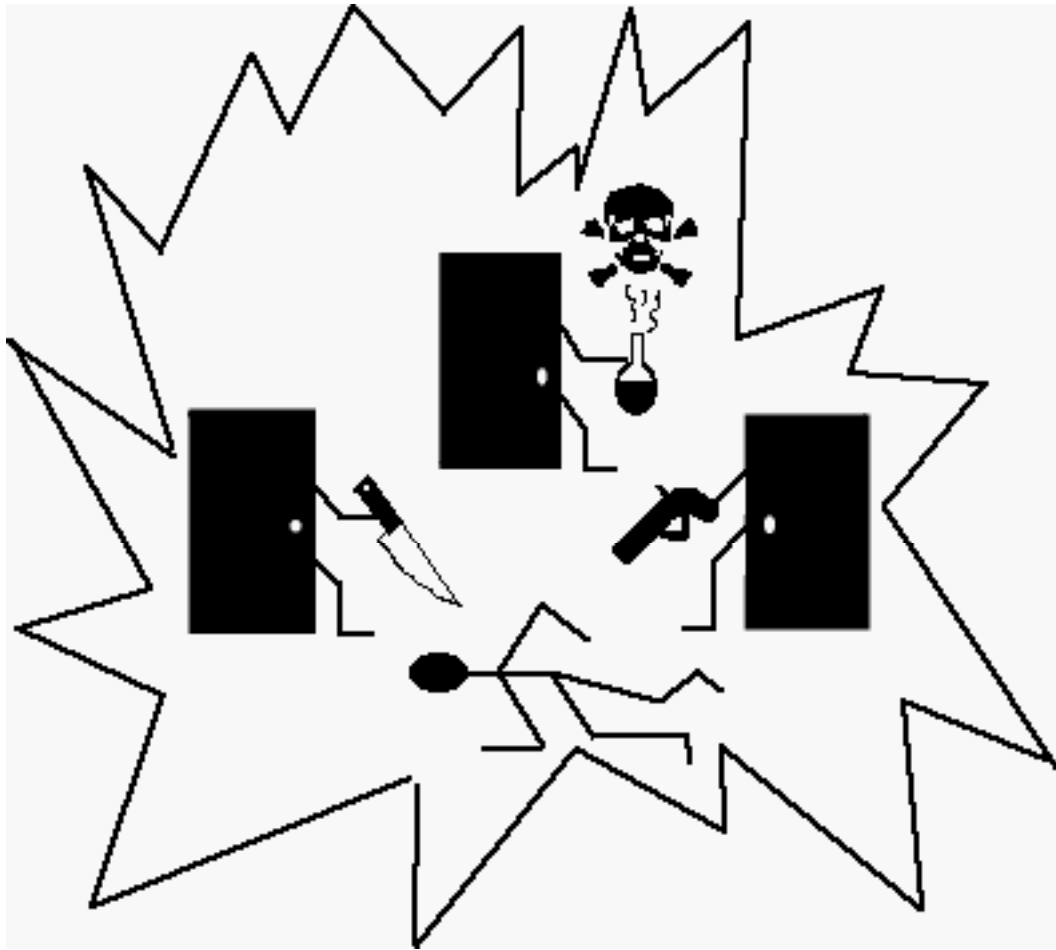


DEADLY VOWS



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CHARACTER LIST

DEADLY VOWS

Tyson (Tye) Toulong

A self-made, self-righteous, over-bearing business tycoon, who made his fortune years ago in the ketchup industry. Has recently ended his 25 year affair with Veri Goodfrind, and to celebrate, planned this "vow renewal" with his wife of 30 years. Boasts freely about the children and their new positions in PUHCTEK's.

Mary Toulong

A woman who goes along with most of her husband's whims. He recently told her about his 25 year affair and is unwillingly going along with his plan to renew their wedding vows.

Misty Toulong

A psychologist who has had difficulties treating people for depression, because of her inclination to "mist" up. She's always ready to analyze your problems, but is unable to offer any real help or solutions.

Dusty Toulong

An archaeologist who has had difficulty earning a reputation for himself as the "Indiana Jones" he pictures himself as. Has never had a successful dig in his entire career.

Drew Toulong

A wanna-be artist who has had difficulty becoming successful. Hasn't found a market for his area of expertise, water-colors of vegetables, and has never sold a single painting.

