only is Anthony the house clown, but he specializes in messing with food.

Anthony: Aw, come on. I was just trying to get you to lighten up a little.

Suzy: I rest my case.


Suzy is horrified and opens her mouth as to protest. Anthony cuts her off.

Anthony: But I didn’t touch those sauce pots. Wesley can back me up, we ran into the kitchen together when we heard Suzy scream.

Wesley: Whoa, hold on, dude. I don’t know what you were doing when you ran into the kitchen.

Anthony: I was right next to you.

Wesley: Actually, once we got in there, you weren’t.

Anthony: Well, where did you go?

Wesley: Are you questioning me? I don’t even work here!

Dave: It has nothing to do with who works where. It has everything to do with who was inside the building when the alarm went off.

Wesley: Let’s think this through, okay? I work for a farm. We sell produce. You buy produce from my farm. Why on God’s organic green earth would I want to ruin your food with my produce in it?

Dave: Thanks, Wesley, but actually, I did pass Economics 101.

Wesley: Okay, great. Can I go now?
Wesley: (Hands up in surrender) I heard a scream. I ran into the kitchen to check on the ladies. Cause I’m that kind of guy, all right?

Dave: And then you came right back out?

Wesley: No, then I went to the office to see if Fiona had my check ready. Do you have any intention of paying me this month? Cause I have plenty of other clients who are willing to pay.

Dave: Our accountant has been on vacation—

Fiona: Everyone seems to be on vacation except—

Wesley: You want to know the last time I took vacation? Let’s think about this. Has there been a Wednesday in the past five years that I haven’t been here with your order?

Dave: All right, I apologize. I’ll talk to Bob later and we’ll get this figured out.

Wesley: All I ask for is an honest living and honest pay. If that’s not possible on your end of things, I’m going to rethink our partnership.

Anthony: You know, that sounds like a threat.

Wesley: A threat?

Anthony: Maybe while you were in the kitchen, you decided to show us what would happen if we double-crossed you.

Wesley: Are you insane?

Anthony: It could happen.

Chevalier: And, there is another reason for your anger. But…

Wesley: But what?

Chevalier: This is a sensitive matter, Monsieur. I did not think you wanted it spoken of in public.

Rochelle: You mean me?

Suzy: Oh, everyone knows about that.

Chevalier: All right then. Perhaps you would like to see this woman humiliated.

Wesley: She humiliated me.
Rochelle: *(Indicating the box of artichokes)* And now it's my turn?
Wesley: I didn't say that.
Rochelle: Then what are these?


*Anthony holds up his hand for a high-five. Wesley gives him an "are you crazy?" look and he drops it.*

Rochelle: I never thought you'd go this far. You'd ruin the restaurant, destroy my reputation, just because I chose—


Rochelle: Yes! He eats meat. And sugar. Your organic-vegan-"I can't eat carbs or sugar or butter" diet doesn't work for me. It doesn't work for us!

Wesley: So, I care about what I put into my body. So, what? You have to date the cookie monster?

Rochelle: You'd ruin my reputation because I decided to date a baker? I'm a pastry chef, Wes. A pastry chef!

Wesley: Okay. Okay. I'm angry. But I wouldn't ruin your career.

Rochelle: Artichokes?!

Wesley: They were the freshest thing we had.

*Dave's cell phone rings.*

Dave: *(Frustrated as he looks at his phone)* Great.

*He answers his phone.*

Dave: Hello, Sir. Can you hang on a moment?

*He puts his hand over the phone.*

Dave: *(To the staff)* It's Bob. He wants to know how everything is coming for tonight. What am I supposed to tell him?!

Fiona: Tell him to take a vacation.

Anthony: Dinner's ruined. Fitzgerald is gonna hate us. He can sell the restaurant and donate to his son's starving artist's guitar fund.
Rochelle: Oh, right. Cause the angry pesto people are going to save the world. 'Basil fields forever.'

Wesley: Tell him to get here early. He doesn’t want to miss the pastry chef’s new signature dessert. Artichoke brûlée.

Dave: Enough! I’m going to take this call and then we’re going to pick up right where we left off. No one go anywhere!

Lights down.

ACT 3

Lights up.

All characters are standing in the same positions as they were at the end of Act 2.

Dave enters.

Suzy: What did you tell Bob?

Dave: That preparations are going…fine.


Dave: The kitchen staff arrived during our break. I told them to start working on a new batch of everything, as much as we have time for. Then Suzy and I might be able to salvage the meal into something presentable.

Rochelle: You and Suzy? So, you don’t think she did it.

Dave: I see no reason why Suzy would ruin a meal that was going to gain her the highest esteem—

Rochelle: So, she could stay on as your sous chef forever? You know she was blindsided when you brought in little miss L.A.

Suzy: This is not the time—

Rochelle: I think it’s the perfect time to discuss the fact that you assumed you would be Goût de Paris’ newest head chef.

Dave: What? Suzy, what is she talking about?

Suzy: Okay. That’s true. I mean, come on, Dave, I’ve done my time here. What more do I have to do to earn a little respect and a decent promotion?

Chevalier: We are talking about Goût de Paris! The best French cuisine in town. You cannot be head chef!
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Suzy: And why not?

Chevalier: You have no idea how to cook true French cuisine. You just know this “French fusion”. What does that even mean?

Dave: Chev—

Chevalier: *(Voice rising)* I’ll tell you what it means! It means not French. It means not authentic! It means no taste! Goût de Paris. Do you even know what that means?

Dave: Chev—

Chevalier: It means "taste of Paris!" Taste of Paris! And we have a sous chef who wants to fusion the taste out of our restaurant. No, you could not be head chef. Not with your ‘fruit-forward’, ‘let’s go green’, trendy palette—

Suzy: Excuse me? There is nothing wrong with my palette.

Rochelle: Except that sometimes you can’t tell when Anthony’s spiced up your coffee.

Suzy: Maybe that’s because I’m focused on what actually matters around here. Come on! Am I really the only one who thinks Rochelle did this?

Rochelle: Me? Why would I want to ruin my own cherry curd? It’s made me famous.

Suzy: But your famous little dessert wasn’t going to be featured tonight.

Rochelle: And that was your decision!

Suzy: Dave and I—

Rochelle: Dave told me he agreed to take it off the menu at your suggestion. You didn’t want to be upstaged. You were afraid your sauces weren’t going to be able to compete with my desserts. Well, at least now they don’t.

Suzy: Exactly! Since you weren’t going to win any awards, maybe you thought no one else should, either.

Rochelle: That’s ridiculous!

Suzy: Is it?

Dave: All right. I get it. We really can’t rule anyone out.

Chevalier: At least we know I did not do it.
Dave: I don't know. That was a pretty passionate speech back there.

Chevalier: Speech? What speech?

Anthony: The one about French fusion…remember?

Dave: You're upset with the direction our restaurant is headed.

Chevalier: I would never—

Dave: Upset enough to influence a critic who'd be sure to remark on our "updated" French cuisine?

Chevalier: "Updated" French! I ask you again, what is this updated French? And why would anyone choose to eat it?

Dave: So, you admit—

Chevalier: I admit I hate this French fusion! It is my opinion. Is that so wrong?

Fiona: I don't have time for this. You think that one of the six of us committed this heinous crime. We get it. But we're at a standstill.

