

FINAL DRAFT
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FOREVER FERNWOOD



EPISODE #451

by

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PRODUCTION

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

TOM	GREG MULLAVEY
CATHY	DEBRALEE SCOTT
MERLE	DABNEY COLEMAN
WANDA	MARIAN MERCER
MAC	DENNIS BURKLEY
PENNY	JUDY KAHAN
MEL	SHELLEY BERMAN
PAPPY	

SETS

<u>ACT I</u> (Page 1)	<u>HARTMAN KITCHEN - NIGHT</u> (Tom, Penny, and Pappy)
<u>ACT II</u> (Page 10)	<u>INT. CABIN - NIGHT</u> (Mac and Mel)
<u>ACT III</u> (Page 16)	<u>JEETER MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT</u> (Merle and Wanda)
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ACT ONEHARTMAN KITCHEN - NIGHT

CONTINUOUS FROM EPISODE #450,
ACT FOUR. TOM, PENNY, AND
PAPPY.

TOM

(TO PAPPY) What's wrong with you,
anyway?! Don't you want to have a
grandchild?!

PAPPY

Sure. I want a grandchild. But what
Loretta's giving birth to is a
murderer-type fiend.

PENNY

That hardly seems like appropriate
language for welcoming a baby into
the world.

PAPPY

Believe me, I'd find nicer things to
say if this kid wasn't going to be a
born killer.

TOM

I don't want to listen to any of it.
This is your own flesh and blood.

PAPPY

It ain't my blood that makes this
baby a fiend. It's yours and
Loretta's. Not that I'm blaming
sweet, innocent Loretta... She
just suffers from the curse of
the Bowers women... and bad luck
in choosing the father of her child.

PENNY

"Bowers" women? "Curse?" What is
all this?! A movie for television?

PAPPEY

Bowers was the family name of Loretta's
mother, my late and beloved wife. She
had this slight peculiarity in her
blood -- may she, and all her victims
rest in peace. Well, Loretta's got
it too.

PENNY

Victims?

PAPPY

Took an axe to eight people.

PENNY

Oh.

PAPPY

Only killed seven of 'em, though.

TOM

This can't be! Loretta never killed anyone... Did she?

PAPPY

You got me to thank for that...
(TO TOM) But if I had your type blood coursing through my veins, Loretta would've come out a fiend -- just like her precious mommy was. Good lookin' woman.

PENNY

Killers aren't born, Pappy. They're raised. Maybe your dear wife was deprived of love when she was little.

PAPPY

That's sadly true, missy. Her folks was never permissive enough to love a disobedient child.

TOM

All children disobey sometimes.

PAPPY

But not all of them wield a bowie knife when they're doing it... And blood lust ain't what you'd call "endearing" in a two-year-old.

PENNY

If she was such a crazed killer all her life, how come you married her?

PAPPY

Good question. I was taught to look on the bright side... And that woman was as good with a skillet and fried eggs as she was with an axe or machete.

TOM

Now hang on! I'm not saying you're a liar, Pappy, but if all this is true, why hasn't Loretta mentioned she was related to a fiend?

PENNY

Yeah! This is the first I've heard of it... And Loretta and I have done lots of girl talk.

TOM

And Loretta doesn't keep secrets, either! Explain that! Why wouldn't Loretta have said something? Huh?

PAPPY

Loretta never knew.

TOM

That does explain it.

TOM

But how could you not have told her. What if she and Charlie had a baby?

PAPPY

I checked Charlie out before they was married. His blood is harmless...

(MORE)

PAPPY (CONT'D)

And I figured Loretta sure enough
wouldn't play around... So why
make her feel funny.

PENNY

Yeah, I can understand that. Being
pregnant is scary enough without
the added fear that your baby's
destined to kill.

TOM

It still seems unbelievable.

PENNY

And the baby's due next week!

PAPPY

Good. It hasn't done any damage yet.

TOM

And maybe it never will. Maybe the
curse died out.

PAPPY

No way. It's in the blood.

PENNY

Hey, give the kid a break! If
anyone can love a killer, it's
Charlie and Loretta. Maybe that's
all the infant needs to overcome this
trauma.

