

Housewarming

By  
Andrea Ang

EXT. THE GATES OF A LUXURIOUS MODERN MANSION

A man is changing the sign of the mansion. He has just scrapped off the old sign and is installing the new one.

CLOSE-UP of the installed sign: "Residence of Madam Le Faux".

INT. THE FOYER OF THE MANSION

We see servants entering and exiting the foyer. They are preparing for a grand dinner party. Some are carrying large bouquet of flowers/floral arrangements. Others are cleaning the large hall: the chandelier, the stair railings, the floor tiles. The interior design is contemporary in style.

One servant whispers to another servant. She rushes off. The camera follows her from behind. She walks down a very long HALLWAY. We see more servants- hanging up decorations, cleaning, etc. She passes through the DINING HALL. We see an extremely long table made of glass. It is very expensive. Candles are being placed as well as other decor. The servant continues to rush by but stops to ask other servants a question. A few shake their head, but one finally responds with a proper answer.

SERVANT

Anubis?

SERVANT 2

Kitchen.

CUT TO

INT. ENTRANCE TO A KITCHEN

This is not the kitchen of the mansion. It is from another house. It is very tiny, belonging in a small house. Old Madam Chie lives in this house. She is beginning to prepare a meal; we only see parts of her (for example, hands, arms, legs, neck, etc) but never her face.

We see her wrinkled hand switch on the light and her figure from waist down in a simple dress that runs below her knees. She reaches for her apron and puts it on.

CLOSE UP of the apron around her neck and her tying it around her waist. She goes to the refrigerator and opens the fridge door. She takes out pork bones, carrots, cabbage, vegetables (ingredients for a stew) and places it on the kitchen counter. She shuts the fridge door.

CUT TO

SHOT OF KITCHEN PANTRY DOOR (OF MANSION) BEING OPENED

The servant is looking into the pantry. She finds Anubis.

SERVANT

There you are. Looking for food again? You know this is not the right place.

SHOT ON Anubis. A grotesquely obese chihuahua looking up at the servant. Servant picks him up.

SERVANT (CONT'D)

Time to get dressed. Madam is waiting.

(Anubis looks up at her)

Don't give me that look.

CUT TO

INT. Madam Le Faux' room.

CLOSE UP of Madam Le Faux' eye. Mascara is being applied to it. She blinks twice. A knock is heard at the door.

MADAM LE FAUX

Come in.

SERVANT

Found him, Madam, in the pantry.

Le Faux gestures for the servant to bring Anubis to her. The The servant comes forward. Le Faux puts out her hand to stop the servant from getting too close. The servant holds Anubis out.

MADAM LE FAUX

(talks to Anubis in a baby voice)

What were you doing in the pantry? You know the food there's all for show. Such a greedy lil' pup. You know it's not time yet. Got to wait for the guests to arrive. And you can't be looking like that. No no no. What will everybody think?

She snaps her fingers. The GROOMER comes to take Anubis. Anubis scowls.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)

Now, now, my little brownie. Do what mummy says. Or else, there'll be nothing for you to eat tonight.

She air kisses Anubis.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)  
Mummy loves you.

The GROOMER takes Anubis to another room.

ZOOM OUT. We see half of her face albeit through a mirror reflection. It is made-up completely. It is a vision of youth. She is inspecting her face.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)  
You are a genius. You know, our guests will never know how I truly look.

ZOOM OUT. We see her whole face now. The other side that isn't made up yet, wears the look of a very aged woman. She is bald and wearing a wig cap. She snaps her fingers- a sign for her make-up artist to finish her look. The make-up artist approaches her.

ZOOM IN on artist's hands drawing her brush.

CUT TO  
OLD MADAM CHIE'S hand drawing a knife. We hear the sound of the sharp knife.

After she is done with the pot, she goes to the oven and pre-heats it. She sets it to 400 degrees. She goes to the fridge and takes out a whole marinated chicken and sets it on the counter.

CLOSE UP of the numbers 400 degrees.

CUT TO

INT. MANSION MAIN HALL.

