

ROUND ONE - The murder is announced

Round Instructions:

Before Round One begins, the following cast should have been circulating (in character) with the guests: Neo Politana, Margarita Pizza and Cara Bonara.

Michelle Angelo and Cosimo Politana should only come in when indicated in the script.

If the setting allows a separate room to meet in prior to dinner, then it is suggested that Part One of the Round One script is conducted in the separate room.

Neo Politana should act the gracious host. He should ask the guests if they are residents in the city or just visiting. If they say they live in the city then he might like to ask which family they belong to and try to work out if he knows of them; if they answer they are visiting, then he should ask them whether they have seen this or that sight (a quick Google search of Milan will give you a few ideas of the sights there). Neo should also tell the guests that he is planning a surprise for his son's birthday and that when the lights go out and the cake comes in they should all sing happy birthday to Cosimo.

Margarita Pizza and Cara Bonara should be circulating around the guests checking that they are comfortable and have everything they need. Cara Bonara can flirt. Margarita should act pregnant, with a sore back. She should tell everyone she meets at some point in the conversation that she is pregnant. If you have a lot of guests then Cara Bonara and Margarita Pizza should also warn the guests about Cosimo's birthday surprise and encourage them to sing.

If the guests do meet in a separate room then it should be Neo who calls them all through for dinner.

ROUND ONE SCRIPT

IF YOU HAVE A SEPARATE ROOM THEN ACT PART ONE IN THAT ROOM BEFORE BRINGING THE GUESTS THROUGH TO THE RESTAURANT.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A SEPARATE ROOM THEN BEGIN PART ONE IN THE RESTAURANT, MAKING SURE ALL THE GUESTS ARE SEATED BEFORE YOU BEGIN.

BEFORE THE SCENE BEGINS MARGARITA PIZZA SHOULD FIND A CUSTOMER THAT CAN CATCH HER SHOULD SHE FALL. THIS SHOULD BE DONE IN CHARACTER SAYING FOR EXAMPLE "This pregnancy makes me very dizzy from time to time. Any sudden shock and poof, I faint. Poor Cara has had to catch me more than once, but I don't like to rely on her. You look strong enough to catch me if I suddenly should faint. How are your reflexes? Do you think you could?" IF YOU PLAN TO HAVE PART ONE IN A SEPARATE ROOM THEN DO THIS AFTER YOU MOVE THROUGH TO THE RESTAURANT BEFORE PART TWO BEGINS.

PART ONE

MICHELLE ANGELO WALKS IN

Neo Politana: Michelle!

Michelle: Neo!

NEO POLITANA GREETES HER WITH AN ITALIAN EMBRACE AND KISS.

MICHELLE REMOVES HER COAT.

Cara Bonara: Let me take that for you Michelle.

CARA BONARA TAKES IT AWAY TO HANG UP OUTSIDE THE ROOM.

Michelle Angelo: Thank you Cara. Is he here yet?

Neo Politana: No.

Michelle Angelo: Good. I thought for a moment there I was going to come in late. I didn't want to steal his thunder.

Neo Politana: You steal everything Michelle regardless of your entrance, my heart, my soul, my life, my breath...I've missed you.

Michelle Angelo: It's only been a couple of hours Neo!

Neo Politana: It has seemed like an eternity to me. Come. Sit. Everything is ready. You should see the cake. It is stupendissimo!

MICHELLE MOVES AWAY WITH NEO POLITANA AND SITS DOWN JUST AS COSIMO POLITANA ARRIVES.

Neo Politana: Cosimo!

Cosimo Politana: Papà!

NEO POLITANA GREETES COSIMO WITH AN ITALIAN EMBRACE AND KISS.

Neo Politana: My son! It's so good to see you. Come, come. This way.

PART TWO

ALL THE GUESTS SHOULD BE USHERED THROUGH TO THE RESTAURANT BY NEO POLITANA SAYING SOMETHING LIKE.

Neo Politana: My friends! Come through to dinner. It is a special night, I am sure Garibaldi has cooked up something fabulous for us all. This way please.

ALLOW THE GUESTS TO SETTLE IN THEIR SEATS BEFORE BEGINNING PART TWO.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A SEPARATE ROOM THEN RUN PART ONE AND TWO BACK TO BACK MISSING OUT THE ABOVE.

NEO INDICATES TO CARA BONARA TO SWITCH OFF THE LIGHTS. SHE DOES SO.

MARGARITA PIZZA BRINGS IN A BIRTHDAY CAKE WITH CANDLES LIT.

ALL CAST EXCEPT COSIMO LEAD THE GUESTS IN SINGING HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO COSIMO.

THE CAKE IS PLACED IN FRONT OF COSIMO WHO BLOWS OUT THE CANDLES. ALL THE CAST CLAP.

CARA BONARA SWITCHES THE LIGHTS BACK ON.

MARGARITA PIZZA HEADS OFF TO THE KITCHEN CARRYING THE CAKE WITH HER WHILST CARA BONARA SERVES COSIMO SOMETHING TO DRINK.

