

"THE MAIN(E) DISH"

SITCOM PILOT: "THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE LAWYER"

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TOP 10 FINALIST - BRAVO'S "SITUATION: COMEDY"

COLD OPENING

FADE IN:

INT. DINER - ROCK HARBOR, MAINE - DAY
(ROBERTA, LOIS, MALE VOICE, SONNY)

AN OLD FASHIONED DINER ON THE COAST OF MAINE. LOBSTER TRAPS, BUOYS AND NETS ADORN THE WALLS. THE COUNTER STOOLS AND BOOTHS ARE COMFORTABLY BROKEN IN FROM YEARS OF COFFEE AND CHATTER...

ON THE WALL IS A BANNER, "WELCOME WINNER OF THE WIN A DINER IN MAINE CONTEST."

BEHIND THE COUNTER IS ROBERTA 30'S, A NATURAL BEAUTY, CAREER WAITRESS. SHE IS DRESSED IN KHAKI SHORTS, A GREEN FATIGUE T-SHIRT AND MILITARY BOOTS - WITH A LARGE BOWIE KNIFE TUCKED INSIDE. (HALF BABE, HALF ASSASSIN) SHE'S HANGS HER ORDERS ON THE WHEEL AT THE KITCHEN WINDOW.

ROBERTA

Ordering!

ROBERTA WALKS TO THE END OF THE COUNTER AS LOIS, FORTY AND FLAMBOYANT, TAKES A SEAT.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

Hey, Lois.

LOIS

(holding her head) You don't have to
scream.

ROBERTA POURS COFFEE. LOIS TAKES A FLASK FROM A HUGE CANVAS BAG AND POURS IT INTO HER CUP.

ROBERTA

Happy hour, already?

LOIS

It's that new Southern Comfort diet.
All the whiskey I want. Just gotta cut
out the fruits and vegetables.

ROBERTA

So, how much have you lost?

LOIS

Three and a half days.

ROBERTA

(points to the banner on the wall)

I hear the winner's a guy.

LOIS

That's strange. I heard it was a girl.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Pick up!

ROBERTA WALKS BACK TO THE KITCHEN WINDOW. LOOKING OUT IS SONNY, (27) - SMALLISH, WITH SUNGLASSES, A GOATEE, A JERSEY ACCENT, AND A YANKEES CAP. A SANDWICH SITS ON THE LEDGE.

ROBERTA

(opens the sandwich) Where's the
swiss?

SONNY TAKES THE PLATE BACK. HE THROWS ON A COUPLE OF SLICES
OF CHEESE, AND COVERS IT WITH BREAD. SONNY PUSHES THE PLATE
BACK TO HER.

SONNY

There.

ROBERTA

This ain't swiss. Where are the holes?

SONNY REMOVES THE TOP SLICES OF BREAD. HE PICKS UP A FORK AND
VIOLENTLY STABS THE CHEESE, OVER AND OVER.

SFX - SCREECHING MUSIC FROM THE SHOWER SCENE IN "PSYCHO".

SONNY SLAPS THE BREAD BACK ON.

SONNY

Now, it's swiss.

ROBERTA

You missed a spot.

SONNY STABS THE CHEESE ONE LAST TIME. ONE LAST SCREECH.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

That your idea of keeping a low
profile?

SONNY

Yeah.

ROBERTA

So much for the witness protection
program.

SONNY

Hey, ya wanna get me killed?

ROBERTA

(looks at sandwich) Sonny. This is provolone.

SONNY

Provolone's next to Switzerland. Only they don't wear short pants and yodel.

ROBERTA

Don't make me come back there. Just gimme the swiss - and nobody gets hurt.

SONNY

We're outta Swiss. Just turn on that ol' Roberta charm.

ROBERTA PICKS UP THE PLATE. SHE TURNS AROUND AND PLACES IT IN FRONT OF A CUSTOMER.

ROBERTA

It's provolone. You got a problem with that?

THE CUSTOMER THROWS UP HIS ARMS AND SURRENDERS.

END OF COLD OPENING

ACT ONEINT. DINER - LATER

(TYLER, JANE, CONVICT, ROBERTA, WENDALL, LOIS, SONNY, HOPPY)

SEATED AT A BOOTH IS TYLER DAVIS, 30, SLICK, A NATURAL SALESMAN WITH A SMILE THAT OPENS DOORS. HE WEARS A DRESS SHIRT AND BLUE BLAZER, AND HAS A CELL PHONE TO HIS EAR.

TYLER

(into phone) That's right. A diner. In
Maine. I won it in an essay contest.
It's all mine... No, moose is not on
the menu... I'm already lining up
investors.

ROBERTA PLACES DOWN A GLASS OF WATER AND A MENU.

TYLER (CONT'D)

(ignores her) Just coffee.

ROBERTA LEAVES.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Look, I told you. I don't have the
cash right now. I'll get it to you.
Just give me some time. I've placed my
last bet.

TYLER HANGS UP.