Wesley: She's right. There were only six of us in the building when the sauces were ruined, and you've questioned all of us.

*The following begins the optional scene. If you decide not to use this scene, proceed to "Dave addresses the audience" cue.*

Dave: You were the only six who had access to the kitchen. But actually, you weren't the only ones in the building.

Chevalier: What? Who else is here?

Dave: Well, I was afraid I would have to do this.

Anthony: Do what?

Dave: Let you in on the secret. I invited some lunch guests to test our food before the big night tonight.


Dave: They're right here, in the main room. *(To the back of the room):* Could you turn the lights up? *(Directly to the audience)* I'm afraid I'm going to need your help.

Chevalier: Zut alors! How could we have missed them?
Rochelle: They’ve been here the whole time?

Suzy: *(To Rochelle)* Afraid they saw something they shouldn’t have?

Rochelle: I have nothing to hide.

Dave: *(To the audience)* I’m afraid I’m going to need your help. You’ve been here the whole time, before and after the incident in question. Maybe you could help me come up with some questions that we need answered.

Fiona: This is outrageous! Watching us the whole time? *(Aside to Anthony, smoothing her hair)* Do you think this will be on TV? I need a stylist if I’m going to be on News Channel 9! *(To Dave, dramatically)* I want a lawyer.

Wesley: Really? Why not just admit you’re guilty now?

Fiona: I can’t go on without a lawyer!

Dave: Fine. *(To audience)* Is there a lawyer out there who can give Fiona some legal advice?

Lawyer: I’m a lawyer.

Dave: *(Goes over to audience member’s table)* Thank you so much for being willing to help. This is kind of embarrassing.

Lawyer: That’s all right. At least the food was good.

Chevalier: I’ll be sure to tell the chef.

Dave: I am the chef and he [she] just did.

Chevalier: Of course.

Dave: *(To Lawyer)* What advice can you give Ms. Beckett?

Lawyer: I’ll need to speak with my client privately.

Fiona goes over to Lawyer’s table.

Lawyer: *(To Fiona)* Did you do it?

Fiona: Of course not.

Lawyer: Because as the owner of this establishment, you do have a legal right to determine what goes into the food. If you did it, we don’t really have a case. What are they going to do? Fire you?
Fiona: I'm the owner.

Lawyer: Exactly. If you want to sabotage your own restaurant, you have every legal right to do that.

Fiona: I didn't do it.

Lawyer: All I'm saying is, if you did, you wouldn't need me.

Fiona: Okay. But if News Channel 9 walks in, could you be ready to stand next to me and look important?

Lawyer: Sure. And Fiona—

Fiona: Yes?

Lawyer: I'll have my office invoice you at the hourly rate.

Fiona clearly upset, returns to CS with the other suspects.

Chevalier: Excuse me, but I just heard the back-door open. Perhaps I should go see if there is one more delivery—

Dave: Oh no.

Rochelle: What is it?

Dave: It's not another delivery. It's—

Bob stands.

Bob: What is going on here?

Anthony: Dad?

Fiona: Sweetheart! What are you doing here?

Bob: I own this place, remember? (To Dave) Everything's fine? Why is my staff standing around when tonight is the biggest night of—

Chevalier: Sir, allow me to explain.

Anthony: Someone tried to sabotage—

Wesley: —and when he says "someone", he is most likely referring to himself.

Fiona: Dinner is ruined.
"Everyone’s a Critic"

Rochelle: Our reputation is trashed and our jobs are hanging in the balance all because—

Suzy: —someone was upset that the purple things were taken off the dessert menu.

Rochelle: Cherry-amaretto petit fours, and they happen to be one of Bob's favorites.

They all look at Bob.

Bob: So, you're all standing around, wasting time, because I like Rochelle's dessert?

Chevalier: As I was saying, someone has tried to sabotage Fitzgerald's dining experience with us tonight. We are just on the brink of discovering who may have done this.

Bob: Well, hurry up. I'll be in my office, ready to fire whoever it is that has caused this colossal waste of time.

Wesley: Unless of course it's the boss' son.

Suzy: Or wife.

Bob: Excuse me?

Suzy and Wesley: Nothing.

Bob: (To Dave) Let me know once everything is figured out.

Dave: Yes, Sir.

Bob sits back down.

Dave: All right. We have to figure this out, and I mean now. (To the audience) It's time for your questions. I'm sure there are things I missed. Perhaps you can help me fill in the gaps.

Depending on time, Dave takes audience questions. The actors improvise their answers.

Dave: Thank you all so much for your input. This has been very enlightening.

Anthony: This is taking forever. Can't we at least take a coffee break?

Suzy: Fitzgerald is going to be here— (she looks at her watch) in half an hour. How am I supposed to fix—
Dave: You're right. We've spent enough time playing around. It's time to find out who really did this.

End of Optional Scene.

Dave addresses the audience.

Dave: I need your help. You've heard all of the testimonies. Now, I want you to write down who you think the culprit is and hand the paper to me. [optional: “...and put the paper in the ballot box on your table”]

Chevalier: We are leaving the fate of our restaurant in the hands of amateurs?

Rochelle: We're not leaving our fate in the hands of anyone. It's clear who caused this catastrophe.

Suzy: Who? You?

Wesley: Doesn't this seem a little risky?

Anthony: Only if you don't have charisma. (Referring to the audience) They like me. I don't have anything to worry about.

Fiona: We don't have anything to worry about at all, Anthony. You heard my lawyer, we have every right to mess with our food.

All characters look at her.

Fiona: Not that we did!

Dave: All right. Let's meet back here in just a few minutes and discuss our conclusions.
ACT 4

Scene/Fiona Ending #1

Buzzer/doorbell sounds. Enter Delivery Woman.

Delivery Woman: Anyone here? I'm looking for a Fiona Beckett…

Fiona quickly enters.

Delivery Woman: (Reading off a clipboard) I have an order here for six leatherback power recline facial tables, color cucumber, for Ms. Fiona Beckett, owner of Uptown Day Spa at 1100 West Main Street.

Fiona: What?!

Delivery Woman hands Fiona a delivery slip.

Delivery Woman: This is 1100 West Main Street. Is this Uptown Day Spa?

Fiona: No! I post-dated the delivery. You're supposed to be here two months from today! Now you can turn right around and-

Delivery Woman: No returns. When you order from Spa Outlet, all sales are final. (As if reciting) If you want to cancel your order, we can deliver six leatherback power recline facial tables, color white, in two months. Unfortunately, these cucumber tables are on back-order. If you cancel, the outlet has to sell them—

Fiona: No! No, I have to have cucumber! Just…let me think.

Delivery Woman: Hey, didn’t this place used to be Goût de Paris? I loved that place! What happened to—

Fiona: Nothing! Nothing happened. Nothing at all.

Delivery Woman: (suddenly understanding) Ri-ight.

Fiona: Are you sure you can’t bring them back to storage? I can call your superiors. Or we can…

Fiona slips what appears to be a very large wad of cash into Delivery Woman’s hand.

Fiona: Will this do?

Delivery Woman: There’s a corner in the warehouse where I could probably fit these. Of course, there’s a leak in the ceiling there, and sometimes we get mildew.
Fiona reaches into her pocket and produces more cash.

Fiona: How about this?

