

CLAIREE. I'll tell them today.

SHELBY. Truvy? Why isn't my radio playing? (Shelby taps the radio. It plays. Shelby's fingernails are still wet. Shelby exits.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II

During the scene change, the song that closes Scene I fades into the following speech to denote the passage of time. It is the KPPD DJ.

DJ. (Fading in.) ...proud of our Devils on their fourteenth straight victory and if they keep playing like this the Devils might just have another state championship to call their own. That final playoff score again...twenty-seven to six. There is no new word on the lawsuit brought by the Reverend Q.T. Bennett against the Chinquapin Parish Board of Education. The Reverend, who is pastor of the Riverview Baptist Church, has filed suit charging that the use of the devil as a mascot for our high school team encourages Satanic behavior in the youth of our community. When reached for comment about the Reverend's lawsuit, Devils head coach Waddy Thibodeaux said, and I quote, "Tell him to go to hell." (Lights up. The radio continues to play under Truvy's phone call. It is November and is unusually cold. Clairee and Ouiser are in the chairs. Clairee is doing Ouiser's hair in silence. Clairee is visibly pregnant. Clairee is halfheartedly reading Reader's Digest.)

TRUVY. (On phone.) I'm sorry honey. You know I would if I could, but I just can't today. I could squeeze you in first thing Monday. Fine. See you then, Susan. (Truvy hangs up, then gazes out the window deep in thought. No one speaks

64

for a moment. Annelie is listening to the weather report.) ANNELLE. Thirty-nine degrees! You were right, Truvy. TRUVY. It's too cold for this time of year, I'm gonna write a letter.

OUISER. I don't like it one bit. I turn blue when it's this cold. And blue is not in my palette.

Start CLAIREE. Anne Boleyn had six fingers.

OUISER. Who's Anne Berlin?

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

OUISER. I never watch public television.

CLAIREE. She had six fingers.

OUISER. What happened to the other four?

CLAIREE. She had eleven total.

OUISER. Are you trying to confuse me? What are you talking about?

CLAIREE. This article says that she had six fingers on one hand. So she had all her dresses made so the sleeves hung down to her fingertips so she wouldn't look weird.

OUISER. Reader's Digest is a font of useful information. (They lapse into thoughtful silence.)

TRUVY. (Her scarf is tied around her neck.) Clairee. I just love my scarf. You are so thoughtful. It really jazzes up this outfit.

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

ANNELLE. I want to spray just a little more of my French perfume. I love it so much. I love it when the smell just fills the air. (She sprays a mist and walks through it.)

TRUVY. Don't waste it! That stuff ain't cheap.

OUISER. Save it, honey. We're going to have to burn our clothes as it is.

65

TRUVY. I'm just so touched that you remembered us.

CLAIREE. I had a ball shopping. I don't care what anyone says, the French people are very friendly. And most of them had the courtesy to speak English.

TRUVY. *(Ouiser has pulled her scarf out from under her smock. It is a wild print. As Ouiser examines it.)* And I love Ouiser's, too. I may want to borrow that sometime.

OUISER. You're welcome to it.

CLAIREE. You don't like it, do you?

OUISER. It's perfect for me. A print this busy'll never show dog hair.

ANNELLE. My feet are like two blocks of ice.

OUISER. *(Sips coffee.)* This tastes like it was made in a rubber tire.

TRUVY. Annelle, remember to get that new thing for the Mr. Coffee.

ANNELLE. *(After a beat.)* Have any of you seen her this morning?

CLAIREE. I haven't. I went directly to the house when I got in. Only the boys were there.

ANNELLE. Do you think she'll come by?

OUISER. I doubt it. I'm sure her hair is the farthest thing from her mind.

TRUVY. Who knows what's on her mind. But she might need something and I just wanted to be here for her.

CLAIREE. I'm glad you decided to stay open today.

OUISER. How are the boys?

CLAIREE. As well as can be expected...

TRUVY. My husband and I are taking some barbecue over there later.

CLAIREE. I have never seen so much food.

ANNELLE. You can never have enough at times like these. My husband's back at the apartment cooking up a storm. He's convinced that his red beans and rice will make everyone feel better.

TRUVY. Maybe he's right. That's why we call it soul food. I'm gonna have to get his recipe.

ANNELLE. You'll have to ask him. Sammy runs me off whenever he starts cooking. That kitchen is so tiny he's scared he'll hit me in the stomach with a spatula.

CLAIREE. When are you moving, Annelle?

ANNELLE. Next month.

TRUVY. You had to bring it up. I can't stand it that she's moving away now that I'm about to be a semi-grandmother.

ANNELLE. It's just down the street, Truvy. A hop, skip, and a jump. That apartment is so squinched Sammy and I have to step outside to change our minds. You're toying with me, aren't you?

TRUVY. A little bit. Not a lot. Guess it's just me and the old man.

CLAIREE. Truvy. Be thankful. You'd miss him if he were gone.

TRUVY. *(Chuckles.)* You know? Last night, he actually got up off the couch and said, "Let's go out to eat." Well...after I came to, I asked him, "What's the matter?" I thought Deputy Dawg had been preempted. Then he said he's got a good shot at doing the electrical contracting for the new college library! I'm not supposed to tell anybody! *(Everyone is excited. M'Lynn enters. No one knows what to say. M'Lynn is very together.)*

M'LYNN. Hello everybody. *(They all hug her.)* Welcome home, Clairee. How was Paris?

CLAIREE. Perfectly beautiful. I ate too much. I brought you something pretty.

M'LYNN. You shouldn't have. *(The radio is playing something inappropriate. Truvy goes to turn it off.)* Don't turn off Shelby's radio. I like the noise.

CLAIREE. There's special programming today. I had Jonathan go down to the station and pull music that Shelby would have liked and they're going to play it until noon.

M'LYNN. He told me. I think you're going to be surprised at some of the stuff you hear.

CLAIREE. That's OK. It's for Shelby.

OUISER. M'Lynn. Just tell us. What can we do?

M'LYNN. Thank you. Truvy? Do you think you could work a little magic? I know I look like ten miles of dirt road.