

PROUD PARTNERS

"Deadfool"

Written by E.J. Rupert

© E.J. Rupert for
Jimmy Rupe Productions
Milwaukee, WI
(414) 550-0547
ejrupert@yahoo.com

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A Latin boy named Luis sits at the table, eating a bowl of cereal, while the narrator, VINCE DE LA CRUZ, 30's, speaks offscreen [*in italics*]. The cereal box, eggs, toast, a carton of milk, and a glass of juice adorn the table.

VINCE

Nothing completes Luis' morning more than eating a bowl of his favorite cereal...

INSERT - THE CEREAL BOX, WHICH SAYS:

"Christ Chrunch"

VINCE

... "Christ Chrunch".

BACK TO SCENE

VINCE

It's filled with vitamins and minerals, has oats, nuts, honey, and marshmallow-flavored pieces of Our Lord and Savior in every bite. With Bible verses on every box. You know, because that's what Latino kids think about daily. And it's part of this complete breakfast. And it's also part of why me and my family are in the mess we're in!

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Vince's father, VINCENT, 50's, sits at his desk and reads the Bible. Organ music PLAYS in the background.

VINCE

This is my father, Vincent De La Cruz. Devout Christian. Rich beyond belief. Good-looking guy. And I hate him. He even named me after him to make sure I'm forever cursed. But call me "Vince". Please, for the love of God, call me, "Vince".

(pause)

Okay, I don't hate him. I just really, really dislike him. It wasn't always that way, though.

SFX: Bell tower CHIMES!

VINCENT
Yes! Quittin' time!

He tosses the Bible, rips off his robe, and runs away.

MONTAGE - LIFE OF THE DE LA CRUZ MEN - FLASHBACK

-- Vince, as a toddler, sits on the living room floor and plays with toys.

VINCE
That's me, enjoying my little toys. And there's Dad and Mom coming in right now.

-- Vincent enters, holding the hand of a pretty Latin lady.

VINCE (CONT'D)
For this week.

-- Vince sits and watches TV. Vincent enters with an African-American lady on his arm.

VINCE (CONT'D)
And there's Dad and Mom the week after.

-- Christmas decorations adorn the living room. Vincent and his son wear "ugly sweaters". A blond, curvaceous lady wearing a skimpy Santa suit enters and gives them both wrapped gifts.

VINCE (CONT'D)
And there's Mom for Christmas! Get the idea?
(sighs)
You would think the inventor of Christ Chrunch would be some big ol' Bible-thumper. No way. My dad got around more than a reverend's daughter!

-- Vincent and his son, as a teenager, sit at a restaurant.

VINCE (CONT'D)
It's because of that cereal. It made him an instant celebrity. And I ain't gonna lie, I helped reap the benefits.

-- A voluptuous female enters with her equally voluptuous teenaged daughter. They both wave to the men, who wave back.

-- At their house, Vincent and his son, now an adult, exit from their rooms, which are next to each other. They wear nothing but pajama bottoms.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Boy, if those walls could talk. Might as well have, since they were so thin!

-- The men smirk at each other and prepare to shake each other's hand. They pause, tremble, pull their hands back, and return to their rooms.

-- The men sit at a basketball game with others.

VINCE (CONT'D)

But when my dad really wanted to be a father, he took me to basketball games. Front row seats at the Lake Charles Crawfish game!

-- A whistle BLOWS off-screen. The crowd CHEERS and stands up.

VINCENT

Yeah!

VINCE

My attention was on something else. I looked to my right, and I saw the most beautiful woman ever.

-- The woman, named GRIZELDA VARGAS, 20's, looks at him, who approaches her.

VINCE (CONT'D)

This was more than a woman, so I had to use some heavy game.

VINCE (CONT'D)

(to Grizelda)

How ya doin'?

GRIZELDA

Hi.

They shake hands.

VINCE

I've had my share of sexcapades, but one look at Grizelda made me change my ways. So I married her...

-- He and Grizelda stand and kiss in front of a minister.

VINCE (CONT'D)
*...and brought her along for my
 sexcapades.*

-- A half-naked woman leaves a room. Vince and Grizelda wave at her.

