

CLAIREE SIDE #1

ANNELLE. Oh. After they finally threw Bunkie Dupuy behind bars and I was rid of him, I went wild. I was drinking, running around, smoking...

TRUVY. Jezebel!

ANNELLE. But Truvy helped me see the error of my ways. I've realized I have something to offer. I joined a church last month. Truvy's helped me see I have talents. I've done guest lectures on beauty at the trade school...

TRUVY. Our little Annelle has become one of the hottest tickets in town.

ANNELLE. Truvy. Stop. I am enjoying the city more. And I am so excited about the Christmas festival today. I've wanted to come to it all my life. And now I live here!

TRUVY. Tell her who you have a date with.

ANNELLE. Truvy, will you hush?

TRUVY. Tell her, missy. Shelby is pretty much totally responsible for the whole thing!

ANNELLE. Sammy DeSoto.

TRUVY. He has a body that doesn't stop anywhere.

SHELBY. How am I responsible?

ANNELLE. He was bartending at your wedding reception last spring. That's when I met him. He makes a mean Cherry Coke.

TRUVY. Romance. This is what I live for. Can we do anything for you today, Shelby?

SHELBY. I'm beyond help. Last week I discovered the early stages of crow's feet.

TRUVY. Oh, honey. Time marches on. And eventually you realize it's marching across your face. How are you feeling?

SHELBY. Never better. *(Clairee enters. She has on a Devils cap. She is hoarse.)*

CLAIREE. *(Presenting a tin of cookies.)* My annual pecan tassies!

TRUVY. There's my girl. I guess you're the happy one this morning.

CLAIREE. Yes, I am. First state championship in eight years!

SHELBY. You sound awful, Miss Clairee!

START

CLAIREE. Hello, darling!

SHELBY. Can I get you some tea?

CLAIREE. Yes, that would be nice. I'm sorry I'm late. I overslept. We didn't get back into town until one o'clock. It was a dazzling victory over Dry Prong.

ANNELLE. I heard you on the radio last night. You were wonderful.

SHELBY. What were you doing on the radio?

CLAIREE. They let me be the color announcer for the Devils. I was fabulous. I was too colorful for words.

SHELBY. That was nice of them to let you talk on the radio.

CLAIREE. Nice nothing. I own the radio station.

SHELBY. Oh! You bought it?

CLAIREE. Yes!! KPPD. The station of choice in Chinquapin Parish!

TRUVY. Shelby? How do you like Clairee's new short and sassy look?

SHELBY. I love it.

TRUVY. Just wait 'til I jack it up.

SHELBY. It makes you look younger, Miss Clairee.

CLAIREE. My hair looks younger. My face looks just as old.

~~ANNELLE. There is so much going on! The state championship last night, the Christmas festival today, the Messiah sing-along tomorrow...~~

~~TRUVY. Life in the big city will spoil you.~~

→ SHELBY. Who's Miss Merry Christmas this year?

CLAIREE. My niece, Nancy Beth, of course.

~~TRUVY. She was here at seven this morning. I had to position her tiara properly on her head so it wouldn't slip around during the parade. I sprayed her hair within an inch of its life.~~

→ SHELBY. Why did I have to ask? I should have known. All you Marmillions are gorgeous. Beauty is genetic in your family.

CLAIREE. Nancy Beth is a pretty girl. Do you know she is Miss Merry Christmas, Miss Soybean, and Miss Watermelon?

TRUVY. But dumb as a post.

CLAIREE. Empty is the head that wears the crown.

~~TRUVY. You have to admit God did a little dance around that family~~

Drew is so successful. Belle does her own hair. Their children are perfect. They're like a family on TV. They don't have a care in the world.

M'LYNN. That's not necessarily true.

TRUVY. Oh?

M'LYNN. That's all I'm saying.

TRUVY. Oh.

SHELBY. I should've won Miss Merry Christmas the year I ran. My talent was very showy.

CLAIREE. We told you at the time, Shelby. Fire batons are not everyone's cup of tea.

SHELBY. Mama didn't approve of my twirling fire batons.

M'LYNN. I just don't approve when you insist on doing dangerous things.

SHELBY. Mama hated those fire batons.

M'LYNN. I have never hated anything, Shelby. I supported you, but I just couldn't watch you. Your father, on the other hand, had a field day. He got so much pleasure out of standing in the backyard for hours watching you practice, holding the garden hose so he could put you out when you caught fire.

SHELBY. My entire pageant ensemble was coordinated in shades of pink...soup to nuts. I twirled to the music from *Hawaii 5-0*. It was my theme song.

M'LYNN. But we were proud of her.

TRUVY. The year I competed, the swimsuit competition was my downfall. Most women look for a swimsuit that will lift and separate; I look for one that will divide and conquer. I've always been built for comfort, not for speed.

SHELBY. Who got the title your year, Miss Clairee?

CLAIREE. Oh, child. Nobody. There wasn't even a Christmas festival when I was in high school. Why Jesus wasn't even born until I was a junior in college. I remember it distinctly. My friends and I were all out watching our flocks by night...

END

~~TRUVY. Get over here, Clairee. Annelle's gotta gift wrap your head~~