

David Wendell Boykins'

APPLAUSE

For Miss E!!!

David Wendell Boykins
davehouseproductions@yahoo.com
310-428-6343

Copyright © 2007

SCENE II

AT RISE: *Elestra is dreaming in her recliner while her food is cooking in the kitchen.*

BING!!!

She jumps up startled at the sound of the timer on the stove.

ELESTRA (Continued)

Shit.

Elestra goes to the kitchen, opens the oven door, pulls out a cookie sheet of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. She checks the stemming pots on the stove then looks in the refrigerator and pulls out a pot.

ELESTRA (Continued)

I don't know why I even bother to put stuff in the refrigerator. I know damn well I ain't gonna eat it.

She dumps the pot out in the trash.

ELESTRA (Continued)

Big pot of cabbage and smoked turkey necks, gone. Just a shame! Uugh! Damn this shit hurts, uugh. Doctors don't know what the hell they talkin' 'bout!

She puts the pot in the sink and goes to the stand by the recliner. She takes a bottle of pills and shakes two in her hand. She thinks about it and shakes a few more of the pills into her hand. Then gets the glass of water and throws the pills to the back of her throat.

ELESTRA (Continued)

Ain't nothin' but an ulcer. If they'd give me somethin' that work! Damn. I almost forgot.

She goes under the sink and pulls out a bag of generic dog food. It's in a big white bag with "DOG FOOD" stenciled on the front in huge black letters.

ELESTRA (Continued)

Gotta feed Lester, before he starts his complainin'.

She pours some in a doggy bowl and takes it outside to the side of the house. She pushes the bowl under the fence.

ELESTRA (Continued)

Lester. Come on, dog. Get ya shit. Get out of that damn log and get ya shit.

(under her breath)

Stupid dog.

She goes inside and starts telling jokes to herself.

ELESTRA (Continued)

Y'all know some men...some men ain't no good. They ain't.

There's a knock on the door.

ELESTRA (Continued)

That was a good one.

Elestra opens the door and enters CHARLENE WELLS with a newspaper in her hand. She wears a very plain skirt outfit and sweater and a lockett around her neck.

ELESTRA (Continued)

What are you doin' here, Charlene?

Charlene goes to the kitchen.

CHARLENE

You ask me the same thing everyday Elestra, and everyday I tell you the same thing. I'm retired. I don't have anything else to do but harass you. Besides, you ain't doin' nothin' around here but cookin'. Cookin' more food than you can eat, mind you. I figure I just come and help a friend out. You know, I didn't see Lester in the back yard.

ELESTRA

You done been here for twenty minutes and you just now tellin' me that.

CHARLENE

It has not been twenty minutes.

ELESTRA

He probably in that old log out back.

Elestra goes outside.

ELESTRA (Continued)

Yeah. See? I can see his ugly ass lookin' at me. Plottin'. Like one day he gonna do somethin' to me. But I ain't scared mutha fucka. Naw...I ain't scared.

CHARLENE

Leave that dog alone.

Elestra comes back in the house.

ELESTRA

Hey, do you know what joke I remembered today?

CHARLENE

What?

ELESTRA

"Y'all know some men ain't no good. Listen to me now. Miss E's tryin' to tell ya somethin'!" You remember that one? "They ain't no good. Y'all done seent the one I'm talkin' 'bout." All in the club, in his fluorescent yellow suit! Thinkin' he God's gift! The only thing he can be a present to is the sun with that bright ass suit on, sun say "shit I'm a take me a nap! Holla when you take that shit off! Hell, let me do my job!" Haha! That was pretty funny.

Charlene goes to the sofa and sits down. She begins to look through the newspaper. In time she notices the jewelry box is not on the end table that she likes it to be on. She moves it to the one on the up stage end of the sofa.

CHARLENE

You and all them bad words. Madam Alright never had to use that kind of language.

ELESTRA

What you talkin' about, Charlene? I taught the woman how to cuss.

CHARLENE

They got her picture in the Town Talk again. Looks like she got another movie comin' out.

ELESTRA

If it wasn't for me she would still be in Slidell doin' clown shows at birthday parties. The industry wasn't givin' women the time of day until I came along.

CHARLENE

I can't argue which you on that.

ELESTRA

No one had ever seen a woman with a mouth like mine. I bet I still could get down if I got up there again.

CHARLENE

Why don't you. If you miss stand-up so much.

ELESTRA

Nope!

CHARLENE

Nope?

ELESTRA

No!

CHARLENE

How are you just gonna say no? Like it ain't nothin'.

ELESTRA

Because, messin' up my life once was enough for me.

CHARLENE

First of all, comedy didn't do anything to your life. You did. And second, you know and I know you're not gonna be happy until you're on that stage again.

ELESTRA

I've turned over a new leaf. I've got this night job at South Central Bell answering phones and I mean to keep it.

CHARLENE

Yes Ma'am.