VINCE (CONT'D)
*Now I suggested to her that if we gonna
 be bad, then we gon' be bad together.*

-- Vince walks down the hallway of Vincent's house. Grizelda sneaks out of Vincent's bedroom, spots Vince, and pauses.

GRIZELDA
 Vince!

VINCE
Apparently, she only heard part of that.

VINCE (CONT'D)
 (dryly)
 No, Grizelda, you got the wrong room.
 That's my father's room.

Vincent runs out of his room, wearing a tee shirt and boxers.

VINCENT
 (drunkenly)
 Son, it's not as bad as it looks!
 (pause)
 Your wife is a real good lay!

He GIGGLES. Vince storms away.

VINCE
*So I left my player ways behind, moved
 far away from Lake Charles, Louisiana...*

-- A shot of a plane flying.

VINCE (CONT'D)
*...ended up in Gurnee, Illinois, and
 became a family man.*

-- Vince, dressed more neatly, poses with his family at a photo shoot. His family consists of wife, MARISOL, 30's, and son, HECTOR, 7.

VINCE (CONT'D)
*What happened to Grizelda? Who cares?
 Now, what happened to my father? Well...*

END OF MONTAGE

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Crowds of people dance, drink, and CHAT. Two LADIES converse with each other.

LADY #1

Girl, all the players from the Crawfish are here!

LADY #2

This got to be the party of the year! And these guys lost the game!

The COACH walks past them. The ladies stop him.

LADY #1

Hey, Coach, sorry about tonight.

COACH

(slurred speech)

Huh? Oh, already forgotten. Where's De La Cruz?

LADY #2

Out on the balcony.

They look to the balcony and GASP.

LADY #2 (CONT'D)

And I do mean, "On the balcony"!

Vincent dances on top of the ledge and holds two bottles of champagne in his hands. The coach and the ladies run to him.

COACH

Vincent, get down from there!

LADY #2

Don't jump! You still have a whole life ahead of you! Look at your cereal empire!

LADY #1

Yeah! I know you're upset about your son deserting you, and you never seeing your grandson, but things will turn up!

VINCENT

(drunkenly)

I know! I ain't upset about that!

LADY #1
 (frowns)
 Dang. You not? Are you sure?

VINCENT
 And speaking of turning up, that's
 exactly what I'm doin'! Woo-hoo!

He does a little dance.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 And if I fall, my God will protect me!

COACH
 Will you just get down, please? You're
 freaking everybody out!

VINCENT
 Alright. And don't worry, Coach. Soon,
 Christ Chrunch will be the official
 cereal of your Lake Charles Crawfish!

He begins to step down.

LADY #2
 (to Vincent)
 Is that your beer bottle there?

Vincent steps on the bottle, slips, and falls backwards.
 Everything around him freezes, as well as his body.

VINCENT
 Shoot. I didn't even get to pitch my new
 "Jesus Flakes" cereal!

Everything around him resumes. He falls off of the
 balcony.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 AAARRRRGGGHHH!!!

The coach and the ladies GASP.

INT. DE LA CRUZ HOUSE - EVENING

Hector walks down the hallway and looks at his phone. He
 KNOCKS on a closed door.

VINCE (O.C.)
 What is it, son? We're busy here!

HECTOR

Oh, don't I know it! Look, while you're working on a son or daughter, you might've lost a father!

Hector peeks his head out the door.

VINCE

What??

INT. DE LA CRUZ HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Vince paces back and forth. Marisol and Hector sit on the couch.

VINCE

I never wanted Dad to drop dead for real!

MARISOL

(to Hector)

Here's a lesson, son. Be careful what you wish for.

(pause)

Oh yeah, and no stepping on cracks!

VINCE

I guess I better get ready.

Marisol gets up.

MARISOL

But Vince, are you sure he's dead? According to social media, he's been dead five times already in the past year!

VINCE

They want me to come back to Louisiana for the funeral, so yeah, he's dead.

MARISOL

Oh, good.

Vince and Hector stunningly look at her.

MARISOL (CONT'D)

That he's no longer in pain!

HECTOR

Mom, he fell off a balcony!

