

THE GHASTLY ARMS

by Ken Bradbury



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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Fred and Penny, a young couple

Lothar, the owner of The Ghastly Arms Bed
and Breakfast

Embalmia, wife of Lothar

Istanbul, a resident

FRED: (*entering, holding a suitcase*) Come on, Penny! This is the place.

PENNY: (*stumbling in with her own load of cases*) I'm coming! I'm coming! (*stops, looks around*) This is it?

FRED: (*reading a note in his hand*) The Ghastly Arms Bed and Breakfast. "A Night to Remember."

PENNY: You got that right. (*turns to go*) I'm leaving.

FRED: (*stopping her*) What?

PENNY: This place is creepy, Fred! Who decorates with colored bats and cobwebs?

FRED: That's all part of the charm, Penny. It must be their gimmick. Come on, you're the one who likes scary movies. This is gonna be a blast.

PENNY: Blast away, Fred. I'm outa here. (*but as she turns to go, she runs into the very eerie figure of Lothar, a frightening looking man whose expressions never seem to change ... and who speaks in a strange accent*)

LOTHAR: Welcome. (*Penny screams and grabs onto Fred*) Welcome to Ghastly Arms Bed and Breakfast. My name is Lothar and I am your host. Here! Let me get those for you! (*shouting*) Istanbul! (*and a very strange little creature, Istanbul, shuffles in out of nowhere, whisks the suitcases from the couple's arms and is gone again in a flash*)

FRED: Wh ... What was that?

LOTHAR: The butler, Istanbul. He's very quick ... and he never ... makes ... a mistake. (*smiles*)

PENNY: Oh, gosh. Fred, there's a Holiday Inn just down the

...

LOTHAR: (*covering his ears and letting out a wail*) Ahhhhh! Don't say that word!

PENNY: Holiday Inn?

LOTHAR: (*wails again*) Ahhhhhh!

FRED: Hey! Sorry! So ... I mean, what time do we eat?

LOTHAR: Dinner is now being served.

FRED: Great!

PENNY: Let's go!

FRED: Penny, this was your idea.

PENNY: I changed my mind. Godzilla here gives me the creeps.

LOTHAR: Lothar. (*moving very close to her*) The name is Lothar.

FRED: (*stepping in between them*) Let's eat! (*Lothar gestures them to a table and two chairs.*)

LOTHAR: This way, please. My darling wife, Embalmia, will be with you shortly. (*he leaves*)

PENNY: Embalmia? Did he say Embalmia? His wife is named after an undertaker?

FRED: It's a joke, Penny. That's their gimmick. A scary old mansion, a creepy butler. I'll bet these guys are actors in the off season.

EMBALMIA: (*suddenly appearing, another ghastly figure with the same expressionless stare as Lothar*) Good --- Evening. Your salad. (*she places the salad in front of the couple*) What sort of dressing would you prefer?

FRED: What do you have?

EMBALMIA: White stuff, clear stuff, lumpy stuff, and some really interesting red stuff.

PENNY: Fred!

FRED: We'll take the ... uh ... white stuff.

EMBALMIA: (*smiles an evil smile*) Excellent choice. (*she turns to a side table and picks up a small container of the white stuff and begins to pour it on Fred's salad*) Tell me when.

FRED: (*after she's poured a bit*) Uh ... that'll be fine. (*Embalmia heads for Penny's salad*)

PENNY: (*stopping her*) When! When! I ... uh ... I'm allergic to white stuff.

EMBALMIA: (*smiles*) Interesting. (*and she exits*)

PENNY: (*as Fred begins to eat*) Fred! Don't eat that!

FRED: It's just salad!

PENNY: I saw it move! Fred, I swear I saw your salad move!

FRED: Don't be ridiculous.

EMBALMIA: (*entering*) Oh. Sorry. (*reaches into Fred's salad, pulls out something, looks at it, pinches the life out of it with a grimace, then throws it to the floor and stomps on it ... then Embalmia exits.*)

FRED: Oh, my goodness.

PENNY: Fred ...!

FRED: Oh my goodness. (*Just then Istanbul scurries across the area, making a strange breathing/giggling noise*)

FRED & PENNY: Oh, my goodness!

LOTHAR: (*entering*) Done with the salad?

FRED: Yes. Very. Delicious.

LOTHAR: You hardly touched it.

FRED: It was trying to touch me. What's the main course?

LOTHAR: A surprise. (*he smiles, takes their plates and exits*)

PENNY: This is how people die, you know.

FRED: Penny!

PENNY: They go away for the weekend then suddenly their newspapers begin collecting on the doorstep, the grass gets long, and finally the police come looking after their bodies have decomposed in a Georgia swamp.

FRED: It's an act, Penny! It's just an act! Trust me!

PENNY: I trust you! I just don't trust ...

EMBALMIA: (*entering holding two plates*) Trust me. You'll like this.

PENNY: What is it?

EMBALMIA: Now, or in its former life?

PENNY: Oh, no.

EMBALMIA: A casserole.

FRED: What kind?



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