

SAVOR

by

23-DE06-W31

With the help of his wife and three daughters, a grieving chef learns there's no time like the present to savor each moment.

FADE IN.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bustling. SOUS CHEFS focused. SERVERS move briskly carrying gourmet food in and out.

Symphony of SIZZLING butter, WHIRRING mixers, WHISKING sauces, and other CLINKS and CLANKS of metal spoons on pots and pans.

A SERVER in white shirt and black vest busts through kitchen doors. As soon as they shut:

SERVER

Apps have been served to Table 31.

CHEF DAVID, 40, moves determined across the kitchen.

CHEF DAVID

Make sure to wax that table.

SERVER

Yes, Chef. I've got champagne on ice headed out as we speak.

CHEF DAVID

Excellent.

(to the kitchen staff)

Fire up Table 31. Someone get me a pan good and hot.

SOUS CHEFS

Heard, Chef!

Everyone moves with extra pep. Chef David grabs a mortar and pestle, picking at fresh herbs and seasonings.

He grinds for a few seconds, checking the scent and texture. Satisfied, he covers a thick rib-eye in his special rub.

He crosses the kitchen to the stove:

CHEF DAVID

Behind.

Staff part like the Red Sea.

Chef David moves in front of a piping hot cast iron pan waiting for him. He checks the heat with his hand. It's perfect.

Lowering the steak into the pan with tongs, then:

SIZZLE!

Steam releases in front of the Chef. He's pleased.

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)
How's it going, crew?

SOUS CHEFS
Sauce is four minutes out, Chef. Veg on
the grill.

CHEF DAVID
Way to hustle. Who's got my butter?

One SOUS CHEF rushes with a crock labeled "Chef David's
Special Butter."

SOUS CHEF 1
Right here, Chef.

Chef David grabs the crock without looking, flipping the
steak. Another loud SIZZLE.

Chef David bathes the steak in butter. Over and over.

CHEF DAVID
Anyone in the weeds?

SOUS CHEFS
No, Chef.

CHEF DAVID
That's what I like to hear! Keep up the
good work.

Chef David continues to bathe the steak while peering
over his shoulder.

He takes stock of every scent. Every movement.

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)
Sounds like we're getting close, crew.

One sous chef to another in the B.G.:

SOUS CHEF 2
How does he do that?

SOUS CHEF 3
He's got a sixth sense.

CHEF DAVID

Plate up!

Chef David rests layers of veg, then meat. Sauce swirled around the plate. His movements like a choreographed dance.

Sous Chef 1 watches nearby.

Chef David adorns it with a pat of his special butter. He grabs a sprig of thyme and lays it gingerly on top. He wipes the plate one last time, then:

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)

Table 31 is in the pass.

A server standing by grabs the plate from the noisy kitchen and out the double doors.

SOUS CHEF 1

Perfection as usual, Chef.

CHEF DAVID

Let's just hope he's pleased!

Sous Chef 1 and Chef David spy out the double doors to--

INT. RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - SAME NIGHT

The server slides the plate onto Table 31 in front of an unassuming ELDERLY MAN, sitting alone. A regular of no real fame.

ELDERLY MAN

Wow. Would you look at that! My compliments to the Chef, as usual.

SERVER

Of course, sir. And Happy Birthday.

ELDERLY MAN

How many birthdays can one have in a year? I must be a hundred and eleven by now!

SERVER

As often as you come in, sir. (beat) As usual.

ELDERLY MAN

I'm sure I don't deserve it.

Nodding back towards the kitchen:

SERVER

He seems to think you do.

Lifting his glass to toast the kitchen, other hand over his heart:

ELDERLY MAN

I'm the grateful one.

The server leaves him to himself as he bows his head to pray.

INT. DAVID'S HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

Chef David sneaks in quietly through his kitchen into the living room. He plops himself onto a high back chair, kicking off his shoes.

He lets out a big SIGH.

On a table next to him, a framed photo: David, his beautiful WIFE, and THREE GIRLS, 4, 9, and 13. He picks up the frame to study it.

COBIE

Daddy?

An angelic COBIE, now 5, in bedhead and rainbow pajamas, interrupts David's thoughts.

CHEF DAVID

Cobie. Honey. You should be asleep.

COBIE

I was waiting for you.

CHEF DAVID

You were. Hmm. Come here, sweetheart.

Cobie crawls into her Daddy's lap. He kisses her invisible halo and closes his eyes.

