

FINAL DRAFT

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FOREVER FERNWOOD



EPISODE #418

by

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PRODUCTION

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

TOM	GREG MULLAVEY
MARTHA	DODY GOODMAN
CATHY	DEBRALEE SCOTT
PENNY	JUDY KAHAN
GEORGE	PHIL BRUNS
MERLE	DABNEY COLEMAN
MEL	SHELLEY BERMAN
PIERSALL	RONNIE SCHELL
DORIS STINSIL	

SETS

<u>ACT I</u> (Page 1)	<u>TOWN SQUARE - EARLY MORNING</u> (Tom, Martha, Cathy, Penny, Mel, George, and Piersall)
<u>ACT II</u> (Page 10)	<u>MAJOR LIVING ROOM - DAY</u> (Tom and Merle)
<u>ACT III</u> (Page 13)	<u>HARTMAN KITCHEN - NIGHT</u> (Tom, Penny, and Doris Stinsil)
<u>ACT IV</u> (Page 19)	<u>CATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT</u> (Cathy, Penny, Mel, and Piersall)

ACT ONE

TOWN SQUARE - VERY EARLY MORNING

MARTHA STANDS KNEADING HEATHER'S JACKET, TRYING TO GET VIBRATIONS FROM IT. PIERSALL, WHO IS DESPERATE FOR SUCCESS, IS STANDING BY IMPATIENTLY. MOMENT.

PIERSALL

Come on, Martha! Rev up that ESP.

MARTHA

I want to find Heather as much as you do... but if it doesn't come naturally, it won't come at all.

PIERSALL

Maybe you don't understand... my job is at stake in this. Now, concentrate!... (HANDS ON THE JACKET)... Here. I'll help you.

MARTHA

Yes, yes! I feel it! Heather is trying to reach me. Here I am, Heather! Come to Grandma!

PIERSALL

(CLUTCHING AT THE JACKET)... Go, Martha!
Go!

MARTHA

Wait, a minute!... (GRABBING PIERSALL'S HAND)... That wasn't Heather after all... It was you! Who can tell one hand from another through a jacket?!

GEORGE, TOM, ON PATROL, ENTER SHOT, AND APPROACH.

PIERSALL

(DISILLUSIONED)... This isn't what I expected, Martha. I wanted Jeanne Dixon and you turn out to be Gene Wilder.

MARTHA

Nobody's perfect.

GEORGE

Why don't you two join the search party? Huh? -- Instead of that African mumbo-jumbo.

PIERSALL

Hey now, we're doing our best here.

MARTHA

You've been out all night, and it doesn't look like you've found any of the disappeared persons.

TOM

At least we're doing something. Even if it isn't working, we've all got to keep doing something!

PIERSALL

Well, if you don't mind, I'd like to try something that works... (BEAT)... If I could just figure out what that is.

SFX: STRANGE NOISE IS HEARD AND
BUILDS IN INTENSITY

ALL LOOK TO THE SKY. WHIRLING, VARI-COLORED LIGHTS REFLECT OFF THEIR ASTONISHED FACES. LONG MOMENT. SLOWLY THE SOUND AND THE LIGHTS FADE OUT. ALL BEGIN TO RECOVER SOMEWHAT FROM THEIR STUNNED AMAZEMENT.

MARTHA

Did you see that??

PIERSALL

No... those weird lights got in my way.

TOM

I saw it... but what did I see???

MARTHA

I think it was a space ship.

GEORGE

Yeah, but what do you know?! You think jackets vibrate.

TOM

It looked like a space ship to me.

ALL BEGIN TO TALK AT ONCE, AD LIBBING ASTONISHMENT. CATHY ENTERS SHOT, RUNNING, WEARING ROBE OVER PAJAMAS, HER FEET IN BEDROOM SLIPPERS.

CATHY

That thing! -- In the sky! It was like a flying saucer, or something.

MARTHA

That's what it was! A flying saucer.

CATHY

No, it wasn't... it was like a flying saucer.

TOM

What else could it be but a flying saucer?

GEORGE

Strangest thing I ever saw.

MARTHA

It was eerie... that's the only word for it: "Eerie". And Bizarre... and frightening... but kind of spiritual, too... (BEAT)... Breathtaking... (BEAT)... There are no words for it... frightening... No, I said that.

PIERSALL

This is all very interesting... But it's not the kind of evidence that would stand up in court.

PENNY RUNS INTO THE SHOT, WEARING A ROBE AND SLIPPERS.

PENNY

Isn't it wonderful? They're visiting Earth!

TOM

You think it was a flying saucer, too?

