

The Party 1995

A prose monologue written for a female voice. This is the letter I wrote to Cathy, thanking her for inviting me to her party.

Dear Cathy,

Thank you so much for the invitation to your party. Was it your birthday? I can't remember. Wasn't it exciting? I felt quite distinguished amongst your other guests. Sorry we got there late, Maureen was feeling a little down and wanted to watch East Enders on the television. I'm getting a little worried about Maureen, , still she says life can't be that bad, and it cheers her up. It wasn't until I spoke to her on the 'phone that I realised that we had to bring some food, well my omelette was cooking, actually I had turned the cooker off when the telephone rang. As you can imagine it was some time before Maureen had stopped talking, by that time my omelette was cold, never mind I thought, I will kill two birds with one stone, it'll go down a treat at your party once I tell everyone that the little black bits are mushrooms. It looked quite seasonal mounted on a doily with a sprig of parsley on it. Well it would have, had it not slipped off the doily on the way to the station. Maureen was of course waiting at the wrong entrance which made us even later. Did the Lady of Shalott , you know the girl living with that Christian sect down the Earls Court Road., the one with the short term memory loss, did she get home alright? She was getting a lift half way, I was a little concerned that she would not remember whether she was coming or going, and she would find her way back to your place only to think she had missed something. You told me earlier she wrote poetry, well it wasn't that I wasn't interested, that I didn't ask her to recite a poem, but I thought she would forget her lines and be embarrassed. I must say you went to so much trouble over the Kentucky Fried Chicken but a word about the coleslaw, you are

supposed to cut up the cabbage a little more finely. And who was the girl who put the samosas in the oven and kept testing them to see if they had warmed up? Ah yes, Carmel, that was her name. Still, someone else did eventually check and told her that the oven had to be switched on for food to warm up. I know she had consumed almost a bottle of scotch on the way, and it must have been heavy when she began her journey. Was that your boyfriend with the lads in the kitchen around the food? Didn't they want to mix with your friends? Well, they are still young and immature. Call me mature and responsible but I think ones friends should be supportive. Still they did eventually come into the living room after the food had been consumed. I met, Umph the German philosophy student, and what an attractive name for a German to have, still he did take the humph (pardon the pun) when I questioned him about his studies. Maybe it was German directness and not rudeness as I first thought, but the two are virtually indistinguishable at times. I'm afraid I didn't get a chance to chat to the civil-servant-cum-pop-group manager. What an interesting character he might have been, never mind we can't indulge in social intercourse with everyone at a party can we? Still I did try, when I noticed that the chef was not communicating with any interest, I went over and sat next to him and opened a conversation, mind you I think his girlfriend was trying to tell me something when she continued to stroke his thighs, well he didn't seem to mind, I could see that, at least I think that was what it was. What a nice place you have too. I can see you take great care in choosing your furnishings, like me. My carpet is foot-print grey but then I don't give as many parties as you do obviously. And especially when you have guests like Maureen swigging her feminist brew, 'Speckled Hen' then spilling it. Still Newcastle Brown is a very practical colour for a carpet in the circumstances. I was going to apologise for not bringing a bottle of wine,

I must have forgotten you asked, but as it turned out it didn't matter. I must say I've never tried that! - breaking the cork screw after only the second bottle of wine. Next time I want to replenish my wine cellar I must give it a go. And none of your neighbours had a cork screw either, which is surprising in such an area. Maureen did say in the cab home that someone should show Trevor how to kiss. Apparently he stuck his tongue out. It was, according to Maureen, half way between one of those rubber suction things you stick a thermometer, onto the window with, and a lick from her dog, Lulu. That reminds me, Maureen thought that Lulu must have had a cold, because she had just cut her coat with a pair of kitchen scissors, around her hind quarters because it had become clotted or did she say matted with re-cycled dog food. Well thank you once again for the invitation, I have been inspired by the occasion and I am thinking of writing a play so I await with enthusiasm for your next invite, only I am hoping it will inspire a high drama rather than a comedy.

Yours sincerely,

Terry Miles.

I should add that the envelope was stamped with a faked postmark on it. I opened it and sealed it again. I also asked a friend to add the words: Came to the wrong address; opened by mistake. I delivered it myself.

Cathy telephoned Maureen and said, "Terry has sent me this letter and insulted all my guests."

I hadn't, I missed out all the boring ones! Cathy added, "One of my neighbours has opened it and read it. I am furious.

Funny, I was never invited again. After all, it's not everyone who gets a work of art as a thank you letter, is it?

Names have been changed to prevent any embarrassment.

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