

Scene Two

The same. December.

It is the Saturday before Christmas. Not much in the shop has changed. Only half of the lights are on in the shop. When the lights eventually come back on, we see the subtle changes. The radio SHELBY has given TRUVY, and a small but festive Christmas tree, and several grotesque handicrafts.

When the curtain rises, M'LYNN is sitting under a dead hair-drier. SHELBY enters, mystified by the lack of light and the lack of activity.

M'LYNN Shelby!

SHELBY Mama? Where is everybody?

M'LYNN I thought you weren't coming to town until after lunch.

SHELBY We got an early start because of the traffic. We wanted to drop in on Jackson's parents on the way down here.

M'LYNN (*sarcastically*) What a treat!

SHELBY And you have to catch them early. On Saturdays they leave the house at the crack of dawn to start hunting furry little creatures.

M'LYNN You must not have visited long.

SHELBY We didn't. I could tell they were anxious to start killing things. We stopped by the house first. Nobody was there. Where's Truvy?

M'LYNN She and Annelle are out back sticking pennies in the fuse box. They decorated that little tree and when I plugged it in all the lights blew.

SHELBY (*pointing to a pair of tacky ear-rings*) What are those things?

M'LYNN Red plastic poinsettia ear-rings. They are a gift from Annelle. She has discovered the wonderful world of Arts and Crafts.

SHELBY Are Tommy and Jonathan home yet?

M'LYNN Yes, Jonathan got home yesterday morning. He loves his classes. It's all he can talk about. I think the main thing architecture school has taught him is how much he should hate his parents' house. Tommy arrived last night and immediately started terrorizing your father. It's nice having the family home for Christmas.

SHELBY Some things never change.

M'LYNN And how are you, honey?

SHELBY I'm so good, Mama. Just great.

M'LYNN You're looking well. Is Jackson at the house?

SHELBY No. You know how twitchy he gets. I sent him to look for stocking stuffers.

M'LYNN Good thinking.

SHELBY Uh. Jackson and I have something to tell you. We wanted to tell you when you and Daddy were together, but you're never together, so it's every man for himself. I'm pregnant.

M'LYNN Shelby?!

SHELBY I'm going to have a baby.

M'LYNN I realize that.

SHELBY Well...is that it? Is that all you're going to say?

M'LYNN I...what do you expect me to say?

SHELBY Something along the lines of congratulations.

M'LYNN Congratulations.

SHELBY Would it be too much to ask for a little excitement? Not too much, I wouldn't want you to break a sweat or anything.