AT THE COUNTER:

JANE O'REILLY, 28, GIRL-NEXT-DOOR TYPE, IN JEANS AND A BLOUSE, SITS NEXT TO A CONVICT IN AN ORANGE JUMPSUIT, WHO IS SEATED NEXT TO A U.S. MARSHALL. THE CONVICT'S HANDS ARE CUFFED TOGETHER AND CHAINED TO LEG IRONS.

JANE MARKS A RECIPE IN *GOURMET MAGAZINE*, USING A YELLOW HIGHLIGHTER. THE CONVICT HOLDS THREE COLORED MARKERS IN HIS HAND. JANE TURNS TO THE CONVICT.

JANE

Red, please?

THE CONVICT HANDS HER THE MARKER.

CONVICT

I thought red was for chicken?

JANE

No, silly. The red one is for beef.

CONVICT

I am so dumb... So, you won this place? In an essay contest?

JANE

I just sent in 200 dollars, and told them why I wanted the diner. Over a thousand entries. And mine was the winner... Blue, please.

CONVICT

(handing her the marker) Fish, right?... That's some serious dough. (looking around) For this palace?

JANE

It is to me. I'm just waiting for the owners to make it official.

CONVICT

So, you ever run a restaurant before.

JANE

No. But I was a chef in one. Back home in Sheboygan. I can't go back to work there... I had a flare-up.

CONVICT

With the owners?

JANE

No. A flare-up. I burned it down.

CONVICT

Oooh. Now we're talking.

JANE

No. It was an accident. Grease fire.

CONVICT

Grease fire. I like it.

JANE

Fry-o-lators. Never really got the hang of them.

ROBERTA RETURNS TO TYLER'S BOOTH WITH COFFEE.

TYLER

(into phone) Mike, I'm telling ya.

This place is a gold mine. A license to print money.

WATER LEAKS FROM THE CEILING ONTO THE TABLE.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Classy. Very classy.

ROBERTA WIPES THE LEAK WITH A DISHCLOTH.

TYLER (CONT'D)

It's got tablecloths. (looking at Roberta) French waiters... Five grand gets you in... Okay, just get back to me.

TYLER HANGS UP. ROBERTA POURS TYLER COFFEE.

TYLER (CONT'D)

(re: the leak) Does this happen often?

ROBERTA

Only when it rains - Monsieur.

ROBERTA TAKES HIS WATER GLASS AND PUTS IT UNDER THE LEAK.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

Most French cafes charge extra.

TYLER

For what?

ROBERTA

(looking up) The natural spring water.

TYLER

(as Roberta leaves) Note to self. Fire waitress.

BACK TO JANE AND THE CONVICT

JANE

We all make mistakes. Even juries.

CONVICT

Tell me about it.

JANE

So. Your mother - your dear, dear
mother - actually lied on the witness
stand to convict you. How awful...

CONVICT

Broke my heart.

JANE

AND they mixed up the DNA? You poor
man.

CONVICT

Happens all the time.

JANE CLOSSES THE MAGAZINE AND TAKES THE MARKERS FROM THE
CONVICT. SHE CAREFULLY PLACES THEM IN HER BACKPACK. THE
CONVICT AND MARSHALL GET UP TO LEAVE.

CONVICT (CONT'D)

Good luck, Jane.

JANE

Thanks, Richard. And don't give up
hope. They'll find the one-armed man.

THE CONVICT SLOWLY SHUFFLES AWAY IN HIS LEG IRONS.

IN THE BOOTH NEXT TO TYLER'S, SITS A HEAVY SET, BALDING MAN
(LATE 30'S) WEARING SUSPENDERS. THE BOOTH IS A MESS - STUFFED
WITH BOXES OF FILES, FOLDERS, THICK LEGAL BOOKS, PENS, A
STAPLER, PAPER CLIPS - YOU NAME IT.

A PLAQUE WITH THE NAME WENDALL HOLMES, ESQ. IS ON THE TABLE.
A DIPLOMA FROM THE ONLINE "UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX" HANGS ON
THE WALL. WENDALL LEANS OVER TO TYLER, WHO IS DRINKING WATER.

WENDALL

I wouldn't drink the water.

TYLER

(pulls the glass away) Too late.

WENDALL

(excited) You're not thinking of suing, are you?

TYLER

Are you the owner?

WENDALL

No, I just rent.

ROBERTA

(passing by) His upscale law office.

TYLER

I could use a good shyster.

ROBERTA

Shyster, maybe... Good?

WENDALL HANDS TYLER A COFFEE STAINED BUSINESS CARD.

WENDALL

Wendall Holmes, at your service.

TYLER

Tyler Davis.

WENDALL

Can't quite place the accent.

TYLER

Detroit. (points to the contest banner) That's me. The winner.

ROBERTA

Ain't you the lucky one.

WENDALL

This calls for a celebration. Roberta,
two cafe au lait's, please.

ROBERTA

(walking away) Wrong hotel.

THE WALL PHONE NEXT TO THE BOOTH RINGS. WENDALL PICKS UP.

WENDALL

(into phone) Law Office. 150 an
hour.... Yes, that's dollars... Well,
what can you pay?... All right. Just
make sure you roll the quarters.