MARISOL

(hesitates)

Well, that can be very painful!

Vince SCOFFS and exits.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Vince and Marisol, dressed in all black, enter a room with others seated and similarly dressed. They turn to Vince and Marisol.

VINCE

Sorry. Traffic was a little bad.

A MAN replies.

MAN

In Lake Charles?? What roads did you take??

MARISOL

We drove all the way from Illinois.

A white GENTLEMAN at the podium talks to Vince.

GENTLEMAN #1

Now, now, it's just good that you made it. Have a seat, unless you have something to say.

VINCE

Hmm. Actually, I do.

MARISOL

(to Vince)

Please don't open with a joke, like you did at my daddy's funeral!

VINCE

"I'm only here for the repast and open bar"? That got a few laughs!

Marisol sits down. Vince approaches the podium.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Hi. I had doubts about coming here, but Vincent was my father, so here I am.

GENTLEMAN #1

Uh...

VINCE

(to gentleman)

I know, I shouldn't be admitting it.

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

He wasn't that great of a father, and he named me after him, even though I tried to keep that a secret. But that didn't stop the kids at school from calling me, "V.D."!

He CHUCKLES. The audience looks confused.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Because those are our initials. Anyway, he slept with my wife...

The audience turns to Marisol.

MARISOL

No, I'm not her! Vince, wrap it up, please!

VINCE

...and I hated him for it. But if that didn't happen, then I wouldn't have met my new wife, Marisol...

(points to her)

...and we wouldn't have a great son together. So, in a way, thanks, Dad, and assuming you're in heaven, I'll see you when I get there.

MARISOL

Uh, Vince...

VINCE

I know, dear, I'm done.

He turns to his right and sees a picture of a middle-aged white woman on a stand.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Who the hell is this?

Another man, MARIO, runs up to Vince. Marisol also approaches Vince.

MARIO

We had to move your dad's funeral to yesterday! Didn't you get our email?

VINCE

What??

He pulls out his phone and scrolls through it.

VINCE (CONT'D)

If there was ever a time to quit putting off stuff, like cleaning your inbox!

VINCE (CONT'D)

I don't see anything!

(reads)

"Dear Vince, thank you for the automatic car payment from your debit account." Aw, crap!

He begins to run away, but Marisol pulls him back.

MARIO

But the reading of the will, you're early for that.

VINCE

(sighs)

Fine, let's go.

The three exit.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - OFFICE - LATER

Vince and Marisol sit in front of Mario, who sits at his desk.

MARIO

(reads from papers)

"There are two things that I hold dear to me: my Christ Chrunch empire and my love for my hometown team, the Lake Charles Crawfish."

VINCE

(to Marisol)

Not his son. That would be silly.

MARIO

(continues reading)

"Right now, Christ Chrunch is a proud partner of the Crawfish, but they have plenty of partners. I want us to be the official cereal of the Lake Charles Crawfish. But you guys are reading this, which means I obviously can't make it happen."

Vince SIGHS. Marisol places her hand on his lap.

MARIO (CONT'D)

(reads)

"That's why Vincent De La Cruz, Jr., I leave you and your wife my grand Christ Chrunch enterprise. I'm sorry I did you wrong while I was alive, and I hope this can make up for it. I trust you and your wife can bring my dream into fruition."

VINCE

What??

MARISOL

Oh, honey, isn't that great?

VINCE

No! I don't want his company! It's not even based on any Christian values! He only named it that because he was trying to make words rhyme while he was high!

MARISOL

But we could put our own values into it, dear! Don't worry, I'm here for you!

VINCE

Yeah, I don't know, Marisol.

MARIO

"Marisol"? You mean, you're not...

VINCE

Not what?

MARIO

I mean, Vince, can I talk to you alone?

VINCE

No, anything you say to me, you can say in front of my wife.

MARIO

Yeah, that always works out well.

(sighs)

Okay. The will has Grizelda De La Cruz listed as your wife, not Marisol!

VINCE

What? Oh, hell no!

MARISOL

Well, now that we got that cleared up, see you later!

She prepares to leave.

VINCE

But Marisol...

MARISOL

You guys must've had this all worked out.
Excuse me.

