

A CRICKET COUNTY FRONT PORCH CHRISTMAS

by Eddie McPherson



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FRONT PORCH CHRISTMAS**

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SYNOPSIS: If you think it's a staid, simple Christmas in the backwoods, guess again! Even the big ol' diner porch can't contain all the confusion. First, a blindfolded Mimi steps out of the limo and thinks she's in Paris. Then Grandma assumes Glenda Mae is with child, Brenda Mae is sure that Oswald wants to get hitched, and has Grandma Taylor truly kicked the bucket? And what's this about a creepy critter lurking in the hills? (Here's lookin' at you, Fester Taylor.) Plus, a politically correct Northerner is after the hillbillionaires' riches to finance his Church of Global Unity, where anyone can believe anything as long as no one is offended. Pshaw! They don't give him diddly squat. In the midst of this hot mess, the merry is put back into Christmas, there's a sweet surprise, and all agree that "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:33). Loaded with laughs!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 females, 7 males)

COUNTRY BUNCH:

ELKIN TAYLOR (m).....	The leveled-headed one of the bunch (but still has his moments). <i>(98 lines)</i>
GRANDMA TAYLOR (f).....	The family matriarch. <i>(82 lines)</i>
FESTER TAYLOR (m)	Young and naive. He carries his trusted axe everywhere he goes. <i>(47 lines)</i>
BRENDA MAE TAYLOR (f)	One half of a set of twins. She wants to be in love sooo badly. <i>(53 lines)</i>
GLENDMA MAE TAYLOR CRICK (f)	Brenda Mae's 'twin sister'. She's married to Elmer Crick (bless her heart). <i>(60 lines)</i>
ELMER CRICK (m)	Glenda Mae's henpecked husband. <i>(33 lines)</i>

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DOC HUCKEBERRY (m) Physician of Cricket County
who delivers surprising news.
(2 lines)

CITY BUNCH:

GEORGE HOWARD (m)..... Roaming the countryside,
looking for contributors for the
new church he has created.
(61 lines)

OSWALD TIPPINHEIMER (m) Leader of the city bunch.
(46 lines)

MIMI (f)..... Wants to be anywhere in the
world other than Cricket
County. (44 lines)

PETE (m) Oswald's follower. (25 lines)

PETUNIA (f) Has a heart for her country
cousins. (22 lines)

PRODUCTION NOTES

CAST DOUBLING: The roles of George and Doc may be doubled with a speedy costume change.

COSTUMES: The city bunch wears preppy clothing depicting their wealthy status, including coats, since they are just arriving. George wears a nice hat and coat. The country bunch wears flannel shirts, blue jeans, cotton or gingham dresses, overalls, etc. Brenda Mae needs to change into a sleeveless shirt about halfway through the performance. Doc may wear a white lab coat that is open to reveal overalls, plus a stethoscope.

SET: a window to the cafe is painted left or right of the door, which is center. All the action takes place on the front porch of the diner. The door to the diner has a wreath on it and is at Center Stage. A window to the café is painted left or right of the door. You could add two simple columns and a cardboard roof to carry out the porch theme if desired. Two rocking chairs should be placed on the porch, along with a sign reading “Cricket County Café” and Christmas lights.

PROPS

- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Bucket
- ☐ plastic funnel
- ☐ small suitcase
- ☐ smartphone
- ☐ wooden spoon
- ☐ a pot with a towel over it
- ☐ a stack of wrapped Christmas gifts
- ☐ rubber chicken
- ☐ large spoon
- ☐ spatula
- ☐ crowbar
- ☐ two slingshots
- ☐ stuffed skunk
- ☐ knife
- ☐ potato masher
- ☐ large plastic bowl
- ☐ handkerchief
- ☐ tissue
- ☐ pamphlet
- ☐ wedding veil
- ☐ small bouquet of flowers
- ☐ axe
- ☐ megaphone
- ☐ stuffed kitten
- ☐ tiny axe (perhaps made from a toothpick with a paper axe head attached)
- ☐ piece of paper

SOUND EFFECTS

- Banjo playing
- recorded conversation with Pete, Oswald, and Oswald posing as Mimi
- various loud roaring animal noises
- two crashes
- Christmas music.

All Scripture taken from KING JAMES VERSION ®.

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SCENE 1

AT START: *FESTER stands at Center Stage on the front porch of GRANDMA's diner, holding a pair of binoculars, peering through them and looking out over the audience. GLENDA MAE enters through the front door of the diner, carrying a bucket. She sees FESTER but doesn't think much about it, takes a sharp left and heads to the end of the porch, stops, looks back at FESTER and crosses to him.*

BRENDA MAE: Fester, what you lookin' at?

FESTER: Ain't sure.

BRENDA MAE: Can I look?

FESTER: Shore 'nough can.

FESTER hands BRENDA MAE the binoculars. She sets down her bucket and peers through them.

BRENDA MAE: *(Still looking.)* I have one question, Fester.

FESTER: What's that?

BRENDA MAE: What am I supposed to be lookin' at?

FESTER: Don't you see nothin'?

BRENDA MAE: Just trees.

FESTER: That's funny, that's all I seen too.

BRENDA MAE: I'm confused.

FESTER: 'Bout what?

BRENDA MAE: 'Bout what I'm supposed to be lookin' at.

FESTER: You see, what happened was I heard this noise like a wild animal, comin' from the trees. So I was lookin' to see what it was.

BRENDA MAE: What kind of noise was it?

FESTER: Be real still and maybe we'll hear it.

FESTER and BRENDA MAE stand like statues, listening. The faint sound of a banjo plays in the distance.

BRENDA MAE: Fester, that's just Claude Satterfield playin' his banjer on his front porch.

- 1 **FESTER:** That ain't what I heard a while ago. Brenda Mae, I'm
2 tellin' you, I heard a animal, but it wasn't a bobcat or black bear
3 like usual.
- 4 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Handing FESTER the binoculars.*) All you heard
5 was the wind howlin' through the holler, Fester.
- 6 **FESTER:** (*Scratching his head.*) That's all?
- 7 **BRENDA MAE:** That's all.
- 8 **FESTER:** (*Scratching his head.*) What you know about that?
- 9
- 10 *ELKIN enters Stage Left from the edge of the porch. He crosses*
11 *and stands beside BRENDA MAE.*
- 12
- 13 **ELKIN:** What y'all doin' out here?
- 14 **GLEND A MAE:** Lookin' at trees through them there bee-knock-u-
15 lurs.
- 16 **ELKIN:** Why you lookin' at trees?
- 17 **GLEND A MAE:** Fester thought the wind was a wild animal.
- 18 **ELKIN:** Fester thought the wind was a wild animal? I'm confused.
- 19 **FESTER:** (*Shrugs.*) That makes four of us. (*He counts with his*
20 *fingers on one hand and points to ELKIN, BRENDA MAE, and*
21 *himself with the other hand.*) That makes three of us.
- 22 **ELKIN:** I think I will play like this talk never happened. By the way,
23 has either one of y'all seen my megerphone?
- 24 **FESTER:** It all depends.
- 25 **ELKIN:** On what?
- 26 **FESTER:** What's a megerphone?
- 27 **GLEND A MAE:** You know, Fester, our cousins from the city gave
28 it to us last year.
- 29 **ELKIN:** When we needed somethin' to help us call the 'tater-sack
30 races.
- 31 **FESTER:** Ohhhhhh.
- 32 **GLEND A MAE:** You don't know what we're talkin' 'bout, do you?
- 33 **FESTER:** (*While nodding his head.*) Nope.
- 34 **ELKIN:** You put it up to your mouth and it makes your voice louder.
- 35 **FESTER:** Cousin Elkin, you know how you said you was confused
36 a minute ago? Now it's my turn.
- 37 **BRENDA MAE:** Fester, you was borned confused.

