

MAC AND BETH

By Dwayne Yancey

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CHARACTERS

(Cast of 6; 2 males, 4 females, plus an off-stage voice of either gender.)

MAC (M)	A young man who has just robbed a bank
BETH (F)	His girlfriend, who has a thing for Shakespeare
SHERIFF MACDUFF (M)	The sheriff of Scotland County, and a part-time chicken farmer
MATTIE (F)	A softball player at the laundromat with her sisters. They're weird.
PATTI (F)	A farmer's wife at the laundromat with her sisters.
HATTIE (F)	Is environmentally-conscious, and also at the laundromat with her sisters.
TV ANNOUNCER (E)	Offstage voice

PRODUCTION NOTES / PROPS AND COSTUMES

The production can be as simple or as elaborate as you wish. But here are some things you'll want even in the simplest production:

- * You'll need to hint at a laundromat — and you'll need some clothes washers, or something box-like that can hint at a clothes washer.
- * Beth needs red dye on her hands.
- * Cash, stained red.
- * Cash, bleached white.
- * Mattie wears a baseball cap.
- * A small TV set.
- * A picnic basket – and contents.
- * Campaign posters for Sheriff MacDuff.
- * Sheriff's uniform.

SET REQUIREMENTS

Minimal, but you'll need some clothes washers and driers.

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MAC AND BETH

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THE SCENE: A laundromat in a small town in Scotland County, wherever that is. MAC and BETH, a young couple, have just robbed a bank in another town in the county. The dye pack that tellers are trained to put in a bag of money during a robbery has exploded when BETH was looking in the bag, so now her hands are red with dye. Whether any dye got on MAC is up to you. There's no reference to it in the dialogue. Now MAC and BETH are trying to wash their clothes, themselves, and the money to hide the evidence. There's one washer for clothes and at least one for the money. The scene opens with BETH leaning over an open washer, trying to wash her hands in the water. MAC is anxious; BETH is unphased but easily distracted.

BETH: Out, damned spot, out, I say!

MAC: Will you cut that out? You're driving me nuts.

BETH: But it's won't wash out.

MAC: Well, use more soap or something. You're driving me crazy.

BETH: I've used up all the soap! I swear, all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Here, smell it. The stuff smells bad, too.

MAC: Will you stop it! You're going to attract attention.

BETH: (*reluctantly*) OK.

(*SHE pulls her hands out of the washer; they're covered with red dye.*)

But I think I'm going to attract attention like this, too.

MAC: Put them back in the water! Geez, Beth, don't be an idiot.

BETH: Well make up your mind, Mac. I can either get my hands clean or walk around like this all day. You pick.

MAC: Just - just clean it up, OK?

(*BETH puts her hands back in the water.*)

BETH: I wonder what that means?

MAC: It means get that -- that -- that stuff off your hands!

BETH: No, the Arabia thing. I think it's an expression I heard somewhere. But I never understood it. I thought they just had oil in Arabia.

MAC: Will you just shut up and wash your hands?

BETH: Oh, where's your sense of romance, Mac?

MAC: Romance? What's romance got to do with anything?

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BETH: Oh, now don't tell me you don't remember. That time we skipped Miss James' English class so we could make out behind the stage?

MAC: (*remembering fondly*) Yeah.

BETH: And the only reason we got caught was because I got lipstick all over your collar?

MAC: (*remembering, not so fondly*) Yeah, I got sent to detention.

BETH: Well, it's just like that. Only this time it's not lipstick.

MAC: Yeah, and this time if we get caught, we're all going to jail. Just wash, OK?

(*BETH looks at her hands again.*)

BETH: Who would have ever thought the dye pack to have so much dye in it?

MAC: Well, what did you expect?

BETH: I certainly don't expect something to go "boom!" right in my face!

MAC: Well, I told you not to look in there!

BETH: Well I had to make sure they'd really put the money in there! I mean, you were standing there shaking like a leaf through the whole thing -- (*SHE acts out the hold-up*) -- how was I know they didn't cheat you?

MAC: They did not cheat me!

BETH: Thanks to me. I was the one that told them to put more in the bag.

MAC: Yeah, and they probably threw in an extra dye pack, too, from the looks of it!

BETH: You're no fun!

MAC: There must be something to get that dye off.

BETH: I could call my mother and ask her. She knows all that kind of cleaning stuff.

