

REVISED THRU:
 6/19/88, blue
 6/21/88, pink
 6/22/88, yellow
 7/16/88, gold
 7/18/88, buff
 7/21/88, salmon
 7/21/88, lilac
 7/28/88, cherry
 7/30/88, tan
 8/1/88, grey
 8/2/88, white
 8/3/88, blue
 8/8/88, pink
 8/10/88, yellow
 8/12/88, green
 8/13/88, gold
 8/16/88, buff
 8/17/88, salmon
 8/19/88, cherry
 8/25/88, tan
 8/26/88, lilac
 8/30/88, gray
 8/31/88, white
 9/16/88, green

STEEL MAGNOLIAS

Screenplay By
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SHOOTING SCRIPT

June 15, 1988

STEEL MAGNOLIAS

1 INT. ROBELINE'S BOARDING HOUSE - ANNELLE'S ROOM - 1
EARLY SATURDAY MORNING

This room is the most depressing place on earth. Torn wallpaper, bare light bulbs, ancient sink, cheap bedspread, etc. ANNELLE DUPUY, eighteen years old, is getting dressed. She pulls clothing out of the paper bags that serve as her luggage. It's obvious she wants to look nice. As she examines herself in the mirror, she notices an eye watching her through the keyhole. Her expression tells us this is not the first time she's been spied on. She moves quickly, jamming everything of value into a vinyl purse. She opens the door, trying to catch the peeping tom, but all we see is the image of a large woman disappearing in the shadows.

2 EXT. ROBELINE'S BOARDING HOUSE - MORNING 2

The boarding house looks like a cross between the Haunted Mansion and the Bates Motel. The appearance of it in the cloudy day makes Annelle shudder. We know it's spring because the high weeds surrounding the boarding house are in bloom. We can see in Annelle's face that she is an emotional breakdown waiting to happen. She looks over her shoulder to see RUTH ROBELINE, her landlady, staring at her from a window.

3 OMIT OMIT 3

4 OMIT OMIT 4

5 EXT. FRONT STREET - THE BANDSTAND 5 *

Folding chairs have been set up for "honored" guests. The high school band stands in formation playing some beautiful song which sounds ridiculous playing in marching band rhythm. Men are dressed up. Women wear large corsages in school colors. CLAIRE BELCHER is the center of attention.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

She is the epitome of genteel southern womanhood... elegant, refined, effervescent. Clairee is being introduced by the ebullient MAYOR VAN METER. Clairee is about to cut the ceremonial ribbon with the assistance of the Mayor and his tacky wife, JANICE VAN METER. A little league team stands by.

MAYOR

And now. To formally dedicate this beautiful new park in memory of former Mayor Lloyd Belcher, is a lady who needs no introduction...Mrs. Clairee Belcher!

Janice holds the ribbon for Clairee. These women don't like each other, but cover for the sake of the public. Clairee, signals for a drum roll, flourishes the scissors, and announces:

CLAIREE

Belcher Park is open!
(to the little league team)
Let the children play.

The batter hits the baseball. It's a foul ball that smacks Janice Van Meter upside the head.

6 EXT. DOGWOOD LANE

6

No question this is the best neighborhood in town. Expansive, manicured lawns. Azaleas, dogwood, and magnolias are in bloom. Lovely lawns being decorated in anticipation of Easter. The mailman waves to the paperboy. This is Fred MacMurrayland. Annelle is definitely impressed with this part of town.

6A EXT. EATENTON STREET

6A

Annelle is walking past the Eatenton home, where there are catering and rental trucks being unloaded, when she hears a series of loud GUNSHOTS coming from behind the house. Flocks of birds soar out of the Eatenton's trees. More GUN SHOTS. Annelle doesn't know what to make of this.

7 INT. EATENTON HOME - FAMILY ROOM/KITCHEN

7

The house is a whirlwind of activity.

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED:

7

Cooks are putting the finishing touches on a massive wedding cake. Florists are placing huge flower arrangements. Kitchen help scurries around with trays of virtually everything. M'LYNN EATENTON, the bride's mother, is unpacking champagne glasses. SHELBY, the beautiful bride-to-be, is calling out to her as she comes down the stairs and joins her mother. Her extremely immature brothers TOMMY and JONATHAN are dashing about outside, supposedly cleaning the garage. Her father, DRUM is on the patio holding a huge gun.

SHELBY (O.S.)

Mama!

M'LYNN

What?

SHELBY

(holding up her nails)

Mama. This color is drying way too dark. "Practically Pink," my foot. It looks like a stuck pig bled all over my hands.

M'LYNN

I'm sure I have something that'll do.

(holds up broken champagne glasses, distressed)

Oh, no!

Drum outside in the b.g., fires his gun with a deafening BLAST. No one pays him any attention.

SHELBY

(still looking at her nails)

It has to be delicate.

M'LYNN

(crossing to the door)

Shelby, if I don't have something, we'll send one of the boys to get you some delicate pink nailpolish.

(calls outside)

Tommy, grab that delivery man.

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED: (2)

7

Shelby observes her brothers horsing around with the washtubs full of ice and champagne.

SHELBY

Great idea, Mama. I'd love to see what Tommy'd pick out.

Drum fires another BLAST. Tommy comes over and playfully hugs M'Lynn, slips a chunk of ice down her back, and runs out. M'Lynn gasps.

M'LYNN

Tommy! Don't put ice down my back!

Shelby starts up the stairs.

SHELBY

You should've drowned him at birth.

M'LYNN

(offering her back to
Shelby)

Shelby? Get it out, please.

SHELBY

(the idea is ludicrous)
Mama. My nails are wet.

M'Lynn hurriedly punches a number out on the phone.

M'LYNN

Myrtle. Hi...

Drum fires an exceptionally loud series of SHOTS. With exasperation and ice melting down her back, she covers the phone receiver, goes to the door and yells at her husband.

M'LYNN

(continuing)
Drum!! I am on the phone!

BANG!!

M'LYNN

(continuing)
Stop it! I can't hear myself think.

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED: (3)

7

M'Lynn slams the patio door. Drum ignores her, and fires MORE SHOTS.

M'LYNN

(back on the phone)

... all the champagne glasses are broken. Help!!

(relieved)

Thank you. Thank you.. Thank you...

M'Lynn hangs up the phone and sees Shelby's uneaten plate of breakfast. She takes it up the stairs.

*
*

7A

INT. SHELBY'S SITTING ROOM

7A *

M'LYNN

Shelby, you haven't touched your breakfast.

SHELBY

(ignoring her mother's comment)

Mama. This is drying way too dark. Do you have any of those nail polish remover things?

M'LYNN

Eat something!

Someone calls her and M'Lynn dashes back downstairs as Shelby goes into the adjoining bedroom.

*
*
*

8

INT. EATENTON HOME - SHELBY'S BEDROOM

8 *

Shelby has found some nail wipes.

*

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

On her face is an expression that is not one of an excited bride-to-be. Something is weighing heavily on her mind. As she strips her nails of the polish, she gazes out the open window. Suddenly a face pops in the window. It's her fiance, JACKSON LATCHERIE, a good old boy. There is an urgency to his manner. This is a man in emotional pain.

JACKSON
(tentatively, sweetly)
Shelby?

Shelby slams the window shut. She isn't angry, she just doesn't want to deal with Jackson right at the moment. Jackson's pleas to open the window persist, but Shelby sighs, closes the curtain and continues with her nails.

9 OMIT

OMIT 9 *

10 EXT. TRUVY'S

10

Annelle turns into Truvy's street. Truvy's house is a modest, fairly well tended home. A large parking area is on the side of the house with a dilapidated truck that her husband will tinker on for the next fifty years.

11 EXT./INT. TRUVY'S BEAUTY SHOP

11

The back porch has been enclosed to create her shop. It is eyepoppingly decorated for Easter. The beauty equipment is a mixture of new and old.

(CONTINUED)

11

CONTINUED:

11

Only a counter separates her kitchen from the shop. In the kitchen area, there are hard-boiled Easter eggs covering every square inch of available space. Most have been dyed in garish colors, others are waiting to be dipped. TRUVY, a young-looking 40, barrels into the beauty shop carrying a basket of freshly laundered towels and other laundry. She surveys the eggs and calls.

TRUVY

Spud, get in here and finish dying these Easter eggs!

SPUD (O.S.)

I ran outta stuff.

Truvy continues through the dressing room and bathroom, distributing gowns and towels.

TRUVY

That's why God invented the A&P.

SPUD

I gotta work on the truck.

TRUVY

No. You gotta get the lead out.

SPUD

Yes ma'am! I live to serve. *

TRUVY

Those eggs have to be at the church by twelve noon or they won't get hidden! Do you hear me? Spud!

12

EXT./INT. TRUVY'S

12

Annelle has arrived at the house and is standing tentatively at the screen door. Truvy isn't aware of her presence, so she keeps yelling at Spud.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

TRUVY

Get your butt moving, you lazy so
and so...

Annelle knocks on the door.

ANNELLE

Mrs. Jones?

This startles Truvy. She cleans up her act.

TRUVY

Are you Annelle? You sweet thing!
Come on in.

Truvy starts unhooking the screen door. At the same time we hear
a MOTOR START. Truvy has another thought and rushes like
mad to the living-room window and yells to Spud.

*
*
*

TRUVY

(continuing)

And pick up my dress at the
cleaners!

*

ANNELLE

(through the screen, tentatively)

Am I interrupting something?

*

TRUVY

No! I'm just screaming at my
husband. I can do that anytime.
Call me Truvy.

She opens the screen door and Annelle enters.

*

13 INT. EATENTON HOME - SHELBY'S BATHROOM

13

Shelby is in the bathtub. Jackson walks in. She really
isn't up for this.

SHELBY

Jackson, please...

JACKSON

I'm gonna talk some sense into you
if it kills me.

SHELBY

Get back over to Aunt Laura's!
It's bad luck to see me before the
wedding.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

JACKSON

So you are gonna marry me. . . ?

SHELBY

Get out.

JACKSON

(pleading, almost
childlike)

We can work this out. Shelby.
Please. You know you wanna go
through with this. You don't want
to have to give back all the
wedding presents. That VCR alone
is worth getting married for. And
I love you.

SHELBY

If Daddy catches you in here, the
question of whether or not I can
carry your children won't
matter. . . 'cause he'll cut your
thing off.

JACKSON

(taking a firmer tack)

Say you're gonna marry me. I hate
suspense.

Shelby is forced to think.

SHELBY

(gives in)

Okay, okay, okay. Meet me two
o'clock, Presbyterian church.
I'll be the one in the veil down
front.

JACKSON

I'm going to make you very happy.

SHELBY

We'll see.

14 OMIT

OMIT

14 *

15

INT. TRUVY'S SHOP

15

Annelle is finishing her "audition" as a beauty operator. There is no question Truvy considers herself the town's arbiter of glamor. She constantly works on her appearance. With each glance in the mirror, there is always a curl to be sprayed, eyelashes to be separated, lipstick to be blotted. . . etc. Annelle has been overzealous in her "audition" hairdo. She's combed Truvy's hair into something quite ornate.

ANNELLE

Oops! I see a hole.

TRUVY

I was hoping you'd catch that.

ANNELLE

It's a little poofier than I would normally do, but I'm nervous.

TRUVY

I'm not real concerned about that. When I go to bed I wrap my entire head with toilet tissue so it usually gets a little smushed down anyway in that process.

ANNELLE

In my class at the trade school, I was number one when it came to frosting and streaking. I did my own.

Truvy examines Annelle's hair.

TRUVY

Really? I wouldn't have known. And I can spot a bottle job at twenty paces.

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED: (2)

15

Truvy studies her own hairdo with a critical eye.

TRUVY
(continuing)

Well... your technique is good, and
your form and content will improve
with experience. So you're hired.

Annelle is overcome with joy and gratitude.

ANNELLE

Oh!!! Thank you, oh, thank you,
Miss Truvy!!!

TRUVY

Calm down! You're gonna have a
heart attack.

*
*
*

Truvy gets up and starts taking off her beauty smock and
immediately remedying her ornate hairdo, returning it
to normal. Annelle tries to be helpful.

ANNELLE
(continuing)

Here, let me help you.

(dusting Truvy off)

You've got tiny hairs and fuzzies
all over you.

TRUVY

Honey, there's so much static electricity
in here, I pick up everything 'cept
boys and money.

15A

EXT. TRUVY'S

15A

Truvy's teenage son LOUIE dashes down the stairs. Pierced
ears, bizarre haircut, black leather. Truvy barks his name.

TRUVY

Louie!

*

Louie barks back.

LOUIE

What!

TRUVY

This is Annelle. She's taking Judy's place.

LOUIE

Swell.

(CONTINUED)

15A CONTINUED:

15A

TRUVY

Louie! Take out the garbage!

LOUIE

(snaps as he leaves)

Can't. Late.

(gestures to Annelle)

What'd ya hire her for?

Truvy is embarrassed by Louie's behavior. She covers it with sarcasm as Louie's motorcycle ROARS away.

TRUVY

Our son. We're so proud of him.
Just like his daddy.

Truvy looks at the garbage and sighs with resignation. *

TRUVY

(continuing)

Annelle, honey. Let's talk trash. *

16 EXT. TRUVY'S SHOP - BACK OF HOUSE - UTILITY AREA 16

Truvy and Annelle dump sacks of garbage and hair into a large garbage can. Together, they carry it and a box of old magazines to the curb.

ANNELLE

(truly excited)

I am so excited. I can't believe
it's happening.

(sincerely choked up)

I'm a beautician.

TRUVY

(correcting her)

Ah, ah, ah! Glamour Technician!

ANNELLE

(with pride)

Glamour Technician.

TRUVY

And I'll have you know you're
working in the most successful
shop in town. 'Cause I have a
strict philosophy that I have
stuck to for fifteen years...
"There's no such thing as natural
beauty."

(CONTINUED) *

16 CONTINUED:

16

ANNELLE

(committing this to
memory)

There's no such thing as natural
beauty...

TRUVY

(proudly)

Remember that, or we're all out
of a job. Just look at me, Annelle.
It takes some effort to look like
this.

ANNELLE

I can see that.

*

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

TRUVY

Well... tell me things about yourself.

*

ANNELLE

There's nothing to tell. I'm new in town. I've got a job now. That's it. Could I borrow a few of these back issues of Southern Hair?

*

*

TRUVY

Uh... sure. It's essential to keep abreast of the latest styles. I'm glad to see your interest. You must live close by. Within walking distance, I mean. I didn't see a car.

ANNELLE

My car's... I don't have a car. I've been staying across the river at Robeline's Boarding House.

TRUVY

That's quite a walk. Ruth Robeline... now that's a story. She's a twisted, troubled soul.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TRUVY

(continuing)

Her life has been an experiment in terror. Husband killed in World War II. Her son killed in Viet Nam. I have to tell you, when it comes to suffering, she's right up there with Elizabeth Taylor.

ANNELLE

I had no idea.

Clairee tooting on the HORN of her white Lincoln pulls up to the two ladies.

TRUVY

'Morning, Clairee! Annelle. I want you to meet the former first lady of Chinquapin, Mrs. Belcher. Clairee, this is Annelle.

CLAIREE

I'm a little embarrassed. I'm windblown. I've been at the dedication of our new baseball field.

TRUVY

How'd it go?

CLAIREE

Beautifully.

(remembers)

Except! Janice Van Meter got hit with a baseball. . .it was fabulous.

TRUVY

(immediately understands)

Was she hurt?

(CONTINUED)

CLAIREE

I doubt it. She was hit in the head.

(to Annelle)

Janice is the current mayor's wife... we hate her.

TRUVY

Annelle. They named the stadium after Clairee's late husband... Lloyd Belcher Memorial Recreation Complex.

CLAIREE

What's your family name, dear?

ANNELLE

Oh. My married name's Dupuy. I just moved here. I'm originally from Zwolle.

Clairee signals to Truvy.

TRUVY

Annelle? Would you put some of that hairspray in a box and bring it inside please?

Annelle walks into the garage as Clairee and Truvy walk on. When Annelle is out of earshot, Clairee pounces. She wants the dirt.

CLAIREE

Sweet girl. Where'd you find her?

TRUVY

After Judy quit yesterday, I called the trade school and told them to send me a warm body. Annelle was the valedictorian of the hairdo class. I think there's a story here.

CLAIREE

What makes you say that?

TRUVY

For starters. She's married, but she lives at Ruth Robeline's. Alone.

17

INT. TRUVY'S

17 *

Truvy and Clairee enter the shop *

CLAIREE

I'd get to the bottom of this, if I were you. You have some nice silverware you'd like to keep.

TRUVY

Oh, I'm not worried about that. She's very nice. I just love the idea of hiring somebody with a past.

CLAIREE

She can't be more than eighteen. She hasn't had time to have a past.

TRUVY

Clairee. It's the eighties. If you can achieve puberty, you can achieve a past. *

There is a series of loud GUNSHOTS.

CLAIREE

That man! I'll swanee... I don't know how M'Lynn puts up with it.

TRUVY

Sometimes I wonder if Drum Eatenton's brain gets enough oxygen. That is so annoying.

18

INT. EATENTON HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM

18

Shelby storms into the room carrying a large box. She plops the box down in front of M'Lynn.

SHELBY

Mama. Look at this. This was in the hall closet.

(CONTINUED)

M'LYNN

What is it?

SHELBY

A case of rubbers. Jonathan says Tommy's planning to cover the honeymoon getaway car with 'em. Stop him.

M'Lynn wearily looks out the window and sees Tommy and Drum in the back yard. She calls out the window.

M'LYNN

Tommy! Don't decorate your sister's car with condoms. It's tacky.

