

A CRICKET COUNTY CITY CHRISTMAS

by Eddie McPherson



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A Cricket County City Christmas

A one-act Christmas comedy

by Eddie McPherson

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CITY BUNCH:

OSWALD TIPPINHIMER: Leader and most level-headed

PETE: Well-to-do and a little gullible

MIMI: Just a little bit better than everybody

PETUNIA: Not as bad Mimi (which isn't saying much)

MARCIA: Friend of the family

CLARA TISHWATER: Dame of High Society

LATRISSA: The Tippinhimer's maid

COUNTRY BUNCH:

ELKIN JENNINGS: Leader of his country clan

FESTER: Simple-minded bumpkin who loves his ax

GLENDA MAE

BRENDA MAE: Twins who are in love with Oswald

DONNA JO: Shy and unassuming

THE STORY

The wealthy Tippinhimer family has invited their backward country relatives from Cricket County to join them in the city for the holidays this year. This is the countrified cousins' first time outside their rural corner of the world, and they're not sure how to act. The city cousins take it upon themselves to teach their dear simple family the sophisticated way of life.

A mistake in planning has occurred, though, and Clara Tishwater, the queen of High Society, is due to show up at the Tippinhimer household the same evening as the hillbillies. Mimi and Petunia have high hopes of being inducted into the Society (where everybody who is anybody is a member) after entertaining the royal lady of aristocracy at a Christmas dinner party. But what are the chances of being accepted as long as their bumbling cousins are hanging around? A race to sophisticate their family members is on, but can they teach them to be high society in such a short time? A clash of cultures occurs the night of the Christmas dinner, and Ms. Tishwater is not amused. Yet somehow in the midst of it all, the country cousins teach their city counterparts what the real meaning of Christmas is all about.

Costumes:

The City Cousins need to dress preppy with sweater vests, ties, khaki pants, penny loafers, starched white shirts, navy blazers, black pantsuits with pearl necklaces, nice sweaters with dress pants. They wear nice leather or fur coats. They may be very dressed up starting with Scene 3.

Latrissa wears a plain white dress to start, then a black dress with a white lacy apron from Scene 3 on.

Ms. Tishwater wears a mink stole, a funny-looking hat, a silky dress and glasses with sharp points to them, with a chain attached to each corner.

The Country Cousins may wear overalls, jeans with ropes as belts, and costumes made from gingham, denim, burlap and/or gabardine material. Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae need to dress

alike. They could wear their hair in pigtails. When the city kids dress them up, the Country Cousins wear city clothes but make sure they look terrible in them: i.e., too short, too big, etc. Elkin needs a bow tie. They will need moth-eaten bathrobes and dingy towels for their biblical costumes.

Bathrobes are easily put on over the characters' clothes for the last scene. The City Cousins' robes should be tasteful.

Sound Effects: Ringing doorbell, "Silver Bells."

Props:

Feather duster (Latrissa), simple/old luggage (Country Cousins), ax (Fester), bag of groceries (Pete), make-up compact (Marcia), banana (Pete), financial magazine (Pete), grapes (Glenda Mae), banana (Brenda Mae), small plate of cookies and CD player (Latrissa), earrings (Mimi), coats (Ms. Tishwater and Marcia), dish of salted nuts (Latrissa), finger sandwiches or snacks (Latrissa), pillowcase full of towels and bathrobes (Elkin), doll and blanket (Donna Jo), cup (Pete), newspaper (Marcia).

Set:

The set is a wealthy person's beautiful living room. Curtains hang on the back wall, representing a window. There is a door at Stage Right that goes outside. A door at Stage Left goes to the kitchen. An opening Upstage Left goes off to the hall and the rest of the house. A nice sofa sits Center Stage and a chair to its left with walking space between the two. The set may be decorated elaborately as desired.

When the cast refers to the giant Christmas tree, they look out and up over the audience, who sees the tree only in its imagination. As they admire the tree, they will look all the way to the ceiling and beyond since it's a very tall tree. The window Mimi and Fester peek out of when looking out into the front yard is also pretend. They're also peering out over the audience.

SCENE 1

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(The doorbell rings. LATRISSA enters from the kitchen and prisses to the door. ELKIN stands there in his best hillbilly getup.)

LATRISSA: Yes? *(ELKIN starts to speak.)* I'm sorry, the family has given to all the charities this year. *(Closes the door and heads back to the kitchen. Doorbell. She returns to the door.)* I told you we're not giving. Try the homeless shelter downtown. *(Shuts the door and heads to the kitchen. Doorbell. LATRISSA sighs, returns and opens the door.)* I told you ...

ELKIN: *(Putting up a hand)* Excuse me, ma'am. I don't mean to be rude, but do you think we might come in? It's awful cold out here on this beautiful porch.

LATRISSA: If you think you're coming inside, you're sadly mistaken. The family is expecting out-of-town guests, so if you would please ... *(Starts to close the door.)*

BRENDA MAE: *(Sticking her head inside)* Cousin Elkin, we're freezin'. What's takin' so long?

LATRISSA: Goodness! *(Pointing to BRENDA MAE)* What is that?

ELKIN: That's my cousin, Brenda Mae.

BRENDA MAE: My hair is gettin' frost bit out here.

LATRISSA: Don't worry, dear, nothing could damage anything that atrocious.

BRENDA MAE: Thank you. Elkin, can we go in now?

ELKIN: That all depends on whether or not this nice city lady will open this here door.

LATRISSA: Your chances of winning the lottery are greater.

ELKIN: Is that a "yes" or a "no"?

LATRISSA: That would be a "no."

BRENDA MAE: We'll turn into icicles if we stay out here that long.

LATRISSA: Away with you now. Shoo! Away, away! *(She*

1 *closes the door on them. She throws her body against the door*
 2 *as though that took all her strength. OSWALD enters from*
 3 *the kitchen.)*

4 **OSWALD:** Who was at the door, Latrissa?

5 **LATRISSA:** Just more freeloaders soliciting a handout.

6 **OSWALD:** I thought it might have been our cousins from the
 7 country. They're due any time now. *(Peeks out the*
 8 *window.)*

9 **LATRISSA:** I have all the guest rooms made up, sir. I'm a
 10 little excited to meet your family; I mean, people so
 11 wealthy and all. I hope I don't get nervous.

12 **OSWALD:** There's something I need to tell you about my
 13 cousins. Although they became quite wealthy from all
 14 those oil fields, diamond mines, gold mines and coal
 15 mines they inherited from Uncle Zeke, they are still
 16 very simple people.

17 **LATRISSA:** That's wonderful! To be that rich and still be so
 18 down to earth.

19 **OSWALD:** This is their first trip out of their little hillbilly
 20 world, and I want to make it as enjoyable for them as
 21 possible.

22 **LATRISSA:** Yes, sir. I will do everything in my power to
 23 make them feel at home.