TYLER, NOTICING JANE, PICKS UP HIS COFFEE CUP AND SIDLES OVER TO HER AT THE COUNTER. HE EMPTIES HALF THE SUGAR JAR INTO HIS COFFEE.

TYLER

I couldn't help but notice.

JANE

Notice what?

TYLER

That you weren't noticing me.

JANE

Oh, I'm sorry. I was talking to
someone else.

TYLER

That guy in the orange leisure suit?
Your boyfriend?

JANE

Oh, he's not my boyfriend.

TYLER

Too bad. You made such a nice couple.

JANE

Oh, no. My boyfriend's already in prison.

TYLER

For what? Or should I ask?

JANE

He didn't do it.

TYLER

I don't doubt that for a moment...

JANE

Armed robbery.

TYLER

Innocent huh?

JANE

He couldn't have done it. He was already in prison. For murder.

TYLER

I'm thinking... self-defense.

JANE

How did you know?

TYLER

Just a hunch... So, do you ever date white collar criminals?

JANE

Only if they're innocent.

TYLER EMPTIES THE REST OF THE SUGAR JAR INTO HIS COFFEE.

TYLER

(off JANE'S look of disbelief)

What?... I'm counting carbs.

JANE

Did you know that brown sugar has half the carbohydrates and twice the fibre?

TYLER

(still pouring) You're not with the food police - are you? I never laid a hand on that Slim Jim.

JANE

You know they did a study on Slim Jims using white mice, and found out -

TYLER

Oh, I get it. You're in one of those "low carb" cult groups.

JANE

You've got me mixed up with my brother. He's in a cult group - in Idaho... I'm a chef. (points to her magazine) Can't wait to try out this new Eggs Florentine breakfast.

TYLER

Breakfast? Doesn't ring any bells.

JANE

Not a morning person, huh?

TYLER

I hate morning people. They're all
so... bubbly.

JANE

I like to get up around 4:30. Go for a
morning run. Do a little bird
watching. Get a good healthy
breakfast. Oatmeal. Half a grapefruit.
And then? Just watch the sun come up.

TYLER CROSSES HIS FINGERS, AS IF WARDING OFF A VAMPIRE.

TYLER

Don't get any closer. I've got garlic.

JANE

Oh, my favorite.

TYLER

4:30 in the morning? I'm usually
mixing my last martini.

JANE

Oh. You're a bartender.

TYLER

No. A consultant.

JANE

A consultant. What kind?

TYLER

Restaurants, as a matter of fact.

JANE

Which ones?

TYLER

You've heard of Fridays? Well, before me? It was Mondays.

JANE

Wow! That's brilliant. You are so smart. You're like some kind of GENIUS...

LOIS SITS AT HER STOOL. ROBERTA FILLS HER COFFEE CUP.

ROBERTA

(nodding in Tyler's direction) That guy over there. He's the winner. From Detroit.

LOIS

Detroit? The murder capital of the world.

ROBERTA

Great. Hannibal Lector's gonna be signing my checks.

LOIS

I'm not sure it's the cannibal capital of the world.

ROBERTA

I can think of a few people I wouldn't mind feeding him.

SONNY (O.S.)

(yells) Hey, Roberta! The orders are backing up.

ROBERTA

With a nice Chianti.

BACK TO TYLER AND JANE

TYLER

(giggling) Sheboygan?

JANE

That's right. Sheboygan.

TYLER

(still giggling) I'm sorry. Am I pronouncing it right?

JANE

Yes. Sheboygan. Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Did I say something funny?

TYLER

(finally calming down) Don't tell me. Your favorite movie is? "It's A Wonderful Life"?

JANE

(excited) You must be psychic.

TYLER

Matter of fact I am. Had my own TV show. "Teleporting With Tyler."

JANE

(closes her eyes tight) So, what am I thinking right now?

TYLER

You're thinking... that you've never
met anyone quite like me.

JANE
(opening her eyes)

Sorry... It was the number "7".

TYLER

Oh.

JANE

But, it's true. I've never met anyone
quite like you.

THE DOOR OPENS. HOPPY, (EARLY 40'S) A TENTH GENERATION MAINER
WITH A THICK DOWNEAST ACCENT, WEARING A RAIN-SOAKED SLICKER
AND A DUCKBILL FISHING CAP, ENTERS. HE STEPS INSIDE - AND HIS
FOOT GOES THROUGH A HOLE IN THE FLOOR.

HOPPY

Damn. Thought I fixed that.

HOPPY STEPS OUT OF THE HOLE AND PASSES BY TYLER.

TYLER

Oh, are you the owner?

HOPPY
(shaking Tyler's hand)

Nope. Hallowell P. Birch, III. But
folks round here just call me "Hoppy."

TYLER

Hoppy?

HOPPY

Ayuh. Hoppy.

TYLER

Tyler Davis - The First.

HOPPY

Pleasure... You wouldn't happen to be the owner of that 93' B-M-DUBYA? Would-ya? The one with the top down?

TYLER JUMPS UP AND RUNS OUTSIDE.

HOPPY (CONT'D)

Ayuh. Wicked wet out they-uh.

