

THE UPS ‘N’ DOWNS OF ROLLIN’ HILLS

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

By Gary Ray Strapp

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By Gary Ray Stapp

SYNOPSIS: It's no longer business as usual at the Rolling Hills City Hall, because there is a new mayor in charge, and she's a woman! Mavis finds she has her hands full as the civic leader of her community, and she vows to move Rolling Hills in a positive direction even if she has to push it along all by herself. Fortunately for her, she has the help of her fellow councilmen to back her up . . . way back. There's Turk, who is more of an antagonist than an ally; Lenny, who has a legal background and the mouth to prove it; and Jewel, the council secretary who is only a bottle of peroxide short of being the proverbial blonde. Together, the foursome is compelled to tackle the issue of economic development in an effort to become more competitive with their archrival community of Addison Heights.

Distractions abound as a trio of sisters, who are all candidates for a long vacation in a mental institution, and a trio of cousins, who live in a hole in the ground and are the male counterparts of the Abernathy sisters, bring their own problems to the city council. Toss in a dog-lovin' redneck, a French businessman, and a goofball spy, and the public meeting of the Rolling Hills city council heads south. The citizens find themselves unwittingly enrolled in a "self-improvement" class taught by none other than the mayor herself. Things go from bad to worse when a kidnapping takes place and the highbrow MacAllisters from Addison Heights show up to steal a major industrial project from the needy hands of the Rolling Hills community. But in the end, a surprise development turns the tables around, as one citizen becomes an unimaginable hero.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(8 MEN, 8 WOMEN, 2 EITHER)

MAVIS DUPREE (f).....The newly elected mayor, she is strong-willed, determined, and obviously more couth than her constituents and her fellow councilmen. (354 lines)

TURK DAVIS (m).....A councilman representing the "redneck" constituency of Rolling Hills. (244 lines)

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LENNY SWARTZ (m)A councilman with a sharp-tongued wit who happens to be an attorney. Although Lenny is educated, Turk has rubbed off on him . . . a lot. (191 lines)

JEWEL JONES (f)A councilwoman who performs the duties of secretary. Her likable, energetic personality helps to offset her eighth-grade-level mental-processing ability. (154 lines)

WILLARD/WILLA

WISENHEIMER (m/f)Committee chairman - - way off the wall and out in left field somewhere. (85 lines)

BILLY BOB

MEULLERMAN (m)A local yokel who has a talent for interpreting unintelligible speech, but doesn't have sense enough to wear shoes. (81 lines)

JOE BOB MEULLERMAN (m)A simple man like his brother, Billy Bob, but without any skills. (63 lines)

SAMMIE (m)A cousin to the Meullerman boys, he speaks his own unique language. (18 lines)

BERNADETTE

ABERNATHY (f)A sweet, "older" lady who is mannerly except for her tendency to end her sentences with an air of grace. (58 lines)

CLAUDETTE ABERNATHY (f)A "cowgirl" who may be more cow than girl - - but she also has the ability to interpret unintelligible speech. (61 lines)

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DORADETTE ABERNATHY (f)She's a fruitcake. Nuts and all. (13 lines)

DUSTY (m).....The local drugstore cowboy. (50 lines)

CLEB (m).....A concerned citizen with a dog agenda. (41 lines)

TRESSIE (f).....A concerned citizen with an employment agenda. (14 lines)

JUNE (f).....A concerned citizen with a civic amenity agenda. (16 lines)

TJ MACALLISTER (m)An obstinate, crass, certified jerk. (56 lines)

KASSANDRA

MACALLISTER (f).....A genuine snob. Her beauty is only skin-deep. (37 lines)

CHAUNCEY (CHAWNTELLE)

ROUSSEAU (m/f)A French businessman or woman. (20 lines)

NOTE: Feel free to add extra CITIZENS as desired. It is also possible to double the roles of TJ and CLEB and KASSANDRA with either TRESSIE or JUNE.

SETTING

The public meeting room at City Hall. Upstage center is a rather grand archway with the words ROLLING HILLS CITY HALL centered above it. Standing at one side of the archway is an American flag, and on the opposite side of the archway stands the state flag of Oklahoma (or whatever state flag of choice). Through the archway is a hallway with a USCR exit (to the front entry of city hall) and a USCL exit (leading to the remainder of the building). At SL is a table with four comfortable desk chairs angled toward center stage. The table is equipped with four nameplates, a mayor's gavel at the second center station, notepads, pencils, and coffee cups distributed accordingly. At CSL, immediately right of the main table, is the secretary's desk facing directly toward the audience. The desk is equipped with folders, notebook, typical "office desk" utility items. At USR against the wall is a small table with a plate of cookies and a trashcan beside it. At SR are a dozen folding chairs lined up at an angle facing down CS. Center stage should be open. The walls are decorated modestly, perhaps even a bit tacky. Somewhere a framed picture of George Washington and a framed picture of the current U.S. President should be hanging side by side.

ACT ONE: Evening

ACT TWO: The next evening

THE UPS 'N' DOWNS OF ROLLIN' HILLS

PROPS

JEWEL:

- Plate of cookies
- Pen and notebook
- Dictionary
- Box with suit jacket, tie, three pairs of athletic shoes, three shirts
- Three-ring binder
- purse.

MAVIS:

- Gavel
- Purse with cell phone

WILLARD:

- Wig
- Glasses
- Receipts

DORADETTE:

- Suitcase
- Dead/wilted plants
- Playing cards;

SAMMIE:

- Playing cards

KASSANDRA:

- Purse
- Reading glasses
- Cell phone

TJ:

- two manilla envelopes with contracts

THE UPS 'N' DOWNS OF ROLLIN' HILLS by GARY RAY STAPP was originally produced by the Anderson County High School Drama Department in Garnett, Kansas on April 11th and 12th, 2008, under the direction of Vicki Markham.

ORIGINAL CAST

MAVIS DUPREEMindy Highberger
TURK DAVIS..... Brandon Katzer
LENNY SWARTZ..... Adam Vaughn
JEWEL JONES Karra Friedli
WILLARD WISENHEIMER Izaak Winter
BILLY BOB MEULLERMAN..... Taylor Stapp
JOE BOB MEULLERMAN..... Kurt Yoder
SAMMIE..... Caleb Foltz
BERNADETTE ABERNATHY Amanda Miller
CLAUDETTE ABERNATHY..... Alyssa Sobba
DORADETTE ABERNATHY..... Rochelle McGhee
DUSTY William Barcus
CLEB John Chitwood
TRESSIE..... Tanya Wilson
JUNE..... Desiree Mason
TJ MACALLISTER..... Kevin Yoder
KASSANDRA MACALLISTER Jordan Rickabaugh
CHAWNTELLE ROUSSEAU Stacy Eichman

To my sister, Karen, and my brother, Charlie.

ACT ONE

AT RISE:

JEWEL, MAVIS, TURK, and LENNY stand at their posts behind their respective nameplates, right hand over their hearts, eyes upon the American flag. One councilman "spot" is obviously vacant.

ALL: . . . one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MAVIS, TURK, and LENNY take their seats at the "head table" as JEWEL hurries SR to the side table and picks up a plate of cookies.

JEWEL: *(Overly enthusiastic.)* Who wants a cookie?!

MAVIS: *(Annoyed.)* Jewel, we just finished the Pledge of Allegiance.

JEWEL: *(Looks at her blankly, then after a beat.)* Mavis, what does that have to do with cookies?

MAVIS: Nothing. That's my point. We haven't even begun the meeting yet, and you're offering refreshments.

JEWEL: I wasn't offering refreshments, Mavis. I'm not that kind of a lady. So, who wants a cookie?!

TURK: I'll take one, Jewel.

MAVIS: Turk! You will have to wait on your cookies. As the newly elected mayor, I'm in charge here, and we will follow proper protocol. We are not a bunch of hicks. *(She gives TURK a "look.")* Well, maybe some of us are. Now, Jewel, please sit down and just do your duty and take the minutes.

In a tiff, JEWEL sets the cookie plate on the side table and returns to her desk and begins to take notes . . . a lot of notes . . . oftentimes with a flourish.