24 **OSWALD:** *(Looking at his watch)* Where are they? They should
 25 have been here by now. *(Crosses to the door.)* I hope they
 26 haven't gotten lost in the city. *(He opens the door. ELKIN*
 27 *is patiently standing there.)*

28 **ELKIN:** Merry Christmas!

29 **OSWALD:** Elkin!

30 **LATRISSA:** *(Rushing over to the door)* What did I tell you
 31 about hanging around here? Now away with you ...

32 **OSWALD:** Latrissa, this ...

33 **LATRISSA:** No, sir, don't give it another thought. I'll get rid
 34 of these hobos right away!

35 **ELKIN:** Your fancy porch is nice, Cousin Oswald, but we

- 1 was kind of hopin' we could see the rest of your place
2 before headin' back home.
- 3 **BRENDA MAE:** (*All we see is her hand waving.*) Hello, Cousin
4 Oswald, it's me, Brenda Mae.
- 5 **OSWALD:** Come in, Country Cousins, get out of the cold!
6 (*They enter carrying old worn-out luggage, looking around*
7 *wide-eyed at such a fancy, beautiful place. LATRISSA backs*
8 *away, staring at them in disbelief.*) Elkin, Brenda Mae,
9 Glenda Mae, Fester, Donna Jo; welcome to my home.
10 This is our maid, Latrissa. Latrissa, these are my
11 cousins from Cricket County.
- 12 **LATRISSA:** (*Embarrassed*) It ... it's nice to meet all of you,
13 I'm sure.
- 14 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Rushing to OSWALD's side*) Are you really
15 glad to see me again, Cousin Oswald?
- 16 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Rushing to the other side*) Aren't you glad to
17 see me *more*, Cousin Oswald?
- 18 **OSWALD:** Well, I'm glad to see both of you equally.
- 19 **BRENDA MAE:** (*To GLENDA MAE*) See?
- 20 **FESTER:** (*Looks around, holding his ax on his shoulder.*) Is this
21 fancy buildin' where you live, Cousin Oswald?
- 22 **OSWALD:** This is it. My humble home.
- 23 **FESTER:** Golly. There's not even any cracks in the walls.
- 24 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Holding his arm*) It sure is good to see you
25 again, Cousin Oswald.
- 26 **LATRISSA:** (*Finally able to speak.*) I'm afraid I owe all of you
27 a humble expression of regret for my previous
28 aloofness. I was wondering if you could ever excuse
29 such incompetence. (*All the COUSINS stare at her for a*
30 *minute.*)
- 31 **GLENDA MAE:** That sure was some fancy talkin'.
- 32 **FESTER:** I didn't understand a word she said, but it sure
33 was some fancy talkin'.
- 34 **LATRISSA:** I was just apologizing, that's all. May I have
35 your coats?

- 1 **BRENDA MAE:** Bless your heart.
- 2 **GLENDA MAE:** Don't have a coat of her own. That is a pity,
3 Ms. Latrissa. Of course you can have our coats.
- 4 **ELKIN:** And wear them in good health.
- 5 **OSWALD:** She doesn't want to keep them. She wants to
6 hang them up for you.
- 7 **ELKIN:** *(Has taken off his coat; handing it to LATRISSA)* What
8 a neighborly thing to do. *(Turns to his COUNTRY*
9 *COUSINS, who are taking off their coats.)* See, cousins, I
10 told you the people in the city would be friendly.
- 11 **LATRISSA:** *(Taking the coats)* I'll just take these upstairs. If
12 you'll excuse me. *(Exits, as she prisses to the hall.)*
- 13 **FESTER:** Ms. Latrissa? *(She stops and turns.)* You're excused.
14 *(She exits as FESTER turns to ELKIN.)* Now that is one
15 fine-lookin' female, Cousin Elkin. I think I might ask
16 her to marry up with me later on today.
- 17 **ELKIN:** Fester, you don't even know her.
- 18 **FESTER:** I do know she's prettier than a bowl of squirrel
19 gravy. Why can't I marry her?
- 20 **BRENDA MAE:** 'Cause you don't love her — like I love
21 Cousin Oswald.
- 22 **FESTER:** How do I know if I love her or not?
- 23 **ELKIN:** There's different ways. Some people see
24 firecrackers. Some people get sick at their stomach,
25 and some folks hear sweet music playin' when they
26 look at the person they love.
- 27 **FESTER:** Music? For real?
- 28 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Looking lovingly at OSWALD)* I hear sweet
29 music playin' right now.
- 30 **OSWALD:** *(To himself)* Yeah, "Baby, Don't Get Hooked on
31 Me."
- 32 **FESTER:** Music. Got it.
- 33 **ELKIN:** *(Looking around)* My, I don't believe I've seen
34 anything this beautiful in all my born days.
- 35 **DONNA JO:** *(Pointing up at the "Christmas tree" beyond the*

1 *audience*) Look at that Christmas tree, Cousin Elkin. It's
 2 bigger than Lookout Mountain back home. (*All the*
 3 *COUSINS look up at the unseen tree, very high.*)
 4 **ALL:** Ahhhh.
 5 **FESTER:** It looks like a giant shiny bush.
 6 **GLENDA MAE:** Look how it glitters.
 7 **BRENDA MAE:** And sparkles. (*Sheepishly*) Just like your
 8 eyes, Cousin Oswald. (*GLENDA MAE pulls BRENDA*
 9 *MAE's pigtail.*) Ouch!
 10 **ELKIN:** Will we be beddin' down in here, Cousin Oswald?
 11 **FESTER:** I've never slept on a floor this sparkly before.
 12 **OSWALD:** You don't have to sleep on the floor. Each one of
 13 you has your own bedroom upstairs.
 14 **BRENDA MAE:** Cousin Oswald, I'm afraid you're going to
 15 have to decide who you want to marry, me or my sister.
 16 **GLENDA MAE:** Yeah, cause we're tired of waitin'. There's a
 17 whole slew of fellas back home wantin' to ask us for
 18 our hand.
 19 **BRENDA MAE:** I told Glenda Mae not to be surprised if I
 20 get an engagement ring from you this Christmas.
 21 **OSWALD:** Engagement?
 22 **ELKIN:** Now girls. You're puttin' Cousin Oswald on the spot.
 23 **OSWALD:** Thank you, Elkin.
 24 **ELKIN:** He'll make his decision in his own time. Oswald,
 25 you just take your time. You got three whole days to
 26 decide which one you want to hitch up with.
 27 **FESTER:** Gollee, Cousin Oswald, you mean you're goin' to
 28 be my new brother-in-law?
 29 **OSWALD:** Brother-in- ... (*Turning to GLENDA MAE and*
 30 *BRENDA MAE*) I'm afraid I couldn't —
 31 **BRENDA MAE:** We know, we know, you can't say right now.
 32 I guess we both will just have to be patient until you're
 33 ready to tell us. (*Turning to her sister*) And don't you try
 34 and trick him, Glenda Mae. He's got to make up his
 35 own mind.