MAC: Do not call your mother! Geez, Beth. We need to keep this quiet, don't you understand?

BETH: So how's the money?

(*MAC looks into a clothes washer.*)

MAC: It's hard to tell. Too many suds. Some of them are kind of pink, though. Is that a good sign? Maybe I ought to put in some more detergent.

(*HE shakes some more detergent into the washer.*)

BETH: Isn't that illegal what we're doing?

MAC: What are you talking about?

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BETH: Money laundering. Isn't that a crime?

MAC: Robbing banks is a crime, too!

BETH: Oh, right. I forgot about that. But it's really only a crime if we don't get away with it, right?

MAC: I told you not to go looking into the bag. They always put some kind of exploding dye pack in there. But no, you had to stick your hands in the bag.

BETH: I just wanted to see how much there was.

MAC: Enough for us to live like kings.

BETH: Like kings, huh?

MAC: If we don't get caught.

BETH: We're not going to get caught, Mac.

MAC: How can you be so sure?

BETH: Well, how are they going to catch us? We wore masks and uniforms and everything.

(SHE pulls her hands out of the water to indicate SHE wore a mask.)

MAC: That's one good way! Now back in the water!

BETH: You know, Mac, sometimes you worry too much.

MAC: And this money's not going to be any good if we can't get the dye out.

BETH: We could feed it into a change machine. The machine wouldn't notice that it's all red.

MAC: And how in the world are we supposed to lug around all the change? Won't that be a little suspicious? Won't that be a little heavy?

BETH: Well, it's just an idea.

MAC: Yeah, it's an idea. A bad idea.

BETH: Or we could go to some country where they have different colored money. You know, a lot of countries have money of all sorts of different colors.

MAC: I think they'd still notice.

BETH: Besides, this is just a hick town. The cops around here probably won't be able to figure it out. The sheriff's probably some kind of Barney Fife character anyway. Fife? That's funny. Why does that name ring a bell? Fife? Fife? Say, wasn't there a Fife in - where was that? Starts with an M.

MAC: Mayberry. You're thinking Mayberry.

BETH: No, I don't think it's Mayberry.

MAC: Well, whatever it is, I don't want to hear it.

BETH: *(pouting)* You don't want to hear anything I have to say.

MAC: I wanna hear from Bubba. That's what I wanna hear. Where is that worthless fool anyway? He said he was going to be here with

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his car.

BETH: He doesn't know about the bank, does he?

MAC: No. I just told him we needed a ride. Figured he'd be a better alibi that way. And they'll be looking for that one we hot-wired anyway.

BETH: Good thinking.

MAC: Besides, if I told him, he'd want us to cut him in on the deal, and I ain't cutting him in on nothing. Not him, not nobody. Now where is he?

BETH: So we're the only ones who know?

MAC: Just us and the security cameras.

BETH: Oh, that's so romantic.

(SHE pulls her wet hands out of the water, hugs MAC and kisses him.)

MAC: Hey, you're getting me all wet -

BETH: Oh come on, Mac, you need to lighten up.

(BETH takes her wet hands, sprays or splashes some water on MAC.)

MAC: Hey!

(BETH resumes kissing him. SHERIFF MACDUFF enters while the couple is locked in a long kiss. HE's carrying some campaign posters. HE looks at MAC and BETH and is embarrassed.)

SHERIFF MACDUFF: Uh, pardon me, didn't mean to interrupt you young lovebirds. Just wanted to put up one of my campaign posters. I'm up for re-election, you know.

(HE shows off one of his posters, which says: "Re-elect Sheriff MacDuff" or "Re-elect MacDuff, Sheriff of Scotland County." MAC turns to make sure BETH's red hands aren't visible to the sheriff. MACDUFF proceeds to put up his campaign poster.)

Won't be but just a minute. Just making my morning rounds, then gotta go home for lunch and do some chores on the farm. You ought to see my chickens. Got some prize-winners, I do. Kind of a hobby of mine. Got some Rhode Island Reds and some Rock Island Blues. Gonna enter 'em in the county fair this summer. Y'all come on out and see 'em now, OK?

(MACDUFF looks back at MAC and BETH. MAC resumes kissing BETH, and making sure her hands are out of the way.)

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It's always so nice to see a young couple trying to make a go of it in the world. Don't worry, folks, work hard, keep your noses clean, and someday you'll be able to afford your own washer and drier.