TURK: Now, wait just a minute - -

MAVIS: Shut up, Turk!

LENNY: Here we go . . . already the bickerin'. I'm tellin' y'all, you two need therapy.

TURK: Lenny, I need more than therapy. I need a blunt instrument and a good lawyer, and not necessarily in that order.

LENNY: Turk, I am at your service.

MAVIS: Lenny, he said he needed a GOOD attorney.

LENNY: Well, Mavis, how about I just help him find a blunt instrument?

MAVIS: Ha. You'll be lucky if you find your way home. And would you please take that ball cap off your head! You are sitting at the head table of a government entity, not parked on the bleachers watching a ballgame!

TURK: I wouldn't take that from her if I were you, Lenny.

LENNY: Uh huh, you're one to talk.

JEWEL: People, people, people! Can't we just all get along?

MAVIS/LENNY/TURK: NO!

TURK: Well, finally we all agree on somethin'.

LENNY: Can't we just start this meetin'?! I need to be home by eight o'clock.

TURK: Why eight o'clock?

LENNY: Dancin' with the Stars comes on TV. I don't wanna miss it.

TURK: You watch Dancin' with the Stars?

LENNY: Yeah.

TURK: Why?

LENNY: Why do you think? I like to dance. And Dottie won't dance with me. And let me tell you now, I can cut a rug!

TURK: *(Starts waving his hand in the air and scowls.)* You can also cut the cheese! Good grief, Lenny, what did you eat?

LENNY: I don't smell nothin'.

TURK: You never do! *(He gets up and sits on opposite end of the table in the vacant chair.)*

MAVIS: *(Looks heavenward.)* What did I do to deserve this?

JEWEL: You ran for election, Mavis. And won! That's why you deserve this! You are the very first woman to ever be mayor of Rolling Hills.

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TURK: Thank you, Jewel, for that painful reminder. I should be the mayor! I have eight years of experience on the council. It's not like I just walked in off the street . . . like some people I know.

MAVIS: You're just jealous, Councilman Davis.

TURK: You barely beat me.

MAVIS: But I still won, didn't I? And you're still mad about the fact that more people like me than like you.

TURK: Fifty-one percent voted for you, and forty-nine percent voted for me. Don't get to thinkin' you're loved by the community. Half of the voters don't like you . . . including me.

LENNY: And me.

MAVIS: And yet, I still won. Deal with it.

TURK: Well, you wouldn't be so high and mighty if the fellas from my lodge had been able to come in and vote. Their votes was sure to make me mayor.

LENNY: Yeah, pretty bad luck on that situation, Turk. Thirty-eight Elks housebound with food poisonin'. That must have been some bad bean dip.

JEWEL and MAVIS subtly exchange knowing glances.

TURK: Yep. So much for the Elks code of honor. Brotherly Love - - Justice - - Charity - - and Fidelity - - all down the toilet. Oh well, there's always next time.

MAVIS: Whatever. Now, if you two councilmen are finished reminiscing about the good ol' days, I, as the newly elected mayor presiding over my first meeting of the Rolling Hills City Council, would like to commence this meeting.

TURK: Yes ma'am, your royal highness. Please, do your thang!

MAVIS: Ah . . . at last, a little respect from Mr. Davis.

TURK: Don't get used to it.

MAVIS: As mayor of Rolling Hills, I now open this weekly meeting of the city council. Jewel, as secretary, please commence with the roll call.

JEWEL: Yes, ma'am. *(She reads from a roster.)* Mayor Mavis Dupree?

MAVIS: Here.

TURK: Jewel, do you have to say Dupree? Can't you just say Mavis? You know that kills me.

JEWEL: That's her name. Says so right here on the roster.

LENNY: Turk, let it go.

TURK: Okay, okay.

JEWEL: Oswald Davis?

TURK: Jewel, do you have to say Oswald? You know that kills me.

JEWEL: That's your real name, Turk. Says so right here on the roster.

TURK: I know what my real name is. But we're all friends here - -
(Glances at MAVIS.) - - well, most of us are.

LENNY: Oswald, let it go.

TURK: Shut up, Lenny.

MAVIS: At this rate, it's going to take us an hour to get through roll call. Turk, will you please answer Jewel?

TURK: HERE!

JEWEL: Jewel Jones? (She pauses a beat.) Here!

LENNY: Good grief.

OTHERS simultaneously roll their eyes.

JEWEL: Ray Bob Meullerman?

TURK: Jewel! Ray Bob is dead.

LENNY: He died three months ago!

TURK: Choked to death . . . on a sponge. (*Becomes contemplative.*)

JEWEL: Oh, yeah. I - - I forgot. Every time I do dishes, I think of him, though.

TURK: Yeah, and get this, I hear some folks out there are makin' fun of Ray Bob cuz of the way he died.

LENNY: What are they sayin'?

TURK: They're callin' him Sponge Bob!

LENNY: That's mean.

MAVIS: Jewel, why don't you just mark Sponge Bob - - I mean, Ray Bob, off the roster.

JEWEL: I can't do it! I hate having blanks on my roster.

LENNY: As opposed to her havin' blanks in between her ears.

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TURK: We do need a replacement for Ray Bob. Someone else should get to be a part of all this fun. Mavis, have you decided who you're goin' to appoint yet?

MAVIS: As a matter of fact, I have. I will be announcing that appointment later in the meeting.

TURK: Who is it? Gladys? Roletta? Suzanne?

MAVIS: What makes you think she's going to be female?

TURK: She? I rest my case.

JEWEL: Lenny Swartz?

LENNY: What?

JEWEL: No, you're supposed to respond by saying "here."

LENNY: We're still doin' roll call? For the love of Pete, we're gonna be here all night!

JEWEL: I don't love Pete. I don't know what you've heard, but . . . but I do not love Pete.

MAVIS: Jewel, what are you talking about? Never mind. Please continue with roll call.

JEWEL: I'm waiting on Lenny.

LENNY: HERE! But I have a question. Why am I last on roll call?

JEWEL: Because you're a Swartz. And Swartz comes after Dupree, Davis, Jones, and Meullerman. It's alphabetical. Do you follow me?

LENNY: (*Instantly annoyed.*) I'm not stupid.

MAVIS: No, but you are a lawyer. That's why she had to spell it out for you, Lenny.

TURK: Hey! Davis comes before Dupree. Why ain't I first on the roster?

JEWEL: Because the mayor is always first. Duh.

TURK: Sorry I asked.

LENNY: Can we please move this meeting forward? We keep digressin'.

JEWEL: What's that mean?

LENNY: It means, Miss Dewey Decimal, that this 20-minute meeting of the Rollin' Hills City Council is gonna take three hours cuz of this lame brain roll call mini-series. Now let's get on with the business at hand! Need I mention Dancin' with the Stars again?!

MAVIS: Keep your ballet slippers on, Lenny. Now, by virtue of the roll call, we do have a quorum to discuss business. First, may we have a reading of the minutes of last month's meeting?

JEWEL: *(Excited.)* Yes, ma'am! *(She begins to shuffle through her papers.)*

LENNY: I move we dispense with the reading of the minutes.

TURK: I second the motion.

JEWEL: But - -

MAVIS: *(Holds up her hand to JEWEL.)* It's been moved and seconded that we dispense with the reading of the minutes.

JEWEL: But - -

MAVIS: *(Holds up her hand to JEWEL.)* All those in favor say "Aye."

MAVIS/TURK/LENNY: Aye.

MAVIS: All those opposed say "Nay."

JEWEL: Nay.

MAVIS: So moved by a vote of three to one, we will dispense with the reading of the minutes.

JEWEL: But - -

MAVIS holds up her hand again and silences JEWEL.

LENNY: Jewel, by virtue of Roberts Rules of Order, the minutes are a dead horse. Stop beatin' on it.

JEWEL: Fine. Why should anyone care that I spent three hours typing these minutes?

LENNY: Three hours? Let me see that. *(JEWEL crosses to him and hands him the single sheet of paper.)* Jewel, there are a total of eleven sentences here. Surely you exaggerate on the time. And there are three typos on the first line!