(she's ignored, she mutters)

It's like talking to a brick wall.

M'Lynn comes away from the window. There is another series of GUNSHOTS. M'Lynn sighs.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

If he's trying to drive me crazy, he's too late.

A GUNSHOT.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

There has to be a better way to get rid of those birds.

Shelby is sick of this subject.

SHELBY

We can cut down all our trees or change the migratory patterns of the birds of North America. Take your pick. You're the one that told him to get rid of 'em.

M'LYNN

But I had no idea he would alienate the entire neighborhood...

SHELBY

The neighborhood'd be a lot more alienated if they got covered in birdshit at my reception.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (2)

18

M'LYNN

Pretty talk. You don't have to be crude.

19 INT./EXT. EATENTON HOME

19

Drum is in a big hurry. He dashes in through the patio door with his gun. Jonathan is reading the newspaper.

DRUM

(with urgency)

Let me have the sports.

Jonathan hands him the sports section. Drum goes down the hall. He puts the gun on the hall table and goes into the bathroom. M'Lynn enters the family room and picks up her tote bag. She puts a coaster under Jonathan's glass of juice. She gives a cursory glance to all the help performing their various preparations, then gets Jonathan's attention.

M'LYNN

(rattling instructions)

We'll be at Truvy's. Try to keep Tommy under control. I don't want he and Jackson...

JONATHAN

Am I my brother's keeper?

M'LYNN

You are your brother's warden. That horrible woman will be delivering the groom's cake in about an hour. And...

M'Lynn realizes there is no noise, and no Drum in the back yard.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

Where's your father?

JONATHAN

(nodding toward the bathroom)

His coffee kicked in.

M'Lynn walks through the hall into the front parlor. She sees the gun on the hall table. She walks to the table and quietly slips it into the drawer.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

M'LYNN

Shelby! Let's go! Did you get your shot?

SHELBY

(exasperated)

'Course I did... settle down.

She bounds down the stairs. They are about to leave the house when Shelby sees Ouiser storming up the front walk.

SHELBY

(stops in her tracks)

Uh, oh. It's Miss Ouiser.

M'LYNN

Back door.

Shelby and M'Lynn change directions.

20 EXT. EATENTON HOME - FRONT DOOR

20

Ouiser pounds on the door. She's worked herself into a snit. Her balding St. Bernard, Rhett, is BARKING his head off, straining at his leash.

OUISER

Drum! M'Lynn! I know you're in there. This is all she wrote!

21 INT. EATENTON HOME - FAMILY ROOM

21

Tommy and Jonathan just look at each other. There's no way they're going to be the one to open the door. Drum comes out of the bathroom. He hears Ouiser screaming and pounding as he grimaces. Jonathan returns to reading the newspaper. He's the master of understatement.

JONATHAN

(dryly)

I think there's somebody at the door.

TOMMY

(even drier)

I think it's for Daddy.

Drum braces himself, then opens the door to reveal an irate, puffed-up Ouiser and her hysterical dog. In her efforts to get the medicine into Rhett she looks like she's been hit by a truck, clothing disheveled, hair a mess, a couple of scratches on her face. Drum and Ouiser have argued for years. They get a perverse enjoyment out of driving each other crazy.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

DRUM

Ouiser. You look like hammered
shit.

OUISER

Don't talk to me like that.

DRUM

Okay, okay. I'm sorry. You just
look like regular shit.

OUISER

(tying Rhett to a
porch column)

Drum Eatenton. I have a bone to
pick with you.

DRUM

Pick it.

Rhett bares his teeth and SNARLS at the sight of Drum.
Drum bares his teeth and snarls back at Rhett.

OUISER

I just got back from the vet's.
Whitey Black says all this noise
you've been making the last few
days has created a nervous
condition in Rhett that's made his
hair fall out. I have to give him
sedatives.

DRUM

Whitey Black is a moron. I'm not
even sure he has opposable thumbs.
If you'll excuse me, I've got yard
work to do.

Drum slams the door in Ouiser's face, but she opens it
and is in hot pursuit of Drum. As she charges through
the family room, Tommy and Jonathan give her a polite
hello, Ouiser returns their greeting...

OUISER

Leave me alone.

22 EXT. EATENTON HOME - BACK YARD

22

Ouiser and Drum are standing next to a picnic table
which is covered with spent shells and boxes of blank
cartridges. There is the SOUND of thousands of birds
in the trees. Ouiser is lambasting Drum.

(CONTINUED)

22

CONTINUED:

22

OUISER

You listen to me... I don't know if I'm coming or going.

DRUM

Yeah. I heard you got so screwed up you cut your dog out of your will and had an ungrateful nephew put to sleep.

Drum laughs mightily at his joke. This just incenses Ouiser more.

OUISER

I am at the end of my rope.

DRUM

Then tie a noose in it and slip it over your head.

Ouiser picks up boxes of shells and starts throwing them into the pool.

DRUM

(continuing)

Ouiser. I don't want to have to kill you.

Drum looks around the picnic table for his gun. He can't find it. He bellows.

DRUM

(continuing)

Boys! Bring me my gun.

OUISER

Don't you threaten me, Drum Eatenton. I'll call the police.

This doesn't faze Drum.

DRUM

I've gotta scare away about five zillion pigeons before Shelby's reception this afternoon. If I don't, I'll have my wife to deal with. And I make it a point never to deal with my wife.

OUISER

That dog is on his last legs! What am I gonna do with the poor animal?

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

DRUM

:: Serve him on toast...

With this, she turns on her heel and storms back toward the house. As she passes the pool, Jonathan starts plopping magnolia blossoms into the water. She's livid. She screams.

OUISER

Thomas Drummond Eatenton!!! Did you get these magnolias off my tree?

DRUM

(more concerned with his missing gun)
The judge hasn't decided whose tree that is exactly.

OUISER

It's mine.

Drum ignores her and Ouiser storms off.

23 INT. TRUVY'S SHOP

23

It's a little later in the morning and the shop is in full operation. Truvy is in the midst of taking rollers out of Shelby's hair. Shelby is trying out various shades of lipstick. Annelle is finishing washing M'Lynn's hair. Clairee, with her hair in hot rollers and clips, is sitting in a chair copying recipes while allowing her pedicure to dry.

*
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*
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*

CLAIREE

(studying a recipe card)

Now are these chocolate chips semi-sweet or milk?

TRUVY

Milk.

CLAIREE

Is the Karo syrup light or dark?

TRUVY

Matter of taste.

CLAIREE

Where's the other one you were talking about... Cuppa, cuppa, cuppa?

(CONTINUED)

TRUVY

That's so easy you don't have to write it down. Cup of flour, cup of sugar, cup of fruit cocktail with the juice. Mix and bake at 350 'til gold and bubbly.

CLAIREE

Sounds awfully rich.

TRUVY

It is. So I serve it over ice cream to cut the sweetness.

(to Shelby)

Be right back.

(notices M'Lynn's wet hair)

Well, M'Lynn, looks like you're ready to roll. I think we can trust Annelle to roll you up. Her coiffure card is right there... behind the counter in the little box.

ANNELLE

(very insecure)

I don't know. Today is very special. And my work tends to be too poofy when I'm nervous.

TRUVY

You'll be just fine... You'll have to start somewhere.

ANNELLE

Does your dress have to go over your head?

SHELBY

You can't screw up her hair. You just tease it and make it look like a brown football helmet.

M'LYNN

I must've missed the passage in Emily Post that says all abuse must be heaped on the mother of the bride.

TRUVY

(the peacemaker)

Hush, girls. Shelby, your mama doesn't tell us much. What's Jackson like?

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*
*
*

23

CONTINUED:

23

SHELBY

He's really cute. I thought he was
a pest at first, but then he kind of
grew on me. And now I love him.

*

TRUVY

Is he real romantic?

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED: (2)

23

Annelle starts to roll up M'Lynn's hair. *

SHELBY

No. But he does give me flowers and surprises me with little presents if I bug him enough. He's promised to give me a red rose on every anniversary corresponding to the number of that anniversary. I think that's so sweet.

TRUVY

Well, now. That's a pretty romantic idea, isn't it?

SHELBY

Yea. I wish it'd been his.

CLAIREE

You made a very good catch, Shelby. Louisiana lawyers do well whether they want to or not.

SHELBY

I don't really care. Don't get me wrong. The money's real nice... but I just like the idea of growing old with somebody. My dream is to get old and sit on the back porch covered with grandchildren and say, "No!" and "Get out of that tree." *

TRUVY

Are you gonna quit your nursing job? *

SHELBY

Never! I love it. I love being around all those babies... Last week we had this poor little fellow who only lived about 12 hours. But I saw to it that he was loved his entire life. I think that's very important. That's why I became a nurse and that's why I'm gonna keep being one.

M'LYNN

Drum and I both feel that Shelby shouldn't work anymore after she gets married.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

SHELBY

I'm so anxious to discuss this topic for the nine hundredth time this week.

(changing subject)

Annelle? I know you're new and all, but don't let that stop you. Anytime you have anything to say, you just let 'er rip.

ANNELLE

I don't have anything to say. *

M'LYNN

You should not be on your feet all day. You should be kinder to your circulatory system.

Shelby is tired of discussing this with M'Lynn.

SHELBY

You know what you need in here, Truvy? You need a radio. Music is wonderful to have in the background. It takes the pressure off having to talk so much.

TRUVY

As a matter of fact, I used to have one... but I slammed it against the wall when I couldn't figure out where the batteries went. I know now I was suffering from premenstrual syndrome. *

SHELBY

I've gotten four radios for wedding presents. I'll give you one.

TRUVY

How sweet!

CLAIREE

Radio?... What did I just hear? Oh, yes. The Antilley family is selling KPPD. I wonder how much radio stations sell for? *

SHELBY

Miss Clairee. You should buy KPPD. You got plenty of money.

CLAIREE

What would I do with a radio station? Business never interested me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (4)

23

CLAIREE (CONT'D)

Lloyd took care of all that stuff. We missed it to forty years by three months. That stinker. He tried. He just couldn't make it. Shelby, I hope you and Jackson will be as happy as Lloyd and I were. We had such a good time. Until November... at least he hung on through the State playoffs.

SHELBY

Miss Clairee. There are still good times to be had.

CLAIREE

Well. I really do love football. But it's hard to parlay that into a reason to live.

TRUVY

What are your colors, Shelby?

SHELBY

Blush and bashful.

M'LYNN

Her colors are pink and pink.

SHELBY

(insistent)

They're blush and bashful, mama. *

M'LYNN

I ask you. How precious is this wedding going to get?

SHELBY

I have chosen two shades of pink. One is much deeper than the other. *

M'LYNN

The bridesmaids dresses are beautiful.

SHELBY

And the ceremony will be too. All the walls are banked with sprays of flowers in the two shades of blush and bashful. There's a pink carpet specially laid out for my service. And pink silk bunting draped over anything that would stand still. *

(CONTINUED)

M'LYNN

That sanctuary looks like it's been hosed down with Pepto-Bismol.

SHELBY

I like pink. Pink is my signature color.

TRUVY

How many bridesmaids?

SHELBY

(not happy about this)

Nine.

TRUVY

Nine? Good Lord!

SHELBY

Exactly. Mama made me have my cousins and Margi St. Maurice.

M'LYNN

Shelby. There was no way around it and you know it.

SHELBY

It will be pretentious. Daddy always says, "An ounce of pretension is worth a pound of manure."

M'LYNN

The poet laureate of Dogwood Lane...

SHELBY

Mama. I wish you would get off Daddy's back. He gets enough hassle from Miss Ouiser.

TRUVY

(always the peacemaker)

Fill us in on the reception.

SHELBY

There's going to be ferns and twinkly lights. The wedding cake will be by the pool. The groom's cake will be hidden in the carport.

(CONTINUED)

M'LYNN

Shelby and I agree on one thing.

SHELBY

The groom's cake. It's awful. It's in the shape of a giant armadillo.

TRUVY

An armadillo?

SHELBY

Jackson wanted a cake in the shape of an armadillo. He has an aunt that makes them.

CLAIREE

It's unusual.

M'LYNN

It's repulsive. It has gray icing. I can't even think of how you'd make gray icing.

SHELBY

Worse! The cake part is red velvet cake. Blood red! People are going to be hacking into this animal that looks like it's bleeding to death.

M'LYNN

The rehearsal supper was an experience.

SHELBY

It wasn't that bad. It was out at Jackson's uncle's place on the river.

M'LYNN

For dessert they served an original creation they called "Dago" pie. It was a pizza with frosting. I think that says it all. Jackson is from a good old southern family with good old southern values. You either shoot it, stuff it or marry it.

*
*
*

SHELBY

They're simply outdoorsy, that's a...

TRUVY

Did you all do anything especially romantic?

SHELBY

We drove down to Frenchman's Point and went parking.

M'Lynn doesn't want to hear about this.

M'LYNN

Shelby, really.

Truvy desperately wants to hear about this.

TRUVY

Oh, boy. The romantic part. This is what really melts my butter.

SHELBY

Then we went skinnydipping and did things that frightened the fish.

Clairee enjoys the candor immensely.

CLAIREE

It's been a long time since we've had a youngster in this place, hasn't it?

SHELBY

We talked, and talked, and talked...

TRUVY

I love those kind of talks... in the arms of the man you love.

SHELBY

Actually we fought most of the time.

TRUVY

You fought?

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED: (8)

23

Shelby is pale and in a cold sweat. There are subtle changes in her manner. *

SHELBY

'Cause I told him I wouldn't marry him.

M'LYNN

(shock)

What?

CLAIREE

(terribly concerned)

Why would you go and do a thing like that?

SHELBY

It's okay now. We worked it all out.

TRUVY

(breaking the tension)

Oh. It was just one of those last minute jitter things. *

SHELBY

No. But the wedding's still on.

TRUVY

Thank goodness. 'Cause this is gonna be in the hairdo hall of fame.

Shelby is beginning to drift into an insulin reaction. *

CLAIREE

Shelby. You scared us. That wasn't a nice thing to do to your mama. You should never say something like that to a woman who's marinating fifty pounds of crab claws.

Shelby is slipping deeper and deeper into the reaction.

TRUVY

Oooo. But making up can be extremely romantic. I'm jealous. I miss romance so much.

CLAIREE

Truvy. It can't be that bad.

TRUVY

The last romantic thing my husband did was in ... 1972. He enclosed this porch so I could support him. *

M'LYNN

Maybe I can cheer you up. Drum and I are planning to talk to your husband about adding a room onto our house.

TRUVY

If you give him a job, I'll give you hot oil treatments free for life.

(taking note of
Annelle's work)

Very nice, Annelle. I think you know what you're doing.

ANNELLE

Thank you. Mrs. Eatenton, you have great hair. And your scalp's as clean as a whistle.

M'LYNN

I try.

Shelby's lost her fight for control. She's slipped under.

TRUVY

Must run in the family. Shelby, you've got such pretty hair... so thick...

Shelby's head is beginning to drop forward.

TRUVY

(continuing)

Hold your head up.

Truvy isn't aware Shelby is having an insulin reaction. Shelby reacts belligerently to Truvy's touch, jerking her head away from Truvy's hand in uncontrolled movements.

SHELBY

(viciously)

Stop it.

TRUVY

(frightened)

Shelby? Shelby? M'Lynn!

M'Lynn, upon realization, springs into action. Despite the seriousness of these reactions, there is no alarm on M'Lynn's part, just efficient action.

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED: (10)

23

She's done this a million times. Clairee is also aware of the urgency of the situation.

CLAIREE

I'll get some juice.

Clairee rushes into the kitchen to get some juice. M'Lynn holds Shelby's hand reassuringly while calmly issuing instructions.

M'LYNN

Truvy. There's some candy in my purse.

Truvy is anxious to help.

TRUVY

I got peppermint right here.

M'Lynn slips the mint into Shelby's mouth. Shelby spits it out. M'Lynn is wiping Shelby's sweaty forehead with Kleenex.

M'LYNN

Shelby? Hang on, honey. Clairee's getting you some juice.

TRUVY

Should I get her a cookie?

M'LYNN

No. Juice is better. Shelby?

CLAIREE

(rushing back
w/juice)

Here's the juice.

M'LYNN

(firmly)

Shelby. You need some juice.

M'Lynn tries to get Shelby to drink. Shelby's condition makes her frighteningly hostile to the ladies. She pushes away the glass and spills some juice. *

SHELBY

Stop it, Mama!

M'LYNN

(tougher than a
drill sergeant)

Drink. Drink the juice.

(CONTINUED)

TRUVY

Drink the juice, honey.

Shelby pushes the juice glass out of M'Lynn's hand, spilling it. Clairee sloshes more juice into a glass. Time is running out. Shelby's about to pass out.

SHELBY

No! Mama, stop it. I have candy in my purse.

M'Lynn holds Shelby's arms down and shoves the glass to Shelby's lips.

M'LYNN

You didn't bring your purse, honey. Here.

SHELBY

No...

But Shelby drinks a sip.

M'Lynn is encouraged that Shelby drank, but it's clear that she's not out of the woods yet.

M'LYNN

It's not any wonder. With all this wedding nonsense and running around.

With everything else she's witnessed this morning, Annelle's mind is almost totally blown. But it is her nature to be helpful.

ANNELLE

Excuse me. Should I call a doctor or something?

TRUVY

No, no.

CLAIREE

She's a diabetic.

M'Lynn treats the situation lightly, but the concern she feels is etched all over her face.

M'LYNN

She's got a little too much insulin, that's all. She'll be fine if we can get something in her. Drink some more, Shelby.

(CONTINUED)

Shelby is still combative, uncooperative.

SHELBY

I'm gonna leave if you don't leave me alone.