She exits.

VINCE

But...

MARIO

Told ya.

Vince SIGHS.

INT. VINCE'S CAR - DAY

Vince drives down the street.

VINCE

*This was crazy. I didn't even want the
company. And I needed to let Marisol
know. So I was on the hunt for her.*

He stops at a drive-thru restaurant. A GIRL speaks.

GIRL (O.C.)

Welcome to Cajun Burgers, how may I help
you?

VINCE

*Well, I had to eat, and when's the next
time I'll be here?*

VINCE (CONT'D)

Yeah, what's your special for today?

GIRL (O.C.)

One burger for \$2, two burgers for \$4.

VINCE

(dryly)
What a deal. I'll just get one.

LATER

Vince drives, eats his burger, and sips on a drink.

VINCE

After spending all day looking for Marisol, while fighting off old friends who claimed my bougie ass left them here to die, I assumed that she flew home. So the next day, I drove all the way back to Gurnee.

INT. DE LA CRUZ HOUSE - DAY

Vince enters the house.

VINCE

Okay, her car is gone.

He enters his and Marisol's bedroom. He opens some dresser drawers.

VINCE (CONT'D)

But her clothes are still here!

He walks into the living room.

VINCE (CONT'D)

So maybe she didn't leave me. But where could she be?

(sighs)

And what about Dad's cereal company? I'd have to relocate my family. And pull Hector out of school. He would be crushed!

HECTOR (O.C.)

Hey, Dad...

Vince turns to Hector, standing in front of a pile of his toys, suitcases, and household goods.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

You're still taking the job, right?

SFX: Text CHIMES!

Vince takes out his phone, looks at it, and GASPS.

VINCE

Oh my god!

He hurries out the house.

HECTOR

(calls out)

That's not the school, is it?

(MORE)

HECTOR (CONT'D)

'Cuz the way I spent my last day, man...!
(shakes his head)
Whew!

INT. GRIZELDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Grizelda SNORES while laid out on the top part of a sofa.
Her adult son, TOMÁS, enters.

TOMÁS

Mom! Wake up! Mom!

He shakes her. She sits up.

GRIZELDA

(slurred speech)
What is it?

She PLOPS DOWN to the cushions of the couch.

TOMÁS

There's a car that keeps circling our
house!

GRIZELDA

So? You the man of the house!

TOMÁS

No, I'm a man in the house. To look after
you. Now get up and confront the weirdo
in that car.

Grizelda gets up and limps outside. She approaches the
car, where Marisol sits.

GRIZELDA

Hi there.

MARISOL

Oh, sorry. I just pulled over to use my
phone. Hard to get bars over here.
Rather, "there", where I was.

GRIZELDA

You can't stalk a stalker! What's the
deal?

MARISOL

I'm not stalkin' nobody!

GRIZELDA

(gasps)

You wouldn't happen to know a Vince De La Cruz, do you?

MARISOL

Why?

GRIZELDA

Because your license plate says, "MDLC CAR". You're his wife, aren't you?

MARISOL

I gotta go, ma'am.

GRIZELDA

Don't "ma'am" me! You know who I am! Otherwise, you wouldn't be around here stalkin' me at six in the morning!

Marisol looks puzzled.

MARISOL

"Evening"!

PAUSE.

GRIZELDA

Dang. That was some party! Look, why don't you come inside, and we can talk? I need some coffee!

MARISOL

(sighs)

Only because I have to use the bathroom.

She gets out. The ladies approach the front door. Marisol looks at a mailbox.

INSERT - THE BOX, which says:

"THE DE LA CRUZ'S"

MARISOL (CONT'D)

And your mailbox is spelled wrong!

GRIZELDA

No it's not! I'm a De La Cruz, and this is my mailbox! It's possessive!

She picks it up and hugs it.

MARISOL

Do you even believe that?

GRIZELDA
Just get in here!

She puts the mailbox down. They enter the house.

LATER

Marisol sits on the couch. Grizelda sits in a chair.

GRIZELDA
Now why are you really here?

MARISOL
I wanted to see what you're all about,
and why you have a hold on my husband.