Well, nice meeting you. Sheriff MacDuff's my name. Hope you'll vote for me in November.

(MACDUFF extends his hand. MAC gingerly takes it.)

MAC: Yeah. See ya around.

(MACDUFF offers his hand to BETH. SHE extends her red hand; MAC reacts in some way. Just as BETH extends her hand, MACDUFF's cellphone rings.)

BETH: Nice meeting you, too, sheriff.

MACDUFF: Pardon me, m'am.

(MACDUFF turns away and answers his cellphone.)

Hullo, MacDuff here . . . What's that? You don't say . . . Duncanville, eh?

(MAC reacts to the name Duncanville.)

. . . so are there any suspects? What? The security guards? That can't be . . . well, maybe they were wearing security uniforms, but it must be some kind of trick . . . so how many were there? . . . uh huh, I see . . . and which way do we think they went? . . . daggone, I better get out on the highway then and start looking for 'em . . . you tell the shift lieutenant I want every available car out looking for 'em . . . set up a roadblock if you have to, all the way from out there by the woods to up to the top of the big hill . . . that should catch 'em if they're still in the county.

(MACDUFF hangs up the phone.)

Well, I'll be. Somebody's done gone and knocked over the bank over at Duncanville, can you believe that? Says they were dressed up as security guards, but you know what I think? I think it's an inside job myself. My mama - bless her soul - she didn't raise no fool. Well, technically, she didn't raise me. But you know what I mean.

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Now, I probably shouldn't be saying this, but I happen to know the two sons of the bank president there are just low-down, good-for-nothing so-and-so's - I bet they got in there, swiped some uniforms, and pulled this as some kind of prank. Well, I'm going teach them a thing or two. You don't pull that kind of stunt in Scotland County. Not as long as I'm sheriff. You know what they say about me, don't you?

MAC: Uh-uh.

MACDUFF: "Beware MacDuff."

BETH: Oh! That sounds scary. Do you think we ought to be afraid of him?

(MAC clamps his hand over her mouth.)

MACDUFF: Well, I'll let you young folks get back to your washing now. I've got me some crooks to catch.

BETH: *(her voice muffled)* Bye, bye!

(MACDUFF exits.)

MAC: You idiot! You could have gotten us busted there.

(MAC removes his hand from BETH's mouth. SHE laughs uproariously.)

What's so funny?

BETH: You!

MAC: Me?

BETH: Yes, you! Don't you see? It worked! Our plan. That stupid sheriff thinks the banker's kids did it. He'll never suspect us.

MAC: I dunno. He gives me the willies.

BETH: I knew it was a good plan! Didn't I have a good plan?

MAC: What? You? It was my plan, remember! It was my idea to hit the bank. Ever since me and Bubba were in that bar one night over in Heathsville and we overheard those tellers talking about how easy it'd be.

BETH: Well, the concept was yours. The details were mine - except for the stolen car part for the getaway vehicle. That was your idea. But all the rest was mine.

MAC: Whatever. I still wouldn't tell that to the judge if I were you.

BETH: Well, as long as you don't chicken out on us, we won't be seeing a judge, now will we? Unless it's to, you know, maybe tie the knot –

(SHE gets all lovey-dovey with MAC again.)

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MAC: Will you get your hands off me? Geez, you're going to get that stupid dye all over me if you're not careful.

BETH: Sorry.

MAC: Geez.

BETH: What's gotten into you?

MAC: Look, I'll just feel better once we get all this mess cleaned up.

BETH: Unless.

MAC: Unless what?

BETH: Unless we can't get it cleaned up.

MAC: What are you talking about?

BETH: What if it won't come off? What if it's like some kind of permanent ink or something?

MAC: It's not permanent ink, OK? It's got to come off somehow.

BETH: I might be stained for life. What will I do then?

MAC: I don't know. Get a tattoo or something to cover it then.

BETH: But what about all those things he just said? You know, 'beware MacDuff' and all that? Do you think he's onto us?

MAC: He's the sheriff, for gosh sake! What's he supposed to say?

BETH: I dunno. It just seems so spooky -- so real.

MAC: I'll tell you what's real. You and me, we have just robbed a bank. That's real. We've got red dye all over our clothes, all over ourselves, and all over the money - and if we don't get it cleaned up soon before that stupid Sheriff MacDuff wises up and comes back here - well, it's off to the state license plate factory for both of us. Is that real enough for you?

