

never worry because I know you're worrying enough for the both of us. Jackson and I have given this a lot of thought.

M'LYNN Has he really? There's a first time for everything.

SHELBY Don't start on Jackson.

M'LYNN Shelby. Your body has been through so much. Why do you deliberately want to—

SHELBY Mama. Diabetics have healthy babies all the time.

M'LYNN You are special. There are limits to what you can do.

SHELBY Mama...listen. I have it all planned. I'm going to be very careful. And this time next year, I'm going to be bringing your big healthy grandbaby to the Christmas festival. No-one is going to be hurt or disappointed, or even inconvenienced.

M'LYNN Least of all Jackson, I'm sure.

SHELBY You are jealous because you no longer have any say-so in what I do. And that drives you up the wall. You're ready to spit nails because you can't call the shots.

M'LYNN I did not raise my daughter to talk to me this way.

SHELBY Yes you did. Whenever any of us asked you what you wanted us to be when we grew up, what did you say?

M'LYNN Shelby, I am not in the mood for games.

SHELBY What did you say? Just tell me what you said. Answer me.

M'LYNN I said all I wanted was for you to be happy.

SHELBY OK. The thing that would make me happy is to have a baby. If I could adopt one I would, but I can't. I'm going to have a baby. I wish you would be happy, too.

M'LYNN I wish I... I don't know what I wish.

SHELBY Mama. I don't know why you have to make everything so difficult. I look at having this baby as the opportunity of a lifetime. Sure, there may be some risk involved. That's

true for anybody. But you get through it and life goes on. And when it's all said and done there'll be a little piece of immortality with Jackson's looks and my sense of style... I hope. Mama, please. I need your support. I would rather have thirty minutes of wonderful than a lifetime of nothing special.

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*The lights come up. The radio is blaring.*

M'LYNN They're on, Truvy!

SHELBY Please. Don't tell anybody yet. I want to tell Daddy first.

M'LYNN I never tell anyone anything. *(She goes to turn the radio volume down)*

TRUVY *enters. She carries some Christmas decorations.*

TRUVY Well! Look who's here! Give me a hug right here and now!

SHELBY Hi, Truvy! Merry Christmas!

TRUVY Ho, ho, ho. *(Calling through the door)* Annelle! We have a special mystery guest! *(To SHELBY)* You're just in time. You can have the honour of lighting the tree of beauty.

SHELBY How precious. What a novel idea to trim it with hair things.

ANNELLE *enters.*

TRUVY It's all Annelle's idea. She has quite an eye for the unusual.

ANNELLE Hi there! *(She hugs SHELBY)*

SHELBY *(pointing to the tree and the decorations)* Annelle, you did all this?

ANNELLE Guilty. Truvy just turned over the decoration responsibility to me. I like themes. And I despise the commercialization of Christmas, always have. So I went to the fire sale at the Baptist Book Store in Shreveport last