

CLAIREE. You are so lucky, Shelby. Louisiana lawyers do well whether they want to or not.

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

TRUVY. Are you going to quit nursing?

SHELBY. Never! I love it. I love being around all those babies . . . Last week we had this poor little fellow, two and a half months premature. He looked like a big rat. I kept talking to him and holding him. But I knew he wasn't going to make it.

TRUVY. That's so sad.

SHELBY. It happens all the time.

M'LYNN. Drum and I feel that Shelby should not work anymore after she gets married.

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

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

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

ANNELLE. I don't have anything to say.

TRUVY. Well, M'Lynn. It looks like you're ready to roll. I think we can trust Annelle to roll you up, don't you? Do you think you can roll up Mrs. Eatenton, Annelle?

ANNELLE. I don't know. Today is very special. And my work tends to be too poofy when I'm nervous. Does your dress have to go over your head?

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

M'LYNN. I must have missed the passage in Emily Post that said all abuse must be heaped on the mother of the bride. Go ahead, Annelle. I'm sure you'll do a beautiful job. It doesn't matter what I look like anyway.

TRUVY. Hush girls, Shelby. Tell me things about the wedding. How many bridesmaids?

SHELBY. Nine.

TRUVY. Good Lord!

SHELBY. Exactly.

TRUVY. I hope that photographer brings a wide-angle lens.

SHELBY. I think it's embarrassing and awful. But Mama made me have my cousins, and Margi St. Maurice.

M'LYNN. Shelby. There was no way around it and you know it.

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

M'LYNN. The poet laureate of Dogwood Lane . . .

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

TRUVY. (*The peacemaker.*) What are your colors, Shelby?

SHELBY. Blush and bashful.

M'LYNN. Her colors are pink and pink.

SHELBY. Blush and bashful.

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

SHELBY. My colors are blush and bashful. I have chosen two shades of pink. One is much deeper than the other.

M'LYNN. The bridesmaids' dresses are beautiful . . .

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

M'LYNN. That sanctuary looks like it's been hosed down with Pepco-Bismol.

SHELBY. I like pink.

M'LYNN. I tried to talk her into using peaches and cream.

That would be so lovely this time of year. All the azaleas in our yard are peach colored. Peach is so flattering to every skin tone.

SHELBY. No way. Pink is my signature color.

TRUVY. What color is your dress, M' Lynn?

M'LYNN. Peach and cream.

TRUVY. Clairee?

CLAIREE. Beige lace to the knee.

TRUVY. I am wearing a sexy blue chiffon, Shelby. Jackson's gonna take one look at me and leave you behind in the dust.

SHELBY. Mama's dress is gorgeous. It cost more than my wedding dress.

M'LYNN. It did not. It was on sale.

SHELBY. That's what she told Daddy. What she actually meant is that it was "for sale" not "on sale." (*The phone rings.*)

TRUVY. I'll get it. (*Answers.*) Hello. Hi, Janice. Yes, I heard.

I know it's an emergency . . . but today I'm dealing with Shelby. But tomorrow's Sunday—but . . . (*Just to get off the phone.*) . . . sure, fine . . . come by after church.

(*Hangs up in disgust.*)

CLAIREE. Truvy, you shouldn't give up your Sundays.

TRUVY. Well, you know how neurotic Janice Van Meter is about her appearance.

CLAIREE. (*To Annette.*) Janice is the current mayor's wife.

(*Sweetly.*) We hate her.

TRUVY. Now Shelby . . . fill me in on the reception.

SHELBY. There's going to be ferns and twinkly lights.

There'll be magnolias in the pool.

M'LYNN. I just hope your father doesn't get any magnolias from Quiser's side of the tree. We'll never hear the end of it.

SHELBY. The wedding cake will be by the pool. The groom's cake will be hidden in the carport.

M'LYNN. Shelby and I agree on one thing.

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

TRUVY. An armadillo?

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

CLAIREE. It's unusual.

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

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

M'LYNN. The rehearsal supper was an experience.

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

M'LYNN. They served steak and baked potatoes. They went to a lot of trouble.

SHELBY. His family loves to barbecue.

M'LYNN. For dessert they served an original creation called "Dago" pie. I think that says it all. Jackson is from a good old Southern family with good old Southern values. You either shoot it, stuff it, or marry it.

SHELBY. They are simply outdoorsy, that's all.

TRUVY. Did you all do anything especially romantic?

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

M'LYNN. Shelby, really.

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

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

M'LYNN. Shelby.

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

SHELBY. We talked, and talked, and talked . . .

TRUVY. I love those kinds of talks . . . in the arms of the man you love.

SHELBY. Actually we fought most of the time.

TRUVY. What?

SHELBY. Because I told him I couldn't marry him. (*Shock all around.*)

M'LYNN. What?

CLAIREE. Why would you go and do a thing like that?

SHELBY. It's O.K. now. We worked it all out.

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

SHELBY. No. But the wedding's still on.

TRUVY. Thank goodness. (*Pointing to Shelby's hairstyle.*)

'Cause this is going to be in the hardo hall of fame.

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

TRUVY. Oooo. Making up can be extremely romantic. I'm jealous. I miss romance so much.

CLAIREE. Truvy. It can't be that bad.

TRUVY. The last romantic thing my husband did was in 1972. He enclosed this carport so I could support him! Very