BETH: Well, that'd be steady work, right? People always need license plates.

(MAC shoots BETH a dirty look.)

What? The state license plate - oh, now I get it - you were making a metaphor! No, wait, a simile? No, an allusion. Oh, I don't know. I didn't pay attention to that part of English class.

MAC: You're hopeless.

BETH: Funny. That's what Miss James said, too. Just before she took early retirement. I didn't know you could take early retirement at 33.

MAC: Now, where is that stupid Bubba with his car?

BETH: Why do you always call him Bubba?

MAC: I dunno. That's what he's called. Bubba.

BETH: Well, what's his real name?

MAC: I don't know. Does it matter?

BETH: I was just curious. I bet it's not Bubba.

MAC: It's some kind of stupid family name, OK? I can't remember it. Something with a Q or other.

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BETH: A Q? You mean like Quincy?

MAC: Nah, not that.

BETH: Or Quinton, maybe?

MAC: I don't know!

BETH: Or San Quentin? I hear that's a popular one.

MAC: Geez! That's not funny. Will you knock it off?

BETH: You mean like how we knocked off that bank?

MAC: Ssssh! Somebody might hear you!

BETH: Well, you still don't find a Q in a name every day.

MAC: Whatever, OK? Just forget about his real name. *(Turning his attention elsewhere.)* Dang that Bubba. We should have just kept that car we stole.

BETH: That was a nice car. Had those real nice seats that leaned back and everything. *(Optional lines.)* And those cup holders - did you see those? They were real nice, deep ones. Not like those little cheap ones you sometimes see where you drink always tips over when you go around a corner. *(End optional lines.)* I don't see why we had to ditch it.

MAC: To throw the cops off our trail.

BETH: Oh, right.

MAC: I'm gonna go look for him. He might have gotten lost.

BETH: He doesn't know how to find the laundromat?

MAC: I dunno. I'm just tired of waiting here, OK? How long's it been now, two or three hours?

BETH: Can't be that long. The money's still on the rinse cycle.

MAC: It feels like longer.

BETH: Of course, we had it on soak for awhile to try to get all that dye out.

MAC: I can't stand having nothing to do but sit around and wait. Geez, at this rate it'll be tomorrow before we can get across the state line.

BETH: Tomorrow?

MAC: Well, it's at least three hours from here to -

BETH: Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, creeps in this petty pace from day to day -

MAC: That does it. I'm going outside.

BETH: You want me to come too?

(SHE pulls her hands out of the water.)

MAC: No! You stay here and get cleaned up. We need to get all this cleaned up.

BETH: Oh, all right.

(MAC exits. BETH tends to the laundry, and looks at her hands again.)

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SHE holds them out.)

Maybe I can just say I got a little sunburn?

(THREE WOMEN enter, each carrying baskets of clothes to be washed. They are MATTIE, PATTI and HATTIE. MATTIE is wearing a baseball cap, perhaps other clothes to indicate SHE's a baseball fan. SHE's the tomboy of the group; PATTI is more of a practical farm girl; HATTIE is more philosophical, the hippie of the group. As the WOMEN talk, BETH's eyes widen.)

MATTIE: Well, I thought it was fair, but they ruled it foul, so what can you do? It's like our team is cursed, you know? I mean, I've seen some umpires who are real 'homers,' you know, but nothing like this. I don't know where they got that officiating crew from, but they were the pits.

HATTIE: Fair is foul, foul is fair.

MATTIE: You've got that right. That's exactly how it was. Because when the other side had that long ball in the seventh inning, with the bases loaded, they ruled that fair. And I swear, that went right down the foul line like it did for us. You know, if this hadn't been church league softball, well, I don't know what might have happened. I know some people were tempted to settle it out in the parking lot.

PATTI: Now, now, Mattie. You don't want to go stirring up things all hurley-burley. You know what happened the last time you did that. You don't want to fight that battle again.

MATTIE: I'm not saying I was going to take it outside. I'm just saying others might have. But I can tell you this, we're supposed to play them again tonight, and this time it's on our field, and there's going to be some serious butt-kicking going on.

(SHE holds up some clothing.)

Now look at that will you?

HATTIE: You need the bleach?

MATTIE: Yeah, thanks, Hattie. I've got some bad grass stains here.

PATTI: They say on the news there's a storm blowing in later tonight.

MATTIE: What kind of storm?