INT. DAVID'S HOME - NEXT MORNING

Another symphony of sounds: WHIRRING mixer, SCRAPING bowls, CHOPPING of chocolate and nuts. And lots of GIGGLES. Then, a CRASH of shattering glass.

David, still in his chair and greasy clothes, startles out of sleep.

COBIE (O.S.)

Oops.

RUBY (O.S., PRE-LAP)

It's okay, Cobes. We can clean it up.

David bounding to the kitchen. He stops short to see Cobie and Ruby, now 14, in a sea of baking supplies.

Wyn, now 10, nurses sugar and butter in a pot on the stove.

CHEF DAVID

Is everyone okay? I heard a crash.

COBIE

Daddy!

Cobie rushes to give her dad a hug. Ruby, sweeping glass.

RUBY

We tried not to wake you.

WYN

Cobie dropped a cup.

COBIE

I didn't mean to.

RUBY

It was an accident.

CHEF DAVID

That's all right. As long as no one is hurt.

David circles the kitchen and hugs his girls.

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)

So what do we have going on here?

WYN

We're baking a cake! From scratch, just like you taught us.

Chef David grabs an apron, eager to lead.

CHEF DAVID

Wow. What kind of cake?

RUBY

German chocolate.

COBIE

Mommy's favorite.

A beat. David softens.

CHEF DAVID

It sounds delicious. What can I do to help?

RUBY

Wyn's working on the caramel for the frosting.

WYN

The batter is mostly done. We're preheating the oven.

CHEF DAVID

I'm impressed. Did you flour the pans?

RUBY

That was Cobie's job. Before she broke the glass.

CHEF DAVID

Well, let's start with that. Ruby, would you pass me the flour please?

Ruby passes the opened bag of all-purpose flour, puffs of dust escaping along the way.

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)

(coughing)

I didn't know there was gonna be a snowstorm!

RUBY

Sorry, Dad.

CHEF DAVID

It's okay, kiddo. All right, Cobie. We'll put some in here and then toss it around like this.

COBIE

Yes, Chef!

GIGGLES and then--

David's hands over Cobie's, they swirl and pat the pan until it's coated.

CHEF DAVID

There you go! Great job!

Just then, David's phone buzzes in his pocket. He looks down and sees a text message come through.

It reads: Thinking of you today. Love, Mom.

David puts the phone back in his pocket. He looks over at his girls:

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)
Do you three think you can handle this
while I get washed up?

WYN
Yep!

RUBY
We got it, Dad.

CHEF DAVID
Thank you.

He kisses Cobie's invisible halo as she licks chocolate
off her fingers.

INT. BEDROOM - SOMETIME AFTER

Freshly showered David sits on the edge of his floral
bedspread putting on his shoes.

On the nightstand nearby, a wedding photo of David and
his bride. Beside it, a desk calendar on the month of
May.

David buries his face in his hands, wiping away the
tired. And the grief.

He musters up strength and leaves the room.

INT. DAVID'S HOME - KITCHEN

David turns the corner to a messy kitchen, just as Ruby
pulls the cake from the oven. It's perfectly risen.

CHEF DAVID
Wow! Girls, that smells incredible!

Wyn snuggles up to her dad.

WYN
Do you think she'll like it?

CHEF DAVID
I think she'll love it.

Ruby picks up Cobie and snuggles her, too.

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)
Why don't you ladies wash up while the
cake cools.

RUBY
Okay. Come on Cobes. Let's pick out
something pretty.

Wyn kisses her Daddy on the cheek before she follows her sisters. David marvels at his girls.

David shifts gears and begins cleaning the kitchen. He stops over the sink--

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. DAVID'S HOME - KITCHEN - 2 YEARS EARLIER

CHOP! CHOP! CHOP! CHOP!

Chef David dices veggies with precision and speed.

He alternates, nursing a hot pot bubbling behind him on the stove. Moving quick, with intensity.

A colorful blur runs through the kitchen, bumping him.

CHEF DAVID
Watch out! You can't just
run through here like that.
It's dangerous.

WYN
Sorry, Daddy. Can I help?

CHEF DAVID
Not right now.

WYN (CONT'D)
Aw.

Chef David immediately back to work. He doesn't notice Wyn's disappointment.

3 year old Cobie bouncing, eyes peeking over the counter:

COBIE
Daddy, I want to chop
something.

CHEF DAVID
Not now.