M'LYNN

I'd love to see you try. Shelby ... cooperate. Please!

TRUVY

(almost pleads)
Honey, drink... please.

Shelby does drink some more.

M'LYNN

There we go. That's a start.

There is a minor release of tension. Clairee breathes for the first time since Shelby's attack started.

CLAIREE

That one hit her quick.

M'LYNN

She's been so upset lately. Dr. Mitchell told her at her last appointment that children are not possible.

*
*
*
*

Shelby has become aware of the conversation around her.

SHELBY

Don't talk about me like I'm not here.

M'Lynn knows Shelby's going to be okay.

M'LYNN

There. She's making some sense. This one wasn't bad at all. But I think we should have a little more juice.

ANNELLE

Can I do something? Should I...

23 CONTINUED: (13)

23

M'LYNN

No. She'll be fine. Don't
fuss over her... normality
is very important to Shelby.

*
*

Truvy is genuinely concerned. Satisfied the worst is
over, she starts to clean up the spilled juice, etc.

TRUVY

I'm sorry about the children
part, M'Lynn.

M'LYNN

I know. She feels that Jackson
might be throwing away his chance
for children.

*

SHELBY

Jackson said, "Shelby. Don't be
stupid. There's plenty of kids
out there that need good homes.
We'll adopt ten of 'em. We'll buy
'em if we have to."

*

CLAIREE

Jackson sounds like good people
to me.

Shelby is recovering. She realizes what has happened
and is embarrassed.

SHELBY

(continuing)

Oh gosh... oh gosh... I'm sorry...
I'm so sorry, Mama.

24 INT. EATENTON HOME - FAMILY ROOM

24

Drum storms in, really confused. He's been looking
everywhere for the gun. Jonathan has fallen asleep,
Tommy is eating wedding reception food while reading
the paper.

(CONTINUED)

24

CONTINUED:

24

DRUM

What did I do with my gun?

Jonathan grunts in his sleep, but doesn't wake.

TOMMY

Where'd you have it last?

DRUM

How the hell do I know?

Drum jostles Jonathan who stirs in a stupor.

DRUM

(continuing)

Get up! We got work to do.
Daylight's burning.

Jonathan stumbles off the sofa.

DRUM

(continuing)

Boys. We're going to get rid of
some birds.

25

INT. EATENTON GARAGE

25

Drum, Jonathan and Tommy are rummaging through boxes and trunks in the garage. Finally, Drum finds what he's after in an old toy box. He triumphantly holds up an old toy GI Joe bow and arrow.

26

EXT. PARKING AREA - TRUVY'S SHOP

26

Annelle, Truvy and Clairee are carrying about a million cartons of Easter eggs to Truvy's car. It's not a new model car, and the spring on the trunk lid is broken, so Annelle is holding it up. Shelby sits on the porch, eating a boiled egg. M'Lynn is bringing her more to eat. *

SHELBY

Miss Clairee! What cute shoes. *

CLAIREE

You think so? I'm not real sure about them. I think they're a little too racy for me. I'll probably give them away.

*
*
*
*
*

TRUVY

Ooo. Those are too cha-cha for words. If you decide to get rid of them. I'll buy 'em from you.

*
*
*
*

CLAIREE

What size do you wear?

*
*

TRUVY

Well. In a good shoe, I wear a size six, but sevens feel so good, I buy a size eight.

*
*
*
*

CLAIREE

They're eight and a halves.

*
*

TRUVY

Perfect.

*
*

After putting the eggs into the trunk of the car, Truvy heads back towards the house. Ouiser turns the corner, huffing and puffing and muttering while dragging her hyperactive dog on his leash and struggling with a large, heavy totebag. Clairee and Anelle exchange glances as Ouiser charges across the lawn.

*
*
*
*
*

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

CLAIREE
Lord, give us strength.

ANNELLE
That is one ugly dog. What kind
of a dog is that?

CLAIREE
If it had hair, it'd be a St.
Bernard

As Ouiser approaches, she starts to rant.

OUISER
This is it, I've found it, I'm in
hell!

Truvy stops.

TRUVY
'Mornin', Ouiser...

OUISER
Don't try to get on my good side.
I no longer have one.

TRUVY
You're a little early.

Ouiser desperately tries to tie her dog to a tree.

OUISER
That's precisely why I'm here.
I have to talk to M'Lynn about
her husband.
(M'Lynn approaching from the porch)
He's a boil on the butt of humanity.

M'LYNN
I'm sorry this whole thing has
gotten out of hand, Ouiser.

OUISER
It's not your fault, M'Lynn.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

26

CONTINUED (3)

26

Ouiser goes to fill Rhett's bowl from the garden hose.

*
*

OUISER (CONT'D)

I used to think that you were crazy for marrying that man. Then I thought for a few years that you were just a glutton for punishment. Now I realize you must be on some mission from God.

*

SHELBY

Miss Ouiser, Daddy isn't trying to drive you crazy. He's just trying to make my reception nice. His heart's in the right place.

M'LYNN

Ouiser, I know for a fact there will be no more gunshots. So why don't you relax?

OUISER

But he was going to fire a gun at me!

M'LYNN

They're blanks. And Drum would never aim a gun at a lady.

OUISER

He's a real gentleman. I'll bet he takes the dishes out of the sink before he pees in it.

Annelle's still holding up the trunk lid, but her arm's getting tired, so she's only holding it open a couple of inches.

Ouiser heads for the house and stops to give Annelle the once-over.

*

OUISER

Who the hell are you?

ANNELLE

(terrified)

Uh...Annelle...

TRUVY

Annelle is my new...

*

*

OUISER

Fine. I know everyone.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OUISER (CONT'D)

(almost accusatory)

I don't recall ever seeing you before.

ANNELLE

I just moved into town not too long ago.

OUISER

With your family?

ANNELLE

No'm. I don't have any family to speak of.

OUISER

With your husband?

ANNELLE

Uh... my husband? That's hard to say... I... uh... I don't know.

OUISER

You don't know?

ANNELLE

I'm not sure.

OUISER

I'm intrigued. Are you married or not? These are not difficult questions.

ANNELLE

Uh... we're not... he's not... I can't talk about it.

CLAIREE AND TRUVY

Of course you can.

ANNELLE

I'm not sure if I'm married or not... he's gone!

OUISER

Honey. Men are the most horrible creatures. They'll ruin your life, mark my words.

ANNELLE

Everything is horrible. Bunkie... that's my husband.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNELLE

(continuing)

He just vanished last week. He took all the money, my jewelry, the car. Most of my clothes were in the trunk. He's in big trouble with the law. Drugs or something. The police keep questioning me. But I don't know anything. They say my marriage may not be legal. . .

*
*

TRUVY

You should've said something.

ANNELLE

I was scared to. I need a job in the worst way and I didn't know if you'd hire someone who may or may not be married to someone who might be a dangerous criminal. But I swear to you that my personal tragedy will not interfere with my ability to do good hair.

TRUVY

Of course it won't. . .

ANNELLE

I really don't think things could get any worse.

OUISER

Of course they can.

ANNELLE

I'm totally alone. Checks are bouncing everywhere. Everything is going wrong. I keep asking myself . . . why me?

SHELBY

We are awful. We are all hateful, awful people. Here all we've been talking about is weddings and psychotic animals.

Ouiser reacts.

CLAIREE

What can we do to help?

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (6)

26

SHELBY

I know one thing I can do.. This afternoon, you are going to drop by my house and have some bleeding armadillo groom's cake.

*
*

M'LYNN

Yes, you must.

ANNELLE

Oh, I couldn't. I still get real emotional sometimes...

SHELBY

Not today you won't! It's going to be a great party.

*
*

ANNELLE

But I don't have anything to wear...

SHELBY

No problem. I'll bet I have something that'll do. I'll call the house.

Shelby dashes inside.

27 INT./EXT. EATENTON HOME

27

The phone rings inside the Eatenton home. Drum, Tommy and Jonathan are standing under the bird-infested trees. Drum holds the bow and arrow. It is drawn, ready to fire.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

Tied to the arrow are cherry bombs, M-80's and firecrackers. Tommy and Jonathan are lighting the fuses. When the fuses are all lit...

TOMMY

Okay! Let 'er rip!

DRUM

'Bye, 'bye, blackbirds...

Drum shoots the arrow. It whizzes and fizzes into the trees.

28 EXT. PARKING AREA - TRUVY'S SHOP

28

There is a huge EXPLOSION. Smoke billows up from the direction of the Eatenton home. Birds soar into the air. Rhett goes wild.

OUISER

What in the hell?!?

M'LYNN

(starting homeward)

I hope nobody was hurt! Shelby!...

Rhett is BARKING uncontrollably. Trying to calm the dog, Ouiser slings her heavy tote bag onto the trunk of the car, forcing the lid shut. The resulting CRUNCH leaves no question every egg has been crushed. Annelle, horrified, starts to cry.

TRUVY

(opening the lid of
the trunk)

I want to die.

Rhett, in a frenzy, breaks his chain and heads for the smoke.

SHELBY

(running after
the dog)

Miss Ouiser, please! That dog'll
eat Daddy alive!

M'LYNN

Ouiser! Call your dog! He'll
listen to you.

SHELBY

Miss Ouiser! Please! It's my
wedding day. Say something to
your dog!

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED:

28

OUISER
 (screams)
 Kill, Rhett! Kill!

All the ladies follow M'Lynn running to the Eatenton home.

29

EXT./INT. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - VESTIBULE

29

The ORGAN is playing. Clairee is the ceremony organizer. She has just sent the last bridesmaid and groomsman down the aisle. Shelby and Drum are outside the entrance. Drum is rubbing his ears. The explosion has affected his hearing. The MUSIC swells into the Lohengrin wedding march. Shelby lovingly takes Drum's arm. He can't hear a thing.

SHELBY
 Daddy. It's time.

DRUM
 (too loudly)
 It's time.

Shelby shushes him. The doors open. *

29A

INT. CHURCH

29A

We see the sanctuary from their POV. Pink. Pink carpet, pink flowers cascading everywhere, pink silk bunting, pink bridesmaids. Pink. It's a huge bridal party standing in the front -- nine bridesmaids and groomsmen. Shelby and Drum march beautifully down the aisle. They pass Truvy, who always cries at weddings. Truvy catches Shelby's eye. Shelby has a curl out of place. Truvy pantomimes brushing a curl on her forehead. *

Shelby gets the message from Truvy and blows the curl into place. They pass Ouiser. Drum grins viciously at Ouiser. Ouiser grins back. They pass M'Lynn who glows. Shelby gives M'Lynn a flower from her bouquet. Father and daughter stop before the MINISTER who asks:

MINISTER
 Who gives this woman in marriage?

Shelby looks at Drum lovingly. Drum answers the Minister with great pride and so loudly it's obscene.

DRUM
 Her mother and I do.

Groomsmen Tommy and Jonathan snicker. The Minister is a little startled. M'Lynn, embarrassed, smiles weakly.

30

EXT. EATENTON HOME - BACK YARD RECEPTION

30

The reception is in full swing. A band plays under the marquee. Bartenders dispense liquid refreshment. Guests are everywhere. Shelby is dancing with Drum, M'Lynn is dancing with Jackson. Drum's hearing is returning, but Shelby speaks distinctly anyhow. She's very moved by the events of the day. She's full of love.

*
*

SHELBY

This has been the best day of my life, Daddy.

DRUM

(very proud)

I'm glad, sugar. Am I talking too loud?

SHELBY

You're just fine, Daddy.
(notices M'Lynn's)
Isn't Mama gorgeous?

M'Lynn and Jackson have danced within earshot. M'Lynn's radar senses they're talking about her.

M'LYNN

What?

SHELBY

I was just saying you're the prettiest lady here. That dress is beautiful.

(to Jackson)

It cost more than my wedding dress.

M'LYNN

It did not. It was on sale.

SHELBY

(explains to Jackson)

What she actually means is that it was "for sale," not "on sale."

DRUM

(didn't hear
all of that)

What?

M'LYNN

Never mind.

M'Lynn playfully spins Jackson away from Drum and Shelby.

31

EXT. EATENTON HOME - BAR AREA/GARAGE

31

The main bar has been set up here. Annelle is very uncomfortable. She doesn't know anybody. She's not as stylishly dressed. She's managed to avoid eye contact with practically everyone... except the bartender. SAMMY DeSOTO in late teens, somewhat rural, rough around the edges, but attractive. He's been watching Annelle all evening. He just tries to be friendly.

SAMMY

What can I get ya?

ANNELLE

Uh... nothing. No thanks.

SAMMY

Sure? It's free.

Sammy doesn't realize this is a legitimate concern of Annelle's.

ANNELLE

Oh.

SAMMY

C'mon. What'll it be?

ANNELLE

Uh... a cherry Coke.

This is not what Sammy expected, but... what the hell.

SAMMY

Sure.

He starts smashing maraschino cherries into a glass. He's a charmer, not at all sleazy. *

SAMMY

(continuing)

Friend of the bride or groom?

ANNELLE

Uh... neither. Uh... Shelby invited me. I don't know why I'm here.

SAMMY

I'm Sammy.

(presenting the Coke)

And this is the best cherry Coke in the history of the world.

32 INT. EATENTON HOME - DINING ROOM

32

Shelby and Jackson are cutting the wedding cake. .
surrounded by photographers and well-wishers. Drum
is there with Tommy and Jonathan. M'Lynn, Truvy and
BELLE MARMILLION are standing at the table as Shelby
starts cutting and serving the cake. Shelby feeds
Jackson cake with her fingers. Nancy Beth, next to
Shelby, observes aside to Shelby.

NANCY BETH

That Jackson... he's one big
hangin' man.

Belle overhears with disgust.

BELLE

Come on, Nancy Beth.

She sweeps Nancy Beth past Truvy. Belle notices the
large piece of cake on Truvy's plate, and cautions her.

BELLE

Calories! Calories!

TRUVY

(to M'Lynn after Belle
is out of earshot)

I don't like Belle Marmillion.
I don't trust anyone that does
her own hair. It's unnatural.

M'LYNN

(to Belle's defense)

Now Truvy. She's one of the best
Volunteers we have at the Mental
Guidance Center. She's excellent
with troubled children.

TRUVY

I wish I'd taken Louie there when
he was little and straightened him
out. I shoul'da realized he had
problems when his imaginary play-
mates wouldn't play with him.

M'LYNN

Your boys grew up fine. They're
just a little scary, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

TRUVY

I just think it must be fun to have access to all that secret personal information. C'mon, M'Lynn. Tell us some of your most bizarre mental cases and let us guess who they are. There's a lot of sick tickets in this town.

M'LYNN

I will do no such thing.

Truvy notices M'Lynn's hair and as she fixes it remarks.

*
*

TRUVY

Oops... I see a hole.

*

33 EXT. EATENTON HOME - GARAGE/GROOM'S CAKE AREA

33

Drum saunters over to terrorize Ouiser who is serving the armadillo groom's cake. It's repulsive. It's been carved up and looks like a dead animal.

OUISER

I'm not speaking to you.

DRUM

Awwww. What a shame.

(CONTINUED)

33

CONTINUED:

33

OUISER

I mean it.

DRUM

Ouiser. Let's call a truce just long enough for me to get some cake.

Ouiser, takes the serving knife and whacks off the butt of the armadillo, plops it on a plate and hands it to Drum, the tail hanging off the plate. Drum, not to be intimidated, takes a healthy bite. The Minister is helping himself to some refreshment at the table. Drum savors the bite.

DRUM

(continuing)

Ummm. Thanks, Ouiser.
(he holds the
plate looking
at the tail)

Nothing like a good piece of ass.

Drum winks at Ouiser and walks away, leaving the Minister looking at Ouiser. Ouiser, terribly embarrassed, stabs the armadillo with the serving knife and stalks away.

34

EXT. EATENTON HOME - THE CHAMPAGNE FOUNTAIN

34

Truvy and Clairee are watching a blousy Janice Van Meter. Janice, having been slammed in the head with a baseball earlier, is wearing a bandage that is not remotely concealed by a large hat.

TRUVY

Clairee, you know I would walk on my lips to avoid criticizing anyone, but Janice Van Meter...

CLAIREE

(just as indignant)

I know.

TRUVY

(scrutinizing
Janice's outfit)

I'll bet you money she paid five hundred dollars for that dress. And doesn't even bother to wear a girdle.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

CLAIREE

(watching Janice walk)

Looks like two pigs fighting under a blanket.

TRUVY

I haven't left the house without lycra on these thighs since I was fourteen.

CLAIREE

You were brought up right.

35 INT. STAIRS, SHELBY'S BEDROOM AND BATHROOM

35

*

Shelby and Annelle are walking up the stairs and into Shelby's bedroom.

*

*

SHELBY

(to Annelle)

I'm so glad you came. I couldn't stand the thought of someone being alone or unhappy tonight.

ANNELLE

Everybody's so nice.

SHELBY

They enjoy being nice to each other. There's not much else to do in this town.

Shelby shows Annelle into the adjoining bathroom.

*

36 EXT. PATIO AREA - DANCE FLOOR

36

Carrying dishes back to the kitchen, Clairee and Truvy circle the dance floor.

CLAIREE

I don't like going to things by myself. If I go with another couple, I'm a third wheel. If I go with a friend, we're just a couple of old biddies.

TRUVY

I'm in the same boat. My boys are going to work for their cousin in Missouri and I've got a husband that hasn't moved from in front of the TV set in fifteen years.

*

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

CLAIREE

I can't believe your kids are old enough to leave the nest.

TRUVY

Honey. My last birthday, the boys wanted to put the right number of candles on the cake. I wouldn't let 'em, 'cause I wasn't made up for harsh light.

