

Selection from *Diplomatic Relations*
By Greg Edwards

VEENA

I'm afraid there's nothing fishy about Portikrania, aside from its Salmon Reprocessing Plant.

WESTWOOD

Really?

VEENA

I swear on the life of my very own mother—God rest her soul—that Portikrania is totally, 100% legit.

WESTWOOD

And I assume you have proof?

VEENA

Of course!

(SHE takes a magazine from the table.)

Here's its national magazine. If Portikrania didn't exist, could we have a copy of *Portikrania Weekly*?

WESTWOOD

No, I suppose not—

(Studies the magazine)

Hey, this is *Portugal Weekly*. You just crossed out the “gal” and wrote in “krania.”

VEENA

Why, Inspector! I find that racist!

WESTWOOD

What? I just said, “You crossed out the—”

VEENA

And again! I will not have my daughter exposed to such language.

WESTWOOD

Your daughter's not here.

VEENA

(Calling to the rear office)

Jennifer, come here!

(To WESTWOOD)

There then, who's not here now?

WESTWOOD

Mayor Hinckle, will you please—

VEENA

No, I will not please! I will not entertain a single request from a misportikraniathrope such as you! In fact, I can't stay in this room any longer. It holds too many unpleasant memories.

(SHE walks to the front door.)

WESTWOOD

Step through that door, and I'll arrest you on the spot.

VEENA

(Walks to the stairwell door)

Fine, then I'll step through *this* door, or does your warrant prevent me from visiting the second floor of my own embassy? And in case you get any more racist ideas, Inspector Intolerance, I'm taking *Portugal Weekly* with me!

(SHE grabs the magazine and exits.)

WESTWOOD

(Realizes her mistake)

Wait, what? Mayor!

(HE chases after her. JENNIFER enters from the rear office.)

JENNIFER

Mother? Mother?!

(TONY bursts through the front door with a globe.)

TONY

Mayor Hinckle, I brought another map, and I—

(HE sees JENNIFER and stops dead.)

JENNIFER

Hello.

TONY

Hello.

TONY / JENNIFER

Did you see—? / She's not here.

(Beat.)

She's not here? / Did you see—?

TONY

I have to go.

JENNIFER

But—

TONY

My mother. She's waiting for me. I bought her tickets to the Ice Capades, her favorite kind of capade.

JENNIFER

I understand. Tell your mother I said—

(SHE chokes back a sob, uttering some nonsense syllables in the process.)

TONY

Is that Portikranian?

(The sob breaks free, and JENNIFER starts crying. TONY tries to comfort her. The globe in his hands makes this awkward, so he places it on the reception desk.)

TONY (CONT'D)

Jennifer, what's wrong?

JENNIFER

You hate me.

TONY

No.

JENNIFER

Then why do you always try to get away from me? At first, I thought it was my perfume, so I changed to Estee Lauder, and when Estee Lauder didn't work, I ground up bits of cumin, your favorite spice, and put them in my hair. I smelled like minute rice, but I didn't care; it would all be worth it if you just noticed me.

TONY

I always noticed you.

JENNIFER

But you never said a word.

TONY

I'm no good with words, Jennifer. I clam up, like one of those—what do you call 'em?

JENNIFER

Clams?

TONY

Yeah. Designing buildings, though. That's how I express myself. And this embassy, you inspired everything in it—the columns, the ceiling, the bust. I built it all, Jennifer, all for you.

JENNIFER

Oh, Tony!

TONY

And that ain't nothing. If I could, I'd build you the grandest embassy they ever saw. The Embassy of Jennifer I'd call it, and folks would come from everywhere to visit. From Argentina all the way to the People's Republic of People. But no matter how beautiful and grandiose-like it was, it would never be as beautiful and grandiose as you.

JENNIFER

Why didn't you tell me sooner?

TONY

I was scared, Jennifer. Scared what a goddess like you would think of an awkward, knuckleheaded, pale galoot like me.

JENNIFER

Oh, Tony! You're not pale.

TONY

(Gets down on one knee)

Jennifer Hinckle, will you marry me?

JENNIFER

Yes, Tony, yes!

TONY

I know it won't be easy. Your family's in local politics, mine's the mafia. We aren't exactly bedfellows. But once my family sees that the Embassy of Portikrania is on the level, I know they'd let us marry!