PATTI: Sounds like a bad one to me.

MATTIE: Thunder? Lightning? Rain?

PATTI: Yeah, all that.

HATTIE: I heard that, too. It's supposed to hit right around sunset, they said.

MATTIE: *(sarcastically)* Wonderful.

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PATTI: You know what that probably means, don't you?

MATTIE: Means our game tonight is probably going to get cancelled.

We can't play in thunder, lighting and rain. The (*insert name of denomination*) might but we won't.

PATTI: It means tomorrow morning's probably going to be foggy. I'll take the bleach, too, when you're done.

MATTIE: Here you go, Patti.

PATTI: Thanks.

HATTIE: Oh, I hate it when it's foggy. Whenever the clouds are low like that, the fumes from the paper mill up in Glamistown just seem to sort of hover in the air and it stinks up the place to high heaven all day. It's just filthy! I don't know how they allow that sort of thing.

MATTIE: So, if we're going to get rained out, I suppose we'll have tonight free after all. You want to try to get together sometime?

HATTIE: I don't know. If we really do get a storm, I'm not sure I want to get out in all that weather.

(*PATTI gets out a small TV set.*)

PATTI: Here, why don't we see what the Weather Channel has to say.

MATTIE: Good idea.

HATTIE: You brought a television set to the laundromat?

PATTI: Sure. Why not?

HATTIE: Just seems kinda weird.

PATTI: Hattie, we're all weird.

HATTIE: Well, yeah, I suppose.

PATTI: Yeah, you're right. They're showing a storm moving in tonight, all right.

MATTIE: So how's this thing work?

PATTI: You turn this knob to switch the channel.

MATTIE: I mean, how are you picking up cable channels on this?

PATTI: I don't know. These gizmos are all Greek to me. It may as well be some kind of witchcraft as far as I'm concerned. All I know is it's something Junior rigged up.

MATTIE: So can you get ESPN on here? I wanna see what they have to say about (*insert name of popular Major League Baseball team.*) I hear they might have to put (*insert name of popular player*) on injured reserve.

BETH: Uh, excuse me. I couldn't help but overhear you and, uh, there was something, I, uh, was wondering.

HATTIE: What's that?

BETH: You said something about, uh, well, you know -

MATTIE: Come on, don't be afraid, spit it out.

BETH: Well, uh, you said you had some bleach.

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PATTI: Bleach. Oh, sure. You need some? Here you go.

BETH: Uh, thanks.

HATTIE: Just be careful with it, though. A little goes a long way.

BETH: OK, thanks.

HATTIE: It's a pretty strong formula. I'm surprised they still allow it on the market, to tell you the truth, what with all these environmental regulations they've got nowadays.

BETH: How strong is it?

HATTIE: Oh, it's a regular witch's brew of chemicals. I'm not sure what all's in it, but I'll tell you this, the stuff works wonders.

BETH: Well, I could use something strong.

HATTIE: Grass stains, blood, you name it, it'll take it out. But you've got to watch it, though. That stuff can bleach the color right out of your clothes.

BETH: Really?

HATTIE: Oh, yeah, it'll take out the dirt, but it'll take out the dye right along with it.

BETH: Hmm.

HATTIE: It's like double strength or something.

BETH: Thanks.

(SHE tries a little of the bleach on her hands.)

HATTIE: It works best in hot water. You want to swish it all around until it starts bubbling and fizzing. That's when you know it's working.

BETH: OK, thanks.

(BETH slathers it on her hands and arms.)

Double, double, toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble. Hey, that's kinda neat. Double, double, toil and trouble . . .

(BETH concentrates on cleaning herself.)

MATTIE: So, where you been, sister? You haven't been in whenever I've called you lately.

PATTI: Killing swine.

MATTIE: This time of year? I thought butchering season wasn't until November, December.

PATTI: Usually it isn't, but the volunteer fire department is having a BBQ as a fund-raiser, so we thought we'd make that our contribution.

(The WOMEN talk amongst themselves. MAC enters, sees BETH cleaning her hands.)

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BETH: Hey, Mac, come here and look at this. This stuff really works.

MAC: No sign of that worthless Bubba - hey, what are you doing?

BETH: I'm cleaning my hands. What's it look like I'm doing?

MAC: Where'd you get that stuff?

BETH: From those ladies over there.

(MAC notices the WOMEN. THEY wave at him.)