HOPPY RUBS THE ANKLE OF THE FOOT THAT WENT THROUGH THE HOLE.
WENDALL RUNS OVER TO HOPPY.

WENDALL

Are you hurt?

HOPPY

I'm okay.

WENDALL

You sure? Looks to me like a personal injury case...

HOPPY

Oh, no. You're not getting my money again.

WENDALL

You don't pay me a dime until we collect.

HOPPY

Well, I'm not doing it.

WENDALL

Why not?

HOPPY

For one thing, I'm the one who put in that floor. I'd have to sue myself.

WENDALL

You got insurance?

HOPPY

Can you do that?

WENDALL

(puts his arm around Hoppy)

I'm a lawyer.

WITH THAT, THEY HEAD OVER TO WENDALL'S BOOTH.

TYLER RE-ENTERS THE DINER. HIS CLOTHES AND HAIR ARE WET. HE SITS DOWN NEXT TO JANE. SHE HANDS HIM A TOWEL FROM HER BACKPACK.

JANE

You'll catch your death.

TYLER

Thanks... (drying off) All I need now is a bathrobe and slippers.

JANE

(reaching in) Oh, I've got that too.

TYLER

That's okay. (handing back the towel)
You're a bit odd.

JANE

Odd? Guess you've never met anyone
like me before.

TYLER

As a matter of fact, I have. On Mars.

SONNY (O.S.)

Roberta! Pick up.

ROBERTA

(picking up) This is chili, right?

SONNY

No, it's Argentina.

HOPPY SITS DOWN AT THE COUNTER. ROBERTA PUTS THE BOWL OF
CHILI DOWN IN FRONT OF HIM. HE WOLFS IT DOWN.

ROBERTA

You're a brave man, Hoppy. Hope you
don't have any plans for today.

HOPPY

How do you think this place gets its
lob-stuh?

ROBERTA

Late.

HOPPY

(re: the chili) Ayuh - wicked good.

(Beat) My fault the wife can't get
enough of me?

ROBERTA

Hoppy - those three minutes ain't
making nobody late.

HOPPY
(still chowing down)

Tell your sister that.

ROBERTA

Five, Four, Three, Two...

HOPPY JUMPS UP OFF HIS STOOL.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

Lift off.

HOPPY RUSHES TOWARD THE BATHROOM.

JANE

He should taste my chili. I have a
secret ingredient.

ROBERTA

Really? Anything's an improvement
over Sonny's.

SONNY (O.S.)

I heard that.

JANE

I could show him.

JANE JUMPS OFF THE STOOL AND HEADS FOR THE KITCHEN.

ROBERTA

(to SONNY) Incoming.

SONNY

Pat her down.

ROBERTA

(to JANE) Sonny's a little...
peculiar.

ROBERTA PATS JANE DOWN.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

(to SONNY) She's clean.

JANE GOES INTO THE KITCHEN.

LOIS GETS UP FROM HER STOOL AT THE END OF THE COUNTER. SHE PULLS YELLOW POLICE TAPE OUT OF HER BAG - USING IT TO SAVE HER SEAT.

SHE TRIES THE DOOR OF THE UNISEX BATHROOM. IT'S LOCKED. SHE KNOCKS. NO ANSWER. SHE BANGS WITH BOTH FISTS.

THE DOOR FINALLY OPENS. HOPPY COMES OUT AS LOIS GOES IN.

LOIS

You the one leaving the seat up?

HOPPY

You think I want to end up like your
last husband?

LOIS

I was cleared of all charges. He
slipped off that cliff.

HOPPY

Ayuh. And you slipped into a wicked
million.

LOIS

He was a saint... But just to be on
the safe side? I'd put the seat down.

HOPPY WALKS TO THE COUNTER AND SITS NEXT TO TYLER.

HOPPY

Always wanted one of them beam-uhs.

TYLER

Beemuhs? Oh, you mean beamer?

HOPPY

That's what I said - beam-uh. You're from away, ain'tchya?

TYLER

(nods, points to the banner) I'm the guy that won the contest. So what do you do?

HOPPY

Just about everything. Fish. Fix stuff. Drive the tour bus. You might say - there's little I don't do.

ROBERTA

Or - you might say - as little as possible.

(O.S.) LOUD DOG BARKING IN KITCHEN. JANE COMES RUNNING OUT OF THE KITCHEN HOLDING A LARGE BOWL AND SPOONS.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

I forgot to tell you about Killer. Sonny's Doberman. Sometimes he sneaks into the kitchen.

JANE

Oh, he's sweet... Sonny's a little scary.

ROBERTA

Sonny's a punk.

SONNY (O.S.)

(yells) I heard that.

JANE PUTS THE BOWL AND SPOONS DOWN ON THE COUNTER BETWEEN HOPPY AND TYLER.

JANE

Wait'll you try this.

HOPPY AND TYLER DIG IN. HOPPY GRIMACES - THEN RELUCTANTLY SWALLOWS IT. TYLER TURNS AWAY, COVERS HIS MOUTH WITH A NAPKIN, AND THEN SPITS INTO IT.

JANE (CONT'D)

So, what do you think?