JEWEL: *(Snatches paper from his hands.)* Okay, so typing is not my biggest strength. At least I tried! *(She marches back to her seat and plops down.)* And for nothing!

TURK: Moving on.

MAVIS: Do we have reports from any standing committees?

LENNY: We don't have any standing committees.

TURK: Or sittin' ones either, for that matter. *(Laughs at his own joke, but no one joins him.)*

MAVIS: It was my understanding that the city council had an Economic Development Committee.

TURK: There really ain't a committee. There's just Willard Wisenheimer. He's like the chairman of Economic Development.

LENNY: Willard Wisenheimer is not the chairman of economic development. He's the chair of Countering the Economic Growth of Addison Heights.

TURK: Oh yeah, I forgot we called it CEGAH.

MAVIS: CEGAH?

JEWEL: Countering the Economic Growth of Addison Heights. CEGAH.

MAVIS: Okay, I understand the acronym, but what's the purpose of CEGAH?

JEWEL: What's an acronym?

LENNY: It's an abbreviation, kinda like your brain - - it's short for somethin'.

JEWEL: Oh, I get it.

LENNY: I doubt it. Anyway, the purpose of CEGAH is to keep an eye on Addison Heights. As you know, they are our most hated rival.

TURK: And they are also growin' in leaps and bounds. They have a Ponderosa Steakhouse, for cryin' out loud! Why doesn't Rollin' Hills have one of those?

LENNY: Because we lost out to Addison Heights, that's why. According to the economic experts, our towns are too close together for each of us to support a Ponderosa Steakhouse . . . among other things. Every time we try to bring in a new business, Addison Heights snatches it away. It's like they have spies or something!

TURK: What they have is a bunch of uppity highbrows. I cain't stand that TJ MacAllister. He makes me wanna spit.

MAVIS: Not in here you don't, Turk. But I do understand your disdain for TJ. Just the sight of that pasty-face Cassandra MacAllister makes me want to puke.

TURK: Go ahead.

MAVIS: But what I don't understand is why, of all people, is Willard Wisenheimer the chair of CEGAH? We all know he's an idiot.

JEWEL: Oh, I can answer that! Ray Bob appointed him to that post two years ago when he was mayor.

MAVIS: Ray Bob appointed Willard Wisenheimer! What was he thinking? Was Ray Bob out of his mind? Are the police sure he died accidentally? As far as I'm concerned, giving Willard Wisenheimer any kind of responsibility or even allowing him to represent Rolling Hills would be a pardonable excuse for murder.

TURK: I don't think Ray Bob was knocked off. I mean, it's not likely anyone intentionally sponged him to death.

JEWEL: Uh . . . I don't know . . . I don't think so . . . and, uh . . . let me think . . . uh, I'm pretty sure yes.

MAVIS: Jewel, what are you talking about?

JEWEL: I'm answering your questions. It's usually not too hard to keep up with me.

LENNY: You can say that again.

MAVIS: Jewel, those were rhetorical questions.

JEWEL: What's that mean?

LENNY: Don't worry about it, Jewel. You gave her rhetorical answers. I'd call it even.

JEWEL: How can I take good minutes when I don't understand the words, not to mention how to spell them?

LENNY: Ever hear of a dictionary?

JEWEL: Hmmm! (*Annoyed, she jumps up and takes a dictionary from a shelf behind her, then returns to her seat.*)

MAVIS: Can we please stay focused here?! For the well-being of Rolling Hills, I think we should remove Willard Wisenheimer as chair of CEGAH. It's idiotic that he is the city council's go-to guy for anything!

JEWEL: Willard doesn't have any facial hair.

LENNY: She said go-to, not goatee.

JEWEL: Pardon me, Mr. Lawyer-man.

LENNY: Truth be known, Mavis, CEGAH is nothin' more than a pseudo committee designed to keep Willard Wisenheimer out of our hair.

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JEWEL: Pseudo? *(She flips open the dictionary.)* Pseudo . . . S . . . U . . .

LENNY: P, Jewel, P.

JEWEL: I beg your pardon?

LENNY: The P is silent.

JEWEL: Are you trying to mess me up?

LENNY: Forget it.

TURK: Yeah, makin' Willard the head of a make-believe committee was a stroke of genius, if I do say so myself.

MAVIS: Well, that I can understand! So what are we REALLY doing to get ourselves more economically competitive with Addison Heights? Surely we have a committee for that endeavor?

LENNY: Nope.

TURK: Nuttin'.

JEWEL: Nada.

MAVIS: Nada?

JEWEL: It means none. I learned that on the Internet!

MAVIS: *(She rolls her eyes.)* It's a good thing I won the election! Rolling Hills is in an obvious backslide, and I'm going to do all I can to turn us around!

TURK: *(Sarcastic aside.)* For she's a jolly good fellow . . . which we all can deny.

LENNY: Well, Rollin' Hills has had its ups and downs lately. Time we headed back up. Even with you as captain. I'm behind you, Mavis.

JEWEL: Me too!

MAVIS: Turk? Are you behind me?

TURK: Do I have a choice?

MAVIS: No.

TURK: Then I'm behind you, Ms. Dupree.

MAVIS: Good! *(She stands and begins to cross to CS as she makes an empowering speech.)* Now, it's imperative that we establish a committee to mobilize the economic potential of our fair city and attack that dark iron curtain that separates us from competing with the success of Addison Heights!

TURK: Mavis, this ain't a war!

MAVIS: But Turk, it is a war. And we have only begun to fight!
And we need our best soldiers on the front line. Which reminds
me, where is Willard Wisenheimer? He should at least be here
when I strip him of his post.

LENNY: Ah, Mavis, you're gettin' ahead of yourself.

MAVIS: And why is that?

LENNY: Parliamentary procedure. Establishin' a committee to
move Rollin' Hills in a positive direction and locating the
whereabouts of Willard Wisenheimer to strip him of his
chairmanship of CEGAH constitutes new business.

MAVIS: But - -

TURK: Yeah, Mavis, we don't wanna be operatin' this meetin' like
a bunch of hicks.

MAVIS: But - -

LENNY: Old business first. Then new business.

JEWEL: I second the motion.

MAVIS: There isn't a motion to second, Jewel.

JEWEL: Then I'll make one. I move we talk about old business
first, then talk about new business afterward.

LENNY: We don't need a motion to follow parliamentary
procedure, you dimwit.

JEWEL: I am not a dimwit. My point is if I can't read my minutes,
then Mavis can't talk about anybody's new business ahead of
everybody's old business.

TURK: And we all know Mavis does like to be in everybody's
business.

MAVIS: Turk, shut up. *(She retreats to her chair.)* Jewel, you
can read your minutes next time. I promise! Now, let's get the
old business out of the way so we can turn on a light at the end
of this dimly dark tunnel that Rolling Hills has been lost in
during the tenure of my predecessors and do so while my
enthusiasm is still able to put a fire under your butts! *(She
looks around at the blank faces of the other three.)* Well?

TURK: Well, what?

MAVIS: Is there any old business?!

JEWEL: *(She raises her hand.)* May I go first?

MAVIS: Yes, Jewel, what is it?

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JEWEL: Who wants a cookie? I made oatmeal raisin and ginger snaps!

MAVIS: That is not old business.

JEWEL: Is too. I offered my cookies earlier . . . earlier means before . . . before means old . . . and that makes my cookies old business. Duh!

LENNY: You should be lawyer.

MAVIS: Nobody wants your cookies, Jewel.

TURK: I want a cookie.

MAVIS: Shut up, Turk.

TURK: You shut up.

LENNY: Will you two please take your squabble outside to the playground and duke it out on the monkey bars?!

TURK: All I want is a cookie.

MAVIS: Jewel, give the man a cookie! Anything to shut him up!

JEWEL crosses to the table and picks up plate of cookies and hurries to TURK and offers him the plate.

TURK: *(Looking the cookies over.)* Do you have any chocolate chip?

JEWEL: Sorry, Oswald . . . I mean Turk. Oatmeal raisin and ginger snaps.