MATTIE: Hey!

PATTI: Hey!

HATTIE: Hey!

(The WOMEN resume talking among themselves.)

MAC: Oh my gosh.

BETH: What's wrong?

MAC: That's them.

BETH: That's who?

MAC: The bank tellers.

BETH: From today? Over at Duncanville? I don't think so. The bank tellers there looked like this. *(SHE holds her hands over her heads, as if SHE's the one being held up.)*

MAC: No, not those. The ones that Bubba and I overheard talking at that bar. They were talking about how easy it would be to rob the bank at Duncanville. They said somebody was bound to do it someday and they talked about how whoever did it would wind up rich as a king.

BETH: I don't think they're bank tellers.

MAC: No, I'm telling you, that's them. That is so weird.

BETH: I think they're sisters. Don't they look like sisters to you?

MAC: What?

BETH: See, I've been listening to them and they've been talking about the weather and barbecues and stuff and -

MAC: OK, that's great. Now here's the deal -

BETH: Hey, you know what I just realized?

MAC: Not now, Beth.

BETH: I just thought you might be interested; you're going to think this is really weird - and believe me, I do mean weird -

MAC: I'll be interested later, OK?

BETH: That car they drove up in? Do you know what the bumper sticker says? "My other car is a broom."

MAC: *(finally paying attention to BETH)* What are you talking about?

BETH: Oh nothing. Just an old wives' tale.

MAC: Now, listen up, here's the problem: I'm worried about Bubba.

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BETH: What about Bubba?

MAC: Look, Bubba's not as dumb as he looks, OK? He's gonna figure this out. And then you know what's gonna happen?

BETH: What?

MAC: He's gonna want to get cut in on the deal.

BETH: You think?

MAC: I know. That's just the way Bubba is, OK? And you know Bubba. He's got a big mouth. He can't be trusted with a secret.

BETH: So what are we gonna do?

MAC: What else can we do? We're gonna set him up.

BETH: Set him up for what?

MAC: Everything. Look, I've got this figured out, OK? So here's what we'll do: When Bubba shows up, I'll go tell him I don't need a ride, after all, OK? And when he's not looking, I'll toss the bag with those uniforms in the back seat.

BETH: Yeah?

MAC: Then I'll come back and call the cops. They'll pull him over, they'll find the uniforms and, bingo, it's all over. They'll think he did it, and they'll quit looking for anybody else. Then we can go back, pick up that stolen car we ditched, and get the hell out of Dodge. Whaddya think?

BETH: Oh, Mac. You're so smart.

(SHE hugs and kisses him, with her hands all wet from water and soap and bleach.)

MAC: Hey, watch it.

BETH: Sorry. But, hey, look, this stuff is coming off.

MAC: Great. Now just get it out of all our clothes and the cash and we'll be set.

BETH: OK.

MAC: I'll take this with me and go wait for Bubba.

BETH: Uh, just one thing.

MAC: What's that?

BETH: Well, if you're gonna do it, better do it quickly.

MAC: Uh, yeah, something like that.

(HE grabs the bag with the uniforms, and exits. BETH studies the bleach bottle.)

BETH: Wow, this stuff really does work wonders.

(SHE dumps it in several washers, the one with her clothes and the ones with the cash.)

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That oughta do the trick.

(BETH studies the washers, while the WOMEN cackle with laughter.)

MATTIE: I'm hungry.

PATTI: I brought a picnic basket.

HATTIE: You brought a picnic basket to the laundromat, too?

PATTI: Sure, sometimes I get hungry watching those clothes spin all around all, you know, hurley-burley.

HATTIE: You're weird.

PATTI: Hattie, if I've told you once, I've told you twice, we're all weird.

MATTIE: Or maybe thrice.

HATTIE: I suppose you're right.

MATTIE: We're sisters, remember? So that would make us -

PATTI: Don't go there, Mattie. Don't go there.

MATTIE: Oh, all right. So what's in there?

PATTI: Well, let's see, I've got a fillet here.

(SHE pulls out something long and skinny, like a snake.)

MATTIE: What kind of fillet is that?

PATTI: Oh, some kind of fenny snake.

MATTIE: That's why we're weird!

HATTIE: Not road kill!

PATTI: It's not road kill. Junior caught it when he was out frog-gigging last weekend.

HATTIE: Yuck. I'm not eating snake.