Neo Politana: Speech!

Cosimo Politana: Papà – you're embarrassing me!

Neo Politana: Then I will do it for you. Signore e signori. It seems just a short time ago that I was bouncing Cosimo, mio bambino here on my knees and now look – thirty today, and still he wetting the bed!

Cosimo Politana: Papà!

Neo Politana: A joke! You forgive me? Come, come Cosimo – you speak every day in the courts, surely you can manage just a few words for your friends?

Cosimo Politana: Very well. If I must. [UNCOMFORTABLY] Well...er... thank you all for coming... it is most... unexpected... I am ... touched.

COSIMO LOOKS TO NEO. NEO MOTIONS FOR HIM TO CONTINUE.

Cosimo Politana: I... er... I hope you all have a pleasant meal.

COSIMO'S LINES SHOULD BE INTERRUPTED BY MARGARITA PIZZA RUNNING INTO THE ROOM SCREAMING AND THEN FAINTING ON THE PRE-WARNED GUEST.

CARA BONARA RUSHES OVER TO MARGARITA THANKING WHOEVER CAUGHT HER.

Cara Bonara: Margarita?

Neo Politana: Mama Mia! What has got into her? I'm so sorry Signore e Signori. Margarita is one of our more... emotional staff, and this pregnancy... well...

Cara Bonara: Margarita? Margarita!

NEO WALKS OVER TO MARGARITA AND CARA. MARGARITA COMES ROUND.

Margarita Pizza: Ahhh.

Cara Bonara: What is it Margarita?

Margarita Pizza: What is what?

Cara Bonara: You screamed.

Margarita Pizza: I did?

Neo Politana: Goodness gracious Margarita, can you not remember? I don't think anyone here will forget!

Cara Bonara: Here.

CARA BONARA HELPS MARGARITA UP.

Neo Politana: Come girl. There must have been something to make you scream like that.

Margarita Pizza: Scream?

Cara Bonara: You went into the kitchen. You came back in screaming.

Margarita Pizza: The kitchen! Ahh!

MARGARITA FAINTS AGAIN, THIS TIME ONTO NEO POLITANA.

Neo Politana: So sorry Signore e signori. Like I say before, she is pregnant. What we expect? Cara – go check in the kitchen. Perhaps she dropped the cake. Scusi. [ADDRESS A GUEST] Can I borrow your chair? Margarita, she isn't exactly light. Grazie.

NEO POLITANA PLACES MARGARITA ON THE GUEST'S CHAIR.

CARA BONARA EXITS ROOM AND RETURNS SCREAMING.

Cara Bonara: It's... it's... it's... Garibaldi!

CARA BONARA FAINTS ONTO THE FLOOR. COSIMO RUSHES OVER.

Cosimo Politana: Cara?

Neo Politana: Mama Mia! scusi ladies and gentlemen! I be back with you shortly.

Michelle Angelo: Where are you going Neo?

Neo Politana: The kitchens Michelle. Whatever Garibaldi's done is in there.

NEO POLITANA WALKS OUT. HE COMES BACK IN HOLDING A HANDKERCHIEF TO HIS MOUTH LOOKING ILL.

Michelle Angelo: Neo?

Neo Politana: Cosimo. Call the polizia. Garibaldi... he is...er... dead.

Cosimo Politana: Dead?

Neo Politana: Murdered.

COSIMO LEAVES THE ROOM AS MICHELLE TALKS.

Michelle Angelo: Murdered?

Neo Politana: In my own ristorante! It is unthinkable!

Michelle Angelo: What shall we do?

Neo Politana: Do? He is dead Michelle. There is nothing we can do. It is in the hands of the polizia now.

Michelle Angelo: Oh Neo! I didn't mean that. These people.... [INDICATES GUESTS]. He is the chef!

Neo Politana: [SLAPS HEAD] Duh! Stupido! scusi Signore e signori, scusi.

COSIMO WALKS IN.

Neo Politana: Cosimo – they are coming?

Cosimo Politana: Yes. As soon as they can – there is a football match on. They say it might take some time.

Neo Politana: Time? Time is what we don't have Cosimo. Not with a ristorante full of good people. Come with me.

Michelle Angelo: Where are you going Neo?

Neo Politana: We need to move the body. How can I cook these people a meal with Garibaldi in the way? Michelle – rouse the girls and tell them to hurry up.

NEO POLITANA AND COSIMO POLITANA LEAVE THE ROOM. MICHELLE GOES TO MARGARITA PIZZA, WAKES HER AND TELLS HER TO GO TO THE KITCHENS AND THEN DOES THE SAME TO CARA BONARA. AS MICHELLE REACHES THE DOOR NEO REAPPEARS.

Neo Politana: Do not worry signore e signori. Your meal will be with you shortly.

NEO AND MICHELLE LEAVE THE ROOM.

END OF ROUND ONE.

The guests should all now be served with their first course.

The cast should not re-enter the room until round two begins.