CLAIREE

(laughing)

Stop that.

TRUVY

Well. I'm looking on the bright side. I've got more time to do things. And I've always wanted to visit Baltimore. I've heard it's the hairdo capital of the world.

37 INT. EATENTON HOME - DOWNSTAIRS MASTER BEDROOM

37

*

Truvy and Shelby are repairing makeup.

TRUVY

Let me guess where the honeymoon is: I pictured tropical. Moonlight for days. Secluded. Somewhere you can be intimate out of doors.

SHELBY

Las Vegas.

TRUVY

(not what she's pictured)

Well... the weather's supposed to be nice. I hear it's like living in a blow dryer.

38 EXT. EATENTON HOME - PATIO

38

*

Ouiser is seated at the patio table talking. Clairee brings up FERN THORNTON, who is eating the large piece of armadillo cake on her plate.

CLAIREE

Ouiser...

OUISER

(surveying Fern's plate)

That looks like an autopsy.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

CLAIREE

(covering)

Ouiser! I'd like you to meet Jackson's aunt, Fern Thornton from Alexandria. She made the cake.

OUISER

You did this?

FERN

(very proud)

Guilty. It's very simple really. It just takes patience.

OUISER

You only do armadillos?

FERN

Oh... I can do anything... except snakes. I don't have the counter space.

39 EXT. EATENTON HOME

39

A car comes SCREECHING up the driveway. Tommy and Jonathan jump out. It's the honeymoon getaway car and it's been decorated within an inch of its life. It's covered with condoms. The guests crowd around laughing and APPLAUDING.

40 INT. EATENTON HOME - SHELBY'S BEDROOM

40 *

Shelby, dressed for her "getaway," is fussing with a corsage. M'Lynn helps.

SHELBY

(kidding warmly)

Well, this is it, Mama. You're finally rid of me.

This situation is full of joy for M'Lynn, but as always where Shelby is concerned, she's worried about her daughter's health and well-being.

M'LYNN

I have a feeling you'll show up every now and then.

M'Lynn helps Shelby with the corsage.

(CONTINUED)

40

CONTINUED:

40

SHELBY

Corsages are pretty stupid when you think about it, aren't they?

M'LYNN

(full of emotion)

Shelby. You make Jackson Latcherie take good care of you.

SHELBY

(loving but firm)

Mama. Jackson will take care of me and I'll take care of him.

(with deeper emotion)

And I'm not stupid.

M'Lynn takes in the room where her little girl grew up... but then she decides enough's enough.

M'LYNN

(business as usual)

Well. The boys just brought the car.

SHELBY

(dread)

What did they do to it?

M'LYNN

Let's put it this way. If you and Jackson want to practice safe sex, you're all set.

41

EXT. EATENTON HOME - FRONT DOOR AND DRIVEWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

41

Shelby and Jackson come running out the front door in a shower of flower petals and rice. They jump in the condommobile and drive off. M'Lynn watches them go, many emotions raging in her eyes.

42

OMIT

OMIT

42

*

Guests are leaving, getting in their cars and driving off. M'Lynn is the perfect hostess, bidding goodbyes, etc. Truvy passes M'Lynn. Truvy holds up a napkin with a piece of wedding cake.

TRUVY

I'll have some sweet dreams with this under my pillow.

M'LYNN

Tell your husband I hope he feels better.

It's hard for Truvy to hide the way she feels about her husband. It's painful.

TRUVY

He'll be fine. I know he's real sorry he missed this.

Truvy leaves. A pack of guests is saying goodbye to M'Lynn. Annelle stands aside, not sure what to do. M'Lynn sees her.

M'LYNN

Annelle. Thank you for coming. You did such a beautiful job on my hair.

*
*

ANNELLE

I've never been anywhere so nice.

M'LYNN

You'll have to come back.
(realizes)

Do you need a ride home? I can have one of the boys take you.

ANNELLE

No thanks, I like to walk. 'Bye.

Annelle walks off alone. A pickup truck leaving pulls up beside her. Sammy DeSoto is driving. We don't hear any conversation, but eventually Annelle shyly gets in the truck with Sammy. Clairee is standing in the driveway, getting a flashlight out of her purse. Ouiser approaches her.

OUISER

Walk me home.

CLAIREE

(this is ridiculous)
You just live right there.

43 CONTINUED:

43

OUISER

I don't want to walk in that house...
by myself. You watch the evening
news. You know what kind of world
we live in.

CLAIREE

Well then, who's going to walk me
home?

OUISER

You have a flashlight.

They walk off bickering. M'Lynn and Drum, exhausted
collapse in the trashed front hall.

*
*

M'LYNN

I should sweep all this up.

*

DRUM

I'll make the boys do it. Listen.

*

M'LYNN

What?

*
*

DRUM

Quiet.

*
*

A slow camera PAN into the living room where the boys
are wreaking havoc with Shelby's wedding presents.

*
*

43A OMIT

43A

44 OMIT

44

A45 EXT. FRONT STREET - CHINQUAPIN - FRIDAY NIGHT

A45 *

Completely festooned with Christmas decorations,
Main Street is ready for Christmas. Crowds, jugglers,
etc. Colored lights everywhere. On the bandstand
BARK BOONE is emceeing the coronation of Miss Merry
Christmas, Nancy Beth. The visiting beauty queens
promenade.

*
*
*
*
*

BARK

And now direct from the North
Pole, the lady who's about to
burst with the holiday spirit,
Miss Merry Christmas, Nancy
Beth Marmillion.

*
*
*
*
*

Clairee presents Nancy Beth with a bouquet of a dozen
poinsettias. Flashbulbs record this momentous occasion.

*
*

45 OMIT 45 *

45A ANOTHER ANGLE - FRONT STREET 45A *

Shelby and Jackson getting out of their car. They've arrived from out of town, the car full of their presents to the family, etc. They scan the festivities. Good-natured revelers jostle them. Shelby spots M'Lynn on the balcony of the Mental Guidance Center. Shelby grabs Jackson's hand, then runs waving to get her mother's attention. *

SHELBY
(shouting to M'Lynn
on the balcony)
Merry Christmas, Mama! *

M'LYNN
Shelby! Jackson! I thought you weren't coming into town until tomorrow. *

JACKSON
We thought we'd get on down today and beat the traffic. We dropped in on my folks on the way down here. *

M'LYNN
You must not have visited long. *

SHELBY
We didn't. They were leaving on a hunting trip. They were anxious to start killing things. *

46 OMIT 46 *

46A ANGLE ON RIVER FRONT 46A *

Tommy loaded with drinks and food. He fights his way through the teeming mass toward a decorated barge docked at the riverside. The barge is packed with partying teenagers. Jonathan is piloting the barge and yells at Tommy. *

JONATHAN
Hurry up dick breath. *

47 OMIT 47

47A EXT. RIVER FRONT - BOOTH

47A *

Jackson is collecting many prizes with his sharp-shooting at the shooting gallery. Bystanders cheer him on.

*
*
*

47B EXT. RIVER FRONT - TRUVY'S BOOTH

47B *

Shelby is strolling through the crowd. In a booth, under a large sign reading, "Chinquapin Women's Club," several workers, including Truvy and Annelle, are working like mad, frying meatpies, French fries, corn dogs. Truvy spots Shelby in the crowd and lets out a whoop to get her attention.

*
*
*
*
*
*

TRUVY

(rhymes with Hal-lie!)

Shelby!

*
*
*

Annelle joins in the greeting. Annelle has blossomed since we last saw her. Makeup, new hairdo...one can tell she's been working in a beauty shop.

*
*
*

TRUVY

(continuing)

Were you trying to sneak by us without buying some of our greasy meatpies? They're hot and juicy!

*
*
*
*
*

ANNELLE

Truvy, stop.

(to Shelby)

We're frying in peanut oil. Good and good for you. Serve ya?

*
*
*
*
*

SHELBY

No thanks. I'm just killing time. Jackson's found a firearm. We may never see him again.

*
*
*
*

Truvy offers Shelby a cup of iced tea.

*

TRUVY

How 'bout some iced tea? It's the house wine of the South?

*
*
*

SHELBY

Perfect.

*
*

Truvy dishes food right and left.

*

(CONTINUED)

47B CONTINUED:

47B *

TRUVY

I know your mama is happy you could get in early enough to make the festival.

*
*
*
*

SHELBY

I wouldn't miss a festival for the world. How's your family?

*
*
*

TRUVY

Fine. Spud's as outgoing as ever. Louie brought his girlfriend home. The nicest thing I can say about her is that all her tattoos are spelled correctly.

*
*
*
*
*

47C NEW ANGLE - SANTA'S THRONE

47C *

Santa (Drum) is on his throne attended by elves. The child on his lap has peed on him. He hurls the distressed child into the arms of an embarrassed mom. Santa's lap is soaked. Elves bring paper towels.

*
*
*
*

DRUM

No fire truck for you fella.

*
*

48 OMIT

48 *

48A NEW ANGLE - DOLL STAND

48A *

Shelby, Annelle, and Truvy are purchasing calico dolls from the doll stand. They walk and talk. They pass Marshall and a "friend from L.A." who are listening to a craft demonstration at an arts and crafts booth.

*
*
*
*
*

ANNELLE

So much has happened! After they finally threw Bunky Dupuy behind bars and I was rid of him, I went wild. I was drinking, running around, smoking...

*
*
*
*
*
*

TRUVY

Jezebel!

*
*

They pass Sammy's booth where Sammy is running the basketball throw. Annelle and Sammy wave shyly.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

48A CONTINUED:

48A *

ANNELLE *

But Truvy has helped me see the ...
 error of my ways. She gave me a
 place to live. I go to church.
 I've done guest lectures on beauty
 at the trade school...

TRUVY *

Our little Annelle has become one
 of the hottest tickets in town.

ANNELLE *

Truvy. Hush. I am enjoying the
 city more. I'm so excited about
 the Christmas festival. And there's
 a Messiah sing-along tomorrow...

Annelle gasps. There's something terribly wrong.
 Truvy and Shelby are concerned. In a sea of a
 thousand people, Annelle calls out.

ANNELLE *

(continuing) *

Nobody move! My contact! *

She drops to her knees to search for his missing lens. *

48B EXT. BANDSTAND

48B *

Clairee is chatting with several beauty queens. From
 across a wad of humanity, Bark yells at Clairee,
 pointing to his upheld wristwatch. *

BARK *

Mrs. Belcher! *

(the watch) *

Kickoff! *

Clairee examines her watch, realizes it's time to
 go, and moves through the crowd. She encounters
 Shelby and Jackson. Jackson is laden with prizes.
 They move through the mob. *

CLAIREE *

Hello darlings! When did you get
 into town? *

Jackson greets Clairee and gives her one of his prizes. *

JACKSON *

This afternoon. Merry Christmas! *

(CONTINUED)

48B CONTINUED:

48B *

SHELBY

I'm trying to show Jackson every-
thing. He's never been to the
festival.

CLAIREE

(very proudly)

Well. Make sure you listen to
the football game tonight.

SHELBY

Sure. What're we listening for?

CLAIREE

Me! I'm a working girl now.
Your mama didn't tell you?

SHELBY

Mama never tells anyone anything.

CLAIREE

I'm the color announcer for the
Devils. I'm fabulous. I'm too
colorful for words.

SHELBY

That's nice of them to let you
talk on the radio.

CLAIREE

Nice nothing. I own the radio
station.

Shelby's thrilled.

SHELBY

You bought it?!

Clairee swells with pride.

CLAIREE

Yes! KPPD. The station of choice
in Chinquapin Parish!

49 OMIT

49 *

49A OMIT

49A *

49B EXT. RIVERBANK STAIRS

49B *

Ouiser is coming down the stairs. She passes a child carrying a large balloon. Ouiser's lighted cigarette tip pops the balloon. The child screams for his mama. Ouiser, disgusted, barks at the child in passing.

OUISER

Grow up.

Ouiser mutters over to Clairee, Shelby and Jackson.

OUISER

(continuing).

I could just spit. The fireworks don't even start for hours and already people have been parking on my lawn. It'll flatten my grass.

SHELBY

Hello, Miss Ouiser...

Ouiser realizes who this is.

OUISER

Shelby! Good God! You've had the good sense to move away from this festival madness. Why'd you drag yourself back to let drunk teenagers urp on your shoes?

JACKSON

Miss Ouiser, I think you need a healthy dose of Christmas spirit.

Jackson hands Ouiser the most garish of the stuffed toys. Ouiser accepts it without knowing why.

OUISER

I have so much Christmas spirit I could scream. I just finished putting out my yard decorations.

CLAIREE

Ouiser. "Keep off the Grass" signs are not Christmas decorations.

OUISER

They are bordered in holly!

50 OMIT 50

51 OMIT 51

51A INT. BOY'S LOCKER ROOM - POST-GAME 51A

Clairee is beginning a post-game interview with BOBBY RAY ROSS, victorious Devils running back. The atmosphere is raucous and festive. The interview is introduced by Bark Boone, the fatuous play-by-play announcer. There is the sound of lockers slamming, whoops of joy, towels snapping, showers running. Bobby Ray is spectacularly stupid. Ouiser sits to to one side. *

BARK

Coming to ya live from the Devils locker room. I'm Bark Boone with color announcer Clairee Belcher.

CLAIREE

Thank you Bark. We're talking to running back Bobby Ray Ross, the young man responsible for this dazzling victory over Dry Prong. Bobby Ray... first state championship in eight years! Exciting isn't it? *

BOBBY RAY *

(virtually brain dead)

Yeah.

At this point a couple of football players charge into the area in jock/towel, etc. Clairee doesn't notice them, but Ouiser certainly does. Clairee continues.

CLAIREE

Tell us. How did it feel to score the winning touchdown?

BOBBY RAY *

Good.

Ouiser is trying to get a better view of the locker room nooks and crannies.

(CONTINUED)

51A CONTINUED:

51A

CLAIREE

(desperately trying to
get this lummoX to talk)

Tell us in your own words about the
game tonight.

BOBBY RAY

We won.

Clairee gives up on Bobby Ray and brings Bark into her
discussion. Bark, a total cretin, follows along.

CLAIREE

You know Bark. It's a shame our
viewers out there can't be here to
see the gorgeous new Devil uniforms.

BARK

(can't believe
this woman)

They're lovely...

CLAIREE

I myself would never have chosen
those white pants. They're filthy.
I would have gone with a darker
color. White shows everything.
Just look at those grass stains!
Impossible to get out.

BARK

It's hard to keep white clean when
you're tackled...

Clairee is working up steam. Ouiser has tuned in to
Clairee's descriptions.

CLAIREE

But I love the tops. They're such
a vibrant purple. Bark? Would you
call this color grape or aubergine?

Ouiser's been listening to Clairee with exasperation.
She can't take it anymore.

OUISER

Shut up.

CLAIREE

What?

(CONTINUED)

51A CONTINUED: (2)

51A

OUISER

You're making a fool of yourself!

CLAIREE

(slightly hurt, she forgets about the mike)

I am not.

OUISER

This is football, Clairee. All people want to hear about is touchdowns and injuries. People don't give a damn about that grape shit...

*

Bark lunges for the mike, which has been broadcasting Clairee and Ouiser's argument. Clairee is mortified as Bobby Ray laughs his dumb jock laugh.

*

52 OMIT

52

52A EXT. TRUVY'S - NIGHT

52A

Truvy pulls into the driveway. Annelle bounds down the stairs of the garage apartment. Truvy is carrying an assortment of fried food and cheap wine in a picnic basket. Annelle is excited. She's wearing an outfit that's tight and low cut. She can't decide if it's right or not. She wants Truvy's opinion.

(CONTINUED)

52A CONTINUED:

52A

ANNELLE

(modeling)

Tell me the truth. Be brutal

Truvy studies her. She doesn't approve.

TRUVY

Honey. I don't know. What kind of effect do you want?

ANNELLE

Well...I wanna be sexy, but I don't want to look like activated sewage.

TRUVY

Honey. My advice is, don't put it in the window if it's not for sale.

ANNELLE

You're right.

Annelle runs back up the stairs of the garage apartment to change.

52B OMIT

52B *

53 INT. TRUVY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

53

Spud is on the bed, watching the football game on TV. Truvy knows this is not a good sign. There are a couple of beer cans about, but he isn't drunk. He's very depressed. Truvy sees this immediately.

TRUVY

(fearing the worst)

Well?

SPUD

Nope. Rolly Bassett got the contract. His bid was six thousand dollars under mine.

TRUVY

(more support than surprise)

Six thousand dollars...?

SPUD

He owns his own equipment. I don't
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SPUD (CONT'D)

(sighs)

It's hell to be poor and hired out.

TRUVY

(tries to cheer)

Well. I have a basket of food prepared by Christian women. And a bottle of cheap wine. And I've arranged for some pretty incredible fireworks.

Determined to change his mood, she goes to the closet and gets a blanket.

TRUVY

(continuing)

C'mon. I don't wanna miss the Nativity made entirely of sparklers.

SPUD

I don't feel like it.

TRUVY

You will once you get there.

SPUD

I'm happy where I am.

TRUVY

(almost in tears)

Spud...we always watch the fireworks...

A car horn HONKS.

Truvy pulls it together and goes to the porch.

Sammy, all dressed up, hops out of his pickup. No question he's excited about his date with Annelle. He carries a present (a Christmasy stuffed animal/huge candy cane/etc.) Annelle bounds down the stairs in a more subdued, but still fetching outfit. Sammy presents the gift as they greet. Annelle loves it and gives Sammy a peck on the cheek, which makes him blush. Truvy observes all this. Annelle becomes aware of Truvy's presence. She does a modeling turn for Truvy's approval of her more subdued outfit.