PATTI: Have it your way then. It's perfectly good white meat. Tastes like chicken.

HATTIE: How do you know that thing's not poisonous?

PATTI: Trust me. I know my fenny snakes, OK?

HATTIE: That does it. I going to become a vegetarian.

MATTIE: So what else you got?

PATTI: And here's some eye of newt and toe of frog.

MATTIE: Junior really had a good catch last weekend, huh?

PATTI: Oh yeah. He came back with a whole mess of critters.

HATTIE: Critters? Ew! I don't see how you eat that stuff.

PATTI: And here's some lizard's leg and howlet's wing.

MATTIE: You'd prefer maybe scale of dragon or tooth of wolf?

PATTI: I think it's a screech owl from the size of it.

HATTIE: I'm saying I'd prefer something that's not a reptile!

MATTIE: Howlet's wing isn't from a reptile.

HATTIE: Still, it's - it's - it's gross!

PATTI: *(SHE gets out a cauldron)* Perfectly edible. Just plop it in the

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pot, bring it to boil, stir it around some until the broth starts to bubble
- ummm!

HATTIE: You've brought a cauldron, too?

PATTI: You never know when you might want to cook up a nice stew.

HATTIE: You're weird.

PATTI: Hattie, if I've told you once, I've told you twice, don't make me
tell you thrice -

HATTIE: I know, I know. We're all weird.

MATTIE: We're sisters!

PATTI: So, let's see, what am I missing here? *(SHE reads from the recipe)* "Gall of goat and slips of yew." It's hard to find decent yew
slips this time of year, you know?

HATTIE: You're making all that up.

PATTI: No, I'm not. I've got the recipe written down right here.

MATTIE: *(looks at the recipe and reads from it)* "Make the gruel thick
and slab; add thereto a tiger's chawdron; for the ingredients of our
cauldron" -

PATTI: You can skip the tiger part; mama always did.

MATTIE: So this is gruel, and not a stew? I always thought it was a
stew.

PATTI: Gruel, stew, you can call it whatever you want.

MATTIE: I bet you could probably get some tiger parts in one of those
Asian markets. You know, the ones with all the weird fish and
things.

HATTIE: *(snatching the recipe)* Where'd you get that?

PATTI: It's an old family recipe.

HATTIE: Whose family? Not our family!

MATTIE: Hattie, don't you remember that stew that mama used to be
make?

HATTIE: Yeah. What about it?

MATTIE: Well, did you ever stop to think what was in it?

HATTIE: Umm, no. Why?

PATTI: Or ever wonder what daddy was bringing back whenever he
went on one of his hunting trips down to the swamp?

HATTIE: What are you saying?

MATTIE: Oh nothing. Nothing at all.

PATTI: Sssh. Mama used to tell her it was the "catch of the day."

HATTIE: Oh, no. You're not telling me that - that he used to - that she
used to - that we used to -

MATTIE and PATTI: Um hmmm.

HATTIE: Oh gross.

MATTIE and PATTI: Double double, toil and trouble, fire burn and
cauldron bubble!

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(MATTIE and PATTI cackle with laughter.)

HATTIE: I think I'm going to be sick.

BETH: Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh. They really are witches! Where's Mac? I've got to tell Mac!

(SHE runs for the door; just before SHE gets there, HE enters, and THEY collide.)

MAC: Where are you going?

BETH: Mac! There's something I've got to tell you!

MAC: There's something I've got to tell you! I have done the deed!

BETH: What deed?

MAC: What I was telling you about! About Bubba!

BETH: Oh! That deed! I thought you meant like a deed without a name -

(MATTIE, PATTI and HATTIE cackle with laughter, and clink their soda bottles - as THEY drink something.)

MAC: What's up with them? Are they drunk or something?

BETH: That which has made them drunk hath made me bold!

MAC: Geez, Beth, not in the middle of the day! I might need you to drive the getaway car!

BETH: Look, there's something I need to tell you. See, I've got this funny feeling. *(Alternate: See, I've got a funny feeling about those three.)*

MAC: Yeah? Well, it looks like she's got a funny feeling, too.

(PATTI scratches her thumbs.)

MATTIE: What's wrong with you?

PATTI: My thumb itches for some reason.

MATTIE: You know what they say that means don't you?

HATTIE: What's it mean?

PATTI: It means something wicked this way comes.

HATTIE: Huh?

MATTIE: Something bad is headed this way.