- 1 **GLEND A MAE:** I won't.
- 2 **LATRIS SA:** (*Entering*) The rooms are ready, sir. (*Turns to*
3 *FESTER.*) Take your luggage and walk this way.
- 4 **FESTER:** (*Watches as she prisses to the hall and exits.*) OK, but
5 it ain't gonna be easy. (*He grabs his bag and prisses out*
6 *exactly as LATRIS SA has done.*)
- 7 **BRENDA MAE:** Come on, Glenda Mae, walk this way. (*They*
8 *priss out the best they can while carrying their luggage,*
9 *followed by DONNA JO.*)
- 10 **DONNA JO:** Look Cousin Oswald, we're walkin' this way.
11 (*Exits.*)
- 12 **ELKIN:** (*Turning to OSWALD*) We sure are excited to spend
13 our Christmas with you, Cousin Oswald. I'll go get
14 settled in with the rest of 'em. (*He turns and prisses out*
15 *like the rest, also with his luggage.*)
- 16 **OSWALD:** (*Rubbing his forehead*) Oh, boy. (*PETE enters from*
17 *outside. He carries a bag of groceries.*)
- 18 **PETE:** Are they here yet?
- 19 **OSWALD:** They're here, all right.
- 20 **PETE:** (*Looking around*) I picked up a few extra things at the
21 store. Where are they?
- 22 **OSWALD:** Getting settled in. The twins are back to their
23 flirting game. They actually expect me to propose to
24 one of them before they head back to the hills.
- 25 **PETE:** (*Singing*) Here comes the bride ...
- 26 **OSWALD:** Stop it.
- 27 **PETE:** (*Still singing*) All dressed in burlap.
- 28 **OSWALD:** That's not funny.
- 29 **PETE:** You brought it on yourself.
- 30 **OSWALD:** How do you mean?
- 31 **PETE:** When they started all that marriage talk when we
32 visited them in the hills, you should have put a stop to
33 it then and there.
- 34 **OSWALD:** Easy for you to say. They didn't fall for you.
- 35 **PETE:** I never understood that, since I am the better

1 looking of the two of us.
2 OSWALD: If you're so good-looking, why do they want to
3 marry me?
4 PETE: Even if they did have a thing for me, I would put
5 them in their place right away.
6 OSWALD: You would?
7 PETE: Absolutely! I'm not a softy like you. I lay down the
8 law with women. I let them know where they stand at
9 the very start.
10 OSWALD: Maybe that's why you haven't had a girlfriend in
11 over a year.
12 PETE: I've been busy.
13 OSWALD: You wouldn't let the twins get anywhere with
14 you, huh?
15 PETE: No way! No how!
16 OSWALD: (*Rubbing his chin*) Very interesting.
17 PETE: I'd better get these groceries to the kitchen.
18 Remember, put those country bumpkin girls in their
19 place. (*Exits to the kitchen.*)
20 OSWALD: (*Thinking to himself*) I'd rather put you in your
21 place, dear brother. (*Snaps his fingers, then exits to the hall.*
22 *A second later, MIMI, PETUNIA and MARCIA enter from*
23 *outside. As they begin their conversation, they remove their*
24 *coats.*)
25 MIMI: Well, I still think you're better off.
26 PETUNIA: No doubt. That boy is definitely *not* worth the
27 salt in your tears.
28 MARCIA: (*A little overly dramatic*) I know I should feel that
29 way, but I did love him so.
30 MIMI: You mean you loved his money.
31 MARCIA: (*Surprised she said it, although she knows it's true.*) I
32 can't believe you would be that insensitive, Mimi. After
33 all, I've just lost the love of my life.
34 MIMI: Besides, he wasn't the most handsome guy in the
35 world.

- 1 **MARCIA:** Do looks really matter, dear Mimi, when love is
2 involved?
- 3 **PETUNIA:** The boy was ugly, dumb and clumsy; why else
4 would you be interested in him if it wasn't because he
5 was loaded?
- 6 **MARCIA:** You girls must think I'm pretty shallow. After all,
7 he was sweet, sensitive, kind ...
- 8 **PETUNIA:** So you're saying that if he were broke as a hobo,
9 you would still love him?
- 10 **MARCIA:** Broke?
- 11 **MIMI:** As a hobo.
- 12 **MARCIA:** That's pretty broke, isn't it?
- 13 **MIMI:** Would you?
- 14 **MARCIA:** Of course ... I ... would.
- 15 **PETUNIA:** Right, and I'm the Queen of England.
- 16 **MARCIA:** I've just been dumped by the richest guy in ... I
17 mean, the nicest guy in town, and all you girls can do
18 is attack my motives. Some best friends you turned out
19 to be.
- 20 **MIMI:** I'll tell you what, Marcia dear. We'll treat you to a
21 nice sauna and facial over at the spa. That will take
22 your mind off your troubles.
- 23 **MARCIA:** You girls would do that for me?
- 24 **MIMI:** (*Shouting Off-stage*) Latrissa! I'll have Latrissa make
25 the appointment.
- 26 **MARCIA:** (*Looking up at the Christmas tree*) Your family does
27 go all out at Christmas time. That's the biggest tree yet.
- 28 **MIMI:** Ginger Wells next door thought she was so smart last
29 year with that thirteen-foot pine. Wait until she gets a
30 load of our twenty-footer.
- 31 **MARCIA:** (*Pointing*) And who would have thought to hang a
32 neon Baby Jesus right in the middle of the window?
- 33 **MIMI:** Exactly! Don't you think it adds a religious flavor?
- 34 **MARCIA:** Absolutely!
- 35 **MIMI:** We're going to win that Christmas display contest

1 this year.

2 **MARCIA:** Display contest?

3 **MIMI:** The neighborhood contest. You know, lights in the
4 yard that draw attention to your lavish home and all
5 that.

6 **PETUNIA:** Ginger Wells, our next-door neighbor, has won it
7 for the last three years. Our time to obtain the honor is
8 way overdue. The winner gets her picture in the society
9 pages of the paper.

10 **MIMI:** We started by having Daddy hire workers to knock
11 out the front wall and put in all glass so the cars can
12 view the entire tree from the street.

13 **MARCIA:** Oh my.

14 **PETUNIA:** Next, we will arrange lights on the roof in the
15 shape of a Christmas elf.

16 **MIMI:** Our theme this year is "From Baby Jesus to Santa
17 Claus."

18 **PETUNIA:** That way we cover all the bases. We'll be sure to
19 win this year's display contest and be honored with our
20 picture in the society section.

21 **MIMI:** Speaking of the Society, you have been saying nice
22 things about us, haven't you?

23 **MARCIA:** At every social function and every official
24 meeting. I don't know that my influence pulls any
25 weight, though.

26 **MIMI:** You're in the Society, aren't you? That's pull enough.

27 **PETUNIA:** You have just got to get us in that Society,
28 Marcia. Everybody who is anybody belongs.

29 **MARCIA:** Well, Ms. Tishwater is the one to impress. Tonight
30 could be the magic night.

