

The new Ministry of Health at the mall.

The place is a mess after the Grand Opening celebration. Quinn, Cleo, and Ryan are commiserating.

Cleo

Well, that was a disaster.

Ryan

Yeah. Should have had more food.

Cleo

Not that, Angie. Didn't you see her with Dmitri?

Ryan

Yeah, she seemed to have an especially good time cleaning up his pants.

Cleo

Dmitri seemed to like it too.

Quinn

His pants are the least of it.

Cleo

That Angie. She thought she was the GOAT – running around, taking care of everything, smoothing things out, smoothing **other** things out. Dmitri was eating it up.

Quinn

It's not the pants, you idiot! At least the Boss wasn't there to see it.

Ryan

That **is** odd. Where **was** the boss?

Cleo

Dunno. And he's not actually our boss any more, remember? He's got the steakhouse to run.

Quinn

...and don't you think a steakhouse owner would have some interest in the Grand Opening of the Ministry of Health here?

Cleo

Maybe he didn't get a letter.

Ryan

Maybe Angie was his emissary.

Quinn

Emissary? She's a **waitress**. And still a pain in the ass.

Ryan

As a waitress, she seems to get places though.

Cleo

Yeah. Like Dmitri's pants.

Quinn

Will you quit with the pants? She in with Dmitri now, and Dmitri's in with the mayor. This means Angie schmoozes with the mayor, and now I'll never hear the end of it.

Ryan

Maybe she'll run for office.

Quinn

Kill me now.

Dweezel

(Dweezel enters)

I was hoping I'd find you here.

Quinn

This is not the way I wanted to die.

Dweezel

Quinn, you know Angie, don't you?

Quinn

I'm trying to forget.

Dweezel

Well, she's been making some odd inquiries.

Ryan

What sort of inquires?

Dweezel

About the shop that closed. The one with the... you know.

Ryan

I don't know, but if you do, you'd better spill the beans.

Dweezel

Mumble mumble, blabber blabber.

Ryan

Dweezel!

Dweezel

Okay, okay. She... you know who, is asking around as if there were something... odd... going on at the shop... that I used to work at.

Ryan

Is there?

Dweezel

Well, she said a customer saw something. Something about six old men and a table. Ring a bell?

Ryan

More like a Chinese gong.

Dweezel

Exactly. I played dumb, but I thought you should know.

Quinn

Why does this sound ominous?

Ryan

Who was this customer?

Dweezel

Dunno. She never said.

Cleo

Yeah? Angie comes to you, about your shop, because “somebody saw something”, and you didn’t ask who that somebody was?

Dweezel

She said it was a customer.

Cleo

What did they buy?

Dweezel

I don’t know. I don’t know who it was.

Cleo

No description? Tall? Dark hair? Glasses? You know – the usual stuff. You didn’t ask?

Dweezel

I’m not a spy.

Ryan

Of course not.

Quinn

The important issue is...

Cleo

Angie again.

Ryan

How does she get to be at the center of everything.

Quinn

Now **that’s** ominous.

Dweezel

Shall I make some enquiries?

Ryan

No. You’re not a spy, remember?

Dweezel

Right. Well, back to the dugout.
(Dweezel exits.)

Quinn

Is this guy on our side or not?

Ryan

I don’t know what our side **is** any more.
(Ryan exits after Dweezel, Quinn follows.)

Dweezel!

*(Cleo, alone in the room, sits down to contemplate.
After a moment, Angie enters, unnoticed.)*

Angie

Cleo?

Cleo

What are you doing here?

Angie

I was looking for you.

Cleo

Really? I thought you’d be with that Dmitri guy. You really hit it off yesterday cleaning up his pants – while he was wearing them.

Angie

Jealous?

Cleo Of course not.

Angie Good. He is kinda fun though, when you get to know him.

Cleo Now are you trying to make me jealous?

Angie I would never do that.

Cleo Of course not.

Angie But I do want to talk to you about somebody else.

Cleo Who? The mayor?

Angie Dweezel.

Cleo Dweezel? What about him?

Angie You know his store closed suddenly, right?

Cleo Yeah...

Angie You don't think that's odd?

Cleo It's... inconvenient.

Angie Stores close all the time, right?

Cleo I guess. Why?

Angie So suddenly? One day you show up to work, and it's just not there. No warning, no nothing. Not even a letter. That's not odd? Suppose you came to work tomorrow, and found the food court closed. Permanently.

Cleo That would also be inconvenient. But things open up quicker now too. How long did it take your steakhouse to open? Two weeks?

Angie Something like that. The Boss told me about it when he quit, and a week later I got a letter.

Cleo And you didn't find that odd?

Angie No. Never thought about it.

Cleo There you go. And now?

Angie Now I work there.

Cleo Yes but now you're asking about other things closing. Why?

Angie Well, this customer's been asking odd questions. Does "six old men sat at a table" mean anything to you?

Cleo
(Cleo has a look of surprise but tries to hide it.)
No. Who's asking?

Angie The customer.

Cleo One of the six old men?

Angie I don't know. Just a customer.

Cleo You talked to him and don't know what he looks like?

Angie I don't know. Medium height, brownish hair, I think. He wore a tan corduroy jacket.

Cleo Would you recognize him again?

Angie

Maybe.

Cleo

You’re being coy.

Angie

He thinks there’s something odd going on. Like secret agent stuff. That means he’s noticing things, and isn’t saying what I’m telling you because I trust you.

Cleo

That’s touching, Angie. But if you’re hooking up with Dmitri...

Angie

I’m not. But I did notice something else. Did you know Dmitri has a pet rat now?

Cleo

In his pants?

Angie

No. For real. In all the pandemonium, he saw a rat that was struggling, and took pity on it. Too much wine, if you ask me. But now he has a pet.

Cleo

What does this have to do with this customer?

Angie

Maybe you can tell me?

Cleo

I don’t even **know** Dmitri. Except his pants.

Angie

Why do you keep talking about his pants?

Cleo

Because you were...

Angie

He spilled wine, I stepped in to help. The mayor got a big kick out of the whole thing – thought it was funny.

Cleo

The mayor thinks rats are funny?

Angie

After I talked to him about it.

Cleo

You – ? Never mind – I think you are right. There **is** something odd going on. I just have no idea what it is.

Angie

Keep an eye out, you prairie dog, you!

(blackout)