TYLER

(turning back) It's... good. Really,
it's good.

JANE

I'm so glad. Because I made a lot. (to
Hoppy) How about you?

HOPPY

Oh, uh, yeah. Wicked tasty.

JANE

Oh, please, have some more.

SHE TRIES TO GIVE HOPPY MORE. HE PUTS HIS HAND OVER HIS DISH.

HOPPY

Couldn't touch another bite.

JANE

(pushing the bowl toward TYLER) How about you?

TYLER

(shakes his head) I'm still savoring that first one.

JANE

Oh, go on. Have a little more.

TYLER

No, I couldn't. Really, I couldn't.

JANE

That's okay. You can have it anytime. It'll be a regular item on the menu.

TYLER

You're going to be working here?

JANE

You could say that. I'm the new owner. I won the contest.

TYLER

I think you're confused. I won the contest.

JANE

No. You're the one that's confused.

TYLER

Me?

JANE

Yeah, you.

TYLER

Oh, yeah?

JANE

Yeah.

TYLER

Oh, yeah?

JANE

Yeah.

ROBERTA SLOWLY PULLS THE BOWIE KNIFE OUT OF HER BOOT...
RAISES IT UP... THEN THRUSTS IT INTO THE WOOD COUNTER! RIGHT
BETWEEN TYLER'S FINGERS.

STUNNED SILENCE...

ROBERTA
(staring down Tyler,
finally...)

Coffee?

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. DINER - MINUTES LATER

(HELEN, CHARLIE, TYLER, JANE, CHARLIE AND HELEN, LOIS, ROBERTA)

CHARLIE AND HELEN TUCKER, 60'S, ENTER. HELEN IS PULLING CHARLIE BY HIS EAR. THEY APPROACH TYLER AND JANE.

HELEN

Are you Tyler and Jane?

TYLER AND JANE NOD.

HELEN (CONT'D)

I'm Helen. And this is Charlie. He has something to tell you... Tell them, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Let go.

HELEN

Tell them.

CHARLIE

I can't - with you pulling my ear.

HELEN LETS GO OF HIM.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(straightening up) I used to be taller. (beat) You see, there's been a mix-up. Helen thought that I agreed with her on the winner.

HELEN

You did, Charlie.

CHARLIE

(to JANE and TYLER re: HELEN) You see what I gotta put up with? (beat) Anyway, we each notified the winner. Only thing was - we didn't realize it was two different people.

TYLER

How does that happen?

CHARLIE

You're not married, are you?

JANE

Does this mean we share the diner?

CHARLIE AND HELEN

Oooh, that's a good idea.

TYLER

No, no. That's NOT a good idea. I don't need a partner.

HELEN

Well, we'll just have to settle it then.

CHARLIE

Right after lunch. I can't think on an empty stomach.

TYLER'S CELL PHONE RINGS. TAKING THE CALL, HE WALKS AWAY.

LOIS

(to JANE) Psst! Psst! PSST!

JANE GOES OVER AND SITS DOWN NEXT TO LOIS. LOIS TAKES OUT HER FLASK.

LOIS (CONT'D)

(pouring into her own cup) Want some?

JANE

What is it?

LOIS

Half and half.

JANE

Kind of dark.

LOIS

Half Jack Daniels, half Jim Beam.

JANE

I'm okay, thanks.

LOIS

Not from Detroit, are you?

JANE

Wisconsin.

LOIS

Oh, my fourth husband was from Wisconsin. He died - tragically.

JANE

Oh, I'm sorry. How?

LOIS

Car accident. Brakes gave out.

JANE

That's terrible.

LOIS

I know. I loved that car.

OVER AT A BOOTH:

HELEN AND CHARLIE EAT SANDWICHES.

CHARLIE

(shouting) Who's got the ketchup?

THE KETCHUP BOTTLE GOES FROM TABLE TO TABLE UNTIL CHARLIE GETS IT. IT'S EMPTY. ROBERTA COMES TO THE TABLE WITH A GALLON CAN AND A SPOUT. SHE FILLS THE ONLY KETCHUP BOTTLE THEY HAVE.

ROBERTA

(to HELEN) Gotta be a little sad.

Leaving and all?

HELEN

You kidding, Roberta? Look at this place.

ROBERTA

Take me with you, please. I won't be much trouble. Honest. (beat) How about you, Charlie?

CHARLIE

Right. I'm really gonna miss gettin' up at four in the morning to buy haddock.

ROBERTA

So, where you off to?

CHARLIE

Second honeymoon. First stop,
Australia. Croc hunting.

ROBERTA

Croc? As in crocodiles?... Who said
you weren't a romantic?

HELEN

I thought we were going sky diving?

CHARLIE

We talked about this, de-uh. First
croc hunting, then shark feeding, then
bungee jumping and THEN sky diving.

HELEN

I could be dead by then.

CHARLIE

You just gotta love this woman.

CUT TO:

HELEN AND CHARLIE'S BOOTH - LATER

(CHARLIE, JANE, TYLER, HELEN, WENDALL, SONNY, LOIS, HOPPY,
CHARLIE AND HELEN, ROBERTA)

TYLER AND JANE, AND CHARLIE AND HELEN, SIT FACING EACH OTHER.
HOPPY, LOIS, ROBERTA, SONNY AND WENDALL STAND AROUND THEM.