31 **MIMI:** That's right ... tonight?

32 **MARCIA:** Yes, at the dinner party.

33 **PETUNIA:** Dinner party?

34 **MARCIA:** For Ms. Tishwater. Don't tell me you've forgotten.

35 **MIMI:** Marcia, dear. The dinner party for Ms. Tishwater is

1 *next weekend.*
2 MARCIA: Mimi, I wouldn't forget something as important as
3 dinner with Ms. Tishwater. It's tonight.
4 PETUNIA: Marcia, tell us you're kidding.
5 MARCIA: I'm kidding.
6 MIMI: Good.
7 MARCIA: But I'm not. Remember, I thought it would be a
8 good weekend to have it so Ms. Tishwater could meet
9 your wealthy relatives.
10 PETUNIA: (*Just remembering*) Our wealthy relatives? This
11 weekend?
12 MIMI: (*To MARCIA*) You're going to have to reschedule Ms.
13 Tishwater's visit.
14 MARCIA: That's impossible! She's booked through April.
15 What's the big deal? The house is clean and you can
16 just have Latrissa whip up a simple dinner.
17 PETUNIA: Our chance to finally be accepted into the
18 Society, and we're going to blow it.
19 MIMI: (*To PETUNIA*) Maybe we can contact our cousins and
20 put them off a week.
21 PETUNIA: But they're arriving today. It may be too late!
22 MARCIA: I thought you'd want Ms. Tishwater to meet your
23 wealthy cousins to increase your chances for
24 acceptance into the Society.
25 MIMI: That's just it, if she meets our cousins, we'll never ...
26 PETUNIA: Mimi, shhhh.
27 MARCIA: I'm confused.
28 LATRISSA: (*Entering*) You called, ma'am?
29 MIMI: Huh? Oh, Latrissa, would you please call the spa and
30 make an appointment for a complete makeover for our
31 dear friend, please?
32 LATRISSA: Right away, ma'am. (*Turns to leave but stops.*) By
33 the way, your guests have arrived.
34 MIMI: Good, the guests have arrived. (*Double take*) The
35 guests have arrived?

- 1 **LATRISSA:** Yes, ma'am. (*Exits.*)
- 2 **MIMI:** (*Turning to MARCIA*) Marcia dear, don't you think
3 you need to go home? You must be exhausted after
4 being dumped and everything.
- 5 **MARCIA:** Mimi, you didn't tell me you had company. (*Pulls*
6 *out a compact mirror.*) Look at my makeup. I've been
7 crying.
- 8 **MIMI:** It's nobody really.
- 9 **OSWALD:** (*Entering*) Hey, Marcia.
- 10 **MIMI:** (*She and PETUNIA drag OSWALD to the front of the*
11 *stage.*) Oswald, why didn't you tell us the hillbillies were
12 here?
- 13 **OSWALD:** I didn't know you were home.
- 14 **PETUNIA:** We can't let Marcia see that our family tree
15 consists of a bunch of uncivilized nuts.
- 16 **MIMI:** You get up those stairs and keep them from coming
17 in here.
- 18 **OSWALD:** Just ask Marcia to leave if you are ashamed of
19 your family.
- 20 **MIMI:** We will — now go on and put them off. (*OSWALD exits*
21 *to the hall.*)
- 22 **MARCIA:** (*Putting on the final touches on her makeup.*) Didn't
23 you girls tell me your dear family members had all
24 those oil fields and diamond mines?
- 25 **PETUNIA:** Tha- that's right.
- 26 **MARCIA:** I certainly can't wait to meet them. How is my
27 makeup?
- 28 **MIMI:** Beautiful. And you will meet them —
- 29 **PETUNIA:** But not right now.
- 30 **MARCIA:** And why is that?
- 31 **PETUNIA:** They're taking a nap after their long trip.
- 32 **MARCIA:** Drats. And I did want to meet them so. When *will*
33 I get to see them?
- 34 **MIMI:** Tonight, of course.
- 35 **MARCIA:** What fun. Let's see, what do I wear? Want to

- 1 **make a good impression, you know.** (*FESTER enters with*
2 *his ax and stands in the hall doorway.*)
- 3 **PETUNIA:** (*Without thinking*) **Fester!**
- 4 **MIMI:** (*Grabs MARCIA's arm and pulls her forward to look at*
5 *the Christmas tree.*) **Marcia dear, do you think the tree**
6 **has too many red lights in one spot?** (*PETUNIA tries to*
7 *wave FESTER away. He thinks she's being friendly, so he*
8 *smiles and waves back.*)
- 9 **MARCIA:** **I don't think I see what you're saying.** (*PETUNIA*
10 *tries again; he smiles and waves back. OSWALD enters and*
11 *pulls FESTER off down the hall.*)
- 12 **MIMI:** **Right there! See? In the center of the tree.**
- 13 **MARCIA:** **I still don't see —**
- 14 **PETUNIA:** **Too bad you have to leave so soon, Marcia dear,**
15 **but we know you have lots of getting ready to do.**
- 16 **MARCIA:** **Well ...** (*LATRISSA enters.*)
- 17 **MIMI:** **We must start getting the house ready for the dinner**
18 **party tonight.**
- 19 **LATRISSA:** **Dinner party? Tonight?**
- 20 **PETUNIA:** **That's right, Latrissa. You know, to entertain the**
21 **Queen of High Society, Ms. Tishwater.**
- 22 **PETUNIA:** (*Turning to MARCIA*) **So, we'll see you tonight!**
- 23 **MIMI:** **What time will Ms. Tishwater be here?**
- 24 **MARCIA:** **Eight sharp. Gracious, there's so much to do. My**
25 **nails, my hair. You know, there for a moment I forgot**
26 **all about being dumped. Who knows? I might find the**
27 **love of my life tonight.**
- 28 **MIMI:** (*Ushering MARCIA out*) **Don't count on it.**
- 29 **MARCIA:** **What?**
- 30 **PETUNIA:** **What she meant was we'll count on seeing you**
31 **tonight.**
- 32 **MARCIA:** **'Bye now.** (*opens the door and turns to the GIRLS.*)
33 **Can't wait to ...** (*MIMI slams the door in her face without*
34 *thinking.*)
- 35 **MIMI:** **Let's put our plan to work.**