1 **ELKIN:** (*Picks up a plastic funnel.*) Look, Fester, it's shaped a little
2 like this here funnel, and when you put it up to your mouth, it
3 makes your voice really loud.

4 **BRENDA MAE:** It's what Grandma uses to call us in for supper.

5
6
7 *ELKIN speaks his next line through the funnel, mocking GRANDMA*
8 *as GRANDMA exits the diner and stands behind ELKIN.*

9
10 **ELKIN:** Elkin, Fester, Brenda Mae? Y'all come on in and wash up
11 for supper. I might be one hundred years old, but I can still cook
12 a mean possum roast. Oh, look—my pantyhose is all wrinkled.
13 Wait a minute—I ain't wearin' pantyhose! (*Senses*
14 *GRANDMA.*) She's standin' behind me, ain't she?

15 **GRANDMA:** Elkin Taylor?

16
17 *ELKIN freezes with wide eyes*

18
19 **GRANDMA:** You makin' fun of your feeble grandma?

20 **FESTER:** (*Laughing.*) He shore was, Grandma. He said your legs
21 was wrinkled.

22 **ELKIN:** (*Sarcastic.*) Thanks for your support, Fester.

23 **GRANDMA:** I come out here to tell y'all to keep it down 'cause I
24 got a cake in the oven and loud noises might make it fall. This
25 (*Sarcastically*) one-hundred-year-old woman needs some peace
26 on earth.

27 **ELKIN:** Yes, ma'am.

28 **GRANDMA:** (*Looking around.*) Well, where's the squirrel?

29 **ELKIN:** Didn't see nary a squirrel one, Grandma.

30 **GRANDMA:** How am I supposed to make my famous squirrel gravy
31 for Christmas Eve supper without a fresh squirrel to cook?

32 **ELKIN:** They all must be in hidin'.

33 **GRANDMA:** I'll settle for a rabbit for my rabbit stew.

34 **ELKIN:** Didn't see no rabbits neither.

35 **GRANDMA:** Possum?

36 **ELKIN:** Gone.

37 **GRANDMA:** Deer?

38 **ELKIN:** Disappeared.

- 1 **GRANDMA:** Did you go huntin' or take a nature walk?
- 2 **ELKIN:** I must be losin' my touch, Grandma. It's like all the animals
3 in the woods just ran off on a Christmas vacation.
- 4 **FESTER:** Maybe the wild animal I've been hearin' sceered all the
5 critters off.
- 6 **GRANDMA:** Fester, what you yappin' 'bout?
- 7 **BRENDA MAE:** Oh, nothin', Grandma. Fester's just confused.
- 8 **GRANDMA:** My customers will be expectin' fresh squirrel gravy
9 and rabbit stew for their annual Christmas Eve supper. They
10 shore will be disappointed. Law, law. (*Turns and enters the*
11 *diner.*)
- 12 **ELKIN:** Fester, I don't want to hear another word 'bout some wild
13 animal on the loose. We all need to pitch in and help Grandma
14 get ready for her Christmas customers. Come on.
- 15
- 16 *GLENDMA MAE and ELMER exit.*
- 17
- 18 **FESTER:** (*Points to Off-stage.*) But—
- 19 **BRENDA MAE:** Elkin's right, Fester. Let's go.
- 20
- 21 *BRENDA MAE and FESTER enter the diner. There is a loud roar*
22 *Off-stage. ELKIN jumps, turns around quickly, looks around, and*
23 *runs quickly inside the cabin. PETE and MIMI enter wearing their*
24 *coats. MIMI carries a small piece of luggage and has her eyes*
25 *closed as PETE leads her.*
- 26
- 27 **PETE:** OK now, be careful. Just take your time.
- 28 **MIMI:** Can I open my eyes now?
- 29 **PETE:** Hold on, we're almost there.
- 30 **MIMI:** This is so exciting!
- 31 **PETE:** Stand right here. Give me your suitcase.
- 32 **MIMI:** (*Excitedly, with her eyes closed.*) I still can't believe you guys
33 wanted to surprise me with a Christmas trip this year! I think I
34 can guess where we are. We're in Paris, aren't we? I can tell by
35 the cold air.
- 36 **PETE:** How can we be in Paris when we didn't get on a plane?
- 37 **MIMI:** Then it's Aspen, Colorado.

- 1 **PETE:** Not quite. Are you ready? OK, on the count of three. One...
2 two... three! *(She opens her eyes and looks around, blinking*
3 *rapidly and trying to adjust her eyes to the light.)*
- 4 **MIMI:** *(Still excited, enjoying playing the guessing game.)* Wait,
5 don't tell me. Trees. Cold air. *(Points.)* Outhouse. Water. Pump.
6 *(Looks behind her.)* Old rundown diner. *(Pause, her smile*
7 *turning to a frown.)* Pete?
- 8 **PETE:** *(Nervous smile.)* Yes?
- 9 **MIMI:** Why do I see trees, an outhouse, a water pump, and an old
10 rundown diner?
- 11 **PETE:** *(Throws out his arms.)* Surprise!
- 12 **MIMI:** Pete Tippinheimer, you didn't. You did *not* bring me back out
13 here.
- 14 **PETE:** Now, Mimi, we knew you wouldn't come if we told you we
15 were driving out to—
- 16 **MIMI:** Cricket County? You surprise me with a trip to Cricket
17 County? That does it!
- 18
- 19 *MIMI picks up her suitcase and heads back in the direction she*
20 *entered. OSWALD and PETUNIA enter quickly and stop her.*
21
- 22 **OSWALD:** Whoa, whoa, whoa!
- 23 **PETUNIA:** And just where do you think you're going?
- 24 **MIMI:** Let go of me!
- 25 **OSWALD:** Now, Mimi.
- 26 **PETUNIA:** Mimi, I told them it was a bad idea.
- 27 **OSWALD:** Pete, grab her suitcase.
- 28 **MIMI:** *(To PETE.)* You grab my suitcase and you'll draw back a
29 nub.
- 30 **PETE:** But Mimi, don't you remember? You asked us to bring you
31 out here.
- 32 **MIMI:** I did no such thing.
- 33 **OSWALD:** That's right, Mimi. Don't you remember? You said,
34 *(Mocking her)* "I'm dying to go somewhere where the air is crisp
35 and clear, and I can just sit and relax."
- 36 **PETE:** And I said, "How about Cricket County?" And you said,
37 "Great!"
- 38 **MIMI:** *(Shocked.)* That never happened!