CHARLIE

So, we're all agreed. We're gonna read
your essays aloud. Then the seven of
us will vote. (ala "Survivor") And -
only one of you will win the diner.
The other one? Goes home. Ready?

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(picking up TYLER'S essay) Says here in your essay, Tyler, that your wife's dream was "to see the ocean one last time."

JANE

Oh, that's beautiful.

CHARLIE

That was just after she was "diagnosed with a rare tropical disease."

JANE

Oh, that's awful.

CHARLIE

By the way - what disease was that?

TYLER

(buying time) Amazon - moth - fever.

JANE

My God. That must have been...

TYLER

Expensive. (beat) She wanted to donate her organs. But that was before the moths started - tunneling. (Beat) I only wish you could have known Mary Ann before...

JANE STARTS SNIFFLING.

CHARLIE

Also says here that Mary Ann's last words were, "Go to Maine, darling."

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Open that diner. Cook a lobster for me."

JANE SNIFFLES LOUDER.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

"And for the children we'll never have."

JANE

(crying openly) Ohhhhh.

HELEN

(pats JANE'S hand) There, there, de-uh.

TYLER

Cut down in the prime of her life.

JANE

(crying harder) So much to live for.

CHARLIE

So, Tyler. Is there anything else you feel we should know about you?

TYLER

One word. Closure.

JANE

(overwhelmed) Ohhhhhh... just give it to him!

HELEN

(looks at Jane's essay) And now you, de-uh.

JANE

(blows her nose) I'm sorry.

HELEN

I can't believe this little girl was you. What were you? Seven? Eight?

JANE

Seven and a half. And itching like crazy.

TYLER

Wait a minute. You two know each other?

HELEN

(nodding) 1985. Jane came in with her parents. She had poison ivy. I gave her some calamine lotion.

JANE

You rubbed it on. And then gave me a big bowl of chocolate ice cream.

TYLER

This thing's fixed.

CHARLIE

No, son. We don't do that in Maine.

THE WALL PHONE RINGS.

WENDALL (O.S.)

(yells) HEY, SONNY! It's Manny. Over at Rockingham Park. "Lay off the favorite today. They're stiffing him."

SONNY

Ahhh! Maledetsyone!

LOIS

For a Weinstein - you sure know a lot
of Italian.

SONNY

And you sure ask a lot of questions.

TYLER

Where's Rockingham Park?

HOPPY

Ya can't get they-uh from he-uh.

HELEN PUTS ON HER READING GLASSES, ADDRESSING JANE.

HELEN

Says here... You "graduated cooking
school in Milwaukee."

JANE

That's right. The Acme Institute Of
Gourmet Cooking.

TYLER

Not the Acme Gourmet Institute. Famous
for their tuna ala king?

JANE

Oh, you've heard of it.

HELEN

Also says here, "you'd love nothing
more than to live the simple life..."

TYLER

I lived in a log cabin until I was
eighteen.

HELEN

"...serve comfort food with a gourmet
twist."

TYLER

Did you know I created "Meals On
Wheels"?

HELEN

And - this is my favorite part -
"personally thank that special person
who was so kind to me on that day."

TYLER

I spent five Years in Uganda. I loved
those people.

HELEN

Jane, de-uh. Is there anything else
you feel we should know about you?

TYLER

Let me guess. If she wins the diner--
she'll use it to bring about world
peace.

JANE

(to HELEN) One word. Honesty.

CHARLIE LOOKS AROUND.

CHARLIE

Ready to vote?

CHARLIE PICKS UP A BOWL AND PASSES IT AROUND. AS THE VOTERS PUT THEIR BALLOTS IN, THE BOWL COMES BACK TO CHARLIE. HE PULLS OUT THE FIRST BALLOT. AND CONTINUES PULLING.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Tyler... Jane... Tyler... Tyler... One more vote for Tyler and it's his.

(pulls another ballot) Jane... Jane...

(holding up last ballot) This is it.

With this vote, one of you wins this five star eatery. And the other one - goes home. (opens the last ballot)

Abstain? What? Who's that?

SILENCE.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(to HELEN) What do you think, de-uh?

HELEN

I don't see any choice. Do you?

CHARLIE

Nope.

THEY BOTH REACH OUT TO SHAKE HANDS WITH TYLER AND JANE.

CHARLIE AND HELEN

Congratulations!

JANE

What do you mean?

HELEN

Good luck.

TYLER

You mean to tell me...?

HOPPY

Ayuh... the tribe has spok-un.

ROBERTA RUSHES OVER TO CHARLIE AND HELEN.

ROBERTA

Your hot air balloon just landed.

HELEN

Oh, de-uh. That's our ride, Charlie.

Let's go.

CHARLIE AND HELEN GET UP AND RUSH TO THE FRONT DOOR. THEY TURN AROUND.

CHARLIE

This is it. Bye, everybody.

HELEN

Au revoir, arreverderci, g'day mate.