- 1 **PETUNIA:** What plan?
- 2 **MIMI:** How should I know? I haven't come up with one yet,
3 but we must do some quick thinking.
- 4 **LATRISSA:** A dinner party tonight. That doesn't give me
5 much time.
- 6 **MIMI:** Latrissa dear, you will help us out, won't you?
- 7 **LATRISSA:** Let's see, we'll need snacks, fruit punch,
8 sandwiches ...
- 9 **MIMI:** You make up the menu. We have the most difficult
10 task.
- 11 **PETUNIA:** To make our hillbilly cousins presentable to Ms.
12 Tishwater.
- 13 **MIMI:** Let's go to the kitchen and raid the refrigerator. That
14 will help us think. *(She pulls PETUNIA to the kitchen*
15 *door.)*
- 16 **PETUNIA:** *(As they exit)* Thank you, Latrissa.
- 17 **LATRISSA:** Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear ... *(She prisses to the*
18 *kitchen. OSWALD enters from the hall. BRENDA MAE and*
19 *GLENDMAE stand on either side of him very closely,*
20 *looking lovingly at him. It's hard for him to walk because*
21 *they are standing so close. He crosses to the sofa.)*
- 22 **OSWALD:** How did you like your bedroom suite?
- 23 **BRENDA MAE:** It was just fine ... honey.
- 24 **GLENDMAE:** He wasn't talkin' to you.
- 25 **BRENDA MAE:** Who else would he call sweet?
- 26 **GLENDMAE:** Me, that's who!
- 27 **OSWALD:** Girls, girls. *(Starts to cross as they continue to stay*
28 *close. He stops.)* You stay there. *(They do as he moves*
29 *away.)* Girls, this isn't an easy decision for me to make.
30 I mean, you're both young and *(Swallows a lump)*
31 beautiful and rich. How is a man to make up his mind?
- 32 **GLENDMAE:** I can cook.
- 33 **BRENDA MAE:** I can sew.
- 34 **GLENDMAE:** I can hoe a garden.
- 35 **BRENDA MAE:** I can milk a cow.

1 OSWALD: You see, if I were single, this choice would be
 2 almost impossible to make, but the fact is — I belong to
 3 *all* girls. To settle down with just one would mean
 4 disappointing all the rest.

5 GLENDA MAE: You poor thing. That must be an awful
 6 feeling.

7 OSWALD: It's horrible. I'm a prisoner of my own popularity.
 8 *(Making it up as he goes)* Girls won't leave me alone. Oh
 9 yes, my beauty is a curse!

10 BRENDA MAE: My heart is breakin'!

11 GLENDA MAE: All this time I thought we were meant to be
 12 together.

13 BRENDA MAE: My heart is breakin' into a million tiny
 14 pieces! *(They cry on each other's shoulders.)*

15 OSWALD: Girls, girls. I feel really badly about this. If only
 16 you could find someone who isn't cursed as I; your
 17 hearts would mend once again.

18 BRENDA MAE: My heart will never mend.

19 GLENDA MAE: It's broke beyond repair.

20 OSWALD: Someone — I don't know, like my brother, Pete,
 21 for example.

22 BRENDA MAE: *(Stops crying abruptly.)* Cousin Pete?

23 GLENDA MAE: Cousin Pete ain't cursed?

24 OSWALD: No, and he's really lonely.

25 BRENDA MAE: Lonely?

26 GLENDA MAE: Poor Cousin Pete.

27 OSWALD: He really adores the kind of girls who can cook,
 28 sew, hoe a garden and milk a cow.

29 GLENDA MAE: He does?

30 OSWALD: Poor guy, just can't seem to find someone who
 31 can do all that. He'll probably be lonely the rest of his
 32 life. *(PETE enters eating a banana and reading a financial*
 33 *magazine. He doesn't look at OSWALD or the TWINS. He*
 34 *stands there for a moment as all three stare at him. He*
 35 *glances at them, then does a double take. GLENDA MAE is*

1 *twirling her hair and BRENDA MAE is smiling bigger than*
2 *ever.)*

3 **PETE: What?!** (*Lights black out.*)

4

5

6

SCENE 2

7

8 (*Lights come up. Everyone is On-stage. LATRISSA is dusting*
9 *everything and looking a little nervous. FESTER stands at the*
10 *front door holding his ax. He opens it and peers out as*
11 *OSWALD talks. BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE sit very*
12 *close to PETE on the sofa, smiling at him every time he looks*
13 *their way.)*

14 **OSWALD: ... And what is Christmas without dear family**
15 **members to share it with? And you are our family.**

16 **ELKIN: Kith and kin sittin' together at Christmas time.**

17 **PETUNIA: And that's exactly why we want to throw a little**
18 **Christmas party in your favor.**

19 **DONNA JO: A Christmas party for us?**

20 **BRENDA MAE: Is that anything like a barn dance?**

21 **OSWALD: Well, sure, except without the barn.**

22 **ELKIN: We're gonna have ourself a Christmas hoedown!**

23 **DONNA JO: And we can dress up in our Nativity clothes.**
24 (*FESTER has moved to the "window" and stares out through*
25 *the curtain.)*

26 **BRENDA MAE: Fester, why do you keep lookin' outside?**

27 **FESTER: No reason.**

28 **GLENDA MAE: I'll save all my square dances for you,**
29 **Cousin Pete.**

30 **PETE: Huh?**

31 **BRENDA MAE: We don't want you to be lonely no more.**
32 (*FESTER is still peering out over the audience as though he*
33 *is looking out a window.)*

34 **PETE: Lonely?** (*MIMI rushes in from outside.*)

35 **MIMI: I can't believe it! I just cannot believe it!**

- 1 **PETUNIA:** Mimi, what's wrong?
2 **MIMI:** It's that Ginger Wells next door. She's trying to
3 upstage our Christmas yard display!
4 **OSWALD:** How?
5 **MIMI:** She has placed eight *real* reindeer out there! Antlers
6 and everything!
7 **PETUNIA:** That conniving little sneak.
8 **MIMI:** Apparently she has gotten wind of what we're trying
9 to do. She won't stop until she wins that prize!
10 **PETUNIA:** Then we won't stop either! It's a fight to the
11 finish!
12 **MIMI:** But how do you outdo eight tiny reindeer?
13 **PETUNIA:** That's a tough one.
14 **GLENDA MAE:** Fester, get on over here and sit down.
15 **OSWALD:** Fester, are you looking for something?
16 **FESTER:** (*Sheepishly*) Sorta.
17 **ELKIN:** Tell Cousin Oswald.
18 **FESTER:** Well ... (*Whispers something to OSWALD.*)
19 **OSWALD:** Oh, there's one in your bedroom.
20 **GLENDA MAE:** One of what?
21 **FESTER:** Nothin'!
22 **DONNA JO:** Fester's lookin' for the outhouse.
23 **FESTER:** Donna Jo!
24 **MIMI:** Fester dear, you're not in Cricket County. We have
25 six restrooms indoors.
26 **FESTER:** I wasn't lookin' for nothin'. I was just playin' with
27 my ax. (*Pause*) Excuse me. (*He hands ELKIN his ax and*
28 *runs to the hall and exits.*)
29 **MIMI:** (*To PETUNIA*) Petunia, have you explained how the
30 rehearsal will go?
31 **OSWALD:** Rehearsal?
32 **GLENDA MAE:** (*To PETE*) Here, let me feed you a grape.
33 (*Pops one in his mouth.*)
34 **BRENDA MAE:** Let me feed you a banana. (*Has peeled one*
35 *and tries to stuff the whole thing in his mouth.*)

1 MIMI: Country Cousins, give me your attention. Now that
 2 you are in the city, there are a few things you need to
 3 learn. Things are different here than they are in the
 4 country.

