

Wardrobe

MARY HARTMAN

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EPISODE #77

by

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MARY	LOUISE LASSER
TOM	GREG MULLAVEY
LORETTA	MARY KAY PLACE
CHARLIE	GRAHAM JARVIS
CATHY	DEBRALEE SCOTT
FOLEY	BRUCE SOLOMON
MURIEL	L.C. DOWNEY
HOWARD McCULLOUGH	BEESON CARROLL

SETS

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MARY'S KITCHEN, SIMULTANEOUSLY
LIMBO PHONE -- FOLEY
(Mary, Loretta, Howard McCullough,
Foley)

ACT ONE

MARY'S KITCHEN

TOM AND MARY AT BREAKFAST. AT
FIRST NOT MUCH TALK, THEN MARY
TRIES A SMILE.

MARY

You know, Tom --

TOM

What?

MARY

I think things are getting better.

TOM

You do?

MARY

Yes, definitely better.

TOM

You mean like the state of the world?

MARY

No, seriously.

TOM

The economy?

MARY

Heather's posture.

TOM

Do you mind if I finish my cereal?

MARY

Well, I know it isn't a big thing. But I think it's an indication, you know, of a healthier state of mind, of a more positive attitude...

TOM

Where is she?

MARY

(RELUCTANTLY) She's eating her breakfast.

TOM

What do you mean she's eating her breakfast? She isn't at the breakfast table.

MARY

She took it with her.

TOM

Breakfast?

MARY

Instant breakfast. She said she likes to lick it off her finger like Kool-Aid.

TOM

Oh, Mary, for Pete's sake --

MARY

Look, Tom, her posture's improving, and I just didn't have the energy to argue about her finger. I mean, why push a good thing, right?

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I mean, there haven't been any more complaints from the new neighbors. And you have to admit, it is very important to get off on the right foot with new neighbors.

TOM

I thought we were talking about Heather.

MARY

We are -- Heather and the new neighbors and the world -- it's all related, Tom.

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR, AND
CATHY COMES IN.

CATHY

Mary, I have to talk to you. Good morning, Tom.

TOM

Good morning, Cathy.

MARY

Sit down, Cathy. Have some cereal? Low protein, lotsa calories...

TOM

(TO CATHY) I think she's got that backwards.

CATHY

I just wanted to tell you, Mary, that after everything you've been doing, you finally got your wish.

MARY

What wish? (TO TOM) I honestly have not wished a single wish, I swear. Not on a star, not on a chicken bone...

CATHY

The wedding's off for now.

TOM

Your wedding?

MARY

Not on a wedding. (TURNING) Oh, Cathy, I am so sorry.

CATHY

You're not sorry.

MARY

I mean, how did it happen?

TOM

(TO CATHY) Does she know how it happened?

CATHY

Oh, she knows.

MARY

I don't know. But I just think it's such a shame. I want to hear everything directly from you. I am crushed.

CATHY

(TO TOM) She practically planned it.

MARY

I swear I didn't --

TOM

But that's what you wanted. That's what you kept saying you wanted.

MARY

I wanted Cathy to be happy and not get hurt.

TOM

Why are you against her marrying Dennis Foley? What's it to you?

CATHY

Yeah.

MARY

To me, it is nothing. But to Cathy it is her entire youth -- last week she was going to marry Steve, and the month before that a blue-eyed Armenian bartender!
(TURNING) Cathy, you don't know your own mind!

TOM

And you do?

CATHY

Mary, why don't you tell the truth?

MARY

(TO TOM) I mean, take Steve, out there in Hollywood, unable to speak -- you know, Loretta and Charlie could have looked him up --

TOM

What truth?

CATHY

About why she doesn't want me to marry
Dennis and why she got the wedding
postponed.

MARY

I didn't. (SHE RAISES HER RIGHT HAND)
Cathy, look, my right hand right where
God can see it -- I never talked to
Dennis Foley about postponement!

CATHY

But you did talk to him!

MARY

I didn't say that! Cathy, haven't you
ever heard the saying about leaving well
enough alone?

CATHY

You mean you're finally going to leave
Dennis and me alone?

TOM

Yes!

MARY

I mean, if the wedding is not on now,
then that's the way you should leave it!

TOM

Mary, I want you to be quiet while Cathy
tells me why you don't want her to marry
Dennis.

.

MARY

She's upset, she's confused -- I promise you it would make very little sense.

TOM

What is this?

MARY

Tom, you're late for work. And I don't like you to speed in traffic.

TOM

No one can speed in traffic.

MARY

But you'll get more of those demerits at the plant you're always so worried about, so go. This is girl talk --

TOM

(BEING SHUFFLED OFF) And I also want to know where you were on Thursday?