Morvin Goodfrind

The head of Research and Development at PUHCTEK's. Sees himself as a renaissance man of sorts - knows just enough about everything to drive you to distraction.

Veronica (Veri) Goodfrind

Has always been a "good friend" of Tye and Mary - and has been having an affair with Tye for 25 years! Keeps waiting for him to divorce his wife, and is certain he will someday. Is sexy and flirtatious - after all, she's kept (at least) two men satisfied for 25 years.

Nanny

Life-time Nanny of the Toulong children. Loves children, cooking and housekeeping, and is always ready to share some cleaning advice with the rest of the world.

PRE-SALAD (1)

DEADLY VOWS

(During the mingle, select two audience members to act as “ushers” during the evening. They will distribute and pick up handouts after each scene. When the waiters signal all food and drink orders have been taken, all actors exit except Misty, Drew, and Dusty, who will remain on stage while all other actors exit.)

MISTY: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us tonight as our parents, Tye and Mary Toulong, renew their wedding vows after 30 long years of marriage! At this time, I'd also like to thank our “ushers,” who will be helping us tonight during the celebration. *(Introduce the ushers by name, then continue after the applause.)* Marriage is a difficult relationship, one that has been examined time and time again by psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists...

DUSTY: Misty, don't go into one of your tirades about the institution of marriage... let's just get on with this. Where's Pastor O'Sorree? And where are Mother and Father?

MISTY: Pastor O'Sorree is preparing for the ceremony in the back room. And I think Mother and Father are outside

DREW: Together? Isn't that bad luck for the groom to see bride the prior to the ceremony?

MISTY: They've seen each other every day for the past 30 years, Drew. And, in answer to your question, they're outside satisfying their oral fixation.

DUSTY: What do you mean?

MISTY: In laymen's terms, they're taking a smoke, Dusty. Which is FINE with me.

DUSTY: Why, what's wrong?

MISTY: Wednesday night they told me that if I didn't give up my career as a psychologist and join PУHCTEK's, they would disown me!

DUSTY: I can't say I'm surprised by that.

MISTY: Why not?

PRE-SALAD (2)

DEADLY VOWS

DUSTY: They told me the same thing Monday night.

DREW: They got to me on Tuesday. I'm FURIOUS about it. I've never felt so angry in my life.

MISTY: How did this make you feel?

DREW: Angry. I just said. Anyway, they painted a pretty bleak picture for me. And I should know, I'm an artist.

MISTY: Well, this has certainly thrown my Id into a tail-spin. Mother told me last week she and Father were giving me additional funds for my practice. Now this.

DUSTY: I wonder why they didn't talk to us at the same time?

MISTY: Mother and Father are uncomfortable being around us, all at the same time.

DUSTY: Why is that?

MISTY: It's the classic "Fear of Success" manifestation. They begin to experience feelings of low self-esteem, self-pity, self-hatred, self-betrayal...

DREW: Or maybe it was because we weren't all here this week?

DUSTY: That's right, I just got back from my dig in Mexico yesterday.

DREW: And I've been in Escambia County looking at corn all week. My next watercolor series focuses on yellow vegetables - corn, squash, garbanzo beans...

MISTY: That sounds... colorful, Drew.

DREW: Not really, Misty, all the vegetables will be the same color.

MISTY: Oh, yes, of course. How'd your dig go, Dusty?

PRE-SALAD (3)

DEADLY VOWS

DUSTY: I had some trouble locating the exact site I was looking for.

MISTY: Well, I'm sure you left no pot unturned.

DUSTY: I didn't get to the pots. I couldn't find the site. My GPS wasn't working the whole trip. I think I need a newer one. I'll buy one before my next dig.

DREW: You're going ahead with your plans then?

DUSTY: Yes. I'm not a ketchup salesman, I'm an archaeologist. Just because I haven't had one successful dig, that doesn't make me a pot hunter!

MISTY: Pot hunter?

DUSTY: An amateur, Misty. I may dig archeology, but I'm no amateur!

MISTY: I understand what you're saying. As a psychologist, I tend to empathize when I should sympathize, and role TAKE rather than role PLAY. But with a little self-help I can overcome this.

DREW: Agreed. Organic art is my life. Setting form above nature is the tissue of imagination.

MISTY: Who said that?

DREW: I did. Just now. Didn't you hear me?

(NANNY enters. As she passes by DUSTY she notices a small stain on his shirt.)