1 **PETE:** I even recorded the conversation as proof.

2

3 *PETE holds up his smartphone, and a prerecorded conversation*
4 *plays. It's obvious OSWALD changed his voice, trying to sound like*
5 *MIMI. The following conversation needs to be pre-recorded:*

6

7 **PETE:** *(Recorded.)* Mimi, how would you like to go to go on a little
8 trip?

9 **OSWALD:** *(Speaking as MIMI, recorded.)* I'm dying to go
10 somewhere where the air is crisp and clear, and I can just sit and
11 relax.

12 **OSWALD:** *(As himself, recorded.)* How about driving out to Cricket
13 County?

14 **OSWALD:** *(Speaking as MIMI, recorded.)* Cricket County? That
15 sounds absolutely wonderful!

16

17 *PETE stops the recording.*

18

19 **MIMI:** That conversation never happened. Petunia, what do you
20 know about all this?

21 **PETUNIA:** *(Shrugs, looking a little suspicious.)* Sounded like your
22 voice to me, Mimi.

23 **OSWALD:** There. See?

24 **MIMI:** I am so confused.

25 **PETE:** Don't be confused, just be glad you're here.

26 **OSWALD:** Besides, driving out to Cricket County and attempting
27 to get our hands on some of our hillbilly cousins' inheritance has
28 become a rich Christmas tradition.

29 **PETE:** Depends on your definition of "rich." We go home empty-
30 handed year after year, but it's the hope in our hearts of one day
31 becoming multimillionaires that keeps us coming back season
32 after season, begging for just a tiny percent of their inherited
33 fortune.

34 **OSWALD:** After all, isn't that what Christmas is all about?

35 **PETUNIA:** Oswald, Pete, you two are really beginning to scare me.

36 **MIMI:** Let's face it—we'll never get any of that inheritance money.
37 If anyone needs me, I'll be in the limo.

38

1 *MIMI picks up her suitcase and crosses to the end of the porch, but*
2 *stops when ELKIN sticks his head out the door of the cabin.*

3

4 **ELKIN:** Hey, City Cousins.

5 **OSWALD:** Oh, hello, Elkin.

6 **ELKIN:** Is the coast clear?

7 **PETE:** From what?

8 **ELKIN:** A wild and terrifying critter with a loud mouth.

9 **OSWALD:** No, Mimi's right here.

10 **MIMI:** *(To OSWALD.)* You're soooo funny.

11 **ELKIN:** *(Exits the diner excitedly and shakes OSWALD's hand.)*

12 Welcome back out to Cricket County. I'll take y'all over to the
13 cabin after supper and let you get settled in. Is there anything I
14 can get you in the meantime?

15 **PETE:** Elkin, speaking of your inheritance—

16 **PETUNIA:** Peter, stop it. Thank you, Elkin, but we're fine for now.

17 *(Turning sharply.)* And Mimi, you are *not* sleeping in the limo.

18 **MIMI:** *(Wagging a finger at PETE and OSWALD.)* "Ohhhh what a
19 tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive." *[From*
20 *Marmion by Sir Walter Scott.]*

21 **ELKIN:** What's wrong with Cousin Mimi?

22 **PETE:** She thought we were in Paris.

23 **ELKIN:** *(Laughs.)* Paris? You mean as in Tennessee?

24 **OSWALD:** *(Sarcastic.)* Uh, yes. Paris, Tennessee.

25 **ELKIN:** Is she usually this confused?

26 **MIMI:** *(Staring at ELKIN in disbelief.)* I'm confused?

27 **ELKIN:** That's OK, cousin. It happens to the best of us.

28 **MIMI:** *(Almost shouting.)* Coming from a man who thinks pencils
29 are made in Pennsylvania?

30

31 *GRANDMA re-enters and points a wooden spoon at MIMI.*

32

33 **GRANDMA:** What did I say about makin' noises? Bad city girl.
34 Baaaad!

35 **OSWALD:** Sorry, Grandma Taylor.

36 **GRANDMA:** *(As she re-enters the diner.)* Law, law, law.

37 **MIMI:** That does it. Ciao. *(She grabs her suitcase and exits.)*

38 **PETUNIA:** Oswald, we can't let Mimi stay in the limo.

- 1 **OSWALD:** Don't worry. She'll probably get too cold and come in.
2 **ELKIN:** Look on the bright side. A wild animal will probably get her
3 way before the cold does.
4
5 *They enter the cabin. GLENDA MAE and ELMER enter from Stage*
6 *Left. GLENDA MAE holds a pot with a towel over it and ELMER*
7 *carries a stack of gifts wrapped in Christmas paper.*
8
9 **GLENDA MAE:** Elmer, I still can't shake the feelin' that we forgot
10 somethin'.
11 **ELMER:** Like what, my little sweet tater?
12 **GLENDA MAE:** Elmer, don't call me that. I told you I ain't no
13 vegetable.
14 **ELMER:** I thought you liked it when I called you my sweet tater.
15 **GLENDA MAE:** No, Elmer, I said I like to *eat* sweet taters. There's
16 a big difference. Now, let's see, (*Referring to the pot.*) I got the
17 crawdads and grits. (*She sets down the pot.*) Let me see them
18 there presents. (*Goes through the gifts one by one.*) Fester,
19 Elkin, Brenda Mae...Wait—where's Grandma's present?
20 **ELMER:** Ain't it there?
21 **GLENDA MAE:** I can't believe it. We must have forgot to buy
22 Grandma a Christmas present. Elmer, I put you in charge of
23 presents. I give you one job, and this is what happens. I declare,
24 if your brain was leather, it wouldn't make a saddle for a June
25 bug.
26 **ELMER:** I'm sorry, my little gourd head.
27 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Scolding.*) Elmer!
28 **ELMER:** Gourds ain't vegetables!
29 **GLENDA MAE:** We *cannot* go into that cabin without a Christmas
30 present for Grandma.
31
32 *GLENDA MAE grabs ELMER's shirt collar and brings him nose to*
33 *nose to her.*
34
35 **GLENDA MAE:** What are we goin' to do?! (*GRANDMA enters*
36 *plucking a rubber chicken.*)