Delivery Woman: And sometimes mold spores. It’s a good thing these chairs are already green.

Fiona reaches into her pocket one more time.

Fiona: This is all the green you’re getting. Now get out of my spa! I mean, restaurant!

Dave enters, looking confused.

Dave: Hey, Fiona, there’s a bunch of green recliners in front of the restaurant. You think they got us mixed up with that dentist’s office again?

Fiona: (flustered) Oh, that’s what happened! Yes, I was just having this very nice lady take the chairs away—

Dave approaches and looks over Fiona’s shoulder at the delivery slip in her hand.

Dave: Uptown Day Spa?

Delivery Woman: The owner here was just telling me you might offer free massages for preferred customers.

Fiona: Wait a minute! I never said—

Dave: The owner? (He stares at Fiona) The owner of Uptown Day Spa?

Fiona: I just… I just—

Dave: You’re opening a spa??

Fiona: I just… need a vacation! And if we’re never going to go on one, then I’m taking the money from the restaurant and opening a spa that I can go to every day! And if I have to ruin a little sauce to do that, then so be it!

Delivery Woman: You know—I’m gonna go. I’ll be back for that massage. (She exits)

Dave: It was YOU?

Anthony, Suzy (with a coffee mug), Rochelle, Chevalier, and Wesley enter. They react silently.

Fiona: I wouldn’t say I— I mean—
**Fiona** covers her face and suddenly breaks into sobs.

**Fiona:** *(Between dramatic wails and hiccups)* Yes! I did it. I hate this place. I’m done wasting my life here. I want it shut down forever! I’ve been so miserable!

**Dave:** And you thought ruining our food would fix things?

**Fiona** opens her mouth as if to say something, then breaks back into sobs. **Anthony** pats her back clumsily.

**Dave:** Fiona. Your money is your business. But…have you ever thought about opening a spa somewhere else? You know, that lot down the block has been open for a while. Maybe you could buy the space and still be in walking distance for lunch.

**Fiona** stops crying.

**Dave:** And if Fitzgerald were to give us a good review…

**Fiona:** …we’d have more than enough to splurge! We can buy the lot and— *(suddenly sheepish)* But…is there enough time to fix everything? I’ve messed up all the food…

**Fiona** looks as if she is about to start crying again—**Dave** jumps in hurriedly.

**Dave:** I don’t know, Fiona. But we can try.

**Fiona:** I’m sorry. I really am.

**Dave:** And I’m starting to realize, there’s more that needs fixing around here than just those sauces. We need to make some changes. Whatever it takes for us to actually be a team and stop being… well… *critics*.

**Rochelle:** I hear you. Maybe I don’t get enough credit around here sometimes. But I could be a little nicer.

**Suzy:** Yeah, you could.

Everyone looks at **Suzy.** She smiles reluctantly.

**Suzy:** But I could, too.

**Chevalier:** And I should not have yelled. I am sorry, Sir.

**Anthony:** Me too. For the whipped cream, the vanilla thing, the phone pranks. And…you know, everything else.

*He takes Suzy’s coffee mug.*
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Anthony: Believe me, you don’t want to drink that. Sorry.

Wesley: I guess I wasn’t all that helpful either, bringing the artichokes. I should go get you something else.

Rochelle: Actually, I’ve got a killer artichoke ice cream going. But thanks anyways.

Dave: We’ve got some very serious things to address. But we’ve also got Mr. Fitzgerald five minutes out. If we’re done with the apologies…

A door slams and Erin runs in.

Erin: Oh, guys, I am SO SORRY! I was tasting your food and I threw a baguette in the oven and I totally forgot--

Each character reacts accordingly.

Dave: Erin, I think Suzy’s going to have to train you on the oven.

Erin: I’m…I’m okay with that.

Dave: All right, everyone. Chevalier, is the house ready?

Chevalier: Oui, Monsieur.

Chevalier bows and walks DSR.

Dave: Suzy, your cooks are good to go?

Suzy: On the line.

Suzy salutes and exits SR.

Dave: Rochelle?

Rochelle: Let’s do this.

Rochelle exits SL.

Dave: Anthony?

Anthony: Clean shirt and everything.

Anthony exits DSR (into the audience).

Dave: (To Fiona and Wesley) Wish us luck.

Fiona: Truthfully, I don’t think you’ll need it. But good luck.
Wesley: Good luck! Save me some artichoke ice cream...if there's any left.

Erin, Fiona and Wesley exit SL. Dave remains on stage, watching Chevalier.

Chevalier: (Addressing an unseen person toward the back of the audience) Good evening, Monsieur, and welcome to Goût de Paris. Your table is ready.

Lights down.

Lights up. Characters bow CS.

Chevalier: Now we have one final “special”

Suzy: That you should understand:

Dave: When you come to our restaurant,

Fiona: Your vote is our command.

Erin: So, if tomorrow you should think

Rochelle: The ending needs a change,

Wesley: Please come back and vote again,

Anthony: And we will rearrange.

Delivery Woman: And each of us will play the role

Chevalier: For which we were designed

Suzy: Pressing toward our common goal

Dave: With common heart and mind.

All: Thank you! Good night!
Scene/Wesley Ending #2

_Callie_ enters DSL carrying a large box full of plants and herbs. _Wesley_ enters SR and hurries over to her.

_Callie:_ Hey, Wes! _In a conspiratorial stage whisper_ How did Phase 1 go?

_Wesley:_ Easier than we thought. A lot easier. But I'm not sure we should—

_Callie:_ Oh, this is going to be so much fun. You know, any guy can get back at a girl. It takes a real MAN to get back at a girl using fresh herbs.

_Callie_ drops her box to the ground and begins sorting the plants.

_Callie:_ Nobody breaks my big brother's heart and gets away with it.

_Wesley:_ Thanks, Cal. I'm just thinking maybe...

_Callie:_ On to Phase 2—tweaking the food with secret messages for Rochelle.

_Wesley:_ Secret messages?

_Callie:_ Sure! You know how, way back, couples could tell each other things by sending the other person certain herbs and flowers and stuff?

_Wesley:_ (Weakly) Right. About that—

_Callie:_ We have all these things on the farm. First, yarrow. _Gleefully_ We'll make a tea out of it and pour it in the soup.

_Wesley:_ Yarrow?

_Callie:_ Of course. Yarrow signifies you are declaring war. And it tastes bad. Here's nettles we can cook up with any green leafy vegetable. _Pulling out each plant as she mentions it_ Nettle stand for cruelty and slander... who does that remind you of? Here's rue we can sprinkle on fish or steak or something like that. Rue means regret and disdain. Oh, and here's the best one. I dug up some coltsfoot which means "you will get what you deserve." Ha! Then there's fennel for flattery, mustard greens for—

_Wesley:_ Hold on, Callie, hold on. This is too much.

_Callie:_ Too much? Really? _Completely straight-faced_ I didn't bring any hemlock.

_Wesley:_ Hemlock?!
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Callie: She broke your heart! She threw it on the ground and stomped it into a thousand pieces! This girl needs to pay! And this restaurant needs to pay us! How much profit have we lost from them in the past month? No more of this "good faith" stuff!

Wesley: Well, they’re not going to pay us if they end up with yarrow soup.

Callie: They should be so lucky. It promotes healthy perspiration.