TURK: Guess I'll settle for the oatmeal. Wouldn't be the first time I had to settle for less than I wanted.

LENNY: When was the first time?

TURK: The day I got married.

JEWEL: Mavis, would you like a ginger snap?

MAVIS: No, thank you. I would like to snap something, though.

JEWEL: How about you, Lenny? Ginger snap or oatmeal raisin?

LENNY: One of each?

JEWEL: You got it! *(She offers him the plate and he takes two cookies.)* Okay, I'm done. *(She sits back down and resumes taking notes.)*

MAVIS: Thank you, Jewel. Now is there any OTHER old business? Or does someone have a peach cobbler they would like to discuss?

Suddenly WILLARD WISENHEIMER ENTERS USCR and takes one step through the archway. He is high strung and wild-eyed.

WILLARD: *(In a frenzy and out of breath.)* Everybody!
Everybody! We have an emergency!

ALL quickly rise to their feet.

JEWEL: *(Hurries to him.)* What's wrong, Willard? Is the building on fire?

WILLARD: No . . . No, building not on fire! EMERGENCY!

JEWEL: Well, if the building is on fire, that would be an emergency.

WILLARD: Keep up with me here, Blondie. EMERGENCY!

LENNY: For the love of Pete, what is it?

JEWEL: Lenny, you leave Pete out of this!

TURK: The liquor store's not on fire, is it?

WILLARD: Worse.

TURK: Can't be nothin' worse.

WILLARD: I tell you. This is EMERGENCY!

MAVIS: *(At wits' end with the outburst, she pounds her gavel.)*
Will you calm down!

WILLARD: *(Looks at MAVIS, then crosses to her and closely examines her face.)* Who are you?

MAVIS: I'm Mavis Dupree. The newly elected mayor of Rolling Hills. And you are disrupting my council meeting.

WILLARD: Ahhh. You are Mavis. *(To TURK and LENNY.)*
Never mind, you guys have a bigger problem than mine. I go find Ray Bob and tell him my news. He will know what to do.

TURK: Ray Bob is dead.

WILLARD: Oh. Well - - that changes everything. EMERGENCY!

ALL: WHAT IS IT?!

WILLARD: Why do you yell at me from the top of your liver? We are not in a third world country.

LENNY: Willard, what is the emergency?

WILLARD: Well - - I just come from city council meeting at Addison Heights.

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MAVIS: You were at a city council meeting in Addison Heights?
Why?

WILLARD: Top secret. Can't tell you.

MAVIS: I'm the new mayor. I have a right to know.

WILLARD: An inconvenient technicality.

LENNY: Those are two pretty big words, Willard.

WILLARD: I know! I learn them today while I was spying!

MAVIS: You were - - spying?

WILLARD: Uh oh, me and my super-size vocal orifice. (*To LENNY.*) Is this going to get me court martianed?

LENNY: (*Corrects him.*) Court martialed, not martianed. And no, Willard. She's one of us.

TURK: Now THAT makes me want to spit.

MAVIS: I'm confused. Why were you spying?

JEWEL: That's his job.

MAVIS: His job is spying? That's how he "counters" the economic growth of Addison Heights?

LENNY: Pseudo-committee, remember?

WILLARD: You are new here . . . I bring you up to A grade with rest of them. (*He crosses to MAVIS.*) See, part of my job is to COUNT new stuff in Addison Heights.

MAVIS: (*She gives him a blank look for a second.*) Count?

WILLARD: Yes. See, I am in charge of counting economic growth of Addison Heights. (*Gets secretive.*) We call it CEGAH . . . shhh . . . top secret.

JEWEL: Uh . . . Willard? It's not counting. It's countering.

WILLARD: What you mean?

JEWEL: It means oppose, retaliate, neutralize.

LENNY: Okay, who swapped the dumb secretary for this one who apparently speed-reads Webster? . . . Hmm? . . . Anyone?

WILLARD: You mean, not like count . . . one-two-three?

MAVIS: No . . . not count one-two-three, Mr. Wisenheimer.

WILLARD: Well, already the new guy in town is changing the rules! (*He pulls out a paper from his pocket.*) I guess you won't need this list of things I counted! (*He wads it up and tosses it over his shoulder.*) I like other part of job better anyway.

MAVIS: And that is?

WILLARD: *(He starts creeping around the room.)* Spying on the enemy . . . collecting classified ads and infomercials . . . you know, intra-state espionage stuff. And talk about perks! Oh, reminds me . . . *(He digs in his pockets and pulls out receipts and hands them to JEWEL.)* I need reimbursed for mileage and one late lunch at Ponderosa Steakhouse. Addison Heights so lucky to have Ponderosa Steakhouse. Why Rolling Hills not have one?

TURK: That's what I'd like to know!

WILLARD: *(He drops back to "crouch and sleuth.")* Anyway, I sneak into their city hall and blend myself in with the others so that I look just like one of the other bananas in the bunch, and then I take out notebook and pencil and pretend to be big city reporter.

LENNY: Any chance someone there might have recognized you?

WILLARD: No way, I was in disguise.

LENNY: Disguise?

WILLARD: *(He pulls a ridiculous wig and sunglasses from inside his jacket and puts them on.)* See . . . IN-COG-NI-TO!

TURK: I'm sure that fooled 'em.

WILLARD: Uh huh. Very important to keep identity a secret in this business.

TURK: Yep . . . that kinda goes without sayin'.

MAVIS: Willard - -

WILLARD: *(Suspicious.)* You say my name like you know me?

MAVIS: Everybody knows you. Or at least know WHO you are.

WILLARD: *(Puffs up.)* I didn't know I was so famous! *(Suddenly wary.)* Uh oh, that not be such a good thing for a spy.

LENNY: No kidding - - double "o" o.

MAVIS: Willard? Does this spying thing you do at Addison Heights have anything to do with your cry of doomsday?

WILLARD: Not anything . . . everything! Oh, you very good at distracting me. EMERGENCY!

MAVIS: *(Bangs her gavel again.)* Enough! What is the emergency?

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WILLARD: *(To TURK.)* Testy ol' broad. Okay, let's see where I left off at? *(He pauses a beat to think.)* Oh, yeah - - there was big announcement made! Huge! Costing one million dollars. Maybe even more, like 100 thousand dollars!

TURK: What was it?

WILLARD: I don't know! Everyone start clapping like crazy and then . . . *(He gets terrified at the memory and begins to hyperventilate.)* and then . . . and then . . .

LENNY: And then what?!

WILLARD: I saw . . . the face . . . of thine enemy! And I was turned to stone!

TURK: That ugly, huh?

WILLARD: Not ugly . . . worse! The face of great enemy was . . . beautiful!

TURK: Well, that leaves you in the clear, Mavis.

WILLARD: She was like a goddess! Her voice was beautiful, just like an angel playing a ukulele. *(Cringes in terror again.)* Until her eyes looked into mine and pierced my very soul with her wickedness.

TURK: Sounds just like my wife - - except for the beautiful part.

LENNY: Then what happened, Willard?

WILLARD: *(He swallows.)* Then . . . she pointed at me . . . and screamed!

LENNY: She screamed?

WILLARD: *(Thinks for a moment.)* Well . . . come to think of it, I was the one that screamed!

TURK: Big surprise.

LENNY: Then what happened?

WILLARD: I tell you what happened next, I got out of there fast! Like butter on a Bundt cake! And came straight here - - right after I stop at the Addison Heights Super Wal-Mart. I needed to buy some turkey bacon. Why grocery store here in Rolling Hills not carry turkey bacon, I never understand.

MAVIS: And that's your emergency?

WILLARD: Hey, don't knock it until you tried it. Turkey bacon almost no fat!

MAVIS: I'm not talking about the turkey bacon, you imbecile.
What I want to know is why you came running in here
screaming of an emergency.

WILLARD: Oh, that. I was followed.

TURK: Followed?

WILLARD: Yes.

LENNY: From Addison Heights?

WILLARD: Yes.

MAVIS: By whom?

WILLARD: Well, he kinda look like Colonel Sanders, but without
the bucket of chicken.