COBIE
Please?

CHEF DAVID
(exasperated stuttering)
Just give me a minute.

Cobie pouts. Chef David marches on.

ANNABELLE, 35, lovely, graceful. A real breath of fresh air:

ANNABELLE
Come here, sweetie.

Annabelle cups Cobie's face in her delicate hands:

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)
Will you help Ruby set the table?

Cobie flutters off. Annabelle touches the small of her husband's back, making him pause:

CHEF DAVID
Anna, I'm trying to get dinner on the table.

ANNABELLE
I know. And I appreciate it.

CHEF DAVID
But...?

ANNABELLE
The girls won't be little forever. Don't miss the chance to teach them while you can.

Chef David hangs his head low with a BIG SIGH.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)
They just want to learn from the best!

She kisses his cheek, leaving him to his thoughts, but "Chef Mode" is engaged and it's hard to turn off.

BACK TO THE PRESENT--

David, sheepish, plays porter once again, soaking utensils in the sink. He dries his hands on a towel, just as his girls emerge dressed in bright florals:

RUBY
We're ready.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

David and his girls carry a picnic basket through the yard. Cobie takes off ahead of them and stands in front of a headstone.

WYN
Cobie, wait for me!

Wyn chases behind her. David wraps his arms around Ruby as they walk together.

AT THE GRAVESITE --

The girls stand side by side staring at the stone. Wyn wipes a tear from her eye.

COBIE
Hi, Mommy. We made you a cake.

RUBY
German chocolate. You're favorite.

It's David's turn to wipe away tears.

CHEF DAVID
Should we set up right here?

The girls nod in agreement and get to work.

They spread out a picnic blanket. Cobie and Wyn set out plates and forks.

David pulls out the cake carrier, Ruby the slicer.

Ruby serves her sisters first. Then her Dad.

RUBY
I gave you the biggest slice.

CHEF DAVID
Just like your mom would do.

Just then, David notices a man approaching. In the man's hands, a bouquet of flowers.

David puts down his plate.

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)
Be right back.

ELSEWHERE IN THE YARD --

Away from the girls, David goes to meet the Elderly Man from the restaurant.

ELDERLY MAN
Hello, David.

CHEF DAVID
Mr. Matthew. I didn't realize you'd be here.

ELDERLY MAN
I had to come. If it weren't for her, I
wouldn't be alive right now.

Mr. Matthew places his hand on his heart.

CHEF DAVID
(beat) We have cake. Would you like some?

David motions toward his girls and their picnic.

BACK TO THE PICNIC --

The girls watch as David and Mr. Matthew walk toward them. Cobie climbs into Ruby's lap.

ELDERLY MAN
Hello, ladies.

THE GIRLS
Hello.

ELDERLY MAN
(toward the headstone)
Thank you.

He kisses his hand and touches the headstone before dressing it with flowers.

CHEF DAVID
Girls, this is Mr. Matthew. He's going to
join us for our picnic.

Both men sit.

WYN
Did you know our mom?

MR. MATTHEW
Well, not exactly.

Mr. Matthew looks at Dave for some guidance.

CHEF DAVID
Do you girls remember me telling you that
Mommy was sharing her organs with people
who really needed them?

The girls nod.

COBIE
I remember.

CHEF DAVID

Well, Mr. Matthew here is one of those people.

The girls study Mr. Matthew, intrigued, but unsure.

MR. MATTHEW

I was at the right place. At the right time. (beat) She gave me her heart.

Mr. Matthew touches his chest once more.

Ruby and Wyn fight tears. David wrapping them in his arms.

Then, Cobie bum rushes Mr. Matthew and places her head on his chest. Mr. Matthew cradles her in his arms.

COBIE

It's beating! I can hear her.
(whispering to the heart)
I love you, Mommy.

Mr. Matthew choking back his own tears.

MR. MATTHEW

Thank you for sharing her with me. I am pretty sure I got the best part.

CHEF DAVID

No.
(motioning to his girls)
The best parts of her are right here.

He hugs them closer. Cobie attacking her Dad, collapsing into a ball of giggles.

CHEF DAVID (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. Why don't we have more cake?

Ruby serves Mr. Matthew cake as they share stories and laugh in the background. Voices fading to:

HEADSTONE READS:

Annabelle Bonheur

March 1, 1984 - May 31, 2022

"There's no time like the present to savor each moment."

FADE TO BLACK.