Rochelle enters. **Callie** picks up the yarrow and shakes it menacingly in **Rochelle’s** direction.

Wesley: Rochelle, you remember my sister.

Rochelle: Um…hi, Callie. *(To Wesley)* Is she trying to tell me something?

Wesley: She’s experimenting with a new language.

Callie: Actually, an old language. The language of herbs!

**Callie** takes a step toward **Rochelle** and shakes the yarrow even closer to her face. **Rochelle recoils.**

Callie: And you know what this means? This means WAR!

**Rochelle shrieks. Dave enters.**

Dave: What’s going on out here?

Rochelle: This crazy herb-woman is trying to kill me!

Callie: I’m really not. Like I told Wesley, I didn’t bring hemlock.

Wesley: I…I can explain. *(Reluctantly)* I did it. I ruined the food.

Dave: It was YOU?

**Chevalier, Suzy (with a coffee mug), Anthony, and Fiona enter. They, and Rochelle, react silently.**

Wesley: It was a stupid idea. *(To Rochelle)* I felt like I’d lost something, and I wanted you to lose something, too. And then it didn’t matter that we’d lose your business, ’cause we were going to cancel services anyways. Since you defaulted on payment.

Dave: We’ll get right on that.

Wesley: I’m sorry. I really wasn’t thinking of anyone but myself. I hope you guys can forgive me.
"Everyone's a Critic"

Callie: (To Wesley) You’re apologizing?
Wesley: Yes, Callie. I’m apologizing. We were wrong.
Callie: (Through clenched teeth) You don’t apologize with yarrow.

Rochelle: Oh, is that what this is? I love yarrow tea!

*Callie makes a frustrated sound and stomps out.*

Wesley: I’m sorry. I really am.
Dave: And I’m starting to realize, there’s more that needs fixing around here than just those sauces. We need to make some changes. Whatever it takes for us to actually be a team and stop being… well… critics.

Rochelle: I hear you. Maybe I don’t get enough credit around here sometimes. But I could be a little nicer.

Suzy: Yeah, you could.

*Everyone looks at Suzy. She smiles reluctantly.*

Suzy: But I could, too.
Chevalier: And I should not have yelled. I am sorry, Sir.

*Anthony: Me too. For the whipped cream, the vanilla thing, the phone pranks. And, you know, everything else.*

*He takes Suzy’s coffee mug.*

Anthony: Believe me, you don’t want to drink that. Sorry.

Fiona: I’m sorry, Dave. You’ve worked hard to build a team atmosphere and I haven’t helped.

Wesley: I guess I wasn’t all that helpful either, bringing the artichokes. I should go get you something else.

Rochelle: Actually, I’ve got a killer artichoke ice cream going. But thanks anyway.

Dave: We’ve got some very serious things to address. But we’ve also got Mr. Fitzgerald five minutes out. If we’re done with the apologies—

*A door slams and Erin runs in.*

Erin: Oh, guys, I am so sorry! I was tasting your food and I threw a baguette in the oven and I totally forgot—
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Each character reacts accordingly.

Dave: Erin, I think Suzy’s going to have to train you on the oven.
Erin: I’m…I’m okay with that.
Dave: All right, everyone. Chevalier, is the house ready?
Chevalier: Oui, Monsieur.

Chevalier bows and walks DSR.

Dave: Suzy, your cooks are good to go?
Suzy: On the line.
Suzy salutes and exits SR.
Dave: Rochelle?
Rochelle: Let’s do this.
Rochelle exits SL.

Dave: Anthony?
Anthony: Clean shirt and everything.

Anthony exits DSR into the audience.

Dave: (To Fiona and Wesley) Wish us luck.
Fiona: Truthfully, I don’t think you’ll need it. But good luck.
Wesley: Good luck! Save me some artichoke ice cream…if there’s any left.

Erin, Fiona and Wesley exit SL. Dave remains on stage, watching Chevalier.

Chevalier: (Addressing an unseen person toward the back of the audience) Good evening, Monsieur, and welcome to Goût de Paris. Your table is ready.

Lights down.

Lights up; characters bow CS.

Chevalier: Now we have one final "special"
Suzy: That you should understand:
Dave: When you come to our restaurant,
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Fiona: Your vote is our command.
Erin: So, if tomorrow you should think
Rochelle: The ending needs a change,
Wesley: Please come back and vote again,
Anthony: And we will rearrange.
Callie: And each of us will play the role
Chevalier: For which we were designed
Suzy: Pressing toward our common goal
Dave: With common heart and mind.
All: Thank you! Good night!
Scene / Rochelle Ending #3


Journalist:  *(Loudly and fast)* Rochelle! Hi! I'm Donna with the Post. It's so wonderful to meet you. I'm a HUGE fan of your work.

Rochelle:  Um, thanks…

Journalist:  *(Still very loudly and fast)* I've been following you ever since I was studying in Germany. Did you know that? I went into this bakery and had this *Bienenstich* which was absolutely out of this world. So naturally I HAD to know who made it, and they told me it was an apprentice named Rochelle Lintz. So, I said, that chef is going to make a name for herself, and when she does, I'm going to be there to announce her to the world! And now, look at us! It's really happening RIGHT NOW!

Rochelle:  Um. Why don't we go somewhere a little…quieter?

Journalist:  Oh, of course! I understand completely. We don't want anyone else in this article, just Chef Lintz! Chef Lintz, who'll be able to get any job she wants after this hits the press!

Rochelle:  Really, I'm flattered…

Journalist:  And so, modest, look at you! So, here's where I'm going with this piece. This gem, this diamond in the rough, just buried in this mediocre restaurant where she's completely misunderstood and her talents are quite squandered.

Rochelle:  Don't you think "mediocre" is a little harsh?

Journalist:  What? From what you told me, it sounds like "mediocre" is going to be a stretch after Fitzgerald gets done here. You said the food was sure to embarrass everyone!

Rochelle:  Oh. Right.

Journalist:  That's the whole point. Fitzgerald comes out and blasts this place to the ground, but we run this story first about how your bakery is the only thing that's keeping Goût de Paris alive. Then you become a hero!

Rochelle:  *(Weakly)* I'm a hero, all right.

Journalist:  That's the spirit! And I'm totally going to be famous! Errr…I mean, totally going to make YOU famous!

Rochelle:  Right.

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“Everyone's a Critic”

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Journalist: One thing I know I’m going to feature is that cherry curd I keep hearing about. I’ll need a picture and of course a sample. Why don’t we start there?

Rochelle: (Fumbling) Um…well, usually we have that cherry curd. But today, we’re, um, out of it because…I mean, we’re changing the menu… Right! We’re out of it because they're changing the menu for Fitzgerald! And you know, once you're out, you're out…

Pause.

Journalist: You know, I’m a reporter. I always know when someone’s hiding something.

Rochelle: You…do?

Journalist: Of course. And I know…that this restaurant has been hiding YOU! A food critic is coming and they don’t even have your signature dessert on hand? They deserve to be out of business! Good riddance!

*Wesley and Dave enter suddenly SR. Dave is lugging a garbage bag that looks full and heavy. They do not notice Rochelle.*

Wesley: Seriously? Six quarts of cherry curd, you’re throwing out? Do you have any idea how many pounds of cherries—?

Dave: It was beyond saving. And don't you talk to me about waste. It makes me sick.