TURK: TJ MacAllister. *(He spits.)*

LENNY: What makes you think he followed you?

*TJ enters USCR and pauses in center of the archway. He is
impeccably dressed in a white suit and a pink tie. At this point all
but WILLARD have their backs to the archway.*

WILLARD: Because there he is! *(He meekly points behind
them.)*

*ALL turn slowly around as TJ steps forward and strikes a
formidable pose.*

TURK: TJ MACALLISTER! *(He spits.)*

*Suddenly behind TJ enters KASSANDRA USCR, dressed to the
nines. She steps beside her husband and strikes a similar pose of
superiority.*

WILLARD: The face of thine enemy has found me! *(He hides
behind others.)*

MAVIS: Kassandra MacAllister! *(She immediately becomes
nauseous and covers her mouth with repulsion.)*

TURK: Go ahead, Mavis, let her fly.

LENNY: What do you know, it's Ken and Malibu Barbie. And to what do we owe the privilege of your presence at OUR city hall?

TJ: Tit for tat, as you lower class might say. We're here returning the favor of your interest in my fair city of Addison Heights.

LENNY: What makes you think we even have an interest in Addison Heights?

TJ: Please . . . (*He points to WILLARD.*) your little wind-up troll over there was enjoying our hors d'oeuvres a little too enthusiastically not to be noticed as a ludicrous undercover operative for pathetic little Rolling Hills.

WILLARD: I'm not a ludicrous undercover operative! I'm a ludicrous spy.

TURK: And an idiot. He should move to Addison Heights - - fit right in with your neighborhood, TJ.

TJ: Turk, Turk, Turk, still the jealous one, aren't you? And I'm still the smart one. At least I had sense enough to get out of Rolling Hills when I did. This little dump you call home is pathetic.

TURK: Shut up, TJ.

TJ: (*Laughs.*) And look here, Cassandra, we are in the presence of a new era of leadership.

KASSANDRA: Oh, how - - entertaining. The honorable mayor Mavis Dupree.

TJ and KASSANDRA laugh.

MAVIS: And you're also in the presence of my council meeting, of which you are rudely interrupting.

TJ: Oh well, pardon us, your honor. I certainly wouldn't want to interfere with your meeting. Lots of important . . . stuff . . . to discuss - - I'm sure. Can't you imagine, Cassandra, darling?

KASSANDRA: Of course, Terrance, dear. We should let them resume their little meeting. Oh, and by the way, Mavis, that's a lovely outfit you're wearing. From the K-mart clearance rack, I assume? You should use the \$4.50 you saved on that bargain and have someone at the Rolling Hills Howdy-Do Hair salon repair that . . . haircut . . . for you.

MAVIS: Why - - you - -

TURK: Bite your tongue, Mavis. Bite it!

TJ: Oh good one, Cassandra.

KASSANDRA: Thank you, Terrance. Inspiration is cheap around here.

TURK: Speakin' of cheap, Cassandra, that's kinda small of you to take a dig at Mavis like that.

KASSANDRA: It's a free country.

TJ: A spade's a spade, Turk. Besides, it's a right of every citizen to voice his or her opinion at a town council meeting.

TURK: This ain't your town anymore.

KASSANDRA/MAVIS: Thank God!

TJ: It's still a public meeting, isn't it? Or are you conspiring to "stick it" to the little people of Rolling Hills?

TURK: See that flagpole over there? I'm gonna stick it somewhere.

TJ: As usual, all talk . . . never any backup.

TURK: If you don't back up outta here right now, you'll have to salute that flag with your head between your legs.

LENNY: Careful, Turk.

TJ: Better listen to Lenny, Turk. I have a better lawyer than you do.

KASSANDRA: Terrance, dear, may we leave? I smell something nasty in here . . . (*Looks at MAVIS.*) like cheap perfume.

TJ: Speaking of perfume, darling, what's the humble little city council of Rolling Hills think of the coup Addison Heights has pulled off?

LENNY: What coup would that be?

TJ: Didn't your village idiot, Mr. Weisenheimer, tell you?

WILLARD: Hey . . . how you know my name?!

TJ: I make it a point to know everything. Especially when it comes to little moronic clowns like you.

WILLARD: I'm not a moronic clown! I'm a spy!

TJ: (*To MAVIS.*) Your honor, I rest my case. Anyway, we - - Addison Heights, that is - - will soon be the new office headquarters and primary production facility of the American branch of Chauncey (*Or CHAWNTELLE.*) Rousseau.

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MAVIS: Are we supposed to be impressed? I have no idea what you're talking about.

KASSANDRA: I'm not surprised, Mavis.

TURK: Bite your tongue, Mavis. And try keepin' your mouth shut. You're just settin' yourself up!

JEWEL: Oh, I know what Chauncey Rousseau is!

TURK/MAVIS/LENNY: You do?!

JEWEL: It's a French perfume company! I read about it on the Internet.

TJ: Well, not everybody over here in Rolling Hills is entirely backwoods. Very good, Miss - -

JEWEL: Jones, Jewel Jones. We've never met!

TJ: Of course not.

JEWEL: I'm the secretary for the city council. That means I record the minutes. Even if NOBODY wants to hear them.

TJ: Well, then, Miss Jones, I hope you're writing this down . . . for posterity.

JEWEL: Who's Pos Terity? (To MAVIS.) Do you who he's talking about?

MAVIS: Jewel! Not now!

JEWEL: Well, excuse me!

KASSANDRA: And I thought you only had claws for me, Mavis. I'm jealous! NOT!

TJ: My Kassandra couldn't be jealous of anyone. I give her everything she wants. Including a brand new French perfume with her name on the bottle.

KASSANDRA: And my picture!

TJ: And her picture!

MAVIS: You can't be serious?!

WILLARD: It's true! I heard it with my own eyes. Right before she pierced my very soul with her baby blues.

TJ: And made you scream like a little schoolgirl.

WILLARD: Can't argue with that.

LENNY: Now, let me get this straight. Addison Heights is going to become the headquarters of a French perfume company?

TJ: Correct.

LENNY: And Mrs. McAllister is going to be the face of their newest perfume?

TJ: Correct.

MAVIS: Gag me.

LENNY: (*Laughs.*) I'll believe it when I see it.

TJ: Oh, you're going to see it alright.

KASSANDRA: There are going to be huge billboards with my picture all up and down Interstate 40!

MAVIS: Gag me again!

TJ: Let's see . . . Addison Heights: regional home to the manufacturing of such industry icons as Dooney and Bourke - -

LENNY: Which you stole from us.

TJ: Adidas Sportswear - -

LENNY: Which you stole from us.

TJ: Not to mention home of the Midwest expansion of California's Avio Vineyards - -

LENNY: Again, which you stole from us.

TJ: Whine . . . whine . . . whine. It's not my fault you can't close a deal.

LENNY: If I didn't know any better, I'd swear you have a spy among us.

TURK: I wouldn't put it past him.

TJ: I wouldn't put it past me either! But in your case, the incompetence hardly justifies a spy. It's like taking candy from a baby. Oh wait, we've done that already - - the Godiva Chocolate regional production plant.

KASSANDRA: Touché!

WILLARD: Don't forget the Ponderosa Steakhouse!

TURK: Big deal, MacAllister. Who gives a fat rat's butt about perfume anyway?

TJ: Only those who appreciate the finer things in life . . . people like me . . . to the tune of billions. It's major industry. Something you Rolling Hills rednecks wouldn't know anything about.

TURK: We have industry.

TJ: Oh, yes. An underwear manufacturing plant.

WILLARD: That's where I work! Hanes your way!

TURK: We also have the cheese plant!

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TJ: Yes . . . we could smell it when we stepped out of our Lexus.
How did we let that little collection of smokestacks escape our skyline?!

KASSANDRA: Nasty!

TJ and KASSANDRA laugh.

TJ: Come, darling, lets tiptoe back home and wallow in the amenities of Addison Heights. And watch your step!

KASSANDRA: Ooh . . . (*Looks at MAVIS.*) nasty!

THEY exit.