NANNY: Dusty, is that ketchup on your shirt? You know, ketchup is not impossible to remove if attacked quickly.

DUSTY: I'm planning on removing more than just a ketchup stain from my life, Miss Nanny.

NANNY: A warm butter knife is the quickest way to loosen hot buns.

DUSTY: What?

PRE-SALAD (4)

DEADLY VOWS

NANNY: I plan on talking to your parents tonight about their decision to force you into PUHCTEK's.

MISTY: I hope it helps, Miss Nanny. I could never work in that place. All those steel doors and double locks make me very claustrophobic. And those guards! Every one of them is a classic Mesomorphite.

DUSTY: What's that?

MISTY: My mentor, Dr. W. H. Sheldon, divided people into three physical types. He felt you could determine a personality type based on the physical condition of the...

DUSTY: Give us the Reader's Digest version, Misty.

MISTY: Every one of those guards is a textbook "bully with a hard body". It really surprises me.

DUSTY: That they're bully's?

MISTY: No, that they have hard bodies. When do they have time to work out? Anyway, every time I go to PUHCTEK's I have an anxiety attack. I can't imagine what they're trying to guard. It's just ketchup!

DREW: I can't understand why the place is so sterile. All those white walls and floors... and as much as I love plants, I could never stand 8 hours a day in a place that's so devoid of any living vegetation.

DUSTY: It's the smell that gets to me. There's such an unusual musty odor there. I can't quite identify it.

MISTY: Why does that bother you?

DUSTY: It doesn't bother me, it excites me! It's a very archaeological smell.

NANNY: Little pots of baking soda placed liberally will eliminate that smell. Besides, even though you want no part of PUHCTEK's, you should remember that PUHCTEK's isn't just ketchup. It's made up of a secret formula that stands stem and vine above the rest.

PRE-SALAD (5)

DEADLY VOWS

DREW: You sound like their ads, Miss Nanny. And what's this about a secret formula? First I've heard of it.

NANNY: Just a guess Drew.

MISTY: Your husband was a nutritionist with the company years ago, wasn't he Miss Nanny?

NANNY: He was a cross between a chemist and a nutritionist. He loved to experiment with food additives. The stains I had to remove from his clothing would fill a book.

(MORVIN and VERI enter.)

MISTY: Oh good, Morvin and Veri are here.

MORVIN: Good to see everyone, about ready to start?

VERI: Hello Misty, Dusty, Drew *(she obviously ignores Nanny)*.

DREW: Veri, was that your car at Ned's Nursery this morning? I thought I saw it in the lot when I was leaving.

VERI: No, it must have been someone else's. I was having my hair done this morning.

MISTY: What were you doing at Ned's, Drew?

DREW: I'm studying the biological form of castor beans, and Ned's is one of the few nursery's in town that has them in stock.

MORVIN: Is that the biological form of the raw castor bean, or are you looking at a transverse section of the apex of the castor bean?

DREW: The raw castor bean.

MORVIN: You might try the transverse section... you'll be surprised at the overlapping spiral construction.

DREW: How do you know this?

PRE-SALAD (6)

DEADLY VOWS

MORVIN: Just something I read.

VERI: Yes, Morvin just loves to read, don't you Morvin? Did you get that off the internet, or was it in one of your scientific publications?

MORVIN: It was in (*embarrassed*) TV Guide.

NANNY: Castor oil comes from castor beans and is an excellent leather conditioner.

VERI: I know all about castor beans, Miss Nanny. Where are Tye and Mary?

NANNY: They're outside having a cigarette.

VERI: That'll be the last time.

MISTY: What do you mean?

VERI: Tye and Mary have decided to stop smoking after tonight. Sort of a "vow renewal" gift to one another, long life and all that. Although I think it's ridiculous for people their age to renew their vows.

MORVIN: When did you talk to Tye?

VERI: Earlier this evening. He called about a meeting on Monday - you were in the shower. He said he'd talk to you tonight.

DREW: I need to have a word with the cook... I want to take a look at the dinner salads before they alter the random symmetry.

MISTY: How would they do that?

DREW: By putting salad dressing on them. That creates an altered symmetry...

(Misty, Drew and Dusty exit during the salad discussion.)

PRE-SALAD (7)

DEADLY VOWS

MORVIN: Veri, before the others return, I'd like to talk to you. I'd hoped to talk to you before the party, but unfortunately, you were gone almost all day.