54

CONTINUED:

54

ANNELLE

(turning)

Better?

*
*
*

TRUVY

(approving)

Much.

*
*
*

Sammy doesn't get any of this, but is polite as always.

*
*

SAMMY

Hi, Miss Truvy. Don't you look nice.

*
*
*

TRUVY

(self-deprecating
as ever)

Oh, honey. I keep losing weight,
but it keeps finding me.

*
*
*
*
*

Truvy waves as the happy couple drive off. Envious of their happiness, she sighs and sadly goes back into the house.

*
*
*

55

OMIT

55

56

OMIT

56

57

OMIT

57

60 CONTINUED: (2)

60

Shelby is offering her final arguments very deliberately. *

SHELBY

I'm going to be very, very careful. No one is going to be hurt, or disappointed or even inconvenienced.

M'LYNN

(has to get in the dig.)

Least of all Jackson, I'm sure.

SHELBY

(lashes back)

You're jealous because you no longer have any say-so in what I do. And that drives you up the wall. You're ready to spit nails because you can't call the shots.

M'LYNN

I did not raise my daughter to talk to me this way.

She storms out of the kitchen and into her bedroom. *
Shelby follows her. *

60A INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT *

M'Lynn is sitting on the bed. Shelby crouches in front *
of her. *

SHELBY

Yes you did! Whenever any of us asked you what you wanted us to be when we grew up, what did you say?

M'LYNN

Shelby, I'm not in the mood for games.

SHELBY

What did you say? Just tell me what you said?

M'LYNN

I said all I wanted was for you to be happy.

(CONTINUED)

60A CONTINUED: (2A)

60A

SHELBY

(satisfied)

Okay. The thing that would make me happy is to have a baby. If I could adopt one I would but I can't. I'm going to have a baby. I wish you would be happy, too.

M'LYNN

I wish, I... I don't know what I wish.

(CONTINUED)

60A CONTINUED: (3)

60A

M'Lynn is tight-lipped and angry. Shelby continues trying for her mother's approval.

SHELBY

Mama. I don't know why you have to make everything so difficult. I look at having this baby as the opportunity of a lifetime. Sure, there may be some risk involved. That's true for anybody. But you get through it and life goes on. And when it's all said and done there'll be a little piece of immortality with Jackson's looks and my sense of style...I hope. Please. I need your support. I would rather have thirty minutes of wonderful than a lifetime of nothing special.

M'Lynn is not about to give in yet. She's confused about her feelings.

61 OMIT

61

62 OMIT

62

63 EXT. TRUVY'S SHOP - PARKING AREA - AFTERNOON

63

A customer is leaving.

Sammy is on the roof placing a plastic Santa and reindeer. Annelle, on a ladder is hanging a string of lights. There are several lawn pieces that are electrically connected. Shelby and M'Lynn's car pulls up. Sammy has the plug end of his cord, Annelle, instructs him.

ANNELLE

Just throw it to me.
(holding up an electric octopus with a thousand plugs stuck in it)
I think I got one more hole left.

Sammy prepares to throw the plug as Shelby approaches.

SAMMY

Careful. Here it comes. I don't wanna hit ya upside the head.

63 CONTINUED:

63

Sammy throws the cord, Annelle catches, Shelby helps steady her on the ladder. *

SHELBY *

Annelle, did you do all this? *

ANNELLE *

Guilty. Truvy just turned over the decoration responsibility to me. So I went to the fire sale at the Baptist Book Store in Shreveport last month. They had mismatched manger scenes at incredibly low prices. I cleaned them out of Baby Jesuses... *

(pointing to doorpiece) *

...which I made into ornaments. *

Sammy heaves himself off the roof. *

SAMMY *

She's ready to roll! *

Annelle ceremoniously offers the plug to Shelby. *

ANNELLE *

Do the honors, Shelby. *

Shelby plugs in the cable. The set pieces WHIR and Christmas CAROLS play. It's really a very amusing setup. M'Lynn has just watched all of this soberly. Shelby can't resist the opportunity to good-naturedly throw a zinger to M'Lynn.

SHELBY *

See, Mama. I know what I'm doing. *

Truvy and Clairee come out onto the porch. Clairee has been beautified. Annelle and Sammy immediately use Truvy to hold up an expanse of garland they are draping on the porch. Clairee, seeing the decorations, comments dryly to Truvy. *

CLAIREE *

I think your elves have gone berserk. *

TRUVY *

(pleased to see Shelby) *

What can we do for you today, Shelby? I'm running a special I call the Christmas quickie. *

SHELBY *

I'm beyond help. Last week I discovered the early stages of crow's feet. *

(CONTINUED)

Rev. 8/26/88

68A./69

63

CONTINUED:

63

TRUVY

Honey. Time marches on. And
eventually you realize it's
marching across your face.

*
*
*
*

64

OMIT

64

65

EXT. TRUVY'S PARKING AREA - AFTERNOON

65

Ouiser arriving, parks across the street and leads Rhett to a nearby tree to tie him up. Annelle sees Ouiser with fear and dread. She and Sammy cease decorating.

*
*
*

ANNELLE

(to Truvy and Clairee)

Oh no. Miss Ouiser. She wants a pedicure today. I hate working on her feet.

*
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*
*
*

CLAIREE

It could be worse. She could've wanted a bikini waxing.

*
*
*

Sammy hears this and reacts.

*

SAMMY

(embarrassed)

Excuse me.

*
*
*

He takes a pile of decorations to the garage. Truvy and Annelle go inside. Clairee heads to her car. Shelby approaches Ouiser with purpose. M'Lynn observes.

*
*
*

SHELBY

Miss Ouiser! I've met an old friend of yours.

*
*

OUISER

(couldn't care less)

Oh?

SHELBY

Owen Jenkins.

OUISER

(this gets her attention)

Oh.

Clairee can't help but overhear.

CLAIREE

Owen? Now there's a blast from the past.

SHELBY

Do you remember him? He remembers you.

(CONTINUED)

OUISER

Of course I remember him. He had the longest nose hair in the free world.

SHELBY

He doesn't now. He hardly has any hair anywhere.

CLAIREE

Owen's been gone from Chinquapin since God was a boy. I'd forgotten he'd ever existed.

SHELBY

Well, now Owen lives in Monroe and goes to First Presbyterian. When he found out where I was from he asked me if I knew you. I said not only did I know you, but your dog has almost killed my father on numerous occasions. He lived in Ohio somewhere. His wife just died recently and he moved back down here.

OUISER

Does this story have a point?

SHELBY

No. Not really. He just remembers you fondly, I think.

OUISER

Can't imagine why. He wasn't a bad fellow. But I managed to run him off and marry the first of two total deadbeats.

SHELBY

Maybe sometime I could arrange for all of us to get together.

OUISER

Maybe not.

SHELBY

(disappointed)

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

*

OUISER

Shelby, I managed in just a few decades to marry the two most worthless men in the universe and proceed to have the three most ungrateful children ever conceived. The only reason people are nice to me is because I have more money than God. I'm not about to open a new can of worms.

M'Lynn's professional side can't resist intervening.

M'LYNN

If this is really the way you feel, Ouiser, it isn't healthy. Maybe you should think about coming down and talking to someone at the Guidance Center. We're there to help.

Insulted at the very suggestion, Ouiser snaps.

OUISER

I'm not crazy. I've just been in a very bad mood for forty years.

CUT TO:

*

66 INT. CLAIREE'S HOME - NIGHT

66

Clairee's hosting her annual Christmas open house. Lots of antiques, silver, a society home. All our local characters are there.

Everyone is dressed appropriately, except for Clairee's niece, NANCY BETH. She is still wearing her Miss Merry Christmas outfit, complete with tiara and white fur muff. Clairee comments to Truvy

CLAIREE

Why did she have to come over here in that thing?

TRUVY

I used so much hairspray on her this morning she's gonna have to dynamite that crown off her head.

(CONTINUED)

67

INT. CLAIREE'S HOME - NIGHT

67

Ouiser is gobbling dip. Clairee approaches. *

CLAIREE *

Ouiser! Did you open my Christmas present yet? *

OUISER *

Yes. And it went right in the trash. Don't give me books, Clairee. It's a waste of money. *

CLAIREE *

I'm just trying to help you expand your mind. *

OUISER *

(the very idea) *

I'm not able to expand my mind. I'm too bored. *

CLAIREE *

Ouiser. I'm worried about your outlook. I was just reading today... *

(she remembers a quote) *

The path to personal and spiritual fulfillment is the greatest journey we can take. *

OUISER *

Don't give me that crap. *

Shelby sneaks up on Ouiser's blind side. With Shelby is OWEN JENKINS, a bald, round little man. Shelby, very proud of herself, introduces Owen to Ouiser. *

SHELBY *

Miss Ouiser. There's somebody who wants to see you. *

(Shelby whispers in Ouiser's ear) *

I opened the worms for you. *

Shelby and Clairee make themselves scarce. Ouiser turns around, sees Owen, then with her mouth full of dip.. *

OUISER *

Oh, hell. Owen Jenkins. *

OWEN *

Hello, Louisa. Remember me? *

OUISER *

God, you look different! Have ya shrunk? *

67

CONTINUED:

67

Owen's obviously crazy about this woman after all these years.

OWEN

You look terrific. You've hardly changed at all.

OUISER

I'm not as sweet as I used to be.

68

EXT. CLAIREE'S BALCONY - NIGHT

68

Clairee, Annelle, M'Lynn and Truvy are chatting. M'Lynn is admiring Annelle's "nicely put together" outfit.

*
*

M'LYNN

Annelle. Look at you! Is that new?

*

ANNELLE

Well...I made the dress with my own two hands. I just threw the rest of it together.

*
*
*
*

CLAIREE

(dryly)

The only thing that separates us from the animals is our ability to accessorize.

The pop of a champagne cork pulls their attention downstairs. Shelby and Jackson are pouring champagne and being affectionate. M'Lynn watches their merriment. Ouiser storms onto the balcony.

OUISER

I can't believe Shelby did that. Owen? After all these years? I'm not sure I can be gracious under pressure.

M'LYNN

Shelby, Shelby. Her heart does get the best of her sometimes.

Shelby calls up to the balcony.

SHELBY

Mama! Daddy's got a glass of champagne in his hand.

(CONTINUED)

68

CONTINUED:

68

This alarms M'Lynn.

*

M'LYNN

*

Uh oh...

*

M'Lynn looks down and sees Drum commanding attention.

*

68 CONTINUED: (2)

68

M'LYNN
(continuing; to
Truvy)
I smell a toast coming on.

69 EXT. CLAIREE'S PATIO

69

Drum is very presentational.

DRUM
Excuse me. Excuse me! Hey!
(he has attention)
If I could just take a moment. On
behalf of the entire neighborhood
I'd like to thank our gracious
hostess, Clairee, for having us
into her beautiful home.

Everyone toasts.

DRUM
(continuing)
And!
(Drum looks around)
Where's Shelby?

Shelby, embarrassed, appears.

DRUM
(continuing)
Today, my daughter told me a big
secret.

SHELBY
(about to protest)
Daddy...

Drum shushes her protests, then proceeds in front of
everyone...

DRUM
Honey. I'm not gonna tell 'em
you're pregnant. I'm just gonna
tell 'em I'm gonna be a grandpa.

Drum is pleased with his wit. Shelby gives up. Every-
one's happy. There is much joy, slapping Jackson on
the back. Shelby, despite her embarrassment, is very
excited and proud. M'Lynn, Clairee, Ouiser and Truvy
have more or less joined the crowd. Drum toasts...

DRUM
(continuing)
To Jackson and Shelby!

(CONTINUED)

Everyone toasts. Owen approaches Ouiser with two glasses of champagne and offers her one. She accepts it grudgingly. As Truvy, M'Lynn and Clairee raise their eggnog cups, Annelle does the same with her club soda. The ladies catch the expression on M'Lynn's face. M'Lynn, of course, is happy for Shelby, but she's also scared to death. The women rally around.

CLAIREE

Congratulations!

OUISER

Grandma! Aren't you excited? Smile.
It increases your face value.

M'Lynn tries to smile.

TRUVY

And those doctors said Shelby couldn't have children. What do they know? I guess she showed them.

M'LYNN

The doctors said Shelby "shouldn't" have children. There is a big difference.

The ladies offer their support.

TRUVY

It will all be fine.

CLAIREE

Absolutely.

M'LYNN

Sure...you're right. Diabetics have healthy babies all the time.

(she rallies)

And. You know what they say. That which does not kill us makes us stronger.

Downstairs Drum continues his toasts.

DRUM

And! To my grandbaby. I only hope that it's as good-looking as I am.

*
*

70

EXT. LATCHERIE HOME - ON THE RIVER - LATE MORNING

70 *

It is the third of July, a Saturday, eighteen months later. The eatenton family (Drum, M'Lynn, Shelby, Jackson, Tommy, Jonathan, JACK JR.) are having a picnic/birthday party for Jack Jr. who is one year old today.

All family members have on silly hats and are singing.

†

EVERYONE

(to the tune of Yankee
Doodle Dandy)

...born on the third of July.
He's got a Yankee Doodle
sweetheart, she's his Yankee
Doodle gal. Yankee Doodle went to
town riding on a pony. You are
that Yankee Doodle boy.

Nothing from the kid.

SHELBY

Blow out the candle, honey.

They all try to instruct Jack Jr. in the art of blowing, puffing their cheeks, etc.

JACKSON

Hey, buster.. It's like a duck
whistle.

JONATHAN

This is boring as hell.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

M'LYNN
(trying to gain
Jonathan's
patience)
You only have your first birthday
once.

DRUM
Maybe little buddy's making a
wish.

JONATHAN
I wish he'd blow out the candle.

TOMMY
(fed up)
I can't stand this.

Tommy blows out the candle. Jack, Jr. cries.

71 OMIT

OMIT

71 *

72 EXT. LATCHERIES' HOUSE - FRONT

72 *

M'Lynn and Shelby's relationship has changed. It's
tenderer and more fun.

(CONTINUED)

72

CONTINUED:

72

M'LYNN

∴ You can drop me off at Truvy's,
then take the car to....

Shelby interrupts with an idea. She's thought about
this a lot.

SHELBY

Mama. I think I'll come with
you. I think I want to get my
hair cut.

This decision affects M'Lynn deeply.

SHELBY

(continuing)

Short. And I want Truvy to do
it. It'd be so much easier to
take care of. I'd love to be able
to just run my fingers through it
and go.

M'LYNN

That would look precious.

SHELBY

I feel this need to make things as
simple as possible.

73

EXT. LATCHERIE HOUSE - THE DOCK

73

*

Shelby calls out to Jackson. Her tone is light and
breezy. *

SHELBY

I'm going to Truvy's. Take your
son.

JACKSON

We're going fishing.

SHELBY

I'm going to get my hair cut.

JACKSON

I'm going fishing.

Shelby doesn't get upset. She just says no more. She
walks towards the car with Jack, Jr. in tow. As she
drives off with M'Lynn, two cars carrying Latcherie
relatives arrive, laden with game. *

*

*

*

74

INT. TRUVY'S BEAUTY SHOP - AFTERNOON

74

Truvy's is decorated for the Fourth of July. Very red, white and blue. Truvy is finishing Shelby's hair cut. Annelle is dying Clairee's roots. M'Lynn is amusing Jack Jr. on the porch, her hair wrapped in tin foil packets. The ladies are laughing at Clairee's tale.

SHELBY

But didn't he scare you to death coming by so late?

CLAIREE

Wasn't that late. About 9:30, I guess.

ANNELLE

Still. Somebody knocking on my bedroom window after dark would scare the daylights outta me.

CLAIREE

Not me. Hope springs eternal, you know what I mean. I was so disappointed when I realized it was only my nephew.

TRUVY

Well, I just think it's awful of Drew to throw his son out of the house.

CLAIREE

My brother can be very hotheaded when he wants to be. But he really didn't throw Marshall out. Marshall just came over to my house while his daddy cooled off. I adore Marshall. We stayed up half the night talking last night.

M'LYNN

(entering)

Shelby, I can't seem to find the wipes.

SHELBY

Is he wet again?

M'LYNN

No. He's muddy.

Clairee helps M'Lynn find the wipes in her bag.

SHELBY

Miss Clairee! Finish your story. Get to the good stuff.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIREE

Well! I have to admit Marshall did go about it the wrong way. He marched in without so much as a hello said, "Mama and Daddy. I have something to tell you. I have a brain tumor. I have three months to live." Well, naturally Drew and Belle became hysterical. Then Marshall says, "Hey folks, I'm just kidding. I'm only gay."

SHELBY

That was his idea of breaking the news gently?

CLAIREE

Marshall has always been very theatrical.

TRUVY

What do you think Drew and Belle are feeling about all this?

CLAIREE

I don't know. They just considered themselves to be a model family for so long. First with Nancy Beth dethroned from her Miss Merry Christmas title after that unfortunate motel thing...

Annelle and Truvy remember that monumental occasion. Shelby doesn't know what Clairee means.

SHELBY

(excited about the gossip)

What motel thing? I don't live here anymore, remember?

TRUVY

Nancy Beth was discovered in a nearby motel with a high political official.

*
*
*
*

CLAIREE

They were both high. They'd been smoking everything but their shoes.

*
*
*

TRUVY

She's the first Miss Merry Christmas in history to be caught with her tinsel down around her knees.

*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

Truvy has finished Shelby's hairdo. She turns Shelby into the mirror. The realization of short hair hits Shelby hard. The loss of her hair is very traumatic.

SHELBY

Oh... gosh...

TRUVY

(doesn't know what
to think)

Uh... I did what you wanted,
didn't I?