5 ELKIN: You mean like having outhouses indoors?

6 GLENDA MAE: I guess they call theirs "inhouses." Here!
 7 *(Feeds PETE a grape.)*

8 PETUNIA: We're talking more about social situations.

9 MIMI: Right. In the country you say "y'all," in the city you
 10 say "everyone." In the country, you say, "Fetch me
 11 some of that there water." In the city, you say, "Bring
 12 the car around," and "How much for the pearls in the
 13 window?"

14 PETUNIA: We feel it's our responsibility to help you
 15 understand a few social graces.

16 GLENDA MAE: Like a nice dip of snuff? Here. *(Tries to feed*
 17 *PETE more banana, but he stops her.)*

18 MIMI: Yes. I mean, no! Things like how to greet a stranger.
 19 How to drink afternoon tea with your pinky held out,
 20 and how to enter a room properly. *(FESTER enters*
 21 *rather quickly, trips and falls, then stands up quickly, as*
 22 *though nothing happened. This evokes a quick look from*
 23 *everyone.)*

24 FESTER: It's just me.

25 PETUNIA: *(Crossing to FESTER)* Take Fester's entrance just
 26 now. Did you see how clumsily he barged in? Fester,
 27 that was repulsive.

28 FESTER: Thanks.

29 ELKIN: That's how Fester always comes into a room.

30 MIMI: It must not continue. Fester, pay attention. Watch how
 31 I enter the room. *(She exits out the hall door and re-enters*
 32 *gracefully, with her head held high.)* You enter with ease,
 33 you stand for a moment, you see someone across the
 34 room, throw your hand up in a wave, smile, and say ...
 35 *(Pretends to see someone across the room.)* Hello. *(Someone*

- 1 *else*) Hello. Nice to see you. *(To FESTER)* Now you try.
- 2 **FESTER:** *(Loudly)* Howdy!
- 3 **MIMI:** *(Places her hand to her chest.)* Oh, dear.
- 4 **PETUNIA:** Fester, go out and come in just as Mimi did.
- 5 **FESTER:** Okey-doke. *(He exits to the hall.)*
- 6 **MIMI:** *(Shouting Off-stage to him)* Now, hold up your head.
- 7 Throw back your shoulders. That's it. You're ready to
- 8 enter the room. *(FESTER enters, his head held so high he's*
- 9 *looking straight at the ceiling. His shoulders are thrown back,*
- 10 *causing his arms to stick out from his body.)* How does that
- 11 feel, Fester?
- 12 **FESTER:** I feel like an oak tree.
- 13 **MIMI:** Stop right there. Now you see someone across the
- 14 room.
- 15 **FESTER:** All I can see is the ceilin'.
- 16 **MIMI:** *(Helping him bring his head down some)* Throw your
- 17 hand up in a wave. *(He waves very enthusiastically.)* Smile.
- 18 *(Big smile showing all his teeth)* Now, respond.
- 19 **FESTER:** Howdy, Donna Jo! *(DONNA JO waves.)*
- 20 **MIMI:** Make conversation.
- 21 **FESTER:** I just saw the fanciest outhouse in the whole
- 22 world. *(The COUNTRY COUSINS clap their hands.)*
- 23 **ELKIN:** That was good, Cousin Fester. You did that just
- 24 fine.
- 25 **FESTER:** *(Clapping)* I was good!
- 26 **MIMI:** We'll come back to you. Glenda Mae, you're next.
- 27 *(Approaching her)* Oh, my. Now look how you're sitting.
- 28 Sit up straight and cross your legs. *(She throws her foot*
- 29 *up on her knee.)* No! Like a lady. Like this. *(MIMI*
- 30 *demonstrates. GLENDA MAE crosses her legs, but when she*
- 31 *does, she slumps again.)* Sit up straight. *(She sits up,*
- 32 *causing her legs to come uncrossed.)* Cross your legs! *(She*
- 33 *does, but slumps.)* Petunia, get her legs. *(PETUNIA holds*
- 34 *GLENDA MAE's legs as MIMI helps her sit up straight.)*
- 35 Now, sit up. Petunia, let go. *(PETUNIA does so slowly.)*

1 *This time it works.*) There.

2 **GLEND MAE:** Look everybody, I'm a lady.

3 **FESTER:** Look everybody, I'm entering the room. (*Head*

4 *goes up, arms go back.*) Howdy, Donna Jo! (*COUNTRY*

5 *COUSINS* clap.)

6 **MIMI:** Everybody quiet! We have one hour to teach you to

7 act civilized, so I need you to concentrate!

8 **OSWALD:** Mimi, calm down.

9 **PETE:** Here, let me try. (*He stands.*) The way we speak is

10 very important. Elkin, how is your grammar?

11 **ELKIN:** She broke her hip last year, but she's gettin' around

12 pretty good.

13 **PETE:** Not grandma, grammar. Repeat after me: It doesn't

14 look as though it will rain.

15 **ELKIN:** It don't look like it's gonna ...

16 **PETE:** No, not "don't," never say "don't"; say "doesn't." It

17 "doesn't."

18 **ELKIN:** It-doesn't-look-like-it's-gonna ...

19 **PETE:** "Going to," not "gonna."

20 **ELKIN:** It-doesn't-look-like-it's-going-to-rain.

21 **PETE:** Good. (*COUNTRY COUSINS* clap.)

22 **FESTER:** That was real good, Cousin Elkin.

23 **PETE:** Brenda Mae, you're next. Say: "Pass the salted nuts,

24 please."

25 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Clears her throat.*) Pass that there salt ...

26 **PETE:** Not "that there," say "the." Pass *the* salted nuts.

27 **BRENDA MAE:** Got it. (*Clears her throat.*) Pass the salt, you

28 nut. (*Pauses, with a smile.*) Please.

29 **MIMI:** Good grief. This isn't going to work.

30 **PETUNIA:** Not by tonight. We're in big trouble.

31 **PETE:** Everyone repeat after me: "I'll have to think about

32 that."

33 **COUNTRY COUSINS:** (*Together*) I'll have to think about that.

34 **PETE:** If anyone says anything you don't understand tonight

35 at the party, just say, "I'll have to think about that."

1 *(Aside to OSWALD)* That ought to keep them out of
 2 trouble.