Wesley: You could at least compost…

*Wesley and Dave continue walking SL. Journalist stares at Rochelle in disbelief.*

Rochelle: Okay, stop! I admit it. I’m not a hero. I’m a horrible person. I set this whole thing up.

Journalist: What? What did you do?

Dave and Wesley stop in their tracks and stare.

Rochelle: I made sure the food tasted horrible. It was all me.

Dave: It was YOU?

Enter *Suzy (with a coffee mug), Fiona, Anthony, and Chevalier.*

Journalist: Wait a minute. *(Whipping out a recording device)* What did you do?
Rochelle: I messed with Suzy’s sauces. I had to ruin mine, too, so it didn’t look like it was me. *(To Suzy)* You took my specialty off the menu tonight. I thought if I could at least get some recognition, and maybe if you got taken down a few notches… It was a stupid idea and I shouldn’t have done it.

*There is a brief pause.*

Journalist: Okay, so how about we spin it this way? “Pastry Chef Martyr Falls on Her Cherry Pitter For the Sake of Struggling Restaurant…”

Rochelle: No story today, Donna. I’m sorry I wasted your time.

Journalist: *(Turning off her device, annoyed)* And your cherry curd. You wasted my time AND the cherry curd! This day has been an absolute disaster.

Journalist exits.

Rochelle: I’m sorry. I really am.

Dave: And I’m starting to realize, there’s more that needs fixing around here than just those sauces. We need to make some changes. Whatever it takes for us to actually be a team and stop being…well…critics.

Rochelle: I hear you. Maybe I don’t get enough credit around here sometimes…but I could be a little nicer.

Suzy: Yeah, you could.

*Everyone looks at Suzy. She smiles reluctantly.*

Suzy: But I could, too.

Chevalier: And I should not have yelled. I am sorry, Sir.

Anthony: Me too. For the whipped cream, the vanilla thing, the phone pranks. And…you know, everything else.

He takes Suzy’s coffee mug.

Anthony: Believe me, you don’t want to drink that. Sorry.

Fiona: I’m sorry, Dave. You’ve worked hard to build a team atmosphere and I haven’t helped.

Wesley: I guess I wasn’t all that helpful either, bringing the artichokes. I should go get you something else.
Rochelle: Actually, I’ve got a killer artichoke ice cream going. But thanks anyway.

Dave: We’ve got some very serious things to address. But we’ve also got Mr. Fitzgerald five minutes out. If we’re done with the apologies—

A door slams and Erin runs in.

Erin: Oh, guys, I am so sorry! I was tasting your food and I threw a baguette in the oven and I totally forgot—

Each character reacts accordingly.

Dave: Erin, I think Suzy’s going to have to train you on the oven.

Erin: I’m…I’m okay with that.

Dave: All right, everyone. Chevalier, is the house ready?

Chevalier: Oui, Monsieur.

Chevalier bows and walks DSR.

Dave: Suzy, your cooks are good to go?

Suzy: On the line.

Suzy salutes and exits SR.

Dave: Rochelle?

Rochelle: Let’s do this.

Rochelle exits SL.

Dave: Anthony?

Anthony: Clean shirt and everything.

Anthony exits DSR (into the audience).

Dave: (To Fiona and Wesley) Wish us luck.

Fiona: Truthfully, I don’t think you’ll need it. But good luck.

Wesley: Good luck! Save me some artichoke ice cream…if there’s any left.

Erin, Fiona and Wesley exit SL. Dave remains on stage, watching Chevalier.
Chevalier: (Addressing an unseen person toward the back of the audience) Good evening, Monsieur, and welcome to Goût de Paris. Your table is ready.

Lights down.

Lights up; characters bow CS.

Chevalier: Now we have one final "special"

Suzy: That you should understand.

Dave: When you come to our restaurant,

Fiona: Your vote is our command.

Erin: So, if tomorrow you should think

Rochelle: The ending needs a change,

Wesley: Please come back and vote again,

Anthony: And we will rearrange.

Journalist: And each of us will play the role

Chevalier: For which we were designed

Suzy: Pressing toward our common goal

Dave: With common heart and mind.

All: Thank you! Good night!
Estelle enters with a box.

Estelle: Jacques! Je l'ai trouvé! Je l'ai trouvé tout! Viens voir. (Jacques! I found it! I found it all! Come look.)

Dave: Bonjour, Estelle, comment vas-tu? (Hello, Estelle, how are you?)

Estelle: Et depuis quand parlez-vous français? (And since when do you speak French?)

Dave: What?

Estelle: Vous ne parlez pas vraiment le français, vous? (You do not actually speak French, do you?)

Dave: I don't know what you're saying. I'm sorry, I only know a couple phrases. I'm working on it.

Estelle: Dans ce cas, permettez-moi de vous dire tout au sujet de notre plan. (In that case, let me tell you all about our plan.)

Dave: Are you here to wish us luck?

Estelle: Jacques et moi nous prenons tout. Nous redonnons tout droit. (Jacques and I are taking over everything. We are making everything right again.)

Estelle smiles coquettishly up at Dave.

Dave: Aw, thanks, Estelle! You and Jacques Chevalier are pretty awesome. I'll send him out here in a minute.

Estelle: J'ai trouvé le menu original Goût de Paris, il y a vingt ans, et toutes les décorations, et tout. Nous allons réinitialiser tout. (I found the original Goût de Paris menu, from twenty years ago, and all the decorations, and everything. We are going to reset everything.)

Dave: I'm gonna warn you, we've had kind of a tough afternoon.

Estelle: Ce sera un renouveau! Retour à la cuisine française authentique, pas cette ordure que vous appelez "fusion". Je suis tellement content que nous ayons eu l'idée de ruiner toute votre nourriture. (It will be a revival! Back to authentic French cuisine, not this garbage you call "fusion". I am so glad we had the idea to ruin all your food.)

Dave: Someone may have been out to sabotage our dinner with Fitzgerald.
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Estelle: Et vous ne saurez jamais qui l’a fait. Vous ne pouvez pas parler français, vous ne pouvez pas cuisiner la cuisine française. Quelle blague! (And you will never know who did it. You cannot speak French, you cannot cook French. What a joke!)

Dave: I think we’re getting it under control, though. I’ll go get him. Have a good night, Estelle!

Estelle: Oh, j’ai la meilleure nuit de ma vie. (Oh, I am having the best night of my life.)

Enter Chevalier.

Chevalier: Estelle! Mon Cheri! I thought I heard you.

Dave: She came to wish us luck on our big night.

Estelle: Jacques, cet homme est le plus grand idiot que j’ai rencontré. (Jacques, this man is the biggest idiot I have ever met.)

Chevalier: Now, darling. Try to contain yourself.

Estelle: Devons-nous le renvoyer maintenant? (Shall we dismiss him right now?)

Chevalier: Estelle. (Aside, so only Estelle can hear) You are a little early. Monsieur Fitzgerald comes tonight, for dinner.

Estelle: (Aside, so only Chevalier can hear) He has not come yet?

Chevalier: No, my darling. Go on back home.

Dave: Unless you’d like to join us for dinner?

Estelle: (Directly, to Dave) No, I will not join you for dinner. I do not care for your food. I do not care for your restaurant.

Dave: What?

Estelle: You are a fake. A liar. And I cannot wait until you are exposed!