CATHY

Thursday?

MARY

So drive carefully, and I'll see you tonight.

TOM KISSES HER, THE DOOR CLOSES,
SHE TURNS BACK TO CATHY)

MARY (CONT'D)

Coffee. You want some coffee.

CATHY

You went to see Dennis, didn't you?

MARY

No.

CATHY

Thursday, .Mary. Where were you on
Thursday?

MARY

How about an instant breakfast? You
can lick the granules off your finger
like Kool-Aid.

FADE OUT.

ACT TWOSAME - FOLLOWING

CATHY

I don't want any instant breakfast or instant coffee or instant Kool-Aid, I want to know whether you did or did not go to see Dennis!

MARY

Cathy, there's no such thing as instant Kool-Aid, it's instant to begin with.

CATHY

Mary, I want an answer. You talked him into postponing the wedding, didn't you? Admit it!

MARY

I'm only trying to help. To help, Cathy, help.

CATHY

To help what? Help me be an old maid? If you really wanted to help --

MARY

I do! I swear I do!

CATHY

Then you'd be planning a shower or helping Mother pick out my Tupperware colors. The only thing you're trying to help me do is get jilted!

MARY

Oh, I'm not! Cathy, how can you say a thing like that?

CATHY

Because I don't think I could take it. Not after Steve. I really think it would give me a complex or something. Like Rosalyn McCardle?

MARY

Who?

CATHY

That girl in my graduating class who was going to marry the guy who's father owned a bank?

MARY

Oh, that girl who was cross-eyed with the bangs?

CATHY

She wasn't cross-eyed; she had a slight astigmatism. And they weren't bangs. It was an Indian band. She used to wear this Indian band.

MARY

I don't remember.

CATHY

Anyway, after she got jilted, she went off to work with minorities --

MARY

In Fernwood?

CATHY

No, in Albuquerque. And she got raped and her car was stolen and Jill Turgamott told me she's on drugs.

MARY

You're kidding.

CATHY

So if you're trying to ruin my life like that...

MARY

Cathy, you're my sister.

CATHY

Just go ahead.

MARY

I'd hate to think of you in Albuquerque.

CATHY

Then leave Dennis alone!

MARY

Wait a minute -- how could Jill Turgamott know about Rosalyn McCardle? Didn't they hate each other?

CATHY

You're missing the point. The point is I don't want to wind up raped and on drugs with my car stolen, because you talked my fiance out of marrying me!

MARY

You know, there could've been a bright spot. Maybe she helped those minorities.

CATHY

Mary, will you please stop changing the subject! Did you or did you not have anything to do with Dennis postponing the wedding?

MARY

Cathy, how do you feel about Dennis? I mean truly.

CATHY

I love him.

MARY

No, truly. Everything. The bad parts...

CATHY

I love him, Mary.

MARY

But what is so special about Dennis Foley?

CATHY

Everything! He's kind and sincere and mature and I know that being with him I'll become a more complete and better person than I am.

MARY

You couldn't say it was his silly little smile or his uniform...?

CATHY

And if he doesn't marry me, I will be absolutely devastated. And will hold you personally responsible and will never talk to you again!

MARY

You really care about him, don't you?

CATHY

More than anyone.

MARY

It's enough to break a person's heart, isn't it?

CATHY

Whose?

MARY

Both of ours, Cathy. Both of ours.

FADE OUT.

ACT THREEHAGGERS' LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

MURIEL SITTING ON THE COUCH READING
PHOTOPLAY, LOOKS AT A CLOCK OR HER
WATCH. IN FRONT OF HER A BOX OF
TIMMY'S LETTERS AND PICTURES.
SOUND OF A KEY IN THE FRONT DOOR
LOCK. SHE STASHES THE MAGAZINE
AND BEGINS LOOKING MOONILY THROUGH
THE BOXED KEEPSAKES.

CHARLIE

Anybody home?

MURIEL

In the living room, Charlie.

CHARLIE

(LUGGING IN AN ARMFUL OF KID'S JUNK)

Where's Loretta?

MURIEL

Next door with Mary, but I didn't feel
like visiting. What's that?

CHARLIE

Oh, just some things for my boy I thought
I'd pick up. Skateboard, catcher's mitt,
a football... you know, just some little
things. I decided to wait on the big things
like a ten-speed bike till he gets here
and can pick out his own size and color and
decals, you know.

MURIEL

You're out of breath.

CHARLIE

Well, I'm a little bit excited.

MURIEL

I can understand. Actually I was just going through some of Timmy's letters and pictures myself. His first day of school, his first grown-up suit... Did you have a hard day?