3 COUNTRY COUSINS: *(Together)* I'll have to think about that.

4 GLENDA MAE: This is fun.

5 BRENDA MAE: You ain't just whistlin' "Dixie."

6 PETE: *(To BRENDA MAE)* Remember, don't say "ain't."

7 BRENDA MAE: Sorry. *(Properly)* You isn't just whistlin'
 8 "Dixie."

9 MIMI: Goodness gracious. *(To PETUNIA)* Let's focus on their
 10 appearance.

11 PETUNIA: Good idea. Glenda Mae, do you have mascara?

12 GLENDA MAE: When I was little, but Mama took me to the
 13 doctor.

14 BRENDA MAE: She nearly died from it.

15 MIMI: That's right, they will need makeup.

16 OSWALD: What about clothes?

17 PETE: We can scrounge something from our closets.

18 PETUNIA: Well, whatever we do, we've got to do it quickly.

19 MIMI: Latrissa, show them back to their rooms, please.

20 LATRISSA: Of course. Walk this way. *(She prisses out. The*
 21 *COUNTRY COUSINS follow her, prissing bigger than ever.)*

22 OSWALD: It's not going to work; you're just asking for
 23 trouble.

24 PETE: We've gone too far to back out now.

25 MIMI: Our future at the Society depends on it.

26 PETUNIA: We must keep positive thoughts.

27 FESTER: *(Entering and tripping and falling. He stands quickly*
 28 *and grabs his ax.)* I forgot my ax. *(Exits.)*

29 PETE: What were you saying about positive thoughts,
 30 Petunia?

31 PETUNIA: *(Pauses.)* Never mind. *(Lights black out.)*

SCENE 3

1 *(LATRISSA enters with a small plate of cookies. She wears a*
 2 *black dress with a white lacy apron. She crosses to a stereo*
 3 *system and turns it on. "Silver Bells" plays. She sings along*
 4 *as she sets down the cookies and fluffs the pillows on the*
 5 *sofa.)*

6 **LATRISSA:** Silver bells, silver bells. It's Christmas time in
 7 the city ... *(MIMI enters hurriedly from the hallway, putting*
 8 *on an earring.)*

9 **MIMI:** Latrissa, is the food ready?

10 **LATRISSA:** Yes ma'am, everything should be set.

11 **MIMI:** *(Glancing toward the hall)* I wouldn't say that exactly.
 12 How do I look?

13 **LATRISSA:** Beautiful.

14 **MIMI:** I do, don't I? *(Shouting Off-stage)* Petunia! *(Looks out*
 15 *the window which looks out over the audience. With hands on*
 16 *hips.)* I cannot believe it!

17 **LATRISSA:** What's the matter, ma'am?

18 **MIMI:** Ginger Wells has just added a full-size Christmas
 19 sleigh to her live reindeer display. She makes me so
 20 mad.

21 **LATRISSA:** You still have a chance to win the contest.

22 **MIMI:** Not when I'm up against live reindeer and full-sized
 23 sleighs. If I could only get my hands around ... I don't
 24 have time to worry about that now. I have a bigger
 25 dilemma on my hands.

26 **PETUNIA:** *(Entering)* Mimi, are we ready?

27 **MIMI:** Everything's set down here.

28 **LATRISSA:** I'll finish the punch. *(She prisses to the kitchen.)*

29 **PETUNIA:** Did you help the girls with their makeup?

30 **MIMI:** I thought you did.

31 **PETUNIA:** I gave them my makeup — you said you were ...

32 **OSWALD:** *(Entering wearing a tie)* Is she here yet?

33 **PETUNIA:** No. Are the boys ready?

34 **OSWALD:** I think so; Pete's helping them with their ties.

35 **MIMI:** I'm a nervous wreck.

- 1 **OSWALD:** Calm down. If Elkin and the clan sense you're
2 uptight, they'll get all flustered.
- 3 **PETUNIA:** *(Looking up at the Christmas tree)* At least we have
4 a beautiful Christmas tree to look at.
- 5 **OSWALD:** *(To MIMI)* Sit down and breathe. *(She does.)*
6 Breathe in. Breathe out. Feel better?
- 7 **MIMI:** Yes. *(Doorbell)* No! *(She pops up.)*
- 8 **PETUNIA:** There she is!
- 9 **OSWALD:** Sit down. I'll get it. *(Turns to the girls.)* Look
10 natural. *(They smile fake smiles.)* Oh, brother. *(He*
11 *straightens his jacket and opens the door.)* Good evening,
12 won't you come in?
- 13 **MARCIA:** Thank you, Oswald. Everyone, I'd like you to
14 meet Ms. Tishwater. Ms. Tishwater, this is Oswald,
15 Mimi and Petunia.
- 16 **OSWALD:** It's nice to meet you.
- 17 **MS. TISHWATER:** Of course.
- 18 **OSWALD:** *(Shouting to the kitchen)* Latrissa. *(Turns to MS.*
19 *TISHWATER.)* May I have your coat?
- 20 **MIMI:** Good evening, Ms. Tishwater. It's such a pleasure to
21 have you in our home.
- 22 **MS. TISHWATER:** It would be, yes. *(LATRISSA enters.)*
- 23 **OSWALD:** Latrissa, if you could please take their coats.
- 24 **MS. TISHWATER:** Handle mine with care, dear. That fur is
25 the real thing.
- 26 **LATRISSA:** Yes, ma'am. *(Prisses to the hall.)*
- 27 **MS. TISHWATER:** My, but she does have a swing in her
28 step, doesn't she?
- 29 **PETUNIA:** *(Offering MS. TISHWATER some nuts)* Salted
30 pecans?
- 31 **MS. TISHWATER:** They look store-bought. No thank you.
- 32 **MARCIA:** Did you notice their Christmas tree, Ms.
33 Tishwater? Isn't it lovely?
- 34 **MS. TISHWATER:** I can see you prefer a smaller tree. How
35 quaint.

1 MIMI: Smaller?

2 MS. TISHWATER: If you want to see a real tree, come over
3 to my home.

4 OSWALD: Won't you ladies have a seat?

5 MS. TISHWATER: (*Sitting*) I understand we're meeting some
6 of your family this evening.

7 PETUNIA: About that ...

8 MARCIA: (*Interrupting*) Oh yes, Ms. Tishwater. They own
9 their own oil fields and diamond, gold and coal mines.

10 MS. TISHWATER: How delightful. Where are they? I would
11 like to meet such fine people.

12 MIMI: Upstairs. You know how the wealthy enjoy making
13 an entrance.

14 MS. TISHWATER: I do enjoy the company of opulent
15 persons. (*To MIMI*) I understand you're looking to join
16 our Society.

17 MIMI: We would be honored, Ms. Tishwater.

18 PETUNIA: It would make our Christmas the merriest ever.

19 MS. TISHWATER: One requirement is to have your name
20 listed in the society pages of the paper, and I can't say
21 that I have seen yours.