- 1 **GRANDMA:** Who's yellin' out here? Oh, it's just y'all. Keep it down,
2 'cause I got a cake in the oven. *(They freeze in their position.)*
3 What y'all doin'?
- 4 **GLENDAMAE:** Uhhhh... just talkin'.
- 5 **GRANDMA:** 'Bout what?
- 6 **ELMER:** 'Bout how we forgot your Christmas—
- 7 **GLENDAMAE:** Elmer, zip it. I was just fixin' Elmer's collar,
8 Grandma. Now, that's much better.
- 9 **GRANDMA:** Keep it down or we'll be havin' pancakes for dessert.
- 10 **GLENDAMAE:** Yes ma'am, we will.
- 11
- 12 *GRANDMA re-enters the diner. There is a loud roar Off-stage.*
13 *GRANDMA re-enters quickly.*
14
- 15 **GRANDMA:** What in tarnation was that?
- 16 **GLENDAMAE:** It come from over there!
- 17 **GRANDMA:** Must be a black bear over 'cross the ridge. Now, y'all
18 keep it quiet. *(Re-enters the diner.)*
- 19 **ELMER:** *(Worried.)* That didn't sound like no black bear to me,
20 Glenda Mae.
- 21 **GLENDAMAE:** Let's see, what was we talkin' about?
- 22 **ELMER:** You was chokin' me with my collar. *(He takes her hands*
23 *and places them on either side of his collar.)*
- 24 **GLENDAMAE:** *(Grabs his collar and rocks him back and forth.)*
25 Elmer, what are we goin' to do?! *(She stops suddenly.)* Wait, I
26 got it. Bessie's calf.
- 27 **ELMER:** Bessie as in our cow?
- 28 **GLENDAMAE:** That calf should be borned any time now.
29 Grandma has been wantin' a pet to keep her company. That's
30 what we'll give her, Elmer.
- 31 **ELMER:** We'll give her company?
- 32 **GLENDAMAE:** *(Slaps his arm.)* Would you pay attention?
- 33 **ELMER:** *(Rubbing his arm.)* I can't help it. I'm confused.
- 34 **GLENDAMAE:** Elmer, confused is your middle name.
- 35 **ELMER:** For your information, my middle name is *Gertrude*.
- 36 **GLENDAMAE:** Listen, we will give Grandma Bessie's calf as soon
37 as it's borned.
- 38 **ELMER:** Got it.

- 1 **GLENDAMAE:** Whew, that shore is a load off my mind. I'll go back
2 home and see if the calf has been borned yet. You go in the
3 diner and play happy 'til I get back.
- 4 **ELMER:** Good luck findin' the truck.
- 5 **GLENDAMAE:** Elmer, I'll never know why you decided to paint
6 your truck camouflage. It took us a whole hour to find it this
7 mornin'.
- 8
- 9 *GRANDMA re-enters.*
- 10
- 11 **GRANDMA:** Have you two saw Fester?
- 12 **GLENDAMAE:** No, Grandma.
- 13 **GRANDMA:** (*Sees the presents.*) Oooo, look at all them presents.
14 Shore puts a old woman in the Christmas spirit. Hope somebody
15 was payin' attention when I dropped all them hints this year.
- 16 **GLENDAMAE:** Now Grandma, don't try and get us to spill the
17 beans. Elmer, give me them presents so I can put 'em under the
18 tree 'fore I go back home.
- 19
- 20 *GLENDAMAE takes the stack of presents and gives ELMER the*
21 *pot.*
- 22
- 23 **GRANDMA:** Why you goin' back home?
- 24 **GLENDAMAE:** Huh? Oh, I forgot to put on my makeup.
- 25 **ELMER:** Whew, that's a relief. I thought you was just losin' your
26 looks.
- 27 **GLENDAMAE:** (*Hits ELMER in the belly, then pulls at his shirttail.*)
28 Hush! Come, Elmer.
- 29 **GRANDMA:** Elmer'll be there directly, Glenda Mae. I got a favor to
30 ask him.
- 31 **GLENDAMAE:** Well, OK, but Elmer, whatever you do, (*Looks*
32 *GRANDMA's way and smiles a fake smile*) don't spill the beans.
- 33 **ELMER:** (*Referring to the pot.*) Don't fret none, I got a nice tight
34 grip on 'em.
- 35 **GLENDAMAE:** I mean, don't let the cat out of the bag.
- 36 **ELMER:** Who put a cat in a—

- 1 **GRANDMA:** Elmer! I swear, boy, if dumb was dirt, you'd be 'bout
2 a acre. Go on inside, Glenda Mae. (*Turns to GLENDA MAE.*) I
3 won't ask Elmer nothin' more 'bout my present. On my word, as
4 a Girl Scout.
- 5 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Nervous.*) OK. (*She gives ELMER a warning look*
6 *as she enters the diner.*)
- 7 **GRANDMA:** Quick, Elmer, what's my present?
- 8 **ELMER:** Grandma, you gave your word.
- 9 **GRANDMA:** Too bad I's never a Girl Scout.
- 10 **ELMER:** I can't tell you what your present is, Grandma.
- 11 **GRANDMA:** Give me a hint.
- 12 **ELMER:** Nope.
- 13 **GRANDMA:** Elmerrrr?
- 14 **ELMER:** Sorry, Grandma, but if I give you a hint, like "motherhood
15 is a wonderful thing," Glenda Mae would have my hide for sure.
- 16 **GRANDMA:** (*Thinking aloud to herself.*) Motherhood is a wonderful
17 thing.... Give me another hint.
- 18 **ELMER:** Now Grandma, if I give you another hint, like "the bundle
19 of joy will be here before we know it," well, that might give it away
20 for sure.
- 21 **GRANDMA:** Bundle of joy will be here before we know it?
22 Motherhood is a wonderful... wait a minute. Elmer, are you tryin'
23 to say—
- 24 **ELMER:** No ma'am, I'm tryin' *not* to say. This is one surprise I'm
25 keepin' for shore. (*ELMER snickers and turns and enters the*
26 *diner with the pot.*)
- 27 **GRANDMA:** (*Talking to herself.*) Motherhood? Bundle of joy?
28 (*Clasps her hands together.*) My little Glenda Mae is goin' to
29 have a...? Glory be! (*Folds her hands in a prayer.*) Dear Lord,
30 Imogene Taylor here. If what I'm thinkin' is true, please give me
31 a sign. (*A roar erupts Off-stage.*) Glory hallelujah!
- 32
- 33 *GRANDMA runs back into the diner at the same time BRENDA*
34 *MAE and FESTER run out.*
- 35
- 36 **GRANDMA:** Fester, fetch me a pail of water, child.
- 37

1 *BRENDA MAE is holding up a large spoon and FESTER a spatula*
2 *as though they were weapons. They cautiously look around.*

3
4 **BRENDA MAE:** It sounded a lot closer that time, Fester.

5 **FESTER:** I don't think these weapons are goin' to do much good,
6 Brenda Mae. Maybe I should grab my axe instead.

7 **BRENDA MAE:** No, Fester. You might hurt it.

8 **FESTER:** Nah, my axe is strong.

9 **BRENDA MAE:** I mean, you might hurt the animal.

10 **FESTER:** What if it hurts us first?

11 **BRENDA MAE:** *(A beat.)* Grab a rifle, too.

12
13 *FESTER runs into the diner and BRENDA MAE realizes she's alone*
14 *and looks carefully over the heads of the audience, holding her*
15 *spoon up in the air. She turns her back to Stage Right as MIMI*
16 *enters with her back to BRENDA MAE. It seems she heard the noise*
17 *too. She is holding up a crowbar like a weapon. Neither sees the*
18 *other, backing toward one another. Once they reach Center Stage,*
19 *they rotate, their backs still against each other. They both relax at*
20 *the same time. Turning to see each other, they scream and faint.*
21 *GEORGE enters and sees the two lying there.*

22
23 **GEORGE:** Hello?

