

OUR LADY OF

By Bruce Pearl

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Cast of Characters

Ginger Mahmood: 45-55, a former stripper married to plastic surgeon Dr. Wassim Mahmood

Lourdes Zimmer: 45-55, a recently widowed mail order bride from Columbia.

Two Hispanic men, non-speaking roles who appear on only the last page.

Synopsis

Ginger, a former stripper who has married Dr. Wassim Mahmood after the Doctor's first wife died "accidentally" in Pakistan, and fearing the same fate is in store for her, interviews Lourdes, a Columbian mail order bride whose husband recently died in a construction "accident," ostensibly to be her maid. After hiring Lourdes, who helps Ginger with her problem, Ginger has to come to terms with some unintended consequences.

Scene

Palm Beach, Florida

Time

1995

Scene 1

SETTING: Kitchen of the Palm Beach home of GINGER and Dr. Wassim Mahmood.

AT RISE: Play Vacation by the Go Go's. Ginger, wearing a summer dress, is sitting with LOURDES ZIMMER at the table.

GINGER

So, it's Lourdes, as in Our Lady of?

LOURDES

No, it's Lour-des. You say it the Spanish way. You have no help here, Mrs. Mahmood, to open the door for you now that Viviana left to go to LA with her husband?

GINGER

The Filipino maids are in the laundry room watching soaps. Do you have a -

LOUDES

(Handing over a printout) All I have is this - from the Latina introduction list for marriage -

GINGER

"Your future wife is in the mail." (She lights up a cigarette.) That's right, you and Viviana were both mail order brides from Columbia.

LOURDES

Yes, ma'am.

GINGER

Well, your English is OK - better than the Filipinos. You don't drink or smoke?

LOURDES

I drink now sometimes - socially.

GINGER

You don't have email -

LOURDES

Not then, so we write letters to correspond before they come to Cali where I lived -

GINGER

In Columbia, with Viviana -

LOURDES

Yes - they have parties for the men who come and we get - you know - we dress up for them.

GINGER

You look each other over -

LOURDES

Yes, is how I meet Mr. Zimmer, in person.

GINGER

Is that what you called him?

LOURDES

I didn't call him anything.

GINGER

(Reading) "You're virtuous, sensitive, hardworking and optimistic. Looking for a man who is a kind, loving person with a good job." And that was Mr. Zimmer?

LOURDES

He was OK at first - except when he drank too much. I had to be careful what I say then or it would cause him to hit me. He was strong too for a guy his age. He was 58.

GINGER

When you were married?

LOURDES

When he died.

GINGER

I believe Viviana said he was killed? There was an accident -

LOURDES

He was disappeared for a few days until they find his mixer truck out by Hialeah with a pile of concrete next to it, but no reason for the truck to be there. So, the police break the concrete open and they find Mr. Zimmer.

GINGER

Murdered?

LOUDES

They believe so, yes, his hands were tied behind his back.

GINGER

The police talked to you?

LOURDES

Of course. He was my husband.

GINGER

I mean did they think you had anything to do with it?

LOURDES

There was a suspicion that friends of mine from Columbia could be the ones who did it. Someone who was my enemy told this to the police.

GINGER

Did it have anything to do with drugs?

LOURDES

Mrs. Mahmood, my husband, he drove a cement truck. And, with respect, not all Columbians are drug dealers.

GINGER

Then why would anyone want to kill him?

LOURDES

Who knows? This person, he told the police I got the Columbian guys to do it because my husband was always beating me. One time he beat me so hard, my shoulder separated so I couldn't work.

GINGER

Did you tell the Columbians he was beating you?

LOURDES

Everyone knew. Sometimes he would hit me in public, when he was drinking so much.

GINGER

So, then, maybe the Columbian guys did do it?

LOURDES

Who knows. (Staring) Those men -

GINGER

The gardeners - they're Pakistani.

LOURDES

They don't seem to work so hard. I always had a garden back in Columbia. Here, when I was married, I worked for Miss Olympia. We cleaned office buildings in Miami. She called her service "Cleaning with Biblical Integrity." I don't know what that means, but she would say things to us from the Holy Bible about not dancing when we worked - though I don't know any women who danced when we worked. "Read the Book of Judges," Miss Olympia would say, "the twenty-first verse." It was about men waiting for women, the daughters of Shiloh, to come out to dance so they, the men, could take them by force to be their wives. Like we might catch the eye of the men who were working late, like they might be waiting for us.