CLOSE UP on a giant LED projection of time on the wall. The clock shows 19:59.

Madam Le Faux is coming out from her room to the stairs. The camera pans from her feet (decked out in designer heels) and moves up. She is dressed in a white and gold figure-fitting gown with a feather shawl. She is slim and svelte, one leg is showing through a slit in the gown. Her hair (wig) is in an elegant up-do. She is a vision of beauty. In one arm is Anubis, all groomed. She stops just before the first step.

The clock turns 20:00. She looks down at her servants. They cheer for her. She smiles a charming smile.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)  
 My friends, it has been too long.  
 Tonight we feast!

They cheer. She makes a grand gesture to signal her servants to open the doors. The doors open.

PAN TO

EXT. MANSION GROUNDS.

A big crowd has turned up for the party. They're dressed impeccably- the city's elite. They've been waiting for a while. Once the doors open, we see the guests' faces light up with excitement.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW. We see the facade of the mansion. It is modern in its design, square/ rectangular/ tetris-like in its arrangement on the outset. It's worth millions. More cars are coming up the circular driveway, each time dropping off a guest or two.

PAN TO people entering the mansion. They're mingling, hobnobbing. They're being served hors d'oeuvres, wine. Everything is absolutely delicious. Madam Le Faux is seen greeting some guests.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)  
 So good to see you! You look  
 stunning honey. And you too, so  
 handsome.

GUEST  
 LOVE what you did to the place.  
 It's been abandoned for so long.  
 This neighbourhood could use more  
 people like you.

GUEST 2  
 Not abandoned hon, wasn't it owned  
 by uh- what's her name? Madam Chie?

GUEST  
 Oh yes, that old hag. I'm surprised  
 you even remember her. She used to  
 invite us to her home in the  
 beginning but her parties just  
 aren't like this one! What happened  
 to her anyway?

MADAM LE FAUX  
 Does it matter? She moved out and I  
 moved in!

GUEST 2

I just can't believe I've been invited to one of your parties, Madam Le Faux. I've read so much about them in magazines!

MADAM LE FAUX

Oh honey, you know what I always say "whoever who is simple, let them turn in here"!

GUEST

Simple? We're not-

MADAM LE FAUX

It's a joke sweetie, lighten up.

Another servant passes and whispers in her ear. She nods.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)

(to guests)

Excuse me.

She walks away and goes to the stairs. She walks up a few steps, turns and faces the crowd. She rings a bell to get their attention.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, dinner is served!

Applause from the crowd. She gestures towards the dining hall. They begin to move in that direction.

CUT TO

INT. OLD MADAM CHIE'S DINING ROOM.

It is a modestly-sized room. A dark wooden round table sits in the centre. It looks a little dated but is very sturdy. There are exactly 8 chairs placed around the table. There are plates and cutlery already set as well as wine glasses. On the table, two bottles of home-made wine.

Old Madam Chie is setting the last set of cutlery on the table (again we only see her hands/arms and from waist down). She leaves and comes back with her dishes. We see them being placed one by one, slow and steadily. She sets the pot down and roast chicken. A bowl of sauteed vegetables. Rice. It is a very simple meal but made with love and care.

After she finishes setting the table, she pulls out a chair and sits in it.

She places her arms on the table and clasps her hands. She waits. The camera pans to the clock behind her: 9.55pm.

CUT TO

INT. DINING HALL OF MANSION

Loud sounds of revelry. Unbridled laughter. Lots of drinking. The guests are enjoying themselves. Clearly. There is dancing going on. Loud music.

Madam Le Faux is watching everyone. Anubis is licking her fingers.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)

Soon, Anubis, soon. Just five more minutes.

CUT TO

INT. OLD MADAM CHIE'S DINING ROOM.

SHOT OF the clock hand moving. It's 10pm. The sound of the doorbell rings. The camera pans to Old Madam Chie's mouth curled in a smile. She gets up from her seat. The camera follows her from behind. She walks to the door and opens it. A young person (Jenny) is at the door.