24
25 *GEORGE spots the crowbar, bends over, picks it up, and looks it*
26 *over curiously. FESTER re-enters holding two slingshots.*

27
28 **FESTER:** Grandma said we can't take her rifle, so I got us some
29 slingshots instea— *(He sees GEORGE holding the crowbar and*
30 *standing over the two fainted GIRLS and freezes in his steps.)*
31 *You! (He points at GEORGE.)* You-you stay right there, mister.
32 Don't take one more step! *(Holds up one of the slingshots.)* I
33 know how to use this here slingshot.

34 **GEORGE:** *(Holding up his hands, still gripping the crowbar.)* No,
35 no, wait! This is a false impression.

- 1 **FESTER:** You ain't foolin' me. That there's a crowbar. (*Pulls back*
2 *on the slingshot and points it at GEORGE.*) You put that there
3 weapon down real slow like, mister. (*Shouts.*) Grandma, call the
4 Sheriff!
- 5 **GEORGE:** If you'll just let me explain—
- 6 **FESTER:** You can explain it to the law, mister. (*GEORGE slowly*
7 *sets the crowbar down.*) You take one step and I'm goin' to let
8 you have it, just like David let ol' Goliath have it right between
9 the eyes.
- 10 **GRANDMA:** (*Enters holding a stuffed skunk by the tail in one hand*
11 *and a knife in the other.*) Fester, what have I told you about all
12 this yellin'? And where's that bucket of crick water?
- 13 **FESTER:** Grandma, be careful of the dangerous stranger.
- 14 **GEORGE:** But I'm unoffending.
- 15 **GRANDMA:** See, Fester? He's unoffending.
- 16 **FESTER:** What's that mean?
- 17 **GRANDMA:** Ain't got no idea, but it sounds innocent. (*Turns to*
18 *GEORGE.*) I'm sorry, but the diner don't open for another half
19 hour.
- 20 **FESTER:** Grandma, he has a weapon, and Brenda Mae and
21 Cousin Mimi have been conked on the head with it.
- 22 **GRANDMA:** (*Sees the GIRLS.*) You girls get up from there. I ain't
23 had time to sweep the porch.
- 24 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Sits up, rubbing her eyes.*) What happened? What
25 am I doin' out on the front porch?
- 26 **FESTER:** You was caught off-guard by this here rascal. (*He points*
27 *to GEORGE.*)
- 28 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Looks at GEORGE and likes what she sees. Sits*
29 *up, fixing her hair.*) Well, howdy there, tall, dark, and rascally.
30 (*Looks him up and down.*) Honey, you can catch me off- guard
31 any time you like.
- 32 **GEORGE:** Here, let me help you up.
- 33 **BRENDA MAE:** Well, OK, but be gentle. I'm mighty fragile like a
34 butterfly. (*She stumbles.*) Look at that—it seems I can't stand up
35 good. I'll just lean on you for a bit 'til I feel a little stronger. (*She*
36 *leans on GEORGE.*)
- 37 **GRANDMA:** Fester, help Moo Moo up.
- 38

1 *FESTER bends down and helps MIMI stand.*

2
3 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Looks lovingly at GEORGE.*) Is your daddy a
4 fireman? 'Cause you make me turn red all over and go, "Whooh,
5 whooh!"

6 **GRANDMA:** Lawd, child, y'all git yourself inside. There's still lots
7 of work to be done.

8 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Flirty, to GEORGE.*) Don't you go nowhere, you
9 hear?

10 **GEORGE:** (*Scratching his head.*) Yes, ma'am. Oh, and I think one
11 of you dropped this.

12
13 *GEORGE picks up the crowbar and hands it to FESTER. FESTER*
14 *turns and walks the girls in as GLENDA MAE runs out.*

15
16 **GLENDA MAE:** Well, I'll run home now and milk that cow.

17 **GRANDMA:** I thought you said you was goin' home to put on
18 makeup.

19 **GLENDA MAE:** Don't be silly, Grandma. Who puts makeup on a
20 cow?

21 **GRANDMA:** (*Grabs her elbow and turns GLENDA MAE to her.*)
22 Wait—let me look at you, child. Oh yes, I can already see it. You
23 shore are glowin'.

24 **GLENDA MAE:** Oh, that's 'cause I just ate a chili pepper.

25
26 *GLENDA MAE tries to run off again, but GRANDMA holds her back.*

27
28 **GRANDMA:** Wait, now, Glenda Mae, you don't need to be runnin'
29 'round like this in your condition. Let Elmer do it.

30 **GLENDA MAE:** No, Grandma, Elmer's the one that got me into this
31 mess. I won't be long.

32
33 *GLENDA MAE runs off as ELKIN enters from the diner.*

34
35 **ELKIN:** (*To GEORGE.*) Howdy there, stranger.

36 **GEORGE:** Howd—I mean, hello.

37 **ELKIN:** (*Notices GRANDMA staring off after GLENDA MAE.*)
38 Grandma, is anything the matter?

- 1 **GRANDMA:** Elkin, Glenda Mae is givin' me the best Christmas
2 present I'll ever get in my life.
- 3 **ELKIN:** I bet it won't be better than the rod and reel I got you this
4 year.
- 5 **GRANDMA:** You got me a rod and reel, Elkin?
- 6 **ELKIN:** Who told you? (*Turns to GEORGE.*) What can we do for
7 you, sir?
- 8 **GRANDMA:** He's just a early customer, Elkin. Keep him company
9 'til the diner opens, will ya? I got to go skin this skunk for supper.
10 (*She enters the cabin.*)
- 11 **GEORGE:** Did she say she was about to skin that skunk? For
12 supper?
- 13 **ELKIN:** That's right. (*Notices his expression.*) Oh, now don't fret
14 none. There will be plenty for you. Take a load off and sit a spell.
15 (*They sit in the rocking chairs.*) That shore is some fancy duds
16 you're wearin'. I know you can't be from around here.
- 17 **GEORGE:** No sir, I'm not, as a matter of fact. I'm visiting the
18 countryside, sharing the good news to the nice folks of Crocket
19 County.
- 20 **ELKIN:** *Cricket* County.
- 21 **GEORGE:** That's what I meant. I noticed on the mailbox the name
22 said Taylor.
- 23 **ELKIN:** Yes sir, we're the Taylors. This is Grandma's diner. She's
24 Imogene Taylor. (*GEORGE starts to speak.*) But don't get us
25 mixed up with Shyanne Loudermilk. She's a *tailor*.
- 26 **GEORGE:** Why would I get her mixed up?
- 27 **ELKIN:** 'Cause she ain't family, just a neighbor.
- 28 **GEORGE:** Oh, I thought you said she was a Taylor.
- 29 **ELKIN:** She is.
- 30 **GEORGE:** I'm confused.
- 31 **ELKIN:** That explains the weird look on your face.
- 32 **GEORGE:** (*Trying to understand.*) She's a Taylor, but not part of
33 the family?
- 34 **ELKIN:** Right. Shyanne Loudermilk is a tailor.
- 35 **GEORGE:** So, she *married* a Taylor?
- 36 **ELKIN:** No, she married a farmer.
- 37 **GEORGE:** (*Frustrated.*) Then why is her last name Taylor?
- 38 **ELKIN:** It ain't, it's Loudermilk.

