

DINNER WITH OSMINA

by

Matthew S. Hinton

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DINNER WITH OSMINA**Copyright© 2022 Matthew S. Hinton****CAST OF CHARACTERS***RICH, the paterfamilias**CAROL, the materfamilias**MARLA, the daughter (late teens/18)**DRAKE, the son (teenager, but looks to be in his mid/late 30's)**OSMINA THE MAGNIFICENT, a seer**MAN IN WHITE, wears white pants & shirt***SETTING**

A dining room. An average wooden dining room table with 6 chairs. A large area rug takes up the floor of the playing area. A sideboard rests off of one of the table's ends (or heads), and may serve as a storage space, liquor cabinet, a home for chotzkies, and the like. A simple indiscriminate chandelier hangs above the center of the table.

At rise, a woman, OSMINA THE MAGNIFICENT, stands at the head of the table. She looks like a fortune teller, is all scarves and bangles and necklaces. A scarf tied like a turban exposes the top of her head, her hair cascades down from there. Her hands are nearly obscured by gaudy rings, an excessive number of bracelets make music at every subtle movement, and her face is framed by large glasses. Her age is impossible to guess – she could be 18 or 98. No one knows.

Flanking OSMINA is the family: RICH, CAROL, DRAKE, & MARLA. They have all just entered together. They pause and watch – one or two of them suspiciously – as OSMINA inhales deeply through her nose, exhales, and scans the room.

OSMINA: Yes. Yes. This will do nicely.

(OSMINA gestures and guides each family member to their chair on the long edges of the table. CAROL & MARLA to one side; RICH & DRAKE the other; with the parents nearest to OSMINA's seat.)

OSMINA: A place for each, and each in their place.

(Beat.)

Sit.

(They do. She does.)

CAROL: (*Indicating the chair opposite OSMINIA*) But there's an empty chair at the other end. Shall I remove it?

OSMINA: That seat is for our guest.

DRAKE: Aren't you our guest?

OSMINA: No.

DRAKE: Oh.

OSMINA: Yes.

MARLA: Then *who* are you, again?

OSMINA: I am Osmina The Magnificent.

MARLA: Osmina?

OSMINA: Yes.

MARLA: The Magnificent?

OSMINA: Yes.

CAROL: Oh, where are my manners? You already know me – Carol – but I never introduced the family. That is our daughter, Marla; her baby brother, Drake; and my husband, Richard.

RICH: You can call me Rich.

OSMINA: Rich in family, yes.

RICH: And what is it that you do, Mrs. The Magnificent?

OSMINA: Please. Mrs. Magnificent is my mother. Call me Osmina.

RICH: And what is it that you do, Osmina?

(OSMINA produces a crystal ball, seemingly out of nowhere, and places it on the table. It immediately begins to glow; the lights of the room begin to shift, if slightly.)

OSMINA: I am a *seer*.

RICH, MARLA, DRAKE: A what?

CAROL: A seer. I called her here to *see*. I thought we could use an outsider's perspective ... on selling the house.

OSMINA: Yes. A seer. You see?

(Lights dimmer more as the crystal ball pulses. OSMINA's face seems to be lit from underneath. She rises. Her voice reverberates, fills the room, and is doubled or tripled. It is other-worldly.)

I am a seer of spirits. A conjurer of souls. I envision the future. I read palms and know pasts. I unlock the combination of the stars to reveal untold truths about lives, desires, and fates. My mind's eye is a blue million miles. I am a traveler of the universal highway. I have an EZ Pass, and pay no tolls. I speak to the dead. I bridge them to the living. I clear houses of spirits tortured by untold unfinished business. I bend the psychic energy of the galaxies to my will to cross space and time ... time ... time ... in my quest to bring peace to all of the living and all of the dead.

(Her voice returns to "normal")

Also, I'm a realtor.

(Lights shift back as she sits, closes her eyes.)

Do you see?

RICH: Carol?

CAROL: Isn't that impressive? Her portfolio is something else, too.

RICH: (*firmly*) Carol.

CAROL: All those credentials!

RICH: CAROL!

CAROL: (*sheepishly*) yes?

RICH: (*standing*) Can I speak to you over here, please?

CAROL: (*sighs*) Yes.

(She stands and meets him at the far end of the table – away from OSMINA. They speak in near stage-whisper.)

RICH: A realtor?

CAROL: I *know*, right?

RICH: A realtor?

CAROL: It's an odd word, isn't it? Like is it 'real-ter'? Or is it pronounced 'real-a-ter'? Or 'real-tore'? Or what?

RICH: Carol –

CAROL: It just sounds weirder the more you say it. Realtor... realtor ... realtor ...

RICH: First of all, no one says 'real-tore', that's a bad example.

CAROL: Well I just did.

RICH: I thought we talked about this. We are NOT selling this house.

CAROL: I just wanted another perspective. Something fresh.

RICH: On what? How many times have you tried to sell this house without consulting me?

CAROL: Forty-seven.

RICH: Exactly ... wait. Forty-seven?!

CAROL: There are twenty-five or -six (or so) that I never told you about.

RICH: That is really not okay, honey.

CAROL: Can we not fight about out it just this second, Rich?

RICH: Well, there is clearly a communication problem here, and I don't think the answer is *less* communication, so –

MARLA: – Are you guys done making out over there?

DRAKE: They're not making out; they're fighting about selling the house again.

MARLA: I know. I can hear them. (*To RICH and CAROL*) We can hear you!

RICH: (*Caught with no other response*) Well, *stop it*.

CAROL: Just hear her out. Osmina The Magnificent has a very good reputation.

RICH: This is the last time ...

MARLA and DRAKE: Hah! The last time!

RICH: (*Dad voice*) HEY! (*The get quiet very quickly*) That's what I thought.

(RICH and CAROL return to their chairs, pull them out, and sit slowly, maintaining eye contact the entire time. OSMINA, who seems to have not heard any of this from her trance-like state, opens her eyes.)

OSMINA: Well, do you?

RICH: Do I what?

OSMINA: See?

RICH: I guess I do, sure. Why not? Yes. I see. Say, do you happen to know a good marriage counselor?

MARLA: Dad.

RICH: But not like a *werewolf marriage counselor*, or a *galactic warlock* who has a certificate in psychiatry so he can make some scratch on the side. No side hustles. I mean like, a normal, boring, *real* –

CAROL: Richard.

RICH: –Kidding... just ... just kidding. So, what do we do next, Mrs. The Magn-... Osmina?

OSMINA: First, we join hands.

(They do so. MARLA and DRAKE being across from one another, and being siblings, have trouble with this – DRAKE does something, MARLA slaps his had hard. It knocks against the table. Minor chaos ensues.)

MARLA: Ew! Quit it!

DRAKE: Ow! What's your problem?

MARLA: YOU.

DRAKE: Well no shit!

CAROL: Drake!

RICH: Leave your sister alone.

DRAKE: I don't wanna hold her hand.

MARLA: He was tickling me.

RICH: Marla –

DRAKE: And that fuckin' hurt.

CAROL: DRAKE!

RICH: Language. Jesus Herbert Walker Christ –

CAROL: Richard!

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