MAVIS: Ohh! I hate them, I hate them, I hate them!

TURK: Purdy strong words, Mavis.

MAVIS: Why can't I have a perfume named after me?

TURK: Have you looked in the mirror lately?

MAVIS: Shut up! Tell me, how have they been so successful?
How has Addison Heights blossomed from . . . from nothing . . .
into . . . into . . .

LENNY: The apple of Kiowa County's eye?

TURK: Oklahoma's second-class city of the year?

WILLARD: The big jewel of Chauncey Rousseau perfumes?

JEWEL: What about me? Willard, did you call me fat?

WILLARD: What about you what? I no call you nothing.

JEWEL: You just said my name prefaced by big.

WILLARD: Lady, you not playing with a full deck of dominos, are you?

JEWEL: Whatever!

MAVIS: Are all of you on drugs? Addison Heights is putting us to shame! What are we going to do about the MacAllisters?!

JEWEL: Excuse me, Mavis. How do you spell MacAllister? Is it with a big c or a little c?

MAVIS: You're kidding me, right?

JEWEL: And do I note the MacAllisters' visit under old business or new business?

TURK: I'd like to see 'em noted as stayin' outta our business.

LENNY: Come on everybody, just forget about 'em. Let's get back to this meetin'. Are we to the point where we can adjourn?

TURK: Yeah, when it comes to the MacAllisters, we can't win for losin'. We might as well throw in the towel. I don't know how he has pulled the rug out from under us so many times!

MAVIS: We are NOT giving up! But I have to admit, I'm in no mood to even think about anything other than rubbing Cassandra's face into . . . something . . . smelly . . . really smelly. And right now, I'm so mad I can't think straight.

TURK: (*Sarcastic.*) What's new?

MAVIS: We might as well call it a night.

TURK: What about your announcement to name Ray Bob's successor?

LENNY: Turk, shut up. Dancin' with the Stars?! Remember?

MAVIS: That can wait.

LENNY: Well, hurry up and close us down before somebody shows up to gripe about somethin'. It never fails. When we think we're done we're never done, cuz somebody always shows up!

JEWEL: He's right. And it's usually the three Abernathy sisters.

LENNY: Jewel! Don't speak their name! Oh dear Lord, sayin' their name is like sayin' an incantation. They'll materialize within minutes. (*He jumps up.*) Quick, shut out the lights and let's get outta here!

MAVIS: You can't be serious.

TURK: He's serious! (*He jumps up and pulls MAVIS up by her elbow.*) Hurry up and pound the gavel and let's go!

ENTER BERNADETTE, CLAUDETTE, and DORADETTE, carrying an old suitcase. They pause for a beat as the OTHERS freeze in place.

BERNADETTE: (*Sweetly.*) See, what did I tell you Claudette, we're not late, we're . . . (*With anger.*) JUST IN TIME!

CLAUDETTE: Okay, okay, Bernadette, you're right agin! (*She picks her teeth.*)

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OTHERS stare for a beat. Then WILLARD tiptoes to SR and pulls on his wig and glasses and eats cookies and just “watches.”

LENNY: What did I tell ya?! WHAT did I tell ya?!

JEWEL: The Abernathy sisters.

LENNY: If we were smart, we'd pour a circle of salt on the floor and stand in the middle of it . . . and fast!

MAVIS: You can't be serious.

TURK: He's serious.

BERNADETTE: Hello, everyone! We're not too late, ARE WE?

LENNY: Yes.

CLAUDETTE: We have a very serious matter to discuss with y'all.

DORADETTE: Dippi dippi dippi doooo!

TURK: Well, you see we have already adjourned for the night.

LENNY: We were just leavin'. Sorry.

BERNADETTE: (*Advances.*) Oh, that's not an inconvenience for us, this won't take BUT A MINUTE!

TURK: Famous last words.

CLAUDETTE: (*She looks around.*) Where's the spittoon?

JEWEL: Oh, it's over there - - (*She points to a plant potted in a spittoon.*) I had to use it to pot the plant we got from Ray Bob Meullerman's funeral.

CLAUDETTE: Well, where am I gonna spit?

MAVIS: Spit? Spit what?

CLAUDETTE: My tobaccer.

MAVIS: Oh . . . ugh. I'm sorry, City Hall is a “no tobacco” public building.

CLAUDETTE: What's that mean?

LENNY: It means you can't chew in here. You'll have to remove your snuff. There's a trashcan over there.

CLAUDETTE: Ah . . . here we go agin, Doradette. I'm bein' treated like a second-class citizen agin!

DORADETTE: Abba dabba ebee do.

CLAUDETTE: Ain't it the truth. (*She trudges over to the trashcan and digs out the “chaw” from her mouth and slings it in the trashcan and wipes her fingers on her shirt.*)

BERNADETTE: (*To MAVIS.*) You must be the NEW MAYOR?

MAVIS: Yes, I'm Mavis Dupree.

BERNADETTE: It's a pleasure to meet you, Ms. Dupree. I'm Bernadette Abernathy, and this is my sister, Claudette, and my other sister, Doradette. I just know you're going to do our little city some good. I VOTED FOR YOU!

MAVIS: Well . . . thank you . . . I think.

CLAUDETTE: I didn't vote for ya. I voted for him. *(indicates TURK and waves and winks.)* Hi Turkums.

MAVIS: Turkums?

TURK: *(He shrugs his shoulders and scowls.)* Hello, Claudette.

DORADETTE: Eyyeny Myeny Myeny Moe Woo Bitty Boo!

CLAUDETTE: Doradette says she voted for the both of ya.

BERNADETTE: Doradette, you voted for EVERYBODY!

CLAUDETTE: That's why your ballot never counts for nuthin'.

DORADETTE: Wickie wickie wocka mocka ding ding ding.

CLAUDETTE: Doradette says she didn't vote with a ballot. She just raised her hand.

BERNADETTE: *(Sweetly.)* Doradette, dear. You're being foolish . . . again. PLEASE BE QUIET!

DORADETTE: Jingle jangle poody do.

CLAUDETTE: That mean's zip it. Zip it shut.

DORADETTE: Zippy Pippy Lippy Oty toty.

BERNADETTE: *(To MAVIS.)* You'll have to forgive Doradette. She's a tiny bit - - how should I say it? . . . ADDLE PATED!.

TURK: A little?

LENNY: As opposed to you being a tiny bit - - how should I say it? OFF YOUR ROCKER!

MAVIS: Lenny! There's no need to yell!

LENNY: Just trying to establish communication with the aliens.

BERNADETTE: Unfortunately, we had no choice but to bring Doradette with us - -

CLAUDETTE: We'd leave her at home, but we're afraid the house would be gone when we got back.

MAVIS: *(Thinking it's a joke, she laughs.)* Haahaahaa.

BERNADETTE: It's not funny, MS. DUPREE!

CLAUDETTE: Doradette likes to play with matches.

DORADETTE: Fitty Fitty Fidy Fidy Bo Bo Bo.

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BERNADETTE: Doradette! Hush! I've told you before, it's better to be silent and be thought of as a fool than to talk and REMOVE ALL DOUBT!

LENNY: I have no doubts about any of you!

BERNADETTE: *(To MAVIS.)* I didn't coin that phrase, but I find it VERY USEFUL.

MAVIS: I thought it sounded familiar.

TURK: Mavis, I think that was your campaign slogan, wasn't it? *(He returns to his seat.)*

MAVIS: *(Glares at TURK.)* Well, Ms. Abernathy - -

BERNADETTE: Please call me BERNADETTE!

MAVIS: Bernadette, what . . . what . . . what can the council do for you this evening?

LENNY: Oh, great! You have just opened Pandora's box. *(He sits back down.)*

BERNADETTE: Well, you see, we would like to file a GRIEVANCE!

MAVIS: A grievance? Against who?

JEWEL: Whom?

MAVIS: *(To JEWEL.)* What?

JEWEL: It's whom, not who.

MAVIS: WHOM made you the grammar police?

JEWEL: That's who, not whom.