- 1 **GEORGE:** *(Raising his voice.)* You said she's a Taylor!
- 2 **ELKIN:** That's right.
- 3
- 4 *GEORGE stares at ELKIN. ELKIN smiles innocently.*
- 5
- 6 **GEORGE:** *(Attempting to remain calm, speaks slowly.)* Why-do-
- 7 you-call-her-Taylor?
- 8 **ELKIN:** *(Speaks in the same manner.)* 'Cause- she-makes-
- 9 dresses.
- 10 **GEORGE:** Dresses? Ohhhh, she's a tail— *(He covers his face with*
- 11 *his hand, not believing he just spent time on this conversation.)*
- 12 Let's start over. Nice to meet you, Mr. Taylor. My name is
- 13 George Howard.
- 14 **ELKIN:** Nice name.
- 15 **GEORGE:** Thank you.
- 16 **ELKIN:** So, what can I do for you, Howard?
- 17 **GEORGE:** George.
- 18 **ELKIN:** *(Points to himself.)* No, Elkin. Elkin Taylor, but I ain't a tailor.
- 19 **GEORGE:** No, I mean *my* name is George Howard. You can call
- 20 me George.
- 21 **ELKIN:** Got it.
- 22
- 23 *GRANDMA enters mashing something in a large plastic bowl. She's*
- 24 *singing.*
- 25
- 26 **GRANDMA:** *(Singing)* Rock-a-bye baby, on the treetop,
- 27 When Santa Claus calls, the cradle will rock...
- 28 *(Shouting.)* Fester Taylor, git yourself in here. I still need that
- 29 bucket of water! *(To GEORGE.)* Sorry to make you wait in the
- 30 cold, mister.
- 31 **GEORGE:** I didn't come to eat, ma'am. You see, I'm bringing the
- 32 good news to the folks of Crocket County.
- 33 **GRANDMA and ELKIN:** *(Together.)* Cricket County.
- 34 **GRANDMA:** Speakin' of good news, I got some myself. *(Shouts to*
- 35 *Off-stage.)* Fester!
- 36 **ELKIN:** Grandma, what about your cake?

1 **GRANDMA:** I done took it out so you can make all the noise your
2 little heart desires. Where in Sam Hill did that boy run off to?
3 (*She re-enters the cabin.*)

4 **ELKIN:** Sorry about that, Howard.

5 **GEORGE:** George.

6 **ELKIN:** (*Speaks slowly, pointing to himself.*) El-kin.

7 **GEORGE:** (*Thinking "here we go again."*) Look, my name is
8 George Howard and I'm from Gary, Indiana.

9

10 *BRENDA MAE enters from the diner wearing a sleeveless shirt and*
11 *wrapping her arms around herself.*

12

13 **BRENDA MAE:** It shore is cold out here on this front porch. (*Cuts*
14 *her eyes over to GEORGE.*) Wish I had somethin' to keep me
15 warm. (*Turns to GEORGE, flirty.*) Oh, why, howdy there,
16 stranger. I forgot all about you bein' out here complete with them
17 two strong arms to keep a country girl warm.

18 **ELKIN:** Brenda Mae, I'd like to introduce Gary George from
19 Howard, Indiana.

20 **GEORGE:** (*To BRENDA MAE.*) Actually, the name is George
21 Howard from Gary, Indiana.

22 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Points to herself.*) No sir. Actually, the name is
23 Brenda Mae Taylor from Cricket County.

24 **GEORGE:** I'm George.

25 **ELKIN:** I thought you was Gary.

26 **BRENDA MAE:** Oooo, I like that name. I always wanted to marry
27 a Gary. It sounds so suffocated. (*Thinking aloud.*) Do you,
28 Glenda Mae, take this somewhat handsome man, Gary
29 Indonesia, to be your lawful wedded husband?

30 **GEORGE:** I'm not Gary, I'm *from* Gary. Gary, Indiana.

31 **BRENDA MAE:** Ohhhh. It's nice to meet you, Mr. Indiana. (*Aloud,*
32 *to herself.*) Glenda Mae Indiana. Oh, I like that.

33 **GEORGE:** Am I on *The Twilight Zone*?

34 **ELKIN:** No sir, you're on the front porch. I declare, I don't think I've
35 met a more confused feller.

36

1 *BRENDA MAE crosses to Stage Left, away from GEORGE and*
2 *ELKIN. As she talks, ELKIN motions GEORGE to go inside the diner*
3 *with him. They tiptoe inside without GLENDA MAE's knowledge.*
4 *GLENDA MAE speaks to pretend friends.*

5
6 **BRENDA MAE:** Howdy, ever'body! I'd like y'all to see the
7 engagement ring Mr. Indianapolis got for me. Ain't it the prettiest
8 thing you ever did see? (*Turns and sees that GEORGE is gone,*
9 *so drops the act.*) Well, don't *that* just fry your tater.

10
11 *PETE and OSWALD enter.*

12
13 **OSWALD:** Oh, hello, Glenda Mae.

14 **BRENDA MAE:** I'm Brenda Mae.

15 **OSWALD:** Sorry. Were you talking to someone just now?

16 **BRENDA MAE:** I was 'til he went into the diner. Oswald, why don't
17 fellers find me to be purdy?

18 **OSWALD:** Uhhhh... (*Rubs the back of his neck.*)

19 **PETE:** (*Leans in.*) Careful, Oswald. That's a loaded question.

20 **OSWALD:** (*Hesitates.*) I'm sure they find you attractive...

21 **BRENDA MAE:** A - track- tiv. What does that mean?

22 **OSWALD:** It means purdy. I bet fellows find you to be purdy.

23 **BRENDA MAE:** His name ain't Fellows, it's Gary... or Howard...
24 He's from George, Indigestion or somethin.' Shoot, why would
25 somebody that suffocated like somebody as hillbilly as me? He
26 probably talks fancy, like, "Bring me some more caviar." All I
27 ever get to say around here is, "Somebody go jiggle the handle."

28 **OSWALD:** (*Pretends to want to help her.*) I'm sure it's only a matter
29 of time before your Prince Charming comes along.

30 **PETE:** (*Warning.*) Oswald, strike one.

31 **OSWALD:** (*To BRENDA MAE.*) I mean, look at you. You're a
32 young.... beaut.... smar.... sophisti.... you're real sweet.

33 **PETE:** Strike two.

34 **OSWALD:** I bet the right guy is right under your nose, and you don't
35 even know it.

36 **PETE:** Three strikes, you're out.

37 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Looks lovingly at OSWALD.*) You really think so?

1 **OSWALD:** Sure, and it's probably someone you've known for years
2 and didn't even realize he's been the man for you all along.

3 **PETE:** *(Grabs his elbow.)* Oswald, the ballgame is over.