JENNY

Sorry, I'm late.

OLD MADAM CHIE

Jenny, so nice to see you. And no, you're right on time.

She turns to lead her into the house.

JENNY

I got your invitation, actually I received two. The other was from Madam Le Faux, it's crazy, I didn't think I'd get invited to go you know? I definitely was tempted to go but I mean, look at me- I don't belong there. Sorry, no offence, I didn't mean it like that.

OLD MADAM CHIE

None taken.

She leads her into the kitchen and gestures for Jenny to take a seat.

JENNY

It's just me?

OLD MADAM CHIE

There will be others.

JENNY

Didn't you use to live in that big mansion? No offence, but wouldn't you say this is a downgrade? Plus it's so hard to find. I mean, sorry, unless you couldn't afford to stay there any longer.

OLD MADAM CHIE

I could afford it, but you know I've overstayed that place. It's nice to be in another part of town, to be where people need me. Would you like a drink?

She begins to pour Jenny a drink. The doorbell rings. She hands Jenny a glass.

OLD MADAM CHIE (CONT'D)

See, I told you there'll be others.

She goes to get her other guests.

CUT BACK TO

INT. THE DINING HALL OF THE MANSION.

We hear a loud, ominous chime. Some of the guests are drunk and still dancing. Others eating like a glutton still. Some are slumped in their chair, asleep from too much eating and drinking. Suddenly, one by one they're feeling painful pangs in their gut.

The camera pans to Madam Le Faux. She looks at Anubis and smiles and then to her servants. She taps a fork to her wine glass- she's about to make a speech.

MADAM LE FAUX

Ladies and gentlemen, do not worry! I am so honoured and pleased that you all are here. My servants and I have been waiting for a long time to find the right city for us to inhabit and might I say, we have found the perfect place. You all are so so gracious for having us. Let this be the night you forget who you are.

She gestures for her servants to close the doors. The sound of the doors shutting is loud. It scares some of her guests.

MADAM LE FAUX (CONT'D)  
 (to her servants)  
 Friends, it is time for us to EAT!

CAMERA PANS to the wall where shadows of monstrous figures are being casted. The eyes of one of the guests enlarge in horror. These figures are emerging from the bodies of her servants. Anubis' tiny chinhuahua shadow morphs into a giant wolf-like shadow. We see these figures feeding on mists (these are the souls of the people). The feeding sequence is being played using shadows.

INT. THE MANSION

We hear the voiceover of Old Madam Chie as the rest of the scene plays out in Madam Le Faux's home.

OLD MADAM CHIE (VO)  
 Welcome to my home. I'm so glad all  
 of you could make it.

WIDE SHOT. We see the half-eaten food, the mess of drink on the floor, and then the guests: some are on the floor, some in a chair. They are all in a daze.

CLOSE-UP SHOT of one of the guests' eyes. It looks lifeless, soulless.

OLD MADAM CHIE (CONT'D)  
 Please enjoy this food and the  
 wine. I made them myself.

We see Madam Le faux in her real form- haggard and vile. She is licking her lips and wiping her mouth with her hand. She has fed well. A servant whispers to her.

MADAM LE FAUX  
 (to servant)  
 Send them out so that they will  
 bring us more. There are lots of  
 them to feed on in this town.

The doors open. One by one, the guests rise from where they are, listless and lifeless. SHOT OF the backs of guests leaving the mansion, their feet dragging on as they walk without any energy.

OLD MADAM CHIE (VO)  
 Remember you are always welcome  
 here. You can bring anyone here  
 anytime.

(MORE)

OLD MADAM CHIE (VO) (CONT'D)

You can rest here for as long as  
you want. Come and be refreshed, so  
that you can walk with life out  
there.

CUT TO

INT. OLD MADAM CHIE'S DINING ROOM.

A table full of people of different ages. They're eating and having conversation. They share what they have. It feels like a family dinner. The CAMERA captures each of their faces and finally lands on Madam Chie's face. We see her whole face. She is smiling kindly.

END.