GRIZELDA
A hold? I seriously doubt that! We
haven't talked since that jerk left me!

MARISOL
Yeah?

GRIZELDA
And I'm better for it, too! Look around!
Nice house! Even got a nice son! He's so
smart!

Tomás enters.

TOMÁS
Yeah, when I was little, I made my own
lunches.
(angrily)
For nursery school!

GRIZELDA
You never complained about that until
now, Tomás.

Tomás exits.

GRIZELDA (CONT'D)
(to Marisol)
I've been shuttin' down the club since he
was a baby.

TOMÁS (O.C.)
And she don't mean by working, either!

GRIZELDA
(to Tomás)
Shut up!

MARISOL
(to Grizelda)
Is Tomás...?

GRIZELDA
He's not Vince's. You don't need to be
mad at me about anything else.

MARISOL
Is he Vincent's, though?

GRIZELDA
Oh, so he told you. Look, it's not
something I'm proud of, but Vince ain't
no saint, either. Movin' up north and
becoming Mr. Goody-goody!

MARISOL
Speaking of "saint", did you know that
his daddy wants you and him to run his
Christ Chrunch company?

GRIZELDA
(gasps)
Get out of here!

MARISOL
I wish. You must've made quite an
impression on him.

GRIZELDA
Wow! That's huge!

She rises up.

GRIZELDA (CONT'D)
I can move up in the world! I'll be the
envy of everybody!

MARISOL
So you're happy about this?

GRIZELDA
Listen, I don't want Vince back! And if
he doesn't want the company, he can give
it to me!

She looks at her watch.

GRIZELDA (CONT'D)
Oh, my show's on!

She grabs the remote and CLICKS ON the TV. A female
NEWSCASTER speaks.

ON THE TV

NEWSCASTER

...virus. And now, breaking news at the Christ Chrunch factory, where protesters line up and call for the closure of it!

BACK TO GRIZELDA'S HOUSE

GRIZELDA

Oh boy!

ON THE TV

NEWSCASTER

We go now to Gloria Jenkins on the scene.

GLORIA JENKINS stands in front of a group of chanting PROTESTERS holding picket signs.

GLORIA

(to the camera, in her mic)
The area is tense up here! These people are challenging the Christian values this cereal represents! It all started when founder Vincent De La Cruz accidentally killed himself, supposedly while stoned out of his mind! And speaking of stoned, let's talk to these kids right here!

She approaches two dazed-looking TEENAGE BOYS.

GLORIA (CONT'D)

Excuse me, young man, what do you hope to get out of this?

TEENAGE BOY #1

Uh, I don't know. We get extra credit for this protest, right?

TEENAGE BOY #2

Uh, dude, we have to actually go to school for that, dude.

TEENAGE BOY #1

Dang, what a gyp.

BACK TO GRIZELDA'S HOUSE

Tomás reenters the room.

MARISOL

Vince is probably down there. I better go!

GRIZELDA

Me too. I can drive!

TOMÁS

Mom...

GRIZELDA

But I know I shouldn't. Can I ride with you?

The three exit.

EXT. FACTORY - LATER

The crowd of protesters continue CHANTING. Vince approaches a GENTLEMAN.

GENTLEMAN #3

They've been doing this all day, sir!

VINCE

I know. I'll handle it.

GENTLEMAN #3

Good. You're just like your father.

VINCE

(sighs)

Thanks.

GENTLEMAN #3

By the way, sorry for your loss.

VINCE

Thank you.

GENTLEMAN #3

And he promised me a raise before he died.

VINCE

I'm sure he did.

(pause)

Wait, do you even work here?

GENTLEMAN #3

Sure, second floor, somewhere!

VINCE

Beat it!

The gentleman exits.

CROWD

(chants)

Cruz must go! Cruz must go!

VINCE

That's not even our whole name!

PROTESTER

It flows better!

He approaches a podium and speaks into a microphone.

VINCE

People, listen! Excuse me!

The crowd QUIETS DOWN.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Now what's this all about?

A LADY from the crowd speaks.

LADY #3

There's been drama surrounding your company for years! And now, this is the last straw!

Others CLAMOR in agreement.