PAPPY

This ain't no trauma, hon. That kid'll take a life before it learns the meaning of the word love -- or mama, or papa... or anything else.

PENNY

What a gloomy outlook you have. You probably think a glass is half empty when it's really half full.

PAPPY

I got no time for even half a glass right now. I gotta warn Loretta.

PAPPY STARTS FOR THE DOOR,
BUT TOM RESTRAINS HIM
PHYSICALLY.

TOM

Hold on, Mr. Parmenter. I'm partly the father of that baby, and I've got some say!

PAPPY

You take your hands off me! Maybe I put up with bein' married to a murderer, but I can't stand pushy people.

TOM

You're staying away from Loretta, Pappy!

PAPPY

Okay, I warned you! (PAPPY BITES
TOM'S HAND)

TOM

(RELEASING HIM) Ow!

PAPPY SCOOTs OUT THE DOOR.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'm not sure I like that guy.

PENNY

But still and all I think he's
sincere.

TOM

You mean you think a child of mine
could be born a fiend.

PENNY

It is possible that certain
combinations of genes produce
abnormal children... I just hope
he's wrong this time.

TOM

Me too. I already lost one child
by abortion... I don't want to
lose another one by the electric
chair.

HE EMBRACES HER AND HOLDS
HER TENDERLY FOR A MOMENT.

PENNY

Oh, Tom. Are we going to be haunted
by that abortion forever?

TOM

Listen, Penny... I've put it out
of my mind... But if it's too
much for you... And you want to
call off the wedding... I'd understand.

PENNY

Oh, no, Tom, no.

TOM

You sure?

PENNY

I've waited a long, long time
to love somebody the way I love you.
I'm not going to give you up now.

THEY EMBRACE LOVINGLY.

PENNY (CONT'D)

Tom, we can face the future
together... Let's get married right
away.

TOM

Right away. How about tomorrow?

PENNY

(SMALL SMILE) Give me a little
while to prepare for the wedding.

TOM

How little?

PENNY

Couple of days.

TOM

(EASY SMILE) You've got a date.
Don't make any other plans for
later in the week.

THEY KISS.

FADE OUT.

ACT THREEJEETER MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

EMPTY. DARK. DOOR OPENS AND
MERLE ENTERS, CROSSES TO
WINDOW, PULLS DOWN THE SHADE,
PUTS ON THE LIGHTS, EXITS,
RE-ENTERS WHEELING WANDA
WHO IS GAGGED AND BLINDFOLDED,
HER HANDS TIED. HE CLOSSES THE
DOOR.

MERLE

Doggone it, Wanda! Have you forgotten
how to be considerate?! Just because
we're not a loving couple anymore,
doesn't mean you have to flaunt your
disrespect. I mean, scream bloody
murder in the middle of the town
square, it was downright embarrassing!
How do you think that looked for a
man in my position, huh? You made
me do something I hated, Wanda. I
hated jamming that gag in your mouth.
Now I'll take it off if you promise
not to scream. Do you promise?

WANDA NODS.

(MORE)

MERLE (CONT'D)

All right, I believe you... But only because you were never the overly demonstrative type, and you've filled your outburst quota.

HE CAUTIOUSLY REMOVES THE GAG BUT KEEPS IT CLOSE TO HER MOUTH IN CASE SHE DOES START TO SCREAM. SHE DOESN'T.

WANDA

I hate to impose on you, Merle, but would it be too much if I asked you to take off the blindfold, too?

MERLE

(APOLOGETIC) Oh, I'm sorry. Things are happening so fast, it completely slipped my mind. (REMOVES BLINDFOLD)

WANDA

I hate to be a nuisance, but could you untie my hands? The flow of blood stopped, and it would really spoil the joy of this moment if gangrene set in.

MERLE UNTIES THE BONDS.

MERLE

Wanda, you got to excuse some of the discomfort, because I'm just so inexperienced at this.

WANDA

I understand. But, may I ask a question?

MERLE

Certainly.

WANDA

Now that we've dispensed with the amenities, Qu'est que ce la hell is going on?

MERLE

I love you, Wanda.