ROBERTA THROWS HER ARMS AROUND CHARLIE, THEN HELEN.

ROBERTA

(pulling away) Throw a shrimp on the barbie for me.

HELEN

I think I'll miss you most of all,
Scarecrow.

ROBERTA

Really? I couldn't wait to get rid of
you dubs.

TYLER

Wait a second! You're not leaving?

JANE

Where are you going?

HELEN

Tell you one thing. It ain't Kansas.

CHARLIE

(to the room) You just gotta love this woman. Bye.

LOTS OF GOODBYES FROM THE STAFF AND CUSTOMERS.

TYLER

What's the deal? Who won?

CHARLIE

You both won... We're off.

CHARLIE AND HELEN EXIT.

TYLER

(to WENDALL) You're a lawyer. How do I get rid of her?

JANE

Rid of me?

WENDALL

You're both in luck. Mediation is my specialty.

ROBERTA

I thought it was ambulance chasing.

WENDALL HOLDS OUT HIS COFFEE CUP.

WENDALL

How about a refill, Roberta?

ROBERTA

Sure.

TOTALLY IGNORING HIM, ROBERTA JUST WALKS AWAY, FULL COFFEE POT IN HAND.

WENDALL

(to JANE and TYLER) So hard to find
good help nowadays... Why don't we
step into my office?

THE THREE OF THEM WALK OVER TO WENDALL'S BOOTH. THE WALL PHONE RINGS. WENDALL PICKS IT UP.

WENDALL (CONT'D)

Law office... 150 an hour. (yells)
HEY, SONNY. It's Manny. Wants to lay
down a deuce on the Redskins.

WENDALL HANGS UP AND JOINS TYLER AND JANE IN HIS BOOTH.

TYLER

Plain and simple. It's mine. She stole
it.

WENDALL

How?

JANE

I've never stolen anything in my life.

TYLER

Until now.

JANE

My essay was just as good as yours.

TYLER

At least, mine was in on time.

JANE

On time? I met the deadline.

TYLER

Oh, yeah? Let's see the proof.

JANE OPENS HER BACKPACK. THIS MAY BE THE FIRST BACKPACK IN HISTORY SORTED INTO ALPHABETICAL COMPARTMENTS. SHE CAREFULLY FLIPS THROUGH IT.

JANE

L, M, N, O. Ahhh, "R". Registered
mail. Here we go.

JANE PULLS OUT A GREEN POSTCARD AND HANDS IT TO WENDALL.

WENDALL

She's right. March 15th.

TYLER

(to JANE) Do you know anything about
running a business?

TYLER HELPS HIMSELF TO A PICKLE WEDGE ON WENDALL'S PLATE. AS HE LIBERALLY POURS KETCHUP OVER IT, TO WENDALL...

TYLER (CONT'D)

May I?

NOT WAITING FOR AN ANSWER, TYLER BITES INTO IT.

JANE

(disgusted) Do you know anything about
food?

TYLER

(mouth full) I know plenty. I know
plenty about food.

JANE

Like what?

TYLER PICKS UP THE SUGAR JAR AND POURS IT OVER THE REMAINDER
OF THE PICKLE. HE ADDS MORE KETCHUP AND TAKES ANOTHER BITE.

TYLER

I've been eating my whole life.

JANE

Like what?

TYLER

Like - Pop tarts. Snickers. Cheese
Doodles.

JANE

Anything edible? (beat) What about
when you were married?

TYLER

Married? Oh, right, right. Uhmmm, we
ate out a lot.

JANE

I thought your wife loved to cook?

TYLER

She did. But that was before Mary
Ellen went downhill.

JANE

Mary Ellen? I thought her name was
Mary Ann?

TYLER

It was. Mary Ellen was her nickname.

JANE

Mary Ellen is a nickname for Mary Ann?

TYLER

Did I say "nickname"? I meant "maiden
name".

JANE

Just out of curiosity. What exactly do
you intend to do with this diner?

TYLER

I was thinking I could franchise it.
Change the name to McLobster. Market
it as fast food... I can just see it
now. (looking up and raising his arms)
Golden claws. Rising up into the sky.
From sea to shining sea.

JANE

Oh, that's despicable! How can you
even talk like that? Mary Ann would
turn over in her grave.

TYLER

Who?

JANE

(gasping) Oh... You faker!! You were never married!

TYLER

Well... not technically.

JANE

You phony... Your essay was nothing but a big fat lie.

TYLER

Who said it had to be true?

JANE

(to WENDALL) Ohhh... This is never going to work.

TYLER

That's what I've been saying all along... Why don't you just leave this to a professional - and go back to Sheboygan?

JANE

Ohhhhhh. Just for that. I'm not budging. I'll die in this place!

TYLER

Don't give me any ideas. (to WENDALL)
You believe this?... There's got to be a loophole.

WENDALL SHAKES HIS HEAD.

JANE

So, what do we do?

WENDALL

Do what most lawyers do.

JANE

What's that?

WENDALL

Flip a coin.

TYLER

One fifty an hour, huh?

JANE

No cheating!