CHARLIE

Not too bad. (SEES A BULGE UNDER THE SOFA CUSHION) What's this? (REACHING FOR THE PHOTOPLAY)

MURIEL

Oh, must be something Loretta left. I was so busy concentrating on Timmy I didn't even notice. (WISTFULLY, PERHAPS A TEAR OR TWO)

CHARLIE

What's the matter?

MURIEL

Nothing, nothing. Just that I've been thinking about what I've been able to give Timmy over the years. I have seen to it that he's had an education, but there are so many things he's missed out on because I couldn't provide them.

CHARLIE

Like having an old man he could talk to.

MURIEL

And play catch with and go camping with...

CHARLIE

I'll tell you, Muriel, I'm not a hard-hearted man -- at least, I don't think I am -- but it sure as heck isn't easy to forgive you for that.

MURIEL

Not easier than admitting to myself that you and Loretta can give him a better home than I can.

CHARLIE

I mean, Lord, you kept him from me all the years he was growin' up.

MURIEL

I know. But he was all I had.

CHARLIE

Never got the chance to see him take his first step or say his first word, never got the chance to burp him --

MURIEL

And you should have seen him when he first started to crawl. He did it backwards. It was so cute. He'd bump into things and not know where they came from.

CHARLIE

I just don't see how you coulda done it.

MURIEL

Charlie, I know you won't believe this, but if I had it all to do over again, I'd share him with you, I would. Just like I hope you'll share him with me now that he's coming to live with you.

CHARLIE

If that's his choice.

MURIEL

Oh, it will be. Having a man to look up to, to show him the ropes. All I ask is visiting privileges, a week or so during summer vacations and maybe a day on Christmas.

CHARLIE

And his birthday. I know he'll want to see his mama on his birthday.

MURIEL

Thank you, Charlie. You're real sweet. Just like you're real sweet about helping me get a new start in life. The money, I mean.

CHARLIE

I hope it'll make you happy, Muriel.

MURIEL

Oh, it will. Thank you.

CHARLIE

You know, since you've been with us I think I detect a change in your character.

MURIEL

I'm not as hard, you mean.

CHARLIE

Well, I wouldn't put it that way --

MURIEL

It must be Loretta's sweet influence on me.

CHARLIE

Must be. (THEY'RE SMILING AT EACH OTHER, MURIEL'S SMILE JUST ABOUT TO CRACK, AS THE PHONE RINGS)

Hello? Oh, Mrs. Muncie -- well, how are you? Oh, we're just fine. Waiting for my son to get here and waitin' for Clyde to get back from his fishin' trip. Oh, he will? Well, that's just great. Now you have him call us just as soon as he gets in. And thank you. 'Bye 'bye.

(HANGS UP)

MURIEL

When's he due back?

CHARLIE

Tomorrow mornin', and me and Loretta'll hear about the contracts right after that.

MURIEL

Well, isn't that nice. First thing in
the morning. Hmm. (SHE LOOKS WORRIED)

FADE OUT.

ACT FOURMARY'S KITCHEN, SIMULTANEOUSLY

LORETTA CROONING ABOUT HER GOOD FORTUNE, WHILE MARY CLEANS SOME SILVER JEWELRY WITH TARNEX.

LORETTA

I mean, can you imagine it? I'm gonna be a mama!

MARY

I just don't understand!

LORETTA

Timmy! Which, of course, just makes me a step-mama.

MARY

They say it's supposed to come clean in ten seconds -- I've been doing this for twenty minutes.

LORETTA

You don't think he'll hate me like the step-mama in Cinderella or like that?

MARY

Oh, no --

LORETTA

Maybe you took off all the silver.

MARY

And there's only zinc left? Or nickel?

LORETTA

What's that?

MARY

The metal they make nickels out of.

LORETTA

You're kidding.

MARY

This is hopeless.

LORETTA

Did I tell you he's five feet seven inches tall?

MARY

You told me. Of course, maybe these pieces weren't really silver to be begin with. (CLOSING CONTAINER)

LORETTA

That's taller'n me. And Charlie is just so happy! I mean, we've put that whole mess of what I said on Dinah's show right behind us.

MARY

What does that mean? That you're going to make another recording?

LORETTA

It means my career is still number one with a bullet.

MARY

It does?

LORETTA

Well, almost. I mean, there's a few little clouds still hangin' around, but they're mostly from people I never did hear of. I mean, the big people's still with me. I got an invite to sing for Billy James Hargis over in Kentucky, but Charlie says maybe I should put that one off for awhile. And then there was this real nice message from Rabbi Korff -- you know he was President Nixon's rabbi -- offering to set up a defense fund. Of course, we hadda tell him I wasn't bein' sued by nobody. Also there was some cancellations --

MARY

Oh, I'm sorry.