22 OSWALD: You will soon. We plan to win the Christmas yard
23 display contest this year.

24 MS. TISHWATER: Oh, was that your live reindeer outside?
25 Quite lovely.

26 MIMI: No ma'am, that's next door. Our plan is even better
27 than that one.

28 MS. TISHWATER: Really? do tell me what it is.

29 MIMI: Well ...

30 PETE: (*Entering*) Good evening, everyone.

31 MARCIA: (*Standing*) Pete, I'd like for you to meet Ms.
32 Tishwater. Ms. Tishwater, this is Pete Tippinhimer.

33 PETE: Ms. Tishwater, my pleasure.

34 MS. TISHWATER: I'm sure it is.

35 MIMI: (*With a nervous smile*) Pete, are our dear family

1 members ready to come down and meet our guests?
2 **PETE:** Well ...
3 **MS. TISHWATER:** Shame on all of you for keeping me in
4 such suspense. (*Rubbing her fingers together*) Shame,
5 shame, shame.
6 **FESTER:** (*Off-stage*) Cousin Pete?
7 **PETE:** That's Cousin Fester.
8 **PETUNIA:** (*Nervous*) That's Cousin Fester.
9 **MIMI:** (*Nervous*) That's Cousin Fester.
10 **OSWALD:** Come on in, Cousin Fester! (*FESTER enters wearing*
11 *a nice shirt, tie and dress pants. He's still barefoot. His head*
12 *is thrown back, his arms extend out from his body and his*
13 *shoulders are thrown back.*)
14 **FESTER:** Where is everybody?
15 **PETUNIA:** (*Approaching him and taking his arm*) Here we are,
16 right this way. That's right. Everyone, I'd like you to
17 meet our Cousin Fester.
18 **FESTER:** (*Very loudly, as he had practiced before*) Howdy,
19 Donna Jo! (*PETUNIA pushes his head down. When she*
20 *moves her hand, his head springs back up. She does this a*
21 *couple of times.*)
22 **MARCIA:** (*Crossing to MIMI Upstage*) Mimi, you didn't tell me
23 Fester was so cute.
24 **MIMI:** Huh?
25 **MARCIA:** Cute and rich. What a combination!
26 **MIMI:** Marcia, I don't think ...
27 **MARCIA:** (*Approaching him*) Well, hello, Fester. I'm Marcia.
28 It's very nice to meet you.
29 **OSWALD:** (*Pulling FESTER Downstage*) Fester, I'd like you to
30 meet Ms. Tishwater. (*He pushes FESTER's head down. It*
31 *stays this time; yet he's still in his inflexible position.*) Fester,
32 wouldn't you like to shake Ms. Tishwater's hand?
33 **FESTER:** I'm stuck.
34 **MS. TISHWATER:** Have a seat beside me, Fester. Let's get
35 acquainted. (*He sits the best he can with his arms extended*

- 1 *back. He throws his foot up on his knee.)* Good heavens, he
 2 doesn't have on any shoes.
- 3 **PETE:** That's because mine wouldn't fit.
- 4 **OSWALD:** Pete! What Pete means is Fester stepped in a mud
 5 puddle out back, and we're getting his shoes cleaned.
- 6 **MS. TISHWATER:** I see. *(To FESTER)* Well now, young man,
 7 I understand you're quite opulent. *(FESTER is quiet.)*
- 8 **OSWALD:** Fester, Ms. Tishwater is talking to you.
- 9 **FESTER:** Huh?
- 10 **MS. TISHWATER:** I said, I understand you're quite opulent.
- 11 **FESTER:** *(Stares at her for a second.)* I'll have to think about
 12 that.
- 13 **MARCIA:** *(Sitting quite closely to FESTER, she giggles softly.)*
 14 Fester, you are so witty.
- 15 **FESTER:** Sorry.
- 16 **MARCIA:** *(Laughs.)* There you go again. Mimi, why have you
 17 been keeping this one a secret?
- 18 **MS. TISHWATER:** *(To FESTER)* We're bound to get along
 19 swimmingly since we both cherish the more suitable
 20 things in life, such as wealth and prestige.
- 21 **FESTER:** *(Beat)* I'll have to think about that. *(MARCIA*
 22 *laughs.)* That makes you happy when I say that, don't
 23 it, fancy city lady?
- 24 **MS. TISHWATER:** There is something fishy going on here.
- 25 **MARCIA:** Oh, yes it does, Fester. How did you come to be
 26 so jocular?
- 27 **FESTER:** *(Putting a fist to his chest)* It's that chili I had for
 28 lunch. *(MARCIA laughs. To OSWALD)* She's a happy one,
 29 Cousin Oswald. *(Back to MARCIA)* I'll have to think
 30 about that. *(MARCIA and FESTER laugh heartily.)*
- 31 **OSWALD:** Fester, have a cookie. *(Pushes one in FESTER's*
 32 *mouth. ELKIN enters. He's wearing a T-shirt with a bow tie*
 33 *clipped to its collar. His khaki pants are too short on him. He*
 34 *wears white socks. His hair has been glued to his head. He*
 35 *holds FESTER's ax.)*

- 1 **ELKIN:** Here, Fester. You forgot your ax. (*He thrusts it toward*
2 *FESTER in front of MS. TISHWATER's face.*)
- 3 **MS. TISHWATER:** (*With hand to her chest*) Good heavens, he's
4 going to kill me!
- 5 **PETE:** (*Grabbing the ax*) Elkin, give that to me. Fester, I'll set
6 it right over here out of the way. Is that OK?
- 7 **FESTER:** (*So MARCIA will laugh*) I'll have to think about
8 that. (*MARCIA and FESTER roll with laughter.*)
- 9 **PETUNIA:** (*Trying to stay calm*) Elkin, where is your shirt?
- 10 **ELKIN:** I ripped it tryin' to put it on.
- 11 **MS. TISHWATER:** (*To ELKIN*) Good gracious, you are a
12 slouch, a laggard, a shirker!
- 13 **ELKIN:** No ma'am, I'm a Jennings.
- 14 **MS. TISHWATER:** Mr. Tippinhimer, I demand to know what
15 is going on here this very minute.
- 16 **ELKIN:** Merry Christmas, Ms. Dishwater.
- 17 **OSWALD:** Tishwater, Elkin, *Tishwater.*
- 18 **ELKIN:** I ain't met ... (*OSWALD, MIMI, PETE and PETUNIA*
19 *clear their throats.*) I mean, I hasn't never met someone
20 as fancy as you before.
- 21 **MS. TISHWATER:** (*Taken aback, calming with a smile*) Oh,
22 please.
- 23 **ELKIN:** Yes ma'am, you make me think of Eloise back home.
- 24 **MS. TISHWATER:** Is Eloise your fiancee?
- 25 **ELKIN:** No ma'am, she's my prize pig.
- 26 **PETE:** Elkin!
- 27 **ELKIN:** Prettiest porker in Cricket County.
- 28 **MS. TISHWATER:** Well, I never! (*To PETUNIA*) Would you be
29 kind enough to show me your ladies room?
- 30 **FESTER:** (*To MS. TISHWATER*) You don't have to go outside;
31 they have one upstairs.
- 32 **PETUNIA:** Of course, right this way. (*Leads her to the hall.*
33 *LATRISSA enters. MIMI approaches her.*)
- 34 **MIMI:** Latrissa, play some music and lighten the mood.
35 Oswald, go see what's taking the twins so long. (*She*



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