SHELBY

Yes, you did a beautiful job.
It's just...

M'Lynn has come in to look at Shelby's hair. When they look at each other, Shelby starts to cry. Truvy is a mess.

TRUVY

Honey. Please don't... please
don't cry because I will too. I
have a strict policy that no one
cries alone in my presence.

Clairee and Annelle dispense Kleenex.

M'LYNN

(the final word as
she hugs Shelby)

I love it.

Shelby rallies.

SHELBY

Okay. Now. Truvy. Let's do my
nails.

Truvy's excited.

TRUVY

This is a treat! No one around
here ever wants a manicure. I
don't know what to charge for a
full day of beauty.

(CONTINUED)

M'LYNN

I'm going to want a manicure, too.

Truvy is flabbergasted.

TRUVY

I'm gonna paint my front door red
and change my name to Elizabeth
Arden.

Truvy excitedly rushes to set up the manicure. But she realizes that a bottle of manicure stuff is empty. She turns to ask Annelle for some, but Annelle is in silent prayer. Uncomfortable, Truvy waits for Annelle to finish. The others also notice Annelle.

ANNELLE

Amen.

TRUVY

Amen. Annelle? I'm out of...

She holds up the bottle.

ANNELLE

Is it still next to...?

TRUVY

There's some in the bathroom.

ANNELLE

Okay.

She exits.

SHELBY

Was she praying?

TRUVY

Yes.

SHELBY

Why?

TRUVY

(exasperated)

Got me. Maybe she was praying for
Marshall and Drew and Belle.
Maybe she was praying for us
because we were gossiping. Maybe
she was praying because the
elastic is shot in her pantyhose.
Who knows? She prays at the drop
of a hat these days.

(CONTINUED)

M'LYNN

How long has she been this way?

TRUVY

Since Mardi Gras. She had her choice of going to a Bible weekend with her Sunday school class or to New Orleans with me and two other sinners.

SHELBY

What does her boyfriend say?

TRUVY

Sammy's so confused he doesn't know whether to scratch his watch or wind his butt. He says he could deal with another man in her life, but he has trouble with the father, the son, and the Holy Ghost.

Annelle returns with the bottle of stuff and a lemon. Shelby changes the subject.

SHELBY

Oh. Well. Uh...does Marshall have...you know...friends?

CLAIREE

We talked about that, too. I asked him how he...met people. In my day you could tell by a man's carriage and demeanor which side his bread was buttered on. But in this day and age? Who knows? I asked Marshall, "How can you tell?" and he said, "All gay men have track lighting. And all gay men are named Mark, Rick or Steve." He is such a nut...track lighting.

Everyone finds this very amusing as Ouiser strolls in the shop with her trademark tote bag.

OUISER

'Morning. What's so funny?

SHELBY

Miss Clairee was just telling us the true story of track lighting.

(CONTINUED)

OUISER

I love mine. It highlights my new artwork.

CLAIREE

Since when do you have track lighting?

OUISER

About three weeks. It's in my foyer and up the stairs. It was my grandson's idea.

SHELBY

I haven't seen him in ages. How is he?

OUISER

Steve's fine.

(realizes Shelby's presence)

Shelby! I didn't expect to see you here. God. Your hair's short.

CLAIREE

Ouiser, you're almost chipper today. Why are you in such a good mood? Did you run over a small child or something?

Ouiser starts distributing tomatoes. she gives a large amount to Clairee.

CLAIREE

(continuing)

Don't give me all of 'em.

OUISER

Somebody's got to take them I hate 'em. I try not to eat healthy food if I can help it. The sooner this body wears out the better off I'll be. I have trouble getting enough grease into my diet.

ANNELLE

(she doesn't get along with Ouiser)

Then why do you grow them?

OUISER

I'm an old Southern woman. We're supposed to put on funny-looking hats and ugly old dresses and grow vegetables in the dirt. Don't ask me why, I don't make the rules.

(CONTINUED)

Truvy is working on Shelby's nails. Truvy pushes Shelby's sleeves back to get them out of the way and sees Shelby's bruised and sutured arms. It's a shocking sight. Truvy gasps.

TRUVY

Shelby!?!? What have you done to yourself?

SHELBY

(embarrassed)
Oh. It doesn't even hurt.

TRUVY

(calls with alarm)
M'Lynn!

M'Lynn rushes in, the alarm in Truvy's voice has made her think something awful has happened. Truvy is in shock as she confronts M'Lynn.

TRUVY

(continuing)
Have you seen this?

M'Lynn takes a deep breath to compose herself.

M'LYNN

Yes, I have.

SHELBY

(makes light of it)
The doctor's just trying to strengthen my veins. They're in terrible shape.

OUISER

(examining Shelby's arms)
It looks like you've been driving nails into your arms. What's going on?

SHELBY

Shall we tell them, Mama?

M'LYNN

I guess so. No point in keeping it a secret any longer.
(in all seriousness)
Shelby's been driving nails into her arms.

Everyone protests M'Lynn's attempt at humor. Shelby explains matter-of-factly.

(CONTINUED)

SHELBY

It's my dialysis.

Except for M'Lynn, the room is in shock.

SHELBY

(continuing)

It's no big thing. Don't look at me like that. Having Jack, Jr. put too much strain on my kidneys and now they're kaput. That's all. The doctor said this would probably happen.

TRUVY

That's all. That's all, she says.

ANNELLE

Do you do this dialysis forever?

SHELBY

I could, I suppose. But that's not real convenient when you're trying to keep up with Jack, Jr. So. I'll just have a kidney transplant and I'll be fine.

OUISER

Is it that easy?

SHELBY

Sure. They do them all the time in Shreveport. Three or four a week.

ANNELLE

They do. Our Sunday School class was praying for one just the other day.

OUISER

But the hard part's finding the kidney, isn't it?

CLAIREE

I saw something about it on the news. It's so dramatic. These medical teams fly all over the place taking hearts and kidneys and who knows what else. And you know the thing that impressed me the most? They carry those organs in beer coolers.

(CONTINUED)

TRUVY

Stop.

CLAIREE

Those doctors take out their six-packs, throw in some dry ice and a heart and get on a plane.

TRUVY

How long do you have to wait for one?

SHELBY

There are people on dialysis that have been waiting for years.

TRUVY

That must be agony.

SHELBY

I suppose. But I'm lucky. I don't have to wait anymore.

(the news)

Mama's going to give me one of her kidneys.

Everyone is in even greater shock.

TRUVY

When?

SHELBY

We check in tomorrow morning.

75 INT. GROCERY STORE - LATE SATURDAY AFTERNOON

75

The ladies are in the midst of a discussion as they roll their cart down the aisle collecting items.

CLAIREE

What kind of soup does Drum like?

OUISER

You're asking me?

(pause)

I shouldn't have said that.

CLAIREE

Said what?

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED:

75

OUISER

Back at Truvy's I said I'd be better off when my body wears out. I shouldn't have said that in front of Shelby. I didn't mean that.

CLAIREE

(brushing it off)

Ouiser, nobody pays any attention to you.

OUISER

Well, I feel bad. I'm a terrible person.

CLAIREE

No you're not. You'd give your dog a kidney if he needed one.

Clairee piles several large cans of pork and beans in to the cart.

OUISER

This is just a gesture, Clairee. We're not trying to feed him 'til the end of time!

CLAIREE

Drum loves pork and beans. Eats 'em with everything.

OUISER

That explains a lot.

76

EXT. TRUVY'S HOUSE - PARKING AREA - TWILIGHT

76

*

Spud is under his old truck, tinkering. Truvy is holding the light for him. Truvy's thoughts are deeply felt. Neighborhood children set off FIRECRACKERS in anticipation of the Fourth of July tomorrow.

TRUVY

. . .Shelby said her half of the operation's easy. M'Lynn's is terrible. They basically have to saw her in half to get the kidney out.

SPUD

(from under the truck)

They do it on Circus of the Stars all the time.

(CONTINUED)

76

CONTINUED:

76

Truvy is feeling all of this deeply.

TRUVY

(truly concerned)

Don't joke about it, Spud. I feel awful for 'em.

SPUD

(still tinkering)

Hold it.

(the light)

...steady...

Spud's lack of understanding propels Truvy to express her greatest fear.

TRUVY

I guess the Eatentons are lucky. They all know how much they mean to each other.

(sighs)

Maybe I'm jealous.

Truvy's aching for the proper response from Spud who comes out from under the truck...

SPUD

Hand me the socket wrench.

77

EXT. ANNELLE AND SAMMY'S HOUSE - TWILIGHT

77*

Annelle and Sammy drive up to a tiny little house, loaded with groceries. Sammy is holding a box of beans and reading the directions as he gets out of the car.

SAMMY

It says you're supposed to soak the red beans overnight.

Annelle is crestfallen.

ANNELLE

But we don't have overnight! I wanted to take it to 'em before they leave tomorrow for the hospital.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

SAMMY

Let's cook something else.

ANNELLE

But I bought all of the stuff. And it's in the "freezes beautifully" section of my cookbook. I want to take something that freezes beautifully.

Sammy is a pillar of strength.

SAMMY

Then we'll make red beans and rice.

77A OMIT

77A

77B INT. ANNELLE AND SAMMY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

77B*

Sammy places about six unlit kitchen matches between his lips and starts chopping onions. He explains.

SAMMY

This phosphorus in the matches keeps ya from crying. Get me the bell pepper.

Annelle opens the refrigerator. She is shocked.

ANNELLE

Sammy Dwayne DeSoto. What is this in my frigidaire?

Sammy knows he's gonna catch it. He stands his ground.

SAMMY

Beer.

Annelle takes out the six pack and pours the beer down the sink.

ANNELLE

I don't care what you do in your refrigerator. But you will not keep liquor in mine.

Sammy's so tired of this argument.

SAMMY

Aw, Annelle...for Christ's sake.

Now he's really done it.

ANNELLE

Who?

(CONTINUED)

77B CONTINUED:

77B*

SAMMY
(sheepish; barely
audible)
...Christ...

ANNELLE
(like a nagging
schoolteacher)
Who did you say?

Sammy's sick of this. He bellows, at the top of his lungs, spitting matches everywhere.

SAMMY
Christ! Christ! Christ!

This argument escalates. Annelle is on her high-horse.

ANNELLE
Are you speaking of our Lord? Is
that whose name you're taking in
vain?

SAMMY
(snaps combatively)
That's the one!

ANNELLE
I'm sorry, Sammy, but I'm not
about to spend the next fifty
years of my life with a man that
I'm not going to run into in the
hereafter.

SAMMY
(at the end of
his rope)
Aw, Annelle, goddammit...

This stops Annelle cold. Her anger evaporates and she is operating on a higher, more serious plane.

(CONTINUED)

77B CONTINUED: (2)

77B*

ANNELLE

I think we should pray...

Sammy can take no more of this. He slams down the chopping knife. As he storms out:

*
*

SAMMY

I'd rather eat dirt.

Annelle is calm. She finds her strength in Jesus. In fact, she places a picture of him in front of her as she picks up the chopping knife, awkwardly stuffing matches in her mouth and continues chopping onions.

*
*
*
*

78 INT. EATENTON HOME - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

78

M'Lynn, Shelby, Jackson, Drum, Tommy, Jonathan are playing cards..."Go Fish." Jack Jr. is curled up asleep in a chair. They've been playing everything. Board games are all around. Bowls of popcorn, etc. They are having a great time, laughing so hard that they are crying...except for Drum. He is not amused.

DRUM

(responding to the joke that has just been told)

That's not funny.

Everyone laughs harder.

SHELBY

(she addresses the group)

Okay. Okay. No more transplant jokes. Daddy doesn't like them.

JACKSON

(back to the card game)

Whose turn?

TOMMY

(he intentionally blunders, just to make Drum crazy)

Okay. Mama. Give me all your... internal organs...I mean aces. (fakes sincerity)

Gosh, Dad, I'm sorry. It just slipped out.

(CONTINUED)

78

CONTINUED:

78

No one can control their laughter. Drum throws down his cards. M'Lynn thinks it's funny.

M'LYNN

Go fish.

M'Lynn puts down her cards, laughing. She goes to a sleeping Jack Jr.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

I'm going to put this little one to bed.

SHELBY

Oh, Mama. I'll do it.

M'LYNN

Let me.

(she comments
lightly)

I'll have between two and three hundred stitches. It'll be a while before I can pick him up again.

She scoops up Jack Jr. and takes him off to bed.

JACKSON

(lays down his
cards)

So much for the card game.

TOMMY

Movie! Movie!

Shelby loves this idea.

SHELBY

Yeah! Old. Black and white.

Drum offers his comment from the kitchen.

DRUM

Nothing dirty.

Jonathan is rummaging through the VCR cassettes. He's found one.

JONATHAN

I've got it! A classic! A Tale of Two Kidneys!

Everyone laughs again. Shelby throws a pillow at Jonathan.

79 OMIT 79

80 OMIT 80 *

81 EXT. ANNELLE'S HOUSE 81 *

Truvy pulls up outside Annelle's house, HONKING. *
Annelle tears out of her front door. She's distressed *
as she struggles with a big black pot of red beans and *
rice. She practically runs down the driveway. Truvy, *
dressed for church, doesn't understand Annelle's *
anxiety. *

TRUVY *

Hey! What's the matter? *

ANNELLE *

(truly distressed, *

she rattles) *

I overslept 'cause I was up late *
cooking. I've got to get this *
to the Eatenton's and I just know *
I'm gonna miss church and it's my *
Sunday to count the offering and... *

TRUVY *

Honey. Cool down or I'm gonna *
have to turn the hose on you. *

ANNELLE *

What am I gonna do? *

TRUVY *

(takes charge) *

Get in the car. I'll take you *
by the Eatenton's, then you *
come to church with me. *

ANNELLE *

(unsure about the *
church part) *

I don't know... *

TRUVY *

Annelle. God doesn't care *
where you go to church as long *
as you show up. *

82 INT. EPISCOPAL CHURCH - MORNING

82

Annelle, Truvy and Clairee sit together. The ladies notice Ouiser as she goes down the aisle. The choir files into the stall. Owen is among them. This excites and thrills the girls. They try to get Ouiser's attention to come sit with them. Truvy is the loudest.

TRUVY

Ouiser!

Ouiser, embarrassed, slinks into their pew.

TRUVY

(continuing;
kiddingly)

Ouiser?!? What brings you here?

OUISER

(embarrassed)

Shut up.

TRUVY

(won't let up)

I was just wondering how things were with you and Owen.

CLAIREE

(slyly)

I can report that the Sherwood Florist delivery truck stops by her house at least twice a week.

OUISER

He knows I like fresh flowers.

CLAIREE

And I can report that a strange car is parked in her garage at least once a week.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

OUISER

There. My secret's out. I'm
having an affair with a Mercedes
Benz.

ANNELLE

(very distraught, she
disciplines)

We are in the house of the Lord!

The minister commences the service and prayers for
Shelby and M'Lynn's well being.

83 EXT. EPISCOPAL CHURCH - COURTYARD

83 *

The ladies are leaving the service.

TRUVY

Ouiser. Forgive me. I've been
dying to ask this. Are you and
Owen... you know?

Annelle is very uncomfortable. Clairee is reveling in
Ouiser's embarrassment.

CLAIREE

Wait, wait, wait! I have to get a
mental picture of this!

She delights in the imagery.

OUISER

A dirty mind is a terrible thing
to waste.

(she tries to put an end
to the discussion)

Not that it's any of anyone's
business, but no. We're friends.
He would like more. I'm dealing
with that. But I am old and set
in my ways.

TRUVY

(smug)

You are playing hard to get.

CLAIREE

At her age she should be playing
"Beat the Clock."

84 INT. M'LYNN/SHELBY HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

84

There are flowers from well-wishers, etc.

(CONTINUED)

Visiting hours are over, M'Lynn and Shelby have been readied for bed. They both have IV's in their arms. The IV's are on tall IV stands with rollers, so everywhere M'Lynn and Shelby go, they must negotiate their movement according to these very awkward stands. They're wearing hospital gowns. M'Lynn is in the bathroom. Shelby stands outside the bathroom, talking to M'Lynn. The conversation is lighthearted. Shelby is rambling.

SHELBY

...now that I look back, I realize that Midge and Scooter were my favorites. Ken was boring. I think I felt threatened by Barbie. Those boobs were so intimidating.

The toilet flushes, M'Lynn comes out of the bathroom, wrangling with the IV stand which is taller than the door opening.

SHELBY

(continuing)

I wonder what it would be like to have boobs like Barbie?

M'LYNN

(getting IV under control)

Ask Truvy.

SHELBY

Do you think Jackson'll be able to sneak Jack Jr. in? I really want him to be the first thing I see when I wake up.

*
*
*
*
*

Shelby goes into the bathroom. M'Lynn struggles back to her bed with the IV stand.

M'LYNN

Where there's a will, there's a way.

*
*
*

A look of dismay comes over M'Lynn's face.

*

M'LYNN

(continuing; defeated)

I think I have to go again.

(CONTINUED)

84

CONTINUED:

84

SHELBY

(wrestling the IV
into place)They weren't lying when they said
these things would make our
kidneys go ninety miles an hour...M'Lynn gets out of bed again and heads to the bathroom.
While watching M'Lynn struggle, the final realization
of what is happening hits Shelby. She disintegrates
into sobs.

SHELBY

(continuing)

I can't. I can't let you do this.
There has to be another way. I
can't do this to you.M'Lynn needs to console Shelby as much for herself
as for her daughter.

M'LYNN

Hush. Stop it.
(firmer)
Not now Shelby.

Shelby still sobs.

M'LYNN

(continuing; firmer)

Not now. I have to pee.