VINCE

What's the last straw?

LADY #3

Your daddy dying! I'm sure he was high, drunk, or both!

VINCE

So my daddy committed sins.

(pause)

But Jesus died for my daddy's sins.

(pause)

And in turn, Vincent died for ours! It's the God in him!

(sings to the tune of "God in Me" by Mary Mary)

"It's the God in him!"

He does a little two-step. The crowd looks puzzled. Marisol, Grizelda, and Tomás approach Vince.

GRIZELDA
(sarcastically)
You're doing great.

VINCE
Oh no, it just got skankier in here.

GRIZELDA
Vince, you're looking average as usual.

VINCE
Marisol! You were with her?

MARISOL
Yes.

TOMÁS
Yeah, um, I'm Tomás, by the way.

GRIZELDA
(to Tomás)
Quiet, boy!
(to Vince)
Get out the way.
(to the crowd)
I want all of you to take a good look at yourselves and ask yourselves if this the way you want to spend your lives, judging others?

The crowd murmurs. MRS. LOPEZ speaks up.

MRS. LOPEZ
But your family! The scandals! None of this feels Christian-like!

GRIZELDA
Is that so, Mrs. Lopez? Didn't you use the cereal in your recipe for those "special" Christ Chrunch treat bars you sell?

MRS. LOPEZ
(stammers)
It was initially to clear up my whooping cough.

GRIZELDA
You said measles!

MRS. LOPEZ
It can cure more than one thing! And so I made a little money on the side. You would've done it, too!

GRIZELDA
That's what I'm saying!

VINCE
Hold on!
(to Grizelda and Marisol)
I need to talk to ya'll.
(to the crowd)
Protest amongst yourselves!

INT. FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

Vince, Tomás, and the ladies enter a room.

VINCE
(to Marisol)
I've been trying to call you all this
time, and you come here with her?

MARISOL
But Vince...

VINCE
But nothing! Now look, she'll always be
my first love, and she may start hanging
around often, but she's the past! I love
you, and you're just gonna have to get
used to this arrangement!

MARISOL
(softly)
Okay.

GRIZELDA
(to Marisol)
Why didn't you tell him you weren't
leaving him?

MARISOL
I was low-key turned on!

GRIZELDA
Ooh, I know, right?

They both GIGGLE. Marisol looks angry at Grizelda, and
they quickly STOP.

GRIZELDA (CONT'D)
So does that mean you're gonna run this
company with me, Vince?

VINCE
I don't know yet!

GRIZELDA

I'm good with numbers. When I wasn't partying, I was in school. Then I got my accounting degree!

MARISOL

(sighs)

She might be of good use, Vince.

Vince SIGHS, walks to a window, and stares out of it.

MAN (O.C.)

Plus you're gonna need somebody to handle those naysayers, like she just did!

Vince faces the gang.

VINCE

Alright, I hear ya, Tomás.

TOMÁS

Uh, that wasn't me.

VINCE

(looks puzzled)

Oh. Was it any of you?

GRIZELDA

No! I mean, what he said is true, though!

Everyone looks around.

VINCE

Let's get outta here!

The gang races out of the room. A LITTLE MAN sneaks from behind a desk.

LITTLE MAN

Heh heh! I sure fooled them!

(sighs)

Unfortunately, that's the highlight of my day.

He walks away, with his head down.

INT. FACTORY - DAY

Vince, Marisol, Hector, and Grizelda walk down the floor filled with employees working. Vince and Grizelda talk to each other, while Marisol and Hector look around.

VINCE

*So here we are. I'm running a shop with
my ex-wife. But I'm taking it like a man.
And my wife said it was okay.*

Tomás approaches Grizelda.

TOMÁS

Mom, here's our new mailbox you ordered.

He hands her the mailbox. She and the others look at it.

INSERT - THE BOX, WHICH READS:

"The De La Cruzes's"

BACK TO SCENE

GRIZELDA

Better!

VINCE

*Grizelda will take care of the finances
only.*

Vince, Marisol, and Hector frown at each other, and
continue to walk with them.

VINCE (CONT'D)

*Don't say I never did nothin' for ya,
Dad.*

THE END