WANDA

I appreciate that, Merle. But there are more conventional ways to demonstrate your affection.

MERLE

Like what? I couldn't even get to you at that cabin -- not as long as that gorilla was guarding you.

WANDA

That gorilla was my friend.

MERLE

And that's another reason I had to get you away. I didn't want you and Mac to get too friendly -- if you catch the innuendo.

WANDA

We weren't lovers -- if that's what you're suggesting.

MERLE

The important thing is that we're together again. We belong together, Wanda. I'm sure of that now.

WANDA

And I'm sure I could have you arrested.

MERLE

You're too much of a sentimentalist for that.

WANDA

You're right, of course. I am a sentimentalist. That's why I'll come visit you in jail.

MERLE

(LOOKING AROUND ROOM) God, the memories this room holds.

WANDA

"Held," Merle. "Held."

MERLE

This is where we launched our "Spend A Night With A Superstar" contest. I think I was standing right over here --

WANDA

(INTERRUPTS) Merle, the "Spend A Night With A Superstar Contest" was a dismal failure.

MERLE

Ah yes, I remember it well. But what about The Fernwood Flyer? Now that was a journalistic treasure. In fact I remember that night back in --

WANDA

"Fernwood Flyer", Merle? I don't notice that newspaper at any of the stands. Bomb-0.

MERLE

But the fun we had putting that baby to press, and remember our glorious campaign for the 1984 Olympic games --

WANDA

Which are not going to be held in Fernwood. Remember?

MERLE

I've just this moment realized how cynical you've become. But, darlin' I love you for it. (LEANS IN TO KISS HER)

WANDA

(LEANING AWAY) Merle, you can't force things like that.

MERLE

I know. (QUIETLY BUT WITH ASSURANCE) But you'll come around, Wanda. It's just a matter of time. And a little discomfort.

WANDA

(NO MORE NICE GUY) Merle, you know
how I feel about discomfort.

SHE FLIPS SWITCH ON HER
WHEELCHAIR AND STARTS ROLLING
FOR THE DOOR. REACTING QUICKLY,
MERLE PULLS THE BATTERY CABLE
AND THE WHEELCHAIR STOPS DEAD
IN ITS TRACKS. THERE IS A
PAUSE AS SHE LOOKS AT HIM
COLDLY, THEN STARTS TO SCREAM
AT THE TOP OF HER LUNGS. HE
MANAGES TO REPLACE THE GAG AND,
DESPITE HER STRUGGLES, TO RETIE
HER HANDS. SHE GLARES AT HIM IN
ANGER AND FRUSTRATION.

MERLE

It's just a matter of time, Wanda...
And I'm willing to wait... And you
know the rates at the Bide-A-Wee...
We can stay forever if we have to.

FADE OUT.

ACT FOURSHUMWAY KITCHEN -- MORNING

CATHY, SOLA, GLUM, AT TABLE
PICKING AT BREAKFAST. MOMENT.
MEL ENTERS FROM LIVING ROOM.

MEL

Good morning. Where's Martha?

CATHY

She went to the store.

MEL

Gosh, I wanted to have breakfast
with her... Well, maybe we can eat
together when she gets back.

CATHY

Then Mom and I are going downtown.
We're returning the handcrafted
"T.V. Guide" cover we bought for
Merle and Eleanor's wedding.

MEL

Oh, no wonder you seem blue. (SIGHS)
There's nothing like a bad marriage
to get you down.

CATHY

How can a marriage that doesn't take
place be bad?

MEL

Any marriage that doesn't happen is bad... I guess that's where your generation is different. You don't believe that much in being moral.

CATHY

That has nothing to do with it! I got married before, and just because it was legal, didn't mean it was right. Some people just don't belong together, no matter what! -- Like Merle and Eleanor.

MEL

And some people do... like, Tom and Penny... Martha and me...

CATHY

Could you not depress me while I'm eating?

MEL

What's depressing about me and your mother? We're a lovely couple. (BEAT) Not that your father was a slouch.

CATHY

Don't worry. You haven't offended me.

MEL

Good. A wedding is not depressing.
I can't remember the last time I
was at a real wedding... with music,
and food, and a bride and a groom.