4 **OSWALD:** *(To BRENDA MAE.)* So you see, there's no reason to
5 be so upset...the man of your dreams is probably within arm's
6 reach. You just have to know where to look. *(He reaches out and*
7 *touches BRENDA MAE'S elbow, not realizing how this might*
8 *come across to her.)* See ya later, alligator.

9
10 *OSWALD enters the diner. BRENDA MAE stands with her mouth*
11 *open wide, touching her elbow where OSWALD just touched her.*
12 *She looks dreamily after him, watching him leave. She turns back*
13 *to PETE.*

14
15 **BRENDA MAE:** Did you hear that? He called me alligator... as in,"
16 I shore am in love with you, Brenda Mae, you little alligator." Just
17 think—my Prince Charmin' has been... *(Looks back at the diner)*
18 under my nose all these many years.

19 **PETE:** Uhhhh, yeah. As you guys say out here in the country...
20 *(Shaking his head.)* Law, law, law, law, law.

21
22 *PETE runs into the diner. There is a great roar Off-stage as*
23 *PETUNIA runs in holding a bucket of water.*

24
25 **PETUNIA:** Did you hear that, Brenda Mae? What do you suppose
26 that could be?

27 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Still staring off into the distance in a daze.)* It was
28 the beat, beat, beat of my happy heart.

29 **PETUNIA:** I think there's a wild animal running around out there
30 somewhere. *(She looks at BRENDA MAE, who is standing and*
31 *staring like a statue.)* Brenda Mae, are you OK? Brenda Mae?
32 *(Snaps her fingers in front of BRENDA MAE's face.)*

33 **BRENDA MAE:** Oh, howdy, Cousin Petunia! When did you get
34 here?

35 **PETUNIA:** I went out the back door to the creek to get some water
36 for—Brenda Mae, is anything the matter?

37 **BRENDA MAE:** Can't you tell just by lookin' at my face?

38 **PETUNIA:** You look a little nauseous.

1 **BRENDA MAE:** This ain't the look of nauseousness, it's the look
2 of va-va-va-voom.

3 **PETUNIA:** Va-va-va-voom?

4 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Eyebrows go up and down.)* Va-va-va-voooooom.

5 **PETUNIA:** Ohhhh. *(Eyebrows go up and down.)* Va-va-va-voooooom.

6 Brenda Mae, you're in love?

7 **BRENDA MAE:** As shore as the sun revolves around Pluto.

8 **PETUNIA:** We'll talk about science facts later. So tell me, Brenda
9 Mae—who's the luck—uh, fortune—uh... who's the guy?

10 **BRENDA MAE:** Ain't goin' to say nothin' more 'cept that he's the
11 most suffocated feller I've ever laid these blue and brown eyes
12 on. Ain't it wonderful, Cousin Petunia? Ain't it just wonderful?
13 *(She hugs PETUNIA.)* Come on, I want to show you how I can
14 play the "Weddin' March" through the gap in my teeth.

15 **PETUNIA:** *(Holding up the bucket.)* I'm supposed to take this
16 bucket of creek water to Grandma Taylor for her stewed
17 crawdads.

18 **BRENDA MAE:** Just leave it there. She'll find it. *(She takes the*
19 *bucket and sets it on the edge of the porch.)* Just think, I can
20 finally open up my hope chest if the lock ain't too rusty.

21
22 *GRANDMA enters.*

23
24 **GRANDMA:** Petunia where's that creek water I sent you after?

25 **PETUNIA:** You see—

26 **BRENDA MAE:** Grandma, can you please give us a minute? We'll
27 be right back.

28
29 *GLENDMA MAE drags PETUNIA off.*

30
31 **GRANDMA:** Y'all git back here! I need some help around this
32 place! I said, I need some help 'round here!

33
34 *She stomps her foot, accidentally kicking the bucket and stubbing*
35 *her toe. She grabs her foot and hops around. FESTER enters from*
36 *the diner holding the crowbar. He sees GRANDMA hopping around*
37 *and thinks she's dancing.*

1 **FESTER:** Keep on dancin', Grandma. I'll fetch my guitar and play
2 you some music.

3 **GRANDMA:** I ain't dancin', I'm a-hurtin'. Owwww! It shore does
4 smarts.

5 **FESTER:** What happened, Grandma?

6 **GRANDMA:** Your cousin Petunia left that bucket out here, and I
7 done went and kicked it and stubbed my toe!

8
9 *FESTER drops the crowbar and covers his mouth. He can't stop*
10 *giggling but tries not to let it show.*

11

12 **GRANDMA:** What you laughin' at?

13 **FESTER:** I ain't laughin' at nothin', Grandma. I'm sorry you hurt
14 yourself. *(Giggles again under his breath.)*

15 **GRANDMA:** Oh yeah, that's real funny. Laughin' at an old woman
16 when she's hurtin' like the dickens.

17

18 *FESTER can't help it. He throws his head back and howls with*
19 *laughter.*

20

21 **GRANDMA:** Fester Taylor, that ain't a bit Christian of you.

22

23 *FESTER can't stop. He pulls a handkerchief from his back pocket*
24 *and wipes the tears from his eyes.*

25

26 **GRANDMA:** That does it. I'm goin' to disappear, and y'all can just
27 cook your own Christmas Eve supper!

28 **FESTER:** *(Speaking the best he can.)* Wait... wait a minute,
29 Grandma. Don't leave mad. Where you goin'?

30 **GRANDMA:** Goin' to a better place than this front porch. Some
31 place where they don't laugh at an old woman's misery.

32

33 *She storms off, hobbling, and exits the porch Stage Right. Now that*
34 *FESTER knows she's gone, he lets out the loudest laugh yet.*

35

36 **MIMI:** *(Runs onto the porch from the cabin, wrapping her arms*
37 *around herself.)* I've got to find me a blanket. *(She notices*
38 *FESTER,)* Are you OK, hillbilly Cousin?

1
2 *FESTER'S face is buried in the handkerchief. He shakes his head.*

3
4 **MIMI:** Well, it must be pretty bad to make you so upset.

5
6 *Though FESTER is laughing, it looks like he's crying.*

7
8 **MIMI:** Now, now. It can't be that bad.

9 **FESTER:** *(Finally able to say something.)* It's... it's Grandma.

10 **MIMI:** Grandma Taylor? What about her?

11 **FESTER:** *(With the handkerchief still up to his mouth.)* She... she...

12 **MIMI:** She what, Fester? She what?

13 **FESTER:** Grandma done went and kicked the bucket. *(He covers*
14 *his face, laughing but looking like he's crying.)*

15 **MIMI:** What? *(Shocked.)* What? What do you mean, she—Fester,
16 what are you saying?

17 **FESTER:** I'm sayin' she's gone to a better place. *(Runs off.)*

18 **MIMI:** Oh, my! *(Runs to the door and calls.)* Oswald, come out here,
19 quick!

20
21 *OSWALD enters from the cabin.*

22
23 **OSWALD:** What is it? Mimi, what's the matter?

24 **MIMI:** It's Grandma Taylor!

25 **OSWALD:** What about her?