VERI: I was having my hair done. What do you want to talk about?

MORVIN: I know about you and Tye.

VERI: You know what?

MORVIN: Don't bother pretending. I know about the affair. I've known for some time.

VERI: How did you find out?

MORVIN: I read a letter you wrote to Tye. As you mentioned earlier, I just love to read.

VERI: I don't know what to say.

MORVIN: There's really nothing left to say, is there.

(Morvin exits)

NANNY: I always say if you don't have something nice to say, say nothing at all.

VERI: Yes, I'd like it very much if you would say nothing at all, Miss Nanny.

NANNY: I was hoping you might have something to say.

VERI: Like what?

NANNY: Now that your affair is out in the open, I was hoping you could use your influence to change Tye's mind about the children.

VERI: Sorry. I have no intention of using my influence to change anything. Use your own influence. After all, your husband is the reason Tye is such a wealthy man.

PRE-SALAD (8)

DEADLY VOWS

NANNY: Tye told you about that?

VERI: Of course. We have no secrets.

NANNY: What are you implying?

VERI: Just that Tye and I have no secrets.

NANNY: *(Realization hits Nanny that Tye has told Veri more.)* I can't believe Tye would sink this low. Which reminds me, if you have rust stains in your sink, rubbing them with a fresh lemon will remove the rust in no time!

VERI: How fascinating.

NANNY: Veri, I'm not going to sit still for this. He's going to clean up his act, or I'll clean it up for him!

(Nanny exits. Tye and Mary enter from opposite end.)

TYE: *(To Veri)* Where is everyone? We can't have the toast until everyone is here.

VERI: You can't have the toast until you renew your vows, Tye, unless you've changed your mind about that?

MARY: Oh Veri, I'm glad you're here. I'd like to include you in the discussion Tye and I were having outside.

TYE: There's nothing else to say about it. Veri and I had an affair that lasted 25 years. I ended it last weekend. End Of Discussion.

MARY: Don't pull that "End Of Discussion" business with me Tyson Toulong! This discussion has just begun.

VERI: You told Mary?

TYE: All right. I admit I made some decisions regarding Veri and the children. But nothing has changed between us.

VERI: Nothing's changed?

MARY: Nothing? It seems to me ending our marriage of 30 years is definitely something.

VERI: I can't believe you told Mary.

TYE: Ending our marriage? Mary, we're here tonight to renew our vows!

VERI: You're still renewing your vows?

MARY: That was YOUR idea, and you didn't tell me about your little affair until after I agreed to this ridiculous ceremony!

VERI: Little affair?!

TYE: Mary, be sensible. Our marriage doesn't have to end. The decisions about the children were made with good intentions. None of them have made their mark - and it is VERY important to keep PUHCTEK's in the family and keep the PUHCTEK's secret.

VERI: Doesn't have to end?

MARY: I do agree with your decisions regarding those good-for-nothing children.

VERI: What do you mean, the marriage doesn't have to end?

TYE: I knew you'd see things my way. It's time to teach them the tricks of the trade.

VERI: You told Mary.

MARY: I think they better learn the trade before you teach them the tricks!

VERI: Why in the world would you tell Mary?

TYE: And Mary, you know you don't want our marriage to end. If the marriage ends, so does the PUHCTEK's Empire.

VERI: You don't want the marriage to end?

MARY: You may find this hard to believe, but I really don't care about the PUHCTEK's Empire, Tye. In fact, I may just go to the press myself with your little secret. That would cause quite a stir in the ketchup community, now wouldn't it.

TYE: You wouldn't dare.

MARY: Just hide and watch.

VERI: Tye, what about us?

(Tye and Mary both glance at Veri without answering.)

MARY: Now, why don't you inform our guests that the ceremony is about to begin, and let's get this evening over with.

TYE: *(Uncomfortably)* Friends, after your salad is served, Pastor O'Sorree will lead us in a brief ceremony for the renewal of our wedding vows.

MARY: VERY brief.

TYE: Then please fill your glasses, for I plan on toasting my most beautiful and understanding wife.

MARY: I have plans for you too, my dear.

TYE: So please, everyone, enjoy your salads. And while we're waiting for Pastor O'Sorree, we have some interesting articles we thought you'd enjoy reading.

(Tye , Mary , and Veri exit, with Veri trying to get Tye's attention.)