



“TREAT ME RIGHT”

Written by Joe Rieger

CAST

Brenda

wife

Vinnie

husband

SETTING:

The master bedroom where a woman is sitting at a vanity, talking on the phone and applying makeup.

(Brenda is on the phone talking to her friend Sheila as she gets ready for tonight's "Sweetheart Dinner" sponsored by her church)

BRENDA:

I absolutely love this dress that you loaned me for tonight's Sweetheart Dinner." Thank you so much Sheila. This means a lot to me. I wonder if Vinnie will even notice *(pauses while Sheila talks to her)*. You're right, he's got to notice. Wait, that might be him now.

(From offstage the audience can hear Vinnie ranting from the kitchen)

VINNIE:

Look at this place! This kitchen is a pigsty. What, did Ghengis Kahn and his Mongol horde pop in for lunch?

BRENDA:

He's baaaack. And he sounds all fired up. Ooh *(disappointed)* I was hoping that he'd come back from Home Depot in a good mood. So much for that idea.

VINNIE:

Hey Vinnie Jr.... where's mommy? Wait, let me guess. On the phone with Mrs. Peterson ... talk about your perpetual "yapfest." Just once, I'd like to come home and find this house clean and her not on the phone. BRENDA!

(Brenda is startled and then annoyed by Vinnie's scream. She quickly wraps up her phone call)

BRENDA:

Sheila, I gotta go ... thanks for the dress. Pray for me!

(Vinnie enters the bedroom as Brenda rises to greet him. She spins around to show off her dress, but he doesn't even notice her outfit).

VINNIE:

Can you please explain this?*(He opens up the checkbook and points it at her)*

BRENDA:

It's our check book. What's to explain?

VINNIE:

(Vinnie lowers the checkbook) Explain why you didn't bother to do any of the subtractions for the last 16 checks that you wrote.

BRENDA:

Oh, sorry.

VINNIE:

Sorry ... SORRY! Here I am ringing out at the Home Depot –with a big Saturday afternoon line behind me – and when I go to pay, I see this (*holds up checkbook and lowers it*).

BRENDA:

(*Grimaces*) Oh boy!

VINNIE:

Those weren't exactly my choice of words, let me tell ya. So now I gotta make a choice. Both options bad: I can (A) do five minutes of high stress subtraction and pray that the people in line don't lynch me ... or (B), roll the dice, write the check and hope that it doesn't bounce to the moon. It was like my own private version of a Dirty Harry movie. You know, "Tell me. Are ya feelin' lucky today PUNK?" But instead of Clint Eastwood pointing a 44 magnum, I've got a smart-aleck checkout girl taunting me with a scanner gun saying, "Go ahead, make my day." It was awful I tell you. Awful!

BRENDA:

I said I was sorry. Besides, you should have just used your credit card.

VINNIE:

Brenda, New Year's resolution, remember? I'm trying to keep us out of debt by paying cash. You know the mess we were in. We've been through this checkbook thing a million times... and don't even get me going on the debit card. Why can't you work with me on this?

BRENDA:

O-kay, I'll do a better job at bookkeeping from now on.

(*Brenda makes a gesture to get Vinnie to notice her outfit*)

VINNIE:

(*Vinnie finally notices*) Hey, lookin' good. Why are you all dressed up?

BRENDA:

Wow, you finally noticed. Don't you remember what February 26th is?

VINNIE:

Yeah, UCONN versus Pitt.

BRENDA:

NO! It's something more special than that (*said affectionately as she strokes his arm*).

VINNIE:

You mean – you mean (*Brenda nods her head up and down*) ...some AFTERNOON DELIGHT?

BRENDA:

(Let's out a laugh) Get real! Yeah, that's it. I borrowed this great dress from Sheila so you could act out some warped fantasy inspired by the one hit from "The Starland Vocal Band."

VINNIE:

Hey, it could happen. *(Vinnie sings a line)* "My motto's always been, when it's right it's right. Why wait until the middle of a cold dark night."

BRENDA:

Cold dark night ... get used to'em, because there are plenty of those coming.

VINNIE:

Hey, I'm just trying to be romantic.

BRENDA :

Oh, so that's it. You're just trying to be romantic. Was that a little sweet talk when you came home screaming about a dirty house and the perpetual "yapfest."

VINNIE :

But ... *(He's cut off by Brenda)*

BRENDA :

Were you getting me in the mood with your raging Dirty Harry checkout story?

VINNIE :

I was ... *(He's cut off again)*

BRENDA :

Were you trying to make me feel special and attractive, by ignoring my outfit and not noticing my new hair due?

VINNIE :

Nice 'due babe, really.

BRENDA :

Not funny! This "Sweetheart Dinner" means a lot to me. You totally forgot about it. If you had your way, you'd have your "Afternoon Delight" and then go off to your basketball game. You can do better than that. I DESERVE BETTER THAN THAT ... VINCENT.

VINNIE :

Don't call me Vincent. My mother called me that when I got in trouble as a kid.

BRENDA:

Well you're acting like a selfish little child. Try to understand where I'm coming from for once. Sorry if the house is dirty, we have four boys – remember? And oh by the

way, I've been carting them all over town today while you were getting your testosterone fix at Home Depot. That's why I didn't clean up.

VINNIE :

Sorry. I didn't know that.

BRENDA :

Well lately you don't know a lot of things. For starters, you don't know what it's like being home all week with the kids. I need a special night out once in a while. The people at Valley Brook are my friends. They put a lot of love and effort into this dinner. They even have some entertainment. Joe Rieger is going to put on a little program for us.

VINNIE :

Who's Joe Rieger? And why would I want to hear anything he has to say?

BRENDA :

Why don't you give him and Valley Brook a chance? If you came to church more often, you'd get to know people better... and like them. Who knows, you might even make your very first friend.

VINNIE :

Hey, I've got lots of friends! What's NOT to like about me?

BRENDA :

You don't even want me to answer that one, do you?

VINNIE :

Am I really that much of a jerk? *(Holds up his hand to stop her from answering)* Wait, don't answer that. *(Pauses and reflects for a moment)* Maybe I have been a little inconsiderate and unappreciative. Ya'know ... you do deserve a night out.

BRENDA :

You mean it? *(a sudden thought troubles her)* Wait, you ARE planning to come with me, right? This isn't some "go stag" arrangement so you can watch the Huskies?

VINNIE :

Of course I'm coming with you. I'm not letting you go out looking like that without me. I'll go get ready. *(Pause)* Hey babe?

BRENDA :

Yeah?

VINNIE :

You really do look great – hair due, dress ... the whole sha-bang.

BRENDA :

Thanks, that means a lot to me *(pause)*. Hey Vin?

VINNIE :

Yeah?

BRENDA :

Show me a good time tonight and who knows, later on there could be some (*Brenda sings*) “Sky rockets in flight.”

VINNIE :

(*Vinnie Sings*) “Afternoon delight.”

VINNIE & BRENDA

(*Sing together*) “Aaa- afternoon delight.”

(*Vinnie and Brenda embrace and the play ends*)

THE END