CATHY

My wedding had all that.

MEL

Oh, that's right... and yours would've
seemed like a real wedding, too -- if
it had been in a church, instead
of the Capri Lounge.

CATHY

And if I had been in love, instead
of in jeopardy.

MEL

I guess I'm just an incurable
romantic.

CATHY

Well, I'd try to get cured, if I
were you. The world isn't some
romantic movie, you know.

MEL

You're right. But it's fun to
dream.

HE CUTS OFF AS PENNY COMES
OVER, BUSTING WITH JOYOUS
NEWS.

PENNY

Guess what!

CATHY

I give up.

PENNY

Well, I guess you know what's been going on. (BUBBLING RAPIDLY) Of course it's been more off and on than on, but, anyway, the important thing is, it's on now -- when it counts.

MEL

(SMILING INDULGENTLY) Whoa. Whoa whoa. Settle down. (ESCORTING HER TO TABLE) Sit down. (PENNY SITS) Quiet down. All right. Now. What are you trying to tell us?

PENNY

(STANDING UP) Tom and I are getting married on Friday!

THAT'S A KICK IN THE HEAD FOR CATHY, BUT SHE MAKES A QUICK RECOVERY.

CATHY

(VALIANT KIND) Oh, Penny. I'm so happy for you.

MEL

(EYES UP) Thanks, God.

CATHY

Congratulations.

PENNY

Really?

CATHY

(CONFUSED) Really what?

PENNY

Are you really giving us your
blessings?

CATHY

Sure.

PENNY

Oh, that's wonderful. I was
afraid you'd be angry because
of those feelings you have for
Tom.

CATHY

No, I'm overjoyed. You know how
I love romance, Penny -- even
someone elses.

PENNY

Then it's almost perfect!... Except
for one thing... (TO MEL) Will you
give me away?

MEL

You mean, like the father of the
bride? Me? In a real wedding?

PENNY

(CONFUSED) What other kind is there?

CATHY

The kind at the Capri.

MEL

But I wouldn't even mind that.

PENNY

So you'll do it? You're the only
father figure I've had around here...
And since I don't have a real father,
you're about as close as I can come.
So will you give me away?

MEL

(TOUCHED ALMOST TO TEARS) I couldn't
be more honored, Penny. Thank you
for asking me. But I'm afraid I can't
do it.

PENNY

Why not?

MEL

It just wouldn't be right. I'm
sorry. I hope you understand.

PENNY

Oh I do. I understand perfectly.
I just have one question.

MEL

What?

PENNY

Why?

CATHY

Good question, Pen.

MEL

Because I'm living in sin.

CATHY

For a man who loves weddings so much, that should be easy to remedy.

PENNY

You mean, something like... a double wedding? Tom and I, and...

CATHY

...And Mel and Ma! Just what you wanted. Why didn't you think of it before, Mel?

MEL

Because it's impossible.

PENNY

Why?

MEL

Because Martha is still legally married to George.

PENNY

Oh, that's right. I'm so excited, I can't think straight. Your marriage to Martha wouldn't be truly practical as long as she has another husband.

CATHY

Well, let's not be practical. Let's have a symbolic wedding. It'd be good practice for when the real thing is legal.

MEL

We could go through the motions? --
Wouldn't that be becoming bigamists?

PENNY

Oh, not if you keep your fingers crossed when you say "I do". Come on, Mel, please. Do it. It'd be so exciting.

MEL

Well, it sounds nice. I don't know how Martha would feel about it, though.

CATHY

Don't worry about it. Leave her to me. I'll convince her. I promise.

PENNY

Oh, Cathy, you're a dear. I love you. (IMPULSIVELY KISSES CATHY)

MEL

The more I think about the idea, the more I like it.

(MORE)

MEL (CONT'D)

And maybe I'll get myself all spruced
up and help you convince Martha to
semi-marry Mel. (EXITS GAILY TO
LIVING ROOM, SINGING "I'M GETTING
MARRIED IN THE MORNING")

PENNY

Isn't it wonderful how happy
everybody is?

CATHY

Yeah. Just great... (DISMALLY)
I'm real happy for everybody.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE #451