LORETTA

Like the Mexicali Hotel in Las Vegas --

MARY

You mean, you're not playing Las Vegas?

LORETTA

Oh, sure -- after my new record contract gets signed, which it will just as soon as Clyde Muncie gets back from his fishin' trip -- why, I'll probably wind up playin' Caesar's Palace.

(MORE)

LORETTA (CONT'D)

And like them billboards say, you know,
wouldn't you rather be at Caesar's Palace?

MARY

Are you sure you're getting a new contract?
I mean, I haven't been hearing 'Baby Boy'
on the radio at all.

LORETTA

I thought it was just me. You know my
luck -- I turn on the radio to get some
sweet country sounds and all they's
playin' is the baseball scores.

MARY

You know, come to think of it, I haven't
heard your record once since Dinah's
Show.

LORETTA

That's just a coincidence, Mary. I mean,
they can't play the same record all the
time. And I know, what with Timmy
comin' in tomorrow, that everything's
gonna be just great for Charlie and me.
I just know it!

MARY

I hope so.

LORETTA

I mean, the only thing I'm worried about,
honey, is you.

MARY

Me? Oh, no -- really. This silver jewelry is not that much of a disappointment.

LORETTA

I'm talking about the bloom which is gone from your cheeks. I can tell it is something big and something bad, but as I am your best friend...

MARY

I can't tell you.

LORETTA

I figured as much. Well, honey, if you ever change your mind, just remember that your best friend is right next door.

MARY

Yes, I'll remember.

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR

LORETTA

Look, I gotta go, so whoever it is, I'll just let 'em in on my way out.

MARY

Unless it's the police.

LORETTA

The police? Now, Lordy, why would it be...?

OPENING THE DOOR; IT'S HOWARD McCULLOUGH)

HOWARD

Hello, Mrs. Hartman?

LORETTA

Me? No, I'm Mrs. Hagers! Mrs. Hartman's the piqued one at the table.

MARY

If he's selling Avon, tell him I have a friend who distributes a competitive line.

HOWARD

No, I'm the new neighbor, in the Fedders house?

LORETTA

Oh, hi --

MARY

What did Heather do now? Did Heather do something?

HOWARD

No --

LORETTA

You just go on in, I gotta go now. But if you wanna bring your sample case around, I'd be glad to look at it. I'm in show business. Bye, Mary.

SHE GOES.

HOWARD

I don't think she understood --

MARY

Would you like to sit down? Would you like some coffee?

HOWARD

No, thanks -- I just wanted to apologize.

MARY

Oh, you don't have to apologize. Nobody's wanted my coffee all day.

HOWARD

No -- about my brother. Ed? Your little girl wasn't doing anything all that bad. She was just playing, you know, the way kids will? But Ed gets all t'd off when he thinks he's being spied on.

MARY

Oh, Heather's not a spy. I can guarantee -- do you two live alone?

HOWARD

With my mother. I mean, our mother.

MARY

Oh, that's right -- I think someone told me. Well, I certainly hope we get to be friends. Actually, I should have come over before this and introduced myself or called the welcome wagon --

HOWARD

(A SMILE) Don't worry about it.

MARY

I'm not worried, it's just that I've been having some difficulties lately.

HOWARD

You don't have to explain.

MARY

But I certainly hope we can get to know each other.

HOWARD

I'll take a raincheck on the coffee.

MARY

Fine.

HOWARD

(A BEAT) Well, have a good day.

MARY

It's almost night.

HOWARD

(WARM SMILE) Then have a good night.

MARY

(WARM BEAT) You switched it -- just like that. You have a nice mind.

HOWARD

Thank you.

HE GOES. SHE LOOKS AFTER HIM A BEAT.

SFX: THE PHONE RINGS

MARY

Hello?

TWO WAY: LIMBO

FOLEY

Mary, it's me.

MARY

Me, what? I mean, what do you want?

FOLEY

Dennis.

MARY

I know who you are, I can recognize
your voice.

FOLEY

I thought you'd call after Thursday.

MARY

I didn't, no.

FOLEY

I know you didn't, but I thought you
would. About next Thursday.

MARY

Why?

FOLEY

To finish what we started.

MARY

Well, I was going to. I mean, call.

But I've been --

FOLEY

Look, I've got to get to the station.

I just wanted to call to remind you that
I'll be waiting and to say hello.

MARY

Hello.

FOLEY

(A KISS) Till we meet again. Thursday.

MARY

Dennis?

CLICK

MARY (CONT'D)

Dennis?

FADE OUT.

END EPISODE #77