This is not the consolation Shelby expected. The
absurdity of M'Lynn's situation overcomes the
seriousness and Shelby catches herself mid-sob.
Mother and daughter arrive at yet another level of
quiet understanding.

85

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - MORNING

85

Drum, Clairee, Ouiser, Truby, Jackson, Annelle,
Jonathan, Tommy and the minister are there. They
are trying to make their anxiety.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

The DOCTOR comes into the waiting room, still dressed in his surgical togs and mask. Everyone snaps to attention.

DOCTOR

Looks good. Looks real, real good.

86 EXT. TRUVY'S PARKING AREA - A RAINY SATURDAY MORNING

86

It is October, four months later. Annelle gets out of her car. We can see she is a little pregnant as she heads to the door of the shop. Truvy, in true fashion, has decorated for Halloween. She has lined the walk with pumpkins, there is a major pumpkin by the door, and a skeleton on the door.

87 INT. TRUVY'S SHOP

87

The shop is uncharacteristically dark. Annelle is puzzled.

ANNELLE

(calling)

Truvy? Where are you?

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

The lights snap on and Clairee, Ouiser, M'Lynn, Truvy, plus a few of Annelle's friends pop out.

EVERYONE

Surprise!!!

Truvy is giving Annelle a surprise goblin wedding shower. Annelle is surprised alright. Truvy's shop is decorated for Halloween, with a monster theme.

ANNELLE

Truvy, I can't believe this!

TRUVY

(gesturing around)

I've always wanted to give a wedding shower with a monster motif.

M'LYNN

(pinning a corsage
on Annelle)

It's what you get for getting married on Halloween.

88 INT. TRUVY'S LIVING ROOM

88

Annelle is opening presents. She's holding up a set of elegant towels for everyone to see.

ANNELLE

Miss Clairee, they're gorgeous.
Thank you!

Annelle opens another package and pulls out the contents. It is transparent, risque, downright dirty lingerie. Split crotch panties and everything. Annelle is mortified, the ladies hoot and holler.

TRUVY

Who's that from?

Annelle looks at the card. There's no signature. Annelle's almost too embarrassed to speak.

ANNELLE

It doesn't say.

Clairee snatches the card and recognizes the handwriting.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIREE
(accusatory)

Ouiser.

OUISER
(the cat that ate the canary)

What?

Clairee holds up the card.

CLAIREE
I'd know this penmanship anywhere.
You have the handwriting of a
serial killer.

OUISER
I just thought Sammy wouldn't mind
you reading the Bible in bed as
long as you were wearing something
inspirational.

Annelle turns sevel shades of scarlet as the ladies
howl.

M'LYNN
This is from Shelby. She's sorry
she couldn't make it, she's on duty.

*
*
*

ANNELLE
How's she doing?

*
*

M'LYNN
Just great.

*
*

Shelby is in her nurses uniform, lovingly putting down
a newborn baby. She checks another sleeping baby, then
goes to the nurses desk. he makes notes on charts.
A fellow nurse PAM, passes the desk. Pam moves a shop-
ping bag out of her way. She notices its contents and
pulls out a tiny clown suit.

PAM
This is so cute! Where did
you find it?

SHELBY
Aunt Fern made it.
(she laughs)
I've finally trained Jack Jr. to
say "trick or treat"...or some-
thing kinda like it. I can't
wait to try it on him.

89

CONTINUED:

89

A baby starts SCREAMING from the nursery.

PAM

I think baby Forbes is hungry.

Pam leaves to tend baby Forbes. Shelby puts the costume back in the bag. Suddenly she's hit with a wave of something that leaves her pale and weak. It takes her a moment to recover. She looks frightened, but whatever the attack was, it passes.

90

INT. TRUVY'S SHOP - MID-AFTERNOON

90

Annelle is rummaging in the kitchen and she runs across a bottle of champagne. She confronts Truvy teasingly.

ANNELLE

Someone's husband must be getting back tonight.

TRUVY

Honey. When you work a seven day stretch on an offshore oil rig, the only thing you wanna do on your day off is sleep...but...

(sexual)

I'm gonna do my best to keep him up.

Truvy thrusts the champagne into the icebox. Truvy returns to attend Clairee's facial mask. Annelle is waxing Ouiser's moustache. Clairee is reading a magazine.

CLAIREE

Anne Boleyn had six fingers.

OUISER

Who's Ann Berlin?

CLAIREE

(she can't believe Ouiser sometimes)

Anne Boleyn. She was one of the six wives of Henry VIII.

OUISER

I never watch public television.

CLAIREE

She had six fingers.

(CONTINUED)

OUISER

What happened to the other four?

CLAIREE

She had eleven total.

OUISER

Are you trying to confuse me?

CLAIREE

No. I just want to expose us to a little more culture and that's not easy to come by in this neck of the woods. How about taking a theatre trip to New York?

*
*
*
*
*
*

OUISER

I'm not exposing myself to anything.

*
*
*

CLAIREE

You should broaden your horizons.

*
*

OUISER

You broaden your horizons your way. I'll broaden my horizons mine.

*
*
*
*

CLAIREE

I'm going to support the arts in our area.

*
*
*

OUISER

I'll write a check. I'll support art. I just don't want to see it.

*
*
*

CLAIREE

It wouldn't harelip you.

*
*

OUISER

Let's get one thing straight. I don't see plays because I can nap at home for free. I don't see movies because they're all trash and full of naked people. And I don't read books because if they're good, they'll be made into a mini-series.

*
*
*
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*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

CLAIREE

Ouiser, you would be a much more
contented, pleasant person if you
found some ways to occupy your time.

*
*
*
*

OUISER

I am pleasant, dammit. This morning
I passed Drum Eatenton in the Piggly
Wiggly and I smiled before I could
help myself.

*
*
*
*
*

90A OMIT

90A

91 INT. SHELBY AND JACKSON'S HOME - FAMILY ROOM - 91
LATE AFTERNOON

Shelby is zipping Jack Jr. into the clown outfit. He looks adorable. Shelby doesn't look so good. Jack Jr. chatters.

JACK JR.
Trick treat trick treat trick
trick...

Shelby's very weak.

SHELBY
That's very good, I'm so proud...

Shelby holds onto the furniture for dear life. She's reeling.

92 INT. SHELBY AND JACKSON'S HOME - KITCHEN - DUSK

Jackson comes home from the office. He enters the kitchen. He senses something's wrong. A pot has boiled over on the stove. Jack Jr. comes running in to greet his daddy, still in the clown outfit, now very dirty. Jackson is suspicious.

JACK JR.
(happy to see
Daddy)
Daddy, Daddy, Daddy!

JACKSON
(concerned)
Where's Mommy?

JACK JR.
Asleep...

Jackson, alarmed, goes into the family room and sees Shelby lying on the floor. Panicked, he lunges into action.

A93

EXT. HOSPITAL

A93*

M'Lynn arrives at hospital.

94

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - NIGHT

94

M'Lynn, Drum, Jackson, Dr. Judd are standing at the nurses' station. Behind a glass partition, Shelby is visible. She's unconscious, tubed and wired. Dr. Judd is explaining Shelby's status to them. We see the gravity of the situation on the faces of the family.

95

INT. HOSPITAL - SHELBY ICU UNIT - DAY ONE OF COMA

95

Shelby remains in a coma several days. M'Lynn never leaves her side. Passage of time can be achieved by M'Lynn's change of clothes, etc. M'Lynn is trying to brush Shelby's hair. Jackson sits.

CUT TO:

96

INT. ICU UNIT - DAY TWO

96

M'Lynn reads to a comatose Shelby from People Magazine. Drum sits. M'Lynn keeps a constant stream of conversation, theory being that on some unconscious level, Shelby is aware of their presence.

CUT TO:

A97

OMIT

A97 *

97

OMIT

97 *

97A

OMIT

97A

98

INT. ICU UNIT - DAY FOUR

98

M'Lynn is bending and flexing Shelby's legs and arms. The ICU nurse passes by. M'Lynn explains.

M'LYNN

We're doing our Jane Fonda. Keeps the circulation going.

CUT TO:

A99

OMIT

A99

99

INT. ICU UNIT - DAY FIVE

99

The wear and tear is showing on M'Lynn. She's just sitting on Shelby's side. Shelby's wearing a Walkman. Drum comes in and gently rubs M'Lynn's shoulders.

DRUM

Honey. It might do you good to get out for a little while. Eat a real dinner.

M'LYNN

(quietly)

What if she woke up for two minutes, and I wasn't here?

CUT TO:

A100

OMIT

A100 *

100

INT. ICU UNIT

100

M'Lynn sits.

CUT TO.

103 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE ICU

M'Lynn comes out. Jackson, Drum, Tommy and Jonathan are there. They embrace. M'Lynn is much more together than the guys. After the embrace, she gives gentle directives to Drum

M'LYNN

Call Clairee and Connolly's Funeral Home. They're nice. *

She takes Jackson's hand. Every ounce of her being is trying to focus on keeping it together. She speaks to Jackson.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

Uh. You need to get her pink suit...the one with the cherries pinned on the...

Words are failing her, she gestures to the lapel. She realizes what she wants more than anything.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

Where's Jack Jr.?

JACKSON

Aunt Fern's.

M'Lynn leaves the hospital with the same steam roller intensity with which she entered it.

104 INT. M'LYNN'S CAR - DAWN

104

M'Lynn is a woman possessed. She drives like a bat out of hell. The emotions rage on her face with such ferocity, it's difficult to track them.

105 EXT. AUNT FERN'S HOUSE - DAWN

105

M'Lynn rings the doorbell. Fern, in her robe, answers it. Fern's face tells us that she already knows about Shelby. Fern doesn't know what to say, so she bursts into tears. The door opens farther to reveal a sleepy, pajama-clad Jack Jr. The sight of him almost makes M'Lynn gasp for breath. She catches herself. She remembers that normality was very important to Shelby. The ferocity of her feeling at this moment might frighten the child. She calmly picks up Jack Jr. and hugs him as if this were the last moment on earth.

106

INT. TRUVY'S SHOP - MORNING

106

It's the morning of Shelby's funeral. Truvy is dressed in a somber dress. She's trying to decide about her hair, her makeup. Is a black bow in her hair too much? etc. She's concentrating in the mirror when she sees Spud's reflection as he enters the shop. He's dressed in an ill-fitting suit that probably hasn't been worn in years. Truvy thinks she knows what Spud's wearing the suit means, but she can't get her hopes up.

SPUD

(awkward)

Does this tie go?

TRUVY

... yes.

Spud enters the shop awkwardly. He rarely sets foot in here. It's women's territory.

TRUVY

(continuing; very
tender)

You look real nice.

SPUD

I thought I'd go with you to the
funeral... if you don't mind.

Truvy continues to stare in the mirror, trying to keep the tears out of her eyes. Does this mean her prayers are being answered?

TRUVY

... I don't mind.

Spud, nervous, has seated himself in a beauty chair and is twirling around in it. Truvy continues composing herself in the mirror. Spud has trouble expressing himself on such an intimate level.

SPUD

I feel sorry for 'em. Especially
Jackson. Losing Shelby like that.
If something like that ever
happened to me... I'd... I don't
know what I'd do.

Truvy has waited most of her lifetime to hear this from the man she loves. In this moment of sadness, she wants to burst with joy. But that's not appropriate. She enjoys the moment quietly, deciding the black bow is just fine for the occasion.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

SPUD

(continuing)

Things like this just don't make any sense... no sense at all.

TRUVY

(quietly)

Well, I just keep thinking what Annelle says... the Lord works in mysterious ways.

Spud has been as open as he can comfortably be. He picks a bizarre piece of beauty apparatus and examines it.

SPUD

What the hell is this for?

Truvy turns and smiles at him.

TRUVY

It makes you pretty.

107 EXT. CEMETERY - GRAVESIDE SERVICE - MID-AFTERNOON

107

The graveside ceremony is over. People are milling about, paying their respects. The crowd is dispersing. M'Lynn is holding a pink flower she has taken from Shelby's casket. She's walked away from the crowd for a private moment. Truvy, having seen this, catches Annelle's eye, bringing M'Lynn to Annelle's attention. Annelle crosses to Clairee, touching her arm to interrupt Clairee's conversation with the minister.

CUT TO:

108 M'LYNN

108

holds the pink flower very tenderly. Her thoughts are interrupted by Truvy's voice.

TRUVY

How're you doing, honey?

M'Lynn turns to see Truvy, Annelle, Clairee and Ouiser.

M'LYNN

I'm fine.

They're all trying to help M'Lynn, but they don't really know what to say or do.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIREE

It was a beautiful service.

OUISER

Prettiest flowers I've ever seen.

M'LYNN

They're beautiful...

They all hurt so much they just ache. It's an awkward, awful moment. Annelle offers what she thinks is solace.

ANNELLE

Miss M'Lynn. It should make you feel a lot better that Shelby is with her king.

M'LYNN

(a little shaken)

Yes, Annelle. I guess it should.

ANNELLE

We should all be rejoicing.

M'LYNN

(this is not what she wants to hear)

You go ahead. I wish I could feel that way. I guess I'm a little selfish. I'd rather have her here.

ANNELLE

(gently)

Miss M'Lynn. I don't mean to upset you by saying that. You see. When something like this happens, I pray very hard to make heads or tails of it. I think in Shelby's case, she wanted to take care of that baby, of you, of everybody she knew... and her poor body was just worn out. It wouldn't let her do everything she wanted to do. So she went on to a place where she could be a guardian angel. She will always be young. She will always be beautiful.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNELLE (CONT'D)

And I personally feel much safer knowing she's up there on my side. I know some people might think that sounds real simple and stupid... and maybe I am. But that's how I get through things like this.

M'LYNN

(softens)

Thank you, Annelle. I appreciate that. And that's a very good idea. Shelby, as you know, wouldn't want us to get all mired down and wallow in this. We should deal with it the best way we know how... and get on with it. That's what my mind says. I wish somebody would explain that to my heart.

TRUVY

Drum said you never left her side.

M'LYNN

Well. I wasn't in the mood to play tennis. No... I couldn't leave my Shelby. I stayed there. I kept on pushing... just like I always have where Shelby was concerned... hoping she'd sit up and argue with me. But finally we all realized there was no hope. I was very afraid I wouldn't survive the next few minutes when they turned off the machines. Drum couldn't take it. He left. Jackson couldn't take it. He left. It struck me as amusing. Men are supposed to be made of... steel or something. But I just sat there... holding Shelby's hand. There was no noise, no tremble... just peace. I realized as a woman how lucky I was. I was there when this wonderful person drifted into my world and I was there when she drifted out. It was the most precious moment of my life thus far.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: (3)

108

M'Lynn is struggling for control. The ladies are a mess. M'Lynn's scared she's going to lose it.

M'LYNN
(continuing; pulling
it together)
I'd better get back.

She dabs her eyes with Kleenex. She's trying very hard.

M'LYNN
(continuing)
Anybody have a mirror?

Truvy rolls her eyes. This is the stupidest question she's ever heard.

TRUVY
Does anybody have a mirror.

Truvy whips a mirror out of her purse. M'Lynn gives her makeup a quick look. Truvy continues to be supportive.

TRUVY
(continuing)
Well. I don't know how your
insides are doing. But your hair
is holding up beautifully.

M'Lynn still gazes into the mirror. She is seeing much more than a hairdo.

M'LYNN
You know... Shelby... Shelby was
right. It does look like a
(blonde) football helmet.

M'Lynn disintegrates. The ladies gather around.

CLAIREE
Oh, honey... are you okay?

M'LYNN
Yes. Yes. I'm fine. I'm great.
I could jog to Texas and back, but
my daughter can't. She never
could. I'm so mad I don't know
what to do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: (4)

108

M'LYNN (CONT'D)

I want to know why. I want to know why Shelby's life is over. How is that baby ever going to understand how wonderful his mother was? Will he ever understand what she went through for him? I don't understand. Lord I wish I could. It's not supposed to happen this way. I'm supposed to go first. I've always been ready to go first. I can't stand this. I just want to hit somebody until they feel as bad as I do. I... just want to hit something... and hit it hard.

Everyone is unable to react, overcome with emotion. Eventually, Clairee has an idea. She pulls Ouiser next to M'Lynn and braces Ouiser as if Ouiser were a blocking dummy.

CLAIREE

Here. Hit this! Go ahead, M'Lynn. Slap her!

OUISER

(dumbfounded)

Are you crazy?

CLAIREE

Hit her!

OUISER

Are you high?

TRUVY

Clairee! Have you lost your mind?

CLAIREE

We can sell T-shirts saying, "I Slapped Ouiser Boudreaux!" Hit her!

ANNELLE

Miss Clairee! Enough!

M'LYNN

Hush, Clairee.

Everyone is beginning to lighten up.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: (5)

108

CLAIREE

Ouiser, this is your chance to do something for your fellow man. Knock her lights out, M'Lynn

OUISER

Let go of me!

CLAIREE

(letting go of Ouiser)

Well, M'Lynn. You just missed the chance of a lifetime. Most of Chinquapin Parish'd give their eye teeth to take a whack at Ouiser.

OUISER

You are a pig from hell.

Ouiser stalks off in a huff. M'Lynn starts to laugh.

M'LYNN

That was very funny, Clairee.

They all start to laugh.

A109 OMIT

A109 *

109 OMIT

109 *

110

EXT. OUISER'S BACKYARD - LATE AFTERNOON

110

*

Ouiser is sitting on a bench by the fountain, alone.
She's still hurt and mad at Clairee for the graveyard business.
Clairee approaches with reconciliation on her face. Ouiser
turns her back on Clairee.

*

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

110

OUISER

Go away.