Dave: Estelle? (To Chevalier) I don’t understand.

Estelle: You do not understand French; you do not understand English. How have you been in business for this long?

Chevalier: Estelle. You must go home now.

Dave: What’s going on? What do you mean, ‘exposed’?
Estelle: I will make it very plain so you can understand. *(Very slowly and clearly)*  
We spoiled your food.

Dave: What?! Why?

Estelle: Why? Why? So that the world can taste what happens when you denigrate real French cuisine!

Dave: *(To Chevalier, shocked)* You did this?

Chevalier: Oui, Monsieur. And I am sorry. I will give you my resignation. *(To Estelle)*  
I need you to leave now.

Estelle: Very well.

*Estelle exits.*

Dave: It was YOU?

Enter Anthony, Suzy *(with a coffee mug)*, Rochelle, Fiona, and Wesley. They react silently.

Dave: I don't understand. You love this restaurant. Why would you want to ruin it?

Chevalier: With all due respect, Monsieur, I feel it has already been ruined. This is no longer the restaurant I loved. It has changed.

Dave: But are all those changes bad?

Chevalier: Maybe not all of them. But our food used to be so good, so French. Now what are we? If we are not authentic, we are not good.

Dave: If you really want to resign, I won't stop you. But I never knew you felt that strongly about our menu changes.

Chevalier: Perhaps I should have said something earlier.

Dave: There may be more changes in the future, if tonight goes well. Maybe you could consult with us on menu updates. You could be part of our future. But it's up to you.

Chevalier: I am sincerely sorry. Estelle's idea seemed so good at first. But then...I would like to make it up to you, if you can forgive me.

Dave: As long as you stay out of the kitchen until we get this settled.

Chevalier: I'm sorry, I really am.
Dave: And I'm starting to realize, there's more that needs fixing around here than just those sauces. We need to make some changes. Whatever it takes for us to actually be a team and stop being...well...critics.

Rochelle: I hear you. Maybe I don't get enough credit around here sometimes...but I could be a little nicer.

Suzy: Yeah, you could.

Everyone looks at Suzy. She smiles reluctantly.

Suzy: But I could, too.

Chevalier: And I should not have yelled. I am sorry, Sir.

Anthony: Me too. For the whipped cream, the vanilla thing, the phone pranks. And...you know, everything else.

He takes Suzy's coffee mug.

Anthony: Believe me, you don't want to drink that. Sorry.

Fiona: I'm sorry, Dave. You've worked hard to build a team atmosphere and I haven't helped.

Wesley: I guess I wasn't all that helpful either, bringing the artichokes. I should go get you something else.

Rochelle: Actually, I've got a killer artichoke ice cream going. But thanks anyway.

Dave: We've got some very serious things to address. But we've also got Mr. Fitzgerald five minutes out. If we're done with the apologies--

A door slams and Erin runs in.

Erin: Oh, guys, I am so sorry! I was tasting your food and I threw a baguette in the oven and I totally forgot--

Each character reacts accordingly.

Dave: Erin, I think Suzy's going to have to train you on the oven.

Erin: I'm...I'm okay with that.

Dave: All right, everyone. Chevalier, is the house ready?

Chevalier: Oui, Monsieur.

Chevalier bows and walks DSR.
Dave: Suzy, your cooks are good to go?

Suzy: On the line.

Suzy salutes and exits SR.

Dave: Rochelle?

Rochelle: Let's do this.

Rochelle exits SL.

Dave: Anthony?

Anthony: Clean shirt and everything.

Anthony exits DSR (into the audience).

Dave: (To Fiona and Wesley) Wish us luck.

Fiona: Truthfully, I don't think you'll need it. But good luck.

Wesley: Good luck! Save me some artichoke ice cream... if there's any left.

Erin, Fiona and Wesley exit SL. Dave remains on stage, watching Chevalier.

Chevalier: Good evening, Monsieur, and welcome to Goût de Paris. Your table is ready.

Lights down.

Lights up; characters bow CS.

Erin and Wesley exit SL. Dave remains on stage, watching Chevalier.

Chevalier: Now we have one final "special"... When you come to our restaurant...

Fiona: Your vote is our command.

Erin: So, if tomorrow you should think.

Suzy: That you should understand:

Dave: When you come to our restaurant.

Anthony: Clean shirt and everything.

Fiona: (To Erin and Wesley) Wish us luck.

Anthony exits DSR (into the audience).

Dave: Rochelle exits SL.

Rochelle: Let's do this.

Suzy: Suzy, your cooks are good to go?

Anthony: And we will rearrange.
“Everyone’s a Critic”

Estelle: And each of us will play the role
Chevalier: For which we were designed.
Suzy: Pressing toward our common goal
Dave: With common heart and mind.
All: Thank you! Good night!
Scene/ Suzy ending #5

Suzy sits alone at a table with a coffee mug. Ava enters from the kitchen, panicked but hushed.

Ava: (In a whisper) Suzy! Pssst. Suzy!

Suzy: Ava! Get back in the kitchen! You know chef's apprentices aren't allowed in the dining room.

Ava: I know, but I've run into one teeny tiny problem.

Dave: (Offstage, furious) Ava! Where are you?

Suzy leaps to her feet.

Suzy: What happened?

Ava: Well, you know how you called and told me about Erin, and you told me what you did. And you know I'm completely on your side.

Suzy: Of course, you are—

Ava: And then you know how Dave told us to start re-making the sauces for tonight.

Suzy: Yeah…?

Ava: So, I started making things the right way. But then I couldn't. What's the point of destroying the first meal if we're just going to remake everything perfect?

Suzy: The hope was that the change to the first sauce would go undetected until—

Ava: Right. But then it did get detected. So, I figured, we had to do it again, right? And then, I couldn't help myself… It turns out, sabotaging ingredients is way more fun than making stuff taste good!

Suzy: Ava! What did you do?

Ava: I just wanted to do what you did the first time! You're a culinary genius! Who knew you could create such a disgusting masterpiece? The mustard, and the vinegar, the fish sauce, and then that pineapple? You could actually see it curdling!

Suzy: Just tell me what you did.
Ava: Actually, I did nothing. But Dave may have seen me standing over the cherry curd…

Suzy: Uh huh…

Ava: …WITH a bottle of clam juice.

Dave enters from the kitchen, holding a bottle of clam juice.

Dave: Ava! You think this is a game? You're fired. You have exactly two seconds to collect your belongings and get out of my kitchen!

Ava: I—but—

Dave: I said OUT!

Suzy: Hold on. Hold on. You can't blame Ava.

Dave: Can't blame Ava? I caught her right before she poured this in the cherry curd! Again!

Suzy: But it doesn't make sense. Ava wasn't even in the restaurant when the fire alarm went off. She got here half an hour ago.

Dave: Well, it was either her, or she was following her supervisor, which would lead us to—

He cuts off and stares at Suzy.

Suzy: Me.

Dave: You?

Suzy: I did it. And then I told Ava, and apparently, she liked the idea a little more than I expected. But I'm the one who ruined the sauce. I'm sorry.

Dave: It was YOU?

Enter Anthony, Rochelle, Fiona, Chevalier, and Wesley.

Dave: Why would you do something like this?

