

# COOKING ON THE STREET

## By Leon Kaye

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ISBN 1-93240-433-3

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*This play is intended to be performed as a monologue. When switching characters, body language as well as vocal nuance should be altered.*

*AT RISE: The stage is empty, but imagine a kitchen counter island with four burners and a chopping area. Behind is a counter with stove. On the front counter is a basket of vegetables: potatoes, celery, onions, garlic etc. Also on the counter are a vial of oil, a saucepan, pot with meat stock, and spices. Behind are a fish tank with two lobsters, electric knife, toaster, melons, and knife holder with knives. JIMMY, a mafioso-type, over 35 years old, stands behind the counter, wearing an apron.*

JIMMY

*(in an Italian accent if possible)* Yo. Welcome to another episode of "Cooking on the Street." I am your culinary raconteur, Jimmy the Finger. That's my AKA. To my close friends, I'm just Jimmy. Just Jimmy and you get to keep all your fingers. *(smiles)* A little cooking humor for you. *(beat, then an angry frown)* Why aren't you laughing? *(HE calms himself.)* Never mind me. I get a little edgy sometimes. It's tough being the *bon vivant* when you owe Paulie Noodles ten grand and his boys are looking for you. *(beat)*

Okay then... in our last episode, we discussed appliances you can use in the event of an attack. The electric knife, the frying pan... Ya got your rolling pin... If your attacker is underwater, ya got your toaster and other electrical accessories. And though your friends may approach you with inexpensive items they say fell off a truck, I suggest you go with quality. *(counts with his fingers)* One, they last longer. Two, they work better. And three, in the event of a homicide, you don't have to explain why the serial numbers are all scratched off.

In today's program, we're gonna get away from the appliances and talk about something else. We're gonna discuss the different foods you can use in event of attack. There's some crazy people out there, so what better way to defend yourself in the kitchen but to make foods that are: *(counts with his fingers)* A -- good for you, B -- that are delicious to eat and C -- can cause great bodily injury to your attacker.

Today, we're gonna learn how to make a lobster bisque. You may want to know what the word, bisque, means. Or you wanna know the word origin or the Latin root or, hey! Look it up! What do I look like, a dictionary?! *(calms himself)* I'm sorry about that again. My girlfriend goes around saying, "someone's got a temper." *(beat)* I mean to say my ex-girlfriend. *(beat)* We broke up last month. Something about my fear of commitment. Fear of commitment? She's wrong on

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that one. I don't have a fear of commitment. It's just that if we got married, and a year later I don't like it, can I get out of it?

*(turns on the stove, uses a sauce pot)* Anyway, let's light our stove. We've got our sauce pot here. And I always like to start with a little peanut oil. *(adds oil)* And you ask why peanut oil? It's because peanut oil has a boiling point that's higher than vegetable or olive oil and will scald anything in sight. You throw a pot of hot peanut oil at some wise guy attacker and he'll be missing some bodda-boom from his bodda-bing.

*(starts chopping garlic)* I always like to cut up some garlic. I hear garlic is very good for your cholesterol. Mediterranean countries use a lot of garlic instead of salt. We do that in Italy, too. *(adds garlic to the oil; shows the audience his hands)* I always like to rub my hands with the garlic before throwing the cloves in the pot, 'cause a little garlic to the attacker's eyes will blind him for a few seconds - enough time for me to get to the twelve-inch knives. *(mimes the hands to the face and shows where HE keeps his knives)* Okay, that garlic looks nice. We sauté the garlic there. A nice Spanish word for all of you.

So let's add some spices. And unfortunately, spices are not that useful in case of an attack. They just add taste to your meal. *(adds the spices)* Some fresh basil, maybe some thyme if you've got thyme. I always say, don't do the crime if you can't do the thyme. Ha ha. *(breaks up)* A little prison humor I'm throwing in there. Always good to laugh when you're doing a nickel in Greenhaven. Maybe some cloves if you got 'em. And you let that simmer a little.

Then we're gonna add our stock. I've got here four cups of venison stock. And I like to use venison, especially when I'm driving fast through Duchess County. Waste not, want not, right? *(pours the stock into the pot)* Always remember - if you're gonna use fresh deer stock, it don't keep for more than two hours. You don't want any of your guests getting food poisoning, heaving chunks all over your new *Corinthian leather* couch. *(points to a fellow in the audience)* This guy knows what I mean. *(beat)* So if you accidentally hit a deer and you live more than sixty miles from the site of the collision, it's best you just leave it by the side of the road. Give him back to nature. The predatory animals know what to do. *(mixes his stock)* And if you don't have deer stock, chicken or beef will do fine. To an attacker, *any* boiling pot of liquid ain't good.

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