LENNY: Jewel, nobody rattled your noggin, now be quiet and take your notes so we can get these . . . these . . . ladies outta here as soon as we can!

MAVIS: Lenny! Ms. Abernathy - -

BERNADETTE: Uh - - uh - - uh.

MAVIS: - - Bernadette - - has the floor.

BERNADETTE: Thank you, madam. Your etiquette is SO REFRESHING!

TURK: Please . . . just shoot me now.

MAVIS: You were speaking of a grievance?

BERNADETTE: Yes. We are having difficulties with OUR NEIGHBOR.

CLAUDETTE: She's a maniac!

LENNY: Takes one to know one.

BERNADETTE: Claudette, now we don't need to use such
HARSH WORDS!

CLAUDETTE: Well, she is! She's a terror! A menace! I wouldn't
be surprised if she was a Yankee!

MAVIS: A Yankee?

BERNADETTE: Ignore that last remark. Claudette has chosen
not to accept the South's DEFEAT!

MAVIS: Surely you aren't referencing the Civil War?

BERNADETTE: Surely I am. (*Whispers to MAVIS.*) I have her in
therapy . . . TWICE A WEEK!

MAVIS: I see.

CLAUDETTE: I know she's a Yankee! This mornin', she put
rocks inside my hubcaps. I thought I was under attack! I was
tryin' to get out of the driveway so fast, I backed my pickup
truck over our mailbox . . . three times!

BERNADETTE: The final straw was this afternoon. I caught the
little - -

CLAUDETTE: Yankee - -

BERNADETTE: - - dear watering my flowers from ACROSS THE
FENCE!

MAVIS: That - - that sounds like a nice - - neighborly - - thing to
do.

BERNADETTE: She had a bottle of herbicide attached to the
garden hose! She MURDERED MY PETUNIAS!

MAVIS: Oh, that's not so nice.

BERNADETTE: Doradette, come here dear and show her our
murdered flowers. (*Starts to whimper.*)

*DORADETTE crosses and opens a suitcase and pulls out a
handful of very dead plants.*

BERNADETTE: I want RETRIBUTION!

MAVIS: I promise I'll look into it.

BERNADETTE: I want her to pay for DAMAGES!

MAVIS: I understand.

BERNADETTE: I want her SPANKED!

MAVIS: Spanked?

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CLAUDETTE: We want her little butt whapped, that's what we want. Cuz her daddy won't do it.

MAVIS: Daddy? How old is this neighbor of yours?

BERNADETTE: I don't know, how old do you think she is, Claudette?

CLAUDETTE: She's about eight or nine, but she'll never make it to 10 if she keeps tormenting us like she does.

Suddenly DUSTY enters, panicked.

DUSTY: Hey, hey, hey. I don't know what they've been telling ya'll, but theys lies. My little Abby ain't done nuthin to these ol' ladies! They're CRAZY, I tell ya!

BERNADETTE: Old ladies?! OLD LADIES!

CLAUDETTE: That's the little demon's daddy!

DORADETTE: *(She crosses to him and kicks him in the shins.)*
Boba doba do. Wager wagger wag.

DUSTY: Owww! What did I do?

BERNADETTE: You called us OLD LADIES!

DUSTY: But you are old ladies.

CLAUDETTE: Kick him again, Doradette.

DORADETTE kicks him in the shins again.

DUSTY: Owww!

MAVIS: That's enough!

DORADETTE: Kika Wika. Hoba Doba Mina Mo!

DUSTY: What did she say?

CLAUDETTE: She said you're a weirdo and your horse wears combat boots.

DUSTY: She's crazy! And not the good kind of crazy neither!

DORADETTE kicks him again.

DUSTY: Owww!

MAVIS: Turk, Lenny! Do something!

THEY jump up and TURK steps between DORALETTE and DUSTY. Suddenly JOE BOB and BILLY BOB and SAMMIE ENTER through archway USC. They are dressed only in dingy overalls and old hats. DORALETTE starts to wonder around the room, playing with things.

JOE BOB: Dang, Billy Bob . . . looks like we picked a good night to come to the city council meetin'.

BILLY BOB: You's right about that, Joe Bob. Looks like a scrap is takin' place. Who's winnin'?

LENNY: Oh, jeez! The Meullerman Boys! There must be a full moon!

MAVIS: The Meullerman boys? Relation to Ray Bob?

LENNY: Yep.

MAVIS: Ohhh.

DUSTY: *(To TURK.)* I wanna file a complaint against that crazy shin-kicker!

CLAUDETTE: Don't you call my sister names! *(She lunges for DUSTY, but TURK stops her.)*

TURK: Okay, okay . . . back away, Miss Claudette.

CLAUDETTE: Oh, okay. But only cuz you asked me to, Turkums.

TURK: Please, please, don't call me that.

LENNY: Joe Bob, what are you doin' here tonight?

JOE BOB: We hear'd a rumor, we did, we did. We hear'd that the new mayor wuz gonna appoint somebody to take Ray Bob's place on the council.

BILLY BOB: *(Makes an awkward sign of the trinity.)* May our dear brother rest in peace.

JOE BOB: *(Mimics BILLY BOB.)* Yeah . . . rest in peace, brother. *(He looks upward.)* That reminds me, I been meanin' to ask, Billy Bob, did we take that sponge outta his throat afore we buried him?

BILLY BOB: *(Thinks for a second.)* I didn't, Joe Bob. Ask Sammie.

JOE BOB: Sammie, did we get that sponge outta Ray Bob's mouth afore we buried him?

SAMMIE: *(Gutturally.)* Uhg uh huh uh huhhh uh ha.

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BILLY BOB: Sammie says he took it out.

JOE BOB: Whew! That's good news.

MAVIS: Gentlemen, you have my condolences.

JOE BOB: Your what?

MAVIS: My condolences.

JOE BOB: *(To BILLY BOB.)* I didn't take em, honest. I don't even know what they is.

BILLY BOB: Me neither. Do you know, Sammie?

SAMMIE: Uh huhhhhh . . . *(Gestures to his chest.)* Uh ahh uh ooouah uh.

BILLY BOB: Sammie says she's talkin' about female thangs.

JOE BOB: Oh . . . uh . . . look lady, we's never been married afore, so proly best you just hang on to your condolences thangs yerself.

MAVIS: You don't understand - -

LENNY: And neither do you, Mavis. But I'll give you two minutes, and you'll have it figured out.

MAVIS: What?

LENNY: You'll see.

MAVIS: Mr. Meullerman?

BILLY BOB/JOE BOB: You speakin' to me . . . or him? *(THEY point to each other.)*

MAVIS: Either one. We're about to adjourn for the evening, but perhaps I can quickly give you some information. You mentioned something about your brother's replacement on the council?

JOE BOB: Uh . . . yeah . . . I hear'd the new mayor was appointin' somebody to replace Ray Bob.

MAVIS: That's right. I will soon be making that appointment.

BILLY BOB: Who you be?

MAVIS: The new mayor.

JOE BOB: You're the new mayor?

BILLY BOB: Of Rollin' Hills?

JOE BOB: But you're a woman!

MAVIS: So?

BILLY BOB: So how did a woman get elected to mayor?

TURK: By a little bitty one percent margin, that's how!

JOE BOB: Oh . . . we's in trouble. We is, we is.

BILLY BOB: Big trouble! Ain't that right, Sammie?

SAMMIE: Uh hah uh huuhhhh ahugh.

JOE BOB: Nothing agin you personally, lady. But a female ain't got no place in politics. Next thang you know, they'll be female governors!

BILLY BOB: Ha . . . that'll never happen.

MAVIS: You do realize there are women governors, don't you?

BILLY BOB: Says who?

MAVIS: Says . . . says anyone who hasn't lived in hole in the ground for the past two decades!

LENNY: Well, there ya go, Mavis. Meet the Meullerman Boys.

TURK: From "down under."

MAVIS: Down under?

TURK: Yeah - - (*Points toward the ground.*) - - down under.

MAVIS: You're not serious?

TURK: So, boys, how's the ol' home place?

BILLY BOB: Dark.

JOE BOB: Quiet.