A CROWD GATHERS AROUND THE BOOTH - INCLUDING ROBERTA, SONNY,
LOIS AND HOPPY.

ROBERTA

(Picking up a tip) Here's a quarter.

ROBERTA HANDS JANE THE QUARTER.

WENDALL

Who's going to toss it?

HOPPY

I'll do it.

LOIS

We're going to trust you? A man who
doesn't put the toilet seat down.

JANE

(to SONNY) You look like an honest
person. Would you mind?

ROBERTA

Yeah, let's have "Sammy the Bull" flip
it.

SONNY

(crossing himself, looking up)
Sammy...

LOIS

Weinstein, huh!

JANE

(handing ROBERTA the quarter) Would
you mind?

ROBERTA

No problem. But just to be sure. Let's
have Lois look at it.

ROBERTA HANDS THE QUARTER TO LOIS. LOIS HOLDS IT UP TO THE
LIGHT. SHAKES IT NEXT TO HER EAR. BITES IT. THEN TAKES A
MAGNIFYING GLASS FROM HER BAG AND EXAMINES BOTH SIDES OF IT.

LOIS

(hands ROBERTA the coin) I'm satisfied
with this coin.

ROBERTA

(to TYLER) So, you feelin' lucky?
PUNK!

TYLER

(to himself) Note to self. Kill
waitress.

SONNY

Wait a second. (holds up a five dollar bill) I got a fin on Tyler.

LOIS TAKES OUT A FIVE DOLLAR BILL AND HANDS IT TO SONNY.

LOIS

I'll take the girl.

WENDALL

Me, too.

HOPPY

You're on, Wendall.

ROBERTA

So, who's calling it?

TYLER

Heads.

JANE

Oh, good. I was going to say tails.

ROBERTA FLIPS THE COIN INTO THE AIR. IT RISES UP IN SLOW MOTION TO THE SOUNDTRACK OF "THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY".

FREEZE FRAME ON JANE. SUPERIMPOSED ON THE FREEZE FRAME ARE THE WORDS, "THE GOOD".

NOW, FREEZE FRAME ON TYLER, AND SUPERIMPOSE THE WORDS, "THE BAD".

THEN FREEZE FRAME ON WENDALL, AND SUPERIMPOSE THE WORDS, "AND THE LAWYER".

IN SLOW MOTION, THE COIN FALLS INTO ROBERTA'S PALM. SHE CATCHES IT. THEN FLIPS IT ONTO THE TOP OF HER OTHER HAND, CONCEALING THE COIN.

ROBERTA

Ready?

BEFORE ROBERTA EXPOSES THE COIN, TYLER GRABS HER HANDS.

TYLER

Hold it. (looking at Jane) This isn't fair... You shouldn't lose your dream over a bet.

SONNY

You kidding? That's how I lost my virginity.

TYLER

(to JANE) How's this? I stay out of the kitchen. You stay out of my way.

JANE

(pause) On one condition. You have to promise... You'll never, ever, ever, tell another lie.

TYLER

Absolutely.

JANE

Is that a promise?

TYLER

(crossing his heart) Cross my heart.

JANE

I didn't hear you say it.

TYLER

Okay... I promise.

ROBERTA

So, what do I do?

TYLER

The bet's off...

ROBERTA SHOWS THE COIN. IT'S HEADS.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Damn!

LOIS

So, Tyler? What did you do back in
Detroit?

TYLER

(with a straight face) I was a -
proctologist.

LOIS

You mean like root canals and wisdom
teeth?

TYLER

Exactly.

ROBERTA

What a dub.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

TAGINT. DINER - LATER

(JANE, TYLER, ROBERTA)

THE DINER HAS EMPTIED OUT EXCEPT FOR A FEW STRAGGLERS. TYLER AND JANE SIT AT A BOOTH ACROSS FROM EACH OTHER.

JANE

Looks like we're stuck with each other.

TYLER

At least, the food's free.

ROBERTA

(setting the table) Wait'll you taste it... Let's make this quick. We're closing.

TYLER

I'd like the double quarter pound combo meal with cheese. Hold the onions.

ROBERTA

Would you like me to supersize that, sir?

A LECHEROUS SMILE CROSSES TYLER'S FACE.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

Don't even... (then, turning to Jane)
And you - Cinderella?

JANE

Okay... Here's what I'd like.

ROBERTA STARTS WRITING...

JANE (CONT'D)

A Cobb salad. No, make that a Waldorf.

No, never mind. Make that a California salad. And I'd like yogurt in place of cottage cheese. Non-fat, of course...

ROBERTA JUST ROLLS HER EYES, AS SHE STOPS WRITING. JANE CONTINUES...

JANE (CONT'D)

And pineapple instead of apples. No, make that papaya. And red grapes instead of green. And no nuts. I'm allergic to nuts...

ROBERTA IS NOW FILING HER NAILS. JANE MARCHES ON...

JANE (CONT'D)

And if you have raisins? I'd like the yellow ones instead of the brown ones, and... (finally looking up at Roberta) Are you getting all this?

ROBERTA

Ohhh, yeah...

END OF SHOW.