Suzy: Why wouldn't I? You went looking in L.A. for your new head chef, while I've been here for years, waiting for a position like that to open up. If you didn't like my work, you could have just said something. (Pause) But putting the restaurant's reputation on the line… I may have overreacted.

Dave: To be fair, you could have said something, too. Especially if it would have prevented this.
Suzy: You're right. I was way out of line. Totally unprofessional.

Dave: And I wanted you and Erin to work together for a while. Because if things progress the way we hope, then we're going to need a standard operating procedure before one of you takes the new location across the city.

Suzy: Well, I think we're already good with—wait. What?!

Dave: You heard me.

Suzy: And you want me—as head chef?

Dave: Well, I did… Do you think you can leave your feelings out of the food?

Suzy: For sure.

Ava: Can I keep my feelings IN the food?

Dave and Suzy stare at Ava.

Ava: You know what, I'll do my experimenting at home. See you tomorrow.

Ava exits.

Suzy: I'm sorry. I really am.

Dave: And I'm starting to realize, there's more that needs fixing around here than just those sauces. We need to make some changes. Whatever it takes for us to actually be a team and stop being…well…critics.

Rochelle: I hear you. Maybe I don't get enough credit around here sometimes…but I could be a little nicer.

Suzy: Yeah, you could.

Everyone looks at Suzy. She smiles reluctantly.

Suzy: But I could, too.

Chevalier: And I should not have yelled. I am sorry, Sir.

Anthony: Me too. For the whipped cream, the vanilla thing, the phone pranks. And…you know, everything else.

He takes Suzy's coffee mug.

Anthony: Believe me, you don't want to drink that. Sorry.
Fiona: I’m sorry, Dave. You’ve worked hard to build a team atmosphere and I haven’t helped.

Wesley: I guess I wasn’t all that helpful either, bringing the artichokes. I should go get you something else.

Rochelle: Actually, I’ve got a killer artichoke ice cream going. But thanks anyways.

Dave: We’ve got some very serious things to address. But we’ve also got Mr. Fitzgerald five minutes out. If we’re done with the apologies—

A door slams and Erin runs in.

Erin: Oh, guys, I am so sorry! I was tasting your food and I threw a baguette in the oven and I totally forgot—

Each character reacts accordingly.

Dave: Erin, I think Suzy’s going to have to train you on the oven.

Erin: I’m…I’m okay with that.

Dave: All right, everyone. Chevalier, is the house ready?

Chevalier: Oui, Monsieur.

Chevalier bows and walks DSR.

Dave: Suzy, your cooks are good to go?

Suzy: On the line.

Suzy salutes and exits SR.

Dave: Rochelle?

Rochelle: Let’s do this.

Rochelle exits SL.

Dave: Anthony?

Anthony: Clean shirt and everything.

Anthony exits DSR (into the audience).

Dave: (To Fiona and Wesley) Wish us luck.

Fiona: Truthfully, I don’t think you’ll need it. But good luck.
Wesley: Good luck! Save me some artichoke ice cream...if there's any left.

Erin, Fiona and Wesley exit SL. Dave remains on stage, watching Chevalier.

Chevalier: (Addressing an unseen person toward the back of the audience) Good evening, Monsieur, and welcome to Goût de Paris. Your table is ready.

Lights down.

Lights up; characters bow CS.

Chevalier: Now we have one final "special"

Suzy: That you should understand:

Dave: When you come to our restaurant,

Fiona: Your vote is our command.

Erin: So, if tomorrow you should think

Rochelle: The ending needs a change,

Wesley: Please come back and vote again,

Anthony: And we will rearrange.

Ava: And each of us will play the role

Chevalier: For which we were designed

Suzy: Pressing toward our common goal

Dave: With common heart and mind.

All: Thank you! Good night!
Scene / Anthony Ending #6

Luna enters with a bass guitar case and an amp. She looks around and puts the amp down CS.

Anthony enters, surprised to see her.

Luna: Tony babe! This place is happening. Where should I set up?

Anthony: Luna? What are you doing here?

Luna: Okay, so it's not happening yet. But it totally might happen. I'm thinking we set up the mains there and bump some bass over here.

Anthony: I actually don't think this is the right space for us.

Luna: Well, obviously. We'll need more of a pit for your stage dives. But it'll work till we get that check from your old man. How 'bout I call Pete and Bruiser and have them load in tomorrow?

Anthony: Luna, we're not closed yet.

Luna: Huh? You mean there's still food and stuff?

Anthony: Kind of.

Luna: Dude. I'm starving. Can you get us some fries?

Anthony: We don't serve fries.

Luna: I thought you said this place was French.

Anthony: (Guiding Luna toward the door) Hey, listen. We'll practice at Bruiser's place tonight. We can't do it here.

Luna: Why not? This restaurant gig is over, right?

Anthony: I'm not sure.

Luna: What? You promised this time!

Anthony: I know. I know.

Luna: We were supposed to have this space two months ago after you did that thing with the vanilla! We could have been on the top 40 by now!

Anthony: I'll figure this out. Right now, I just need you to leave.
Luna: Fine. Fine. I’m leaving. But you’re going to have to make a choice, dude. Is it the restaurant? Or is it… *(Dropping her voice to an intense reverence)* the music?

*Dave enters.*

Dave: *(To Anthony)* Anthony, break’s over. *(Noticing Luna)* Who’s this?

Luna: Hey, I’m Luna. I’m on bass. You sittin’ in or something?

Anthony: *(With significance)* Luna. This is Dave. The executive chef here.

Luna: Oh! Dude. Sorry about your fries.

Dave: What are you talking about?

Luna: But I’m thinking, you know, once the Angry Pesto People gets big, we’re totally going to need a cook for the road. You want a job?

Dave: I have a job.

Luna: I’m totally going to come up with a job for you. You know, since we put you out of business and all.

*Luna sits on her amp and assumes a “thinking” pose until her next line.*

Dave: Put me out of business? *(Severely)* Anthony, what’s going on here?

Anthony: All right, all right! *(Resigned)* Dad always said he’d give me some money to get started with a band. But he won’t do it as long as this restaurant is around.

Dave: It was YOU?

Enter Suzy *(with a coffee mug)*, Rochelle, Chevalier, Fiona, and Wesley. They react silently.

Anthony: I didn’t think it would be that big of a deal. I just figured, if I could make some things go wrong, maybe Dad would realize he’s too old for this kind of thing and put the money… elsewhere.

Dave: Anthony. We’re not closing. But if you were looking for an opportunity to leave the restaurant, I think this is it.

Anthony: Wait. You mean… are you saying…?

Dave: I’m saying, I’m cutting you loose. You can go.

Anthony: You mean, I actually *can* get fired?
Dave: You actually can get fired.

Anthony: Yes!! *(Stops abruptly)* Wait. Right now?

Dave: That’s usually how it works.

Anthony: But…does it have to be right now? Like, I have to leave?

Dave: Wasn’t that the idea?

Anthony: Yeah, I guess… I just figured I could stay for dinner? And maybe help open tomorrow? I mean, I got some cardamom for Suzy’s coff— I mean, Suzy’s prep station.

Dave: Can’t walk away, can you? Just like your dad.

Luna: *(Leaping to her feet)* Ooh! Brainstorm! *(To Anthony)* Let’s have him make up a recipe for ANGRY PESTO! We can sell it in jars at the merch table!