SAMMIE: Uha ughh aun uh uh huhh.

BILLY BOB: That's right, Sammie, it's a little damp, but we's don't mind.

MAVIS: Are you saying you live in a cave?

JOE BOB: Not a cave, zackly . . . more like a hole.

MAVIS: A hole?

JOE BOB: Yep . . . nuttin' like it. Cheap to live in, no property taxes, and you don't have to paint it. You don't, you don't.

MAVIS: Where . . . where is this place?

BILLY BOB: Uh uh . . . we ain't tellin' ya. We's don't like company.

SAMMIE: Ugg huh hum gah gahuuh.

BILLY BOB: You're right, Sammie, we's ain't here to talk about where's we live. We's come to ask the mayor - - and iff'n that's really you - - we's askin' that you appoint Sammie here as our brother's replacement on the city council.

MAVIS: You want me to appoint him to the city council?

JOE BOB/BILLY BOB: Uh huh!

MAVIS: I'm . . . I'm speechless.

TURK: Ask them what Sammie's qualifications are?

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MAVIS: (*Dazed.*) What are his qualifications?

JOE BOB: Well, he's a first cousin to Ray Bob.

BILLY BOB: And us, too.

JOE BOB: That orta be enough to qualify. After all, Ray Bob wuz our kin. (*He makes the sign of the trinity again.* **BILLY BOB** and **SAMMIE** mimic.)

MAVIS: But . . . but look at him . . . he's . . . he's . . . (*Realization strikes.*) He's not even wearing any shoes!

JOE BOB: So?

BILLY BOB: None of us are. (*He lifts his feet up.* *They are bare, but blackened from dirt.*)

JEWEL: Ooooo . . . icky!

BERNADETTE: Excuse me, Ms. Dupree, I don't wish to be rude, but I insist you deal with our grievance. After all, we WERE HERE FIRST!

JOE BOB: Whoa! Dang! Now who might you be, little lady?

BERNADETTE: My name is Bernadette Abernathy.

JOE BOB: Wull . . . I like how you holler! I do, I do. (*He crosses to her.*) My name's Joe Bob Meullerman.

BERNADETTE: How nice to meet you, MR. MEULLERMAN! And this is my sister, Claudette, and my other sister, Doradette . . . Doradette, please LEAVE THE FLAG ALONE!

JOE BOB: And this is my brother, Billy Bob, and our cousin, Sammie. Sammie's gonna be on the city council.

MAVIS: Oh no, he's not.

JOE BOB: What you mean?

MAVIS: Well, what I mean is . . . I'm not making any appointments tonight. We've had a serious situation come up that requires priority attention.

BERNADETTE: She's referring to our grievance . . . against that man's (*Points to DUSTY.*) LITTLE MONSTER!

DUSTY: HEY! DON'T YOU CALL MY ABBY A MONSTER, YOU CRAZY OL' BROAD!

DORADETTE hurries over and kicks him in the shins. Pandemonium breaks out.

DUSTY: OW!!

CLAUDETTE: SHE IS A MONSTER! AND WE WANT HER WHUPPED!

BILLY BOB: I'LL WHUP THE MONSTER! LET ME AT IT! I'S LIKE TO FIGHT!

SAMMIE: UHHHH UGA AHUH AH UH!

BILLY BOB: SAMMIE WANTS TO FIGHT THE MONSTER, TOO!

DUSTY: QUIT CALLIN MY BABY GIRL A MONSTER!

MAVIS: TURK! DO SOMETHING!

TURK: I ain't the mayor!

MAVIS: *(She suddenly stands up and pounds the gavel.)*
ORDER! ORDER! I DEMAND THAT ALL OF YOU SHUT UP!

Immediate silence strangles the room. ALL look to MAVIS.

MAVIS: That's better! First, there will be no more fighting. Or . . . or Mr. Wisenheimer over there will escort you out of this building!

WILLARD: Uh uh. Not me. Not in my job description. I'm a spy, not a bouncing beefcake.

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MAVIS: Now, I realize each of you have an issue that needs resolved. But we, as citizens of Rolling Hills, have a far more serious issue to deal with that affects all of us. We need to set aside our petty squabbles and opinions and work together as a community! The city of Addison Heights has slighted us and insulted us for the last time. I, for one, will not tolerate it any longer. But look at us - - we've got neighbors fighting with each other, and over what? A bed of flowers? And you - - Mr. and Mr. Meullerman - - you ask me to appoint a man to this council who wears his overalls without a shirt, wears nothing on his feet, or much less even speaks a word I can understand! We've got to be realistic. *(The National Anthem begins to play in the background. DORADETTE proceeds to gently wave the American Flag, as WILLARD softly sings the words of the anthem.)* We've got to pull together just as the founding fathers of this great nation rose up as one to claim their independence. *(Points to the American flag.)* We, as citizens of Rolling Hills, have to likewise join together to claim a victory over Addison Heights. Because if we don't, we might as well give up and let them walk all over us, as we smile like a bunch of helpless peasants while they wipe their shoes on our backs.

EVERYONE looks at her in silence for a beat.

MAVIS: Does anyone understand what I'm saying?

SAMMIE: AH huh huhg uh hmmm.

MAVIS: Perfect.

BERNADETTE: Ms. Dupree, may I SPEAK?!

MAVIS: *(Sighs.)* Yes, please.

BERNADETTE: I did not realize the condition of the Rolling Hills community was in such a bad state of affairs. Our hometown is IMPORTANT TO US! My sisters and I want to help. We wish to WITHDRAW OUR GRIEVANCE!

DUSTY: *(To CLAUDETTE.)* Does that mean the three of you are gonna stop draggin' my little girl's name through the mud?

CLAUDETTE: *(Disappointed.)* I reckon.

DUSTY: *(To DORADETTE.)* And you're gonna stop kickin' me in the knees?

DORALETTE: Vooda Vooda Garma Nooga Pong!

CLAUDETTE: She said yes.

DUSTY: Okay, then. *(To MAVIS.)* Call me crazy, but I'm in!

JOE BOB: If they's in, we's in! You can appoint Sammie after we get ahold of the tail of this Addison Heights situation.

TURK: Well, Mayor Mavis Dupree . . . looks like you got an army for that war of yours. And considerin' the - - the caliber - - of our voluntary recruits, I think we need to institute a draft so we can double our options.

SAMMIE: Uh huhuhuh hm ugh ha.

BILLY BOB: That's a good idea Sammie.

DUSTY: What did he say?

BILLY BOB: He said he thinks we's need to have another big meetin' and invite the whole town. Ya know, have one of them brainstormers.

JOE BOB: That's what we need, a meetin' of the minds. We do, we do! That's a good idea. Told ya Sammie had qualifications.

MAVIS: But - -

SAMMIE: Uh huguh uh ha huh.

BILLY BOB: Sammie, moves we have a brainstormin' meetin' to hash out what we're gonna do about Addison Heights.

MAVIS: *(Somewhat dazed.)* But - -

LENNY: I second the motion.

MAVIS: *(She looks at JEWEL for help.)* Help me - -

JEWEL: *(She holds up her hand just as MAVIS did to her earlier.)* What goes around comes around.

TURK: This is where you say, "All those in favor say 'Aye'."

MAVIS: *(She hesitates.)* All those in favor say "Aye"? I'm not in fav - -

ALL: Aye.

JEWEL: It's unanimous!

MAVIS: *(Looking confused and out of her element.)* Motion . . . carried?

JEWEL: We should have this meeting of the minds tomorrow night, don't you think?

TURK: Tomorrow night.

LENNY: At 7:00 pm.

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MAVIS: Tomorrow night? At 7:00 pm? *(She tosses TURK and LENNY a bewildered look.)*

LENNY/TURK: *(BOTH shrug.)* You're the mayor.

JEWEL: Oh, goodie! And I get to read the minutes too . . . as I was promised! *(She looks at MAVIS and waves a thick handful of notes.)* And I'll bring cookies!

MAVIS: Whatever! *(Looks forlorn.)* Meeting adjourned. *(She weakly smacks her gavel.)*

BLACKOUT.

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