PENNY

Well, sure.

PIERSALL

Proof! There's no proof! It could've just been a frisbee.

MARTHA

If it was anything less than flying saucers, I'm sure Cathy and Penny would be embarrassed to death, coming out here dressed like that.

PENNY

I'm not embarrassed. I'm not even cold!...
I'm just shivering from excitement.

TOM PUTS HIS ARM AROUND PENNY.
GEORGE TAKES HEATHER'S JACKET
FROM MARTHA AND PUTS IT AROUND
CATHY.

GEORGE

Cathy needs this jacket more than you do.

MARTHA

Maybe so, now that I've already been contacted by the... Great Beyond.

MARTHA LOOKS TOWARD THE SKY.
THEY ALL DO. MEL APPROACHES,
CARRYING THE PACKAGE TRUSS GAVE
HIM IN #417, ACT I.

TOM

Are they coming back?

PIERSALL

There's no evidence they came in the first place!

CATHY

I hate to do it, but I agree with you,
Piersall.

MEL MOUNTS THE GAZEBO. THE OTHERS
CONTINUE TO STARE UP AT THE SKY.

MEL

Hello, everybody.

GEORGE

Did you see it, Mel?

MEL

I saw it... (SMILING DELIGHTEDLY)... And
I know what it was.

PIERSALL

Nobody knows... not till the government
decides.

MEL

It was a space ship. I know, because my
good friend, Mr. Truss, told me.

TOM

Truss?

PIERSALL

Not good enough.

GEORGE

(TO PIERSALL) Let him talk.

MEL

And Mr. Truss knows, because he's a space
man -- from Alpha Centauri.

TOM

Hey, Mel, that's going a little too far.
We all know Truss... He's strange, yeah...
But he's not from space.

PENNY

Guess again, Tom.

GEORGE

UFO's are one thing... but nobody's gonna
tell me there are space men!

MEL

It seemed far-fetched to me, too. But
really, Truss came here to help Earth.

PIERSALL

Bunk.

MEL

And all those disappeared people of
Fernwood -- they're aboard the space
ship. They're in training to be the
saviors of all mankind.

PIERSALL

Then the case is solved!

CATHY

What?!

PIERSALL

It's so simple! Space men took them! No
one can blame me for not finding them.
They were out of this world.

GEORGE

(TO MEL)... Just because we saw a space ship doesn't mean you have to grab the spotlight with these cock-and-bull stories.

MEL

I have more proof!... (REACHING INTO HIS SHOPPING BAG)... Tubby Purley's T-shirt!

MARTHA

(EXAMINING THE T-SHIRT)... Remind me to tell Tubby's mother about a bleach that removes these stubborn stains.

MEL

I got that T-shirt right from the space ship where he's staying!... And look at this! Implements from Alpha Centauri!

MEL TAKES OUT ODD LOOKING IMPLEMENTS FROM HIS SACK. THE CROWD GATHERS TO EXAMINE THEM.

TOM

Heather! Heather's safe, too! When will they be back?

MEL

Three days! In three days nothing will be the same!

PENNY

I should've been on that space ship. I wanted to be in on saving mankind, too.

THE CROWD EXPRESSES ITS AMAZEMENT.

CATHY

(TO PIERSALL) They're falling for it,
Piersall... and it's some kind of trick.

PIERSALL

No... it's gotta be true. It's the only
answer that'll save my reputation as an
investigator.

CATHY

Why don't you put your reputation as an
investigator to some use. Find Jeffrey.

PIERSALL

He's gone?

CATHY

He never came home last night. He
disappeared like the rest.

FADE OUT.

ACT FOURCATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CATHY IS STANDING BY IN UTTER DISMAY WHICH IS GROWING INTO TERROR AS PIERSALL, WHO IS IN THE PROCESS OF RAPIDLY GOING OVER THE EDGE, TEARS AROUND THE ROOM, LOOKING INTO BATH.

PIERSALL

Are you sure he isn't here? -- Hiding in the bathtub, maybe.

CATHY

I'd know it if he was... Jeffrey's been gone for twenty-four hours, and I'm really worried.

PIERSALL

You're worried??? What about me??

CATHY

You??? You're not married to him!

PIERSALL

But I'm investigaging him... and now I've lost him... (LOOKING UNDER THE BED) ... Is there room to hide under the bed... No... my luck! I'm off the hook with those other disappearances, and I get into hot water over this. Do something, Cathy!

CATHY

I will! I'll tell your superiors you did good -- even though it looks like you loused up.