CLAIREE

Okay. Alright. Hit me, then. I deserve it.

OUISER

You are evil and you must be destroyed.

CLAIREE

Mother Nature is taking care of that faster than you could. Things were getting entirely too serious for a moment. We needed to laugh.

(Clairee giggles)

I'll bet Lloyd got a kick out of that one.

OUISER

Lloyd did get a lot of enjoyment at my expense when he was alive.

Clairee senses a breakthrough in Ouiser's mood. With great affection, she confesses.

CLAIREE

Ouiser. You know I love you more than my luggage.

OUISER

(she's bending)

You're too twisted for color TV.

They're back on as even a keel as they'll ever be.

CUT TO:

111 EXT. EATENTON HOUSE - BACK YARD

111

M'Lynn and Truvy talk while M'Lynn is pushing Jack Jr. in a swind.

*
*

M'LYNN

I shouldn't have gone on like I did. I made everybody cry. I'm sorry.

TRUVY

Don't be silly. Laughter through tears is my favorite emotion.

(CONTINUED)

111

CONTINUED:

111

M'LYNN

Maybe it was about time I had an emotional outburst. Maybe I'll start having them at home more often. Drum will be pleased.

Annelle brings M'Lynn and Truvy mugs of coffee. Ouiser and Clairee approach. Truvy comments.

TRUVY

Well I'm glad to see you two have made up.

Clairee takes Ouiser's arm.

CLAIREE

Ouiser could never stay mad at me. She worships the quicksand I walk on.

Ouiser hugs M'Lynn.

OUISER

(taking M'Lynn's hand)

M'Lynn. You're in my prayers.

Annelle reacts to this. Ouiser acknowledges and snaps.

OUISER

(continuing)

Yes, Annelle. I pray. There. I've said it. I hope you're satisfied.

ANNELLE

I have suspected this all along.

OUISER

But don't you go trying to get me to come out to your church to one of those tent revivals with all those Bible beaters doing God-only-knows-what. They'll probably make me eat a live chicken.

ANNELLE

(after a calculated beat)

Not on your first visit.

This remark takes everyone by surprise.

CLAIREE

Very good Annelle! Spoken like a true smart ass!

(CONTINUED)

111

CONTINUED: (2)

111

Ouiser reacts to this jab at her. Then, she spots Drum in a private moment in another section of the yard. He sees Ouiser. In their faces, they know they each share the other's pain. Despite everything, there is great affection.

Annelle steps up to M'Lynn.

ANNELLE

Miss M'Lynn. I don't know if this is the time or place. But I wanted to tell you that Sammy and I have decided if this is a girl, we want to name it Shelby...since she was the reason we met in the first place. If you don't mind.

M'LYNN

Mind? Shelby would love that. I'm tickled pink.
(M'Lynn smiles)
Pink.

TRUVY

What'll you name it if it's a boy?

ANNELLE

(thinks for a moment)
Shelby, I guess.

M'LYNN

That's the way it should be.

She looks at Jack Jr. and resumes pushing him in the swing.

M'LYNN

(continuing)
Life goes on.

112

OMIT

112

113

EXT. FRONT STREET PARK

113

There are the same giant Easter bunnies and Easter eggs as we saw in scene one. Jack Jr.'s playing on the grass, triumphantly pulls out an Easter egg, and lots of children, all in their Sunday best, are searching for Easter eggs. It's the neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt.

113A

OMIT

113A

114 EXT. FRONT STREET PARKING LOT

114

Sammy and Annelle get out of their pickup truck. From the neck down Sammy is wearing a white fur bunny suit. He is hot and miserable. Annelle is hugely pregnant and uncomfortable.

SAMMY

(referring to the
bunny suit)

I've never been so uncomfortable
in my life.

ANNELLE

(having no patience)

We'll talk about uncomfortable when
You're nine months pregnant, okay?

Annelle plops the bunny head on Sammy and hands him a huge basket of Easter goodies.

SAMMY

(muffled)

Jesus...

ANNELLE

(slapping him on
the head)

Watch it. Now you just burst through
these bushes and hop over to where
the kids are.

SAMMY

(because of the head,
he's bumping into
things)

What bushes? I can't see shit.

CUT TO:

115 EXT. FRONT STREET - "TRUVY'S WEST"

115 *

Spud and Truvy drive up. Truvy is about to burst with excitement. Her eyes are supposed to be closed, but she tries to sneak a peek. Spud catches her.

SPUD

Close those eyes, woman, or I'm
gonna staple 'em shut.

She does so. Spud stops the car in front of a small cute new beauty shop that bears the large sign "TRUVY'S WEST....now, two locations to serve you."

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:

115

SPUD
(continuing)
All right. Open 'em.

Truvy opens her eyes to see the large "GRAND OPENING"
banner.

TRUVY
(in tears)
I can't believe it! I'm a chain!

CUT TO:

116 TOMMY, JONATHAN AND JACKSON

116 *

are organizing an egg-rolling race. Jackson announcing
the rules.

CUT TO:

117 CLAIREE WITH JACK JR.

117 *

in her lap.

CLAIREE
Okay. I'll tell you a story.
Once upon a time there was a
beautiful young girl named Shelby.
Now Shelby had a lovely, kind and
wonderful good fairy named
Clairee. But there was also a
terrible ugly evil witch named...
Ouiser...

CUT TO:

118 OUISER

118 *

arriving at the park with Owen. Rhett is on a leash.
Ouiser is not having a good day.

OUISER
I hate these stupid neighborhood
things.

OWEN
(being patient)
No one's twisting your arm to keep
you here.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

118

OUISER

(he's right)

Well. I have to be sociable.

They pass Drum, M'Lynn and Jackson, who are serving lemonade from the refreshment table. Drum gets Ouiser's attention.

DRUM

Hey! Rhett's here.

(brandishing a felt tip marker)

Let's connect the bald spots.

OUISER

Eat shit and die. Hello, M'Lynn.

At the sight of Drum, Rhett bares his teeth and GROWLS. Drum, at the sight of Rhett, does the same. Ouiser yanks Rhett away.

CUT TO:

119 AUNT FERN, SPUD AND TRUVY

119 *

They are selling raffle tickets when Louie and MONIQUE ROAR past on a motorcycle. Monique is Louie's sluttish tattooed girlfriend/fiance. The kids shout their greetings as they pass.

LOUIE & MONIQUE

(together)

Yo! Hi ya!

Truvy shudders. She and Spud do not approve of Monique, Louie's fiance. Aunt Fern picks up on this as she tags prizes. *

JACKSON

That's Louie's fiance?

SPUD

'fraid so.

TRUVY

Yes.

(taking Spud's arm)

We're not losing a son. We're gaining an eyesore.

CUT TO:

120 CLAIREE

120 .*

winding up telling Jack Jr. her story.

CLAIREE

And everyone lived happily ever after. And the nasty, wicked, evil, wretched, ugly, mean, horrible Ouiser was never heard from again. Now! It's almost time for the Easter Bunny. Run on down!

Clairee puts Jack Jr. down and he wanders off. He crosses paths with Ouiser.

OUISER

Well, hello there, Jack! Remember me?

Jack Jr. shakes his head "no."

OUISER

(continuing)

It's me. Your old pal, Ouiser.

The realization that this is the terrible wicked old witch of Clairee's fairy tale tears across Jack Jr.'s face. Instant terror. He screams bloody murder. Ouiser doesn't understand. She reaches for him. He screams louder and backs away. Ouiser screams back.

OUISER

(continuing)

What!?! Shut up.!

Jack Jr. screams louder and takes off running toward the water. M'Lynn jumps into action. Everyone joins in pursuit of this child running for his life. Ouiser is chasing, screaming at him, which terrifies him even more. As Drum runs past Rhett, the dog goes berserk with excitement. At this moment, Rhett's chain, which has been taut, suddenly pops. Jack Jr., still ahead of the adults, reaches the bushes where Sammy has been waiting. As Jack Jr. approaches the bushes Sammy stumbles out. Jack Jr., unaccustomed to encounters with six foot bunny rabbits, is even more terrified. Jack Jr. screams even louder. Sammy has no idea what's happening and he walks smack into a tree. At that moment, Drum, with a rabid Rhett at his heels, flies past Ouiser and grabs a low tree branch, Rhett snapping at his feet. Clairee is in distress, Ouiser is in heaven. Jack Jr., hysterical, runs toward the water. Just before he's about to run into the water, he's snatched up by M'Lynn. She holds the sobbing child.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

120

M'LYNN

(soothingly)

It's okay. Everything's alright,
honey. It's gonna be fine.

M'Lynn notices the hysterical dog. The dog yelps
in combination with the child's screams are almost
more than she can bear. Tommy and Jonathan cross her
path. Exasperated she calls.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

Boys?

TOMMY & JONATHAN

(together)

Yeah mom?

M'LYNN

Do me a favor. Kill that stupid
dog.

Tommy and Jonathan exchange a look of devilish
glee and they dash off on their assigned task.
M'Lynn realizes they took her seriously and runs
after them with the sobbing Jack Jr.

M'LYNN

(continuing)

Tommy! I'm kidding!

Annelle gasps. Labor pains! *

ANNELLE

Truvy! *

Truvy realizing Annelle's situation issues directives
to nearby children: *

TRUVY

Quick! Tell that bunny rabbit to
get over here. Now! *

People are helping Drum, calming Rhett down, scolding
Quiser and attending to Annelle. The neighborhood is
back to normal. The CAMERA PULLS BACK, revealing the
general chaos. As the CAMERA SOARS, so does the
MUSIC...

FADE OUT:

THE END

Scene from STEEL MAGNOLIAS with

Rev. 6/22/88

Tamara, Michelle, Melanie,
Isabelle. 21.

22

CONTINUED: (2)

22

DRUM

Serve him on toast...

4W

With this, she turns on her heel and storms back toward the house. As she passes the pool, Jonathan starts plopping magnolia blossoms into the water. She's livid. She screams.

OUISER

Thomas Drummond Eatenton!!! Did you get these magnolias off my tree?

DRUM

(more concerned with his missing gun)

The judge hasn't decided whose tree that is exactly.

OUISER

It's mine.

Drum ignores her and Ouiser storms off.

23

INT. TRUVY'S SHOP

23

It's a little later in the morning and the shop is in full operation. Truvy is in the midst of taking rollers out of Shelby's hair. Shelby is trying out various shades of lipstick. Anelle is finishing washing M'Lynn's hair. Clairee, with her hair in hot rollers and clips, is sitting in a chair copying recipes while allowing her pedicure to dry.

*
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*

CLAIREE

(studying a recipe card)

Now are these chocolate chips semi-sweet or milk?

TRUVY

Milk.

CLAIREE

Is the Karo syrup light or dark?

TRUVY

Matter of taste.

CLAIREE

Where's the other one you were talking about... Cuppa, cuppa, cuppa?

(CONTINUED)

TRUVY

That's so easy you don't have to write it down. Cup of flour, cup of sugar, cup of fruit cocktail with the juice. Mix and bake at 350 'til gold and bubbly.

CLAIREE

Sounds awfully rich.

TRUVY

It is. So I serve it over ice cream to cut the sweetness.

(to Shelby)

~~Be right back.~~

(notices M'Lynn's wet hair)

Well, M'Lynn, looks like you're ready to roll. I think we can trust Annelle to roll you up. Her coiffure card is right there... behind the counter in the little box.

ANNELLE

(very insecure)

I don't know. Today is very special. And my work tends to be too poofy when I'm nervous.

TRUVY

You'll be just fine... You'll have to start somewhere.

ANNELLE

Does your dress have to go over your head?

SHELBY

You can't screw up her hair. You just tease it and make it look like a brown football helmet.

M'LYNN

I must've missed the passage in Emily Post that says all abuse must be heaped on the mother of the bride.

TRUVY

(the peacemaker)

~~Hush, girls.~~ Shelby, your mama doesn't tell us much. What's Jackson like?

*
*
*
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*
*
*
*

Not cut

23 CONTINUED:

23

SHELBY

He's really cute. I thought he was
a pest at first, but then he kind of
grew on me. And now I love him.

*

TRUVY

Is he real romantic?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

Annelle starts to roll up M'Lynn's hair. *

SHELBY

No. But he does give me flowers and surprises me with little presents if I bug him enough. He's promised to give me a red rose on every anniversary corresponding to the number of that anniversary. I think that's so sweet.

TRUVY

Well, now. That's a pretty romantic idea, isn't it?

SHELBY

Yea. I wish it'd been his.

CLAIREE

You made a very good catch, Shelby. Louisiana lawyers do well whether they want to or not.

SHELBY

I don't really care. Don't get me wrong. The money's real nice... but I just like the idea of growing old with somebody. My dream is to get old and sit on the back porch covered with grandchildren and say, "No!" and "Get out of that tree." *

TRUVY

Are you gonna quit your nursing job? *

SHELBY

Never! I love it. I love being around all those babies... Last week we had this poor little fellow who only lived about 12 hours. But I saw to it that he was loved his entire life. I think that's very important. That's why I became a nurse and that's why I'm gonna keep being one.

M'LYNN

Drum and I both feel that Shelby shouldn't work anymore after she gets married.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

SHELBY

I'm so anxious to discuss this topic for the nine hundredth time this week.

(changing subject)

Annelle? I know you're new and all, but don't let that stop you. Anytime you have anything to say, you just let 'er rip.

ANNELLE

I don't have anything to say. *

M'LYNN

You should not be on your feet all day. You should be kinder to your circulatory system.

Shelby is tired of discussing this with M'Lynn.

SHELBY

You know what you need in here, Truvy? You need a radio. Music is wonderful to have in the background. It takes the pressure off having to talk so much.

TRUVY

As a matter of fact, I used to have one... but I slammed it against the wall when I couldn't figure out where the batteries went. I know now I was suffering from premenstrual syndrome. *

SHELBY

I've gotten four radios for wedding presents. I'll give you one.

TRUVY

How sweet!

CLAIREE

Radio?... What did I just hear? Oh, yes. The Antilley family is selling KPPD. I wonder how much radio stations sell for? *

SHELBY

Miss Clairee. You should buy KPPD. You got plenty of money.

CLAIREE

What would I do with a radio station? Business never interested me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (4)

23

CLAIREE (CONT'D)

Lloyd took care of all that stuff. We missed it to forty years by three months. That stinker. He tried. He just couldn't make it. Shelby, I hope you and Jackson will be as happy as Lloyd and I were. We had such a good time. Until November... at least he hung on through the State playoffs.

SHELBY

Miss Clairee. There are still good times to be had.

CLAIREE

Well. I really do love football. But it's hard to parlay that into a reason to live.

TRUVY

What are your colors, Shelby?

SHELBY

Blush and bashful.

M'LYNN

Her colors are pink and pink.

SHELBY

(insistent)

They're blush and bashful, mama. *

M'LYNN

I ask you. How precious is this wedding going to get?

SHELBY

I have chosen two shades of pink. One is much deeper than the other. *

M'LYNN

The bridesmaids dresses are beautiful.

SHELBY

And the ceremony will be too. All the walls are banked with sprays of flowers in the two shades of blush and bashful. There's a pink carpet specially laid out for my service. And pink silk bunting draped over anything that would stand still. *

(CONTINUED)

M'LYNN

That sanctuary looks like it's been hosed down with Pepto-Bismol.

SHELBY

I like pink. Pink is my signature color.

TRUVY

How many bridesmaids?

SHELBY

(not happy about this)

Nine.

TRUVY

Nine? Good Lord!

SHELBY

Exactly. Mama made me have my cousins and Margi St. Maurice.

M'LYNN

Shelby. There was no way around it and you know it.

SHELBY

It will be pretentious. Daddy always says, "An ounce of pretension is worth a pound of manure."

M'LYNN

The poet laureate of Dogwood Lane...

SHELBY

Mama. I wish you would get off Daddy's back. He gets enough hassle from Miss Ouiser.

TRUVY

(always the peacemaker)

Fill us in on the reception.

SHELBY

There's going to be ferns and twinkly lights. The wedding cake will be by the pool. The groom's cake will be hidden in the carport.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (6)

23

M'LYNN

Shelby and I agree on one thing.

SHELBY

The groom's cake. It's awful. It's in the shape of a giant armadillo.

TRUVY

An armadillo?

SHELBY

Jackson wanted a cake in the shape of an armadillo. He has an aunt that makes them.

CLAIREE

It's unusual.

M'LYNN

It's repulsive. It has gray icing. I can't even think of how you'd make gray icing.

SHELBY

Worse! The cake part is red velvet cake. Blood red! People are going to be hacking into this animal that looks like it's bleeding to death.

M'LYNN

The rehearsal supper was an experience.

SHELBY

It wasn't that bad. It was out at Jackson's uncle's place on the river.

M'LYNN

For dessert they served an original creation they called "Dago" pie. It was a pizza with frosting. I think that says it all. Jackson is from a good old southern family with good old southern values. You either shoot it, stuff it or marry it.

*
*
*

SHELBY

They're simply outdoorsy, that's a...

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (7)

23

TRUVY

Did you all do anything especially romantic?

SHELBY

We drove down to Frenchman's Point and went parking.

M'Lynn doesn't want to hear about this.

M'LYNN

Shelby, really.

Truvy desperately wants to hear about this.

TRUVY

Oh, boy. The romantic part. This is what really melts my butter.

SHELBY

Then we went skinnydipping and did things that frightened the fish.

Clairee enjoys the candor immensely.

CLAIREE

It's been a long time since we've had a youngster in this place, hasn't it?

SHELBY

We talked, and talked, and talked...

TRUVY

I love those kind of talks... in the arms of the man you love.

SHELBY

Actually we fought most of the time.

TRUVY

You fought?

(CONTINUED)