Dave and Anthony stare at Luna.

Luna: You got a better idea?

Silence.

Luna: That’s what I thought. See you at Bruiser’s.

Luna picks up her equipment and exits.

Dave: We’ll talk after dinner, Anthony. This is obviously a serious offense, and there will have to be some serious consequences.

Anthony: I’m sorry. I really am.

Dave: And I’m starting to realize, there’s more that needs fixing around here than just those sauces. We need to make some changes. Whatever it takes for us to actually be a team and stop being…well…critics.

Rochelle: I hear you. Maybe I don’t get enough credit around here sometimes. But I could be a little nicer.

Suzy: Yeah, you could.

Everyone looks at Suzy. She smiles reluctantly.

Suzy: But I could, too.

Chevalier: And I should not have yelled. I am sorry, Sir.
Anthony: Me too. For the whipped cream, the vanilla thing, the phone pranks. And...you know, everything else. 

He takes Suzy’s coffee mug.

Anthony: Believe me, you don’t want to drink that. Sorry.

Fiona: I’m sorry, Dave. You’ve worked hard to build a team atmosphere and I haven’t helped.

Wesley: I guess I wasn’t all that helpful either, bringing the artichokes. I should go get you something else.

Rochelle: Actually, I’ve got a killer artichoke ice cream going. But thanks anyways.

Dave: We’ve got some very serious things to address. But we’ve also got Mr. Fitzgerald five minutes out. If we’re done with the apologies—

A door slams and Erin runs in.

Erin: Oh, guys, I am so sorry! I was tasting your food and I threw a baguette in the oven and I totally forgot—

Each character reacts accordingly.

Dave: Erin, I think Suzy’s going to have to train you on the oven.

Erin: I'm...I'm okay with that.

Dave: All right, everyone. Chevalier, is the house ready?

Chevalier: Oui, Monsieur.

Chevalier bows and walks DSR.

Dave: Suzy, your cooks are good to go?

Suzy: On the line.

Suzy salutes and exits SR.

Dave: Rochelle?

Rochelle: Let's do this.

Rochelle exits SL.

Dave: Anthony?
Anthony: Clean shirt and everything.

Anthony exits DSR (into the audience).

Dave: (To Fiona and Wesley) Wish us luck.

Fiona: Truthfully, I don't think you'll need it. But good luck.

Wesley: Good luck! Save me some artichoke ice cream...if there's any left.

Erin, Fiona and Wesley exit SL. Dave remains on stage, watching Chevalier.

Chevalier: (Addressing an unseen person toward the back of the audience) Good evening, Monsieur, and welcome to Goût de Paris. Your table is ready.

Lights down.

Lights up; characters bow CS.

Chevalier: Now we have one final "special"

Suzy: That you should understand:

Dave: When you come to our restaurant, Fiona: Your vote is our command.

Erin: So, if tomorrow you should think

Rochelle: The ending needs a change,

Wesley: Please come back and vote again,

Anthony: And we will rearrange.

Luna: And each of us will play the role

Chevalier: For which we were designed

Suzy: Pressing toward our common goal

Dave: With common heart and mind.

All: Thank you! Good night!

Lights out.
Secret Ballot:
WHO DID IT???
Please select who you believe is the culprit.

_____ FIONA
_____ WESLEY
_____ CHEVALIER
_____ ROCHELLE
_____ SUZY
_____ ANTHONY
Script of Optional Scene for Lawyer and Bob

Dave:  
*(To the audience)* I'm afraid I'm going to need your help. You've been here the whole time, before and after the incident in question. Maybe you could help me come up with some questions that we need answered.

Fiona:  This is outrageous! Watching us the whole time? *(Aside to Anthony, smoothing her hair)* Do you think this will be on TV? I need a stylist if I'm going to be on News Channel 9! *(To Dave, dramatically)* I want a lawyer.

Wesley:  Really? Why not just admit you're guilty now?

Fiona:  I can't go on without a lawyer!

Dave:  Fine. *(To audience)* Is there a lawyer out there who can give Fiona some legal advice?

Lawyer:  I'm a lawyer.

Dave:  *(Goes over to audience member's table)* Thank you so much for being willing to help. This is kind of embarrassing.

Lawyer:  That's all right. At least the food was good.

Chevalier:  I'll be sure to tell the chef.

Dave:  I am the chef and he [she] just did.

Chevalier:  Of course.

Dave:  *(To lawyer)* What advice can you give Ms. Beckett?

Lawyer:  I'll need to speak with my client privately.

Fiona goes over to Lawyer's table.

Lawyer:  *(To Fiona)* Did you do it?

Fiona:  Of course not.

Lawyer:  Because as the owner of this establishment, you do have a legal right to determine what goes into the food. If you did it, we don't really have a case. What are they going to do? Fire you?

Fiona:  I'm the owner.

Lawyer:  Exactly. If you want to sabotage your own restaurant, you have every legal right to do that.
Fiona: I didn’t do it.

Lawyer: All I’m saying is, if you did, you wouldn’t need me.

Fiona: Okay. But if News Channel 9 walks in, could you be ready to stand next to me and look important?

Lawyer: Sure. And Fiona?

Fiona: Yes?

Lawyer: I’ll have my office invoice you at the hourly rate.

Fiona clearly upset, returns to CS with the other suspects.

Chevalier: Excuse me, but I just heard the back-door open. Perhaps I should go see if there is one more delivery—

Dave: Oh no.

Rochelle: What is it?

Dave: It’s not another delivery. It’s—

Bob stands.

Bob: What is going on here?

Anthony: Dad?

Fiona: Sweetheart! What are you doing here?

Bob: I own this place, remember? (To Dave) Everything’s fine? Why is my staff standing around when tonight is the biggest night of—

Chevalier: Sir, allow me to explain.

Anthony: Someone tried to sabotage—

Wesley: —and when he says "someone", he is most likely referring to himself.

Fiona: Dinner is ruined.

Rochelle: Our reputation is trashed and our jobs are hanging in the balance all because—

Suzy: —someone was upset that the purple things were taken off the dessert menu.
Rochelle: Cherry-amaretto petit fours, and they happen to be one of Bob's favorites.

They all look at Bob.

Bob: So, you're all standing around, wasting time, because I like Rochelle's dessert?

Chevalier: As I was saying, someone has tried to sabotage Fitzgerald's dining experience with us tonight. We are just on the brink of discovering who may have done this.

Bob: Well, hurry up. I'll be in my office, ready to fire whoever it is that has caused this colossal waste of time.

Wesley: Unless of course it's the boss' son.

Suzy: Or wife.

Bob: Excuse me?

Suzy and Wesley: Nothing.

Bob: (To Dave) Let me know once everything is figured out.

Dave: Yes, Sir.

Bob sits back down.

Dave: All right. We have to figure this out, and I mean now. (To the audience) It's time for your questions. I'm sure there are things I missed. Perhaps you can help me fill in the gaps.

Depending on time, Dave takes audience questions. The actors improvise their answers.

Dave: Thank you all so much for your input. This has been very enlightening.

Anthony: This is taking forever. Can't we at least take a coffee break?

Suzy: Fitzgerald is going to be here (she looks at her watch) in half an hour. How am I supposed to fix—

Dave: You're right. We've spent enough time playing around. It's time to find out who really did this.

End of Optional Scene