Silence

ELESTRA

You know? CQ is holdin' some kind of open mic tonight.

CHARLENE

I heard about that.

ELESTRA

Yeah! The girls at work told me about it. Said it's nice.

CHARLENE

You gonna check it out?

ELESTRA

You think I should?

CHARLENE

I don't know, but you need to do somethin' besides drivin' me crazy tellin jokes.

ELESTRA

Humph. You know I threw out all that good cabbage with them turkey necks.

CHARLENE

I don't know why ya cook all that stuff, you know you can't eat it all. Why don't you give the left overs to the dog? Instead of givin' him that stuff you give him? It don't even look eatable.

ELESTRA

What are you talkin' about? It's dog food. That's what dogs eat, dog food. If he was suppose to eat people food, he would be a people. But he's not. He's a dog.

Elestra gets the bag out from under the sink.

ELESTRA (Continued)

See. Dog food. D-O-G-F-O-O-D. Dog food. See people eat people food; dogs eat dog food.

CHARLENE

John Paul says you're crazy.

ELESTRA

Who's he callin' crazy?

CHARLENE

He asked me today, "Why do you go over to that crazy woman's house?" And I stood there in front that man and told a bold faced lie.

ELESTRA

John Paul's the one crazy.

CHARLENE

I told him I don't know why I come over here. But that was a lie. Because I know. I know exactly why I come over here.

ELESTRA

Hell, I know too. You're always hungry.

CHARLENE

What?

ELESTRA

You're hungry and John Paul's hungry too.

CHARLENE

That's not it.

ELESTRA

He probably sends you over here.

CHARLENE

No he doesn't.

ELESTRA

Yes he does.

CHARLENE

I come over here 'cause you done plum lost your mind. And bein' around someone who done plum lost their mind helps me to keep up with mine. That's why I come over here. It don't have anything to do with food.

ELESTRA

How big a plate you want?

CHARLENE

Not too much. I'm tryin' to watch my weight.

ELESTRA

And John Paul?

CHARLENE

What ever you fix him, he'll eat.

ELESTRA

Why don't John Paul ever come over here witcha anyway?

CHARLENE

I can't tear him away from that TV long enough. You know that man will sit there in front of that TV from the minute he gets home from work 'til it's time to go back! Besides, he say he don't like hearing us talk. Say we upset him sometimes.

ELESTRA

Humph. I say the man needs a life. I say you need a life. Do y'all do anything together anymore?

Charlene doesn't reply.

ELESTRA (Continued)

That was one thing about Henton. He knew how to show a woman a good time. It was nothin' for Henton to come home from work on a tuesday night and take me out to Tunk's on the water front. We would eat crawfish etouffe' and catfish jambalaya.

(MORE)

ELESTRA (Continued)

And if that wouldn't be enough, we would go out to CQ's or Sonny Man's and cut a rug all night. Hell, I need a life.

Lester barks

ELESTRA (Continued)

See, Lester's still here. He was just hidin' under that log in the back. That's all. Every once in a while he'll smell himself and think he bad enough to get to me.

CHARLENE

Well it looks like he messed with you alright to me, just doin' what he wanted to do.

ELESTRA

Just doin' what he wanted to do, huh? That's it. It's time I started doin' what I want to do.

CHARLENE

What are you talking about?

ELESTRA

I'm gonna go for it.

Elestra picks up her phonebook and begins to look for a number.

CHARLENE

What are you doing?

ELESTRA

I'm lookin' for CQ's number. If ya gonna do somethin', don't play around with it. Just do it. Here it is.

Elestra picks up the phone and dials.

CHARLENE

You mean you're gonna try and get on tonight?

ELESTRA

Uh-huh.

CHARLENE

But you don't have any material.

ELESTRA

I just told you a joke. I'll use that.

CHARLENE

But that's just one joke.

(MORE)

CHARLENE (Continued)

You can't go up there with just one joke. Don't you need more than one joke? Besides, it's old.

ELESTRA

You laughed.

CHARLENE

But I'm crazy.

ELESTRA

I know that.

CHARLENE

And you say I'm hungry.

ELESTRA

Come on.

CHARLENE

And senile.

ELESTRA

Answer the phone.

CHARLENE

I laughed because I didn't want to hurt your feelings.

ELESTRA

You laughed because...hello. Hello, I want to speak to CQ. Well you tell CQ to get the hell to the phone because Miss E is tryin' to tell him somethin'! Go on, now. I don't have all day.

(to Charlene)

They gonna try and tell me that CQ was busy, that I should call him back later. They don't know who the fuck...yeah? Uh...CQ? Is that you? This Miss E. Miss E! Now don't act like...his son? Oh I'm sorry, baby. Well is your daddy around? Oh well how 'bout that. Last year you say? I'm so sorry for your loss. I was a good friend of your daddy's way back. Yeah. But I wanted to know about the open mic tonight. Yeah, I want to come on by and do some stuff.

(Lights out)