PIERSALL

Sure! They care! The government doesn't give "A" for effort... (TEARING OUT WIRES AND MICROPHONES)... See this? -- My future... My future was in these bugs.

CATHY

I'm sorry.

PIERSALL

Really?... (BEAT)... I don't believe you! I think you wanted me to look bad.

CATHY

Piersall! I'm on your side! Didn't I try to help you get Jeffrey?

PIERSALL

That's what they all say... (BEAT)... I think I've got the answer... Yes, it's brilliant. I congratulate you.

CATHY

On what?

PIERSALL

On killing Jeffrey... It was the perfect way to ruin me, and you almost succeeded. But not quite.

CATHY

I don't kill people! I'm a good American
... Besides, I cared about him. He was
no good, but it wasn't his fault.

PIERSALL

Sure, you cared about him! But you
couldn't let that stand in the way of
destroying me! I'm right! Admit!

CATHY

No!

PIERSALL ADVANCES TOWARD HER.
CATHY GRABS A HAND IRON AND
BACKS AWAY AS HE STALKS HER.

PIERSALL

I've solved the mystery... Just like I
was supposed to. Admit it, Cathy!

THE DOOR OPENS AND AN EXCITED MEL
COMES BURSTING IN, OBLIVIOUS TO
WHAT IS GOING ON BETWEEN PIERSALL
AND CATHY.

MEL

Cathy, Cathy! You must be tickled pink!

PIERSALL

Don't you see you're interrupting?!

MEL

Sorry.

HE EXITS.

SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR

MEL STICKS HIS HEAD IN.

MEL

Can I come in?

CATHY

Come in! Thank heavens you're here.

MEL

Thank you for making me welcome. It's wonderful about Jeffrey!

CATHY & PIERSALL

(SIMULTANEOUSLY) Jeffrey?!

MEL

Ah yes. Jeffrey is one of the chosen few... He's up in that space ship right now.

CATHY

No!

PIERSALL

Yes!... That's the answer!... I'm saved!

MEL

We all will be, when they get back from Alpha Centauri.

PIERSALL

They're all on the space ship. I'm not as dumb as they thought. Even the CIA couldn't track Jeffrey where he is... It's wonderful!

MEL

Yes, the whole town is starting to celebrate.

PIERSALL

Why not? They like me...

MEL

I'm so glad people are getting into the spirit of this.

PIERSALL EXITS HAPPILY. CATHY BREATHES A SIGH OF RELIEF, THEN RUNS TO THE PHONE AND DIALS.

CATHY

(INTO PHONE)... Lieutenant Berman, please.

This is an emergency. I've got to put a stop to this outer space malarkey...

(BEAT)... Oh, he's out? -- Decorating town square for the return of the space ships... Thanks.

MEL

When you say "malarkey," you don't really mean "malarkey," do you? In the sense of "malarkey?"

CATHY HANGS UP THE PHONE.

CATHY

I mean it in the sense of bullsh--

SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR

CATHY JUMPS NERVOUSLY. PENNY ENTERS.

PENNY

Oh, Mel, I'm so glad you're here! Can you get me on board?

MEL

For you? I could sure try.

CATHY

Penny! It's all fake!

MEL

She doesn't mean "fake" in the traditional sense...

CATHY

Truss is human -- maybe not as much as most of us, but he's still human. And he's involved with the DiVitos.

MEL

You're insinuating something there, aren't you?

PENNY

If you're suspicious, why not call the police?

CATHY

They're too busy being taken in by this... craziness.

MEL

I'm going to leave. Cathy, you've been like a daughter to me. Now you're like a bad daughter.

PENNY

(TO MEL) Wait! What about me going into outer space.

MEL

You'll have to wait three days, until the ship lands. Then maybe you can go.

PENNY

Well, that'll give me a chance to shop.

MEL

Bring a winter coat. It's cold in outer space. (EXITS)

PENNY

(TO CATHY) You're always thinking the worst. Can't you just join the fun?

CATHY

With Jeffrey gone? And Heather?...
Thanks, but I'll wait to party till they come back... safely.

PENNY

I wish you wouldn't worry.

CATHY

Then help me... (THINKING)... Come with me to the cabin. Let's see what's there.

PENNY

Well... If it'll put your mind at ease...
(BEAT)... Maybe your mother's ESP could help, too.

CATHY

Yeah!... She was out there with Piersall, but he probably got in her way... He's not well, Penny.

PENNY

Okay. We'll do what you want... And
prove how wrong you are.

CATHY

I hope so. Because if I'm right about
Jeffrey... I don't think I can handle
it.

FADE OUT.