26 **MIMI:** Fester just told me she... I don't know how to say it.

27 **OSWALD:** Tell me what the heck you're talking about.

28 **MIMI:** Fester just told me that Grandma Taylor kicked the bucket!

29 **OSWALD:** What? Are you sure that's what he said?

30 **MIMI:** He was crying, so I asked him what was wrong and through
31 his tears his exact words were, "Grandma kicked the bucket.
32 She's gone to a better place." Then he ran off, all upset.

33 **OSWALD:** It can't be true. She looked so healthy a minute ago.
34 Where is she now?

35 **MIMI:** I don't know. Oh, Oswald, what are we going to do?

36 **OSWALD:** Look, just stay calm. We will need to stay strong for the
37 family.

38 **MIMI:** She was such a sweet old woman. I just loved her so much.

1 **OSWALD:** You two couldn't stand each other.

2 **MIMI:** Oswald Tippinheimer, how can you say such a thing? You
3 know what this means, don't you?

4 **OSWALD:** Stop thinking about the possible millions she may have
5 left us in her will.

6 **MIMI:** That didn't cross my mind.

7 **OSWALD:** I was talking to myself.

8 **MIMI:** (*Wiping a tear with a tissue.*) And to think of all the terrible
9 things I have said to her throughout the years. If only I could take
10 it all back.

11 **OSWALD:** And all these years trying to get our greedy little hands
12 on her inheritance money.

13 **MIMI:** We're terrible people, Oswald.

14 **OSWALD:** The worst.

15 **MIMI:** (*After a pause, calmly.*) Do you think she left us anything in
16 her will?

17 **OSWALD:** (*Eyes light up.*) Oooo, that would be nice. (*Beat.*) I
18 mean, money doesn't matter at a time like this.

19

20 *OSWALD puts his arm around MIMI as they enter the diner, crying.*

21 *GLENDA MAE enters from the edge of the porch Stage Left.*

22 *GRANDMA enters from Stage Right, limping.*

23

24 **GRANDMA:** There you are, you little darlin'. (*Holds GLENDA MAE*
25 *at arm's length.*) Let me get a good look at you. Yes, ma'am, you
26 shore have that special glow about you.

27 **GLENDA MAE:** I just ate a egg and jalapeno biscuit. Grandma,
28 why you limpin'?

29 **GRANDMA:** I just kicked the bucket. (*Points to the bucket.*)

30 **GLENDA MAE:** I'm sorry. Well, I'd better get inside and start settin'
31 the tables.

32 **GRANDMA:** Honey child, there's no need to be nervous in front of
33 me. I know what my Christmas surprise is.

34 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Hands on hips.*) Did Elmer spill the beans?

35 **GRANDMA:** Naw, honey, they're in there on the table.

36 **GLENDA MAE:** I'm goin' to kill him. I told him not to tell you.

37 **GRANDMA:** I think it's mighty wonderful. But why keep such a
38 miracle of life a secret?

- 1 **GLEND A MAE:** (*Shrugs.*) I didn't know myself 'til a few days ago.
2 **GRANDMA:** When is it due?
3 **GLEND A MAE:** The doc says any day now.
4 **GRANDMA:** What? And you didn't know? (*Looking at GLEND A*
5 *MAE'S belly.*) How is that possible?
6 **GLEND A MAE:** I've just been too busy to notice things here lately.
7 What with bein' a wife, choppin' the wood, sloppin' the hogs—
8 **GRANDMA:** Glenda Mae, you stop all them chores this very
9 minute. You let Elmer do 'em.
10 **GLEND A MAE:** Ha, that's a laugh. Elmer doin' chores is like a pig
11 crowin' at dawn. Just ain't natural.
12 **GRANDMA:** (*Shocked.*) Law, child.
13 **GLEND A MAE:** When the youngun *does* come, I'll be surprised if
14 Elmer wants anything to do with it.
15 **GRANDMA:** (*Confused.*) You don't think so?
16 **GLEND A MAE:** Nah. He told me when it's born it will be *my*
17 responsibility. Said he didn't want any part of it.
18 **GRANDMA:** (*Can't believe it.*) Not nice little Elmer.
19 **GLEND A MAE:** Shore enough. He says that when it finally comes,
20 he's goin' to make me keep it in the barn.
21 **GRANDMA:** I hope you told him no!
22 **GLEND A MAE:** I shore did. I said, "Elmer Crick, we are *not* keepin'
23 it in the barn."
24 **GRANDMA:** Good for you.
25 **GLEND A MAE:** It can stay in the tool shed so it'll be closer to the
26 house.
27
28 *GLEND A MAE turns and enters the cabin. GRANDMA finds it hard*
29 *to stand, so she turns and sits in the rocker.*
30
31 **GRANDMA:** Th-the tool shed?
32
33 *ELKIN and GEORGE enter.*
34
35 **ELKIN:** Let's talk out here where we can get some fresh air. Hey,
36 Grandma, glad to see you're gettin' a little rest before all your
37 customers show up.
38

1 *GRANDMA sits frozen, staring off into the distance.*

2

3 **ELKIN:** Grandma? *(He waves his hand slowly in front of her face.)*

4 Hel-looooo!

5 **GEORGE:** Maybe she's stuffed.

6 **GRANDMA:** *(To herself.)* She's goin' to keep it in the tool shed?

7 **ELKIN:** Beg your pardon?

8 **GRANDMA:** *(Still in shock.)* Glenda Mae. Elmer. Tool shed.

9 **ELKIN:** Grandma, you OK?

10 **GRANDMA:** *(She stands, acting a little like a zombie.)* I got to go
11 and finish supper.

12

13 *GRANDMA exits as ELKIN and GEORGE stare after her.*

14

15 **ELKIN:** *(Shrugs, turning to GEORGE.)* You should stick around for
16 Grandma's annual Christmas Eve supper. Folks come from
17 miles around to eat supper here and watch the live Nativity
18 scene we act out. It's a Christmas tradition here in Cricket
19 County.

20 **GEORGE:** Mr. Taylor, that's why I'm here. I wanted to share
21 something with you. *(Hands him a pamphlet.)*

22 **ELKIN:** What's this?

23 **GEORGE:** I'm cofounder of the Church of Global Unity and
24 Political Correctness for a New Generation of Intelligent People,
25 Incorporated.

26 **ELKIN:** Church of Global—

27 **GEORGE:** And as you know, it takes many generous gifts to get a
28 new church off the ground. I'll just come right out and ask: Is it
29 true that you're affluent?

30 **ELKIN:** No sir, I'm a Republican. [Or Democrat or Independent.]

31 **GEORGE:** No, I mean someone told me you're opulent.

32 **ELKIN:** Well, I was 'til I took some Alka-Seltzer. *(Pats his stomach.)*

33 **GEORGE:** *(Frustrated.)* Mister, are you or are you not a prosperous
34 man?

35 **ELKIN:** Now, I don't like to brag, but I've been told I'm purdy good-
36 lookin'.

37 **GEORGE:** *(Almost shouting, losing his patience.)* Do you have a
38 lot of money?!



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