HATTIE: Well, why don't you just say it that way then?

PATTI: I dunno. It's just an old expression. I don't know where it comes from.

(MATTIE notices something on the TV screen.)

MATTIE: Hey, look!

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HATTIE: What's going on?

MATTIE: Some kind of breaking news thing.

PATTI: Well, turn it up.

(MATTIE turns up the volume. SHE might also re-adjust the position of the TV set, so the audience can see the screen - it shows a mug shot of BUBBA.)

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: - this just in. Authorities in Scotland County say they have apprehended the suspected accomplice in today's daring bank robbery at the First National Bank of Duncanville. Sheriff MacDuff has released this photograph of the subject who was taken into custody only moments ago -

BETH: Hey, that's Bubba!

MAC: That was sure quick.

BETH: Why'd they call him an accomplice, though? I thought you told them he was the one who really did it?

MAC: Ssssh.

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: Sheriff MacDuff said authorities initially thought this suspect was the actual bank robber, but an investigation showed he did not match the build of the two masked figures seen on the bank's security cameras.

MAC: Oh crap.

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: The sheriff said a manhunt remains underway. In a brief interview with Channel 3 Action News, here's what Sheriff MacDuff had to say:

VOICE OF SHERIFF MACDUFF: All that I can tell you right now is we've got roadblocks set up from Birnan Wood all the way out to Dunsinane Hill. If these fellows are still in the county, rest assured we'll get 'em.

BETH: Hey! Where'd he say they had roadblocks?

MAC: Sssh.

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: You seem very confident, Sheriff. What gives you such confidence? Is some there evidence here you can't talk about? Or some leads you have -

VOICE OF SHERIFF MACDUFF: Well, I'll tell you what gives me confidence. It's thinking about my mama.

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: Excuse me - did you say your mama?

VOICE OF SHERIFF MACDUFF: That's right. My mama – bless her soul - she wouldn't like it one bit if she knew there were bank robbers running loose around Scotland County. And I sure can't let my mama down.

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: Well, on the off-chance that the bank robbers are listening to this broadcast right now, do you have a

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special message for them, sheriff?

VOICE OF SHERIFF MACDUFF: Just this: "Beware MacDuff."

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: That was Sheriff MacDuff, speaking just moments ago to Channel 3 Action News. We now return you to our regular programming.

BETH: So what are we going to do?

VOICE OF TV ANNOUNCER: But before we do, the sheriff asked that we continue to run the photograph of the accomplice already in custody. The sheriff asks if anyone has seen this man and can identify his associates, they should contact the Scotland County Sheriff's Office immediately.

MAC: Will they shut that thing off!

BETH: Oh Mac, what's wrong? You look like you've seen a ghost.

MAC: I don't want to look at - at - at that picture, that's why!

BETH: It's just the TV.

MAC: Just tell them to shut it off!

BETH: Well, don't look at it.

(MAC turns around, but remains discomfited.)

MAC: But the sound - I can still hear the sound.

BETH: Mac, you're furious. What's wrong?

MAC: *(trying to get a grip on himself)* Nothing. Nothing. It means nothing, I tell you.

BETH: Sound and fury, signifying nothing.

MAC: Look, we've got to get out of here. Go check the washers. See if our stuff is ready.

BETH: OK. What are you going to do?

MAC: Me? I need a cigarette.

(HE lights a cigarette, or at least flicks a lighter.)

BETH: Hey, the sign says no smoking.

MAC: Whatever.

(HE angrily puts out the cigarette, or flicks off the lighter.)

BETH: Out brief candle -

MAC: Go check the washers!

BETH: OK, OK. But I'm telling you, those women -- there's something weird about them -- I think they're into voodoo!

MAC: The washers!

BETH: OK, OK!

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(BETH checks the washers; MAC paces. The WITCHES resume their conversation.)

HATTIE: So you think the sheriff's really gonna catch those bank robbers?

PATTI: Nah.

MATTIE: Why you say that, Patti?

PATTI: I just don't think anybody's going to be able to catch them.

MATTIE: Why not? I figured everybody ought to beware of MacDuff.

PATTI: MacDuff's too much of a mama's boy. He couldn't catch a cold.

(MAC hears this and is emboldened. BETH brings her clean shirt from the washer to MAC.)

BETH: Hey, that bleach really worked. All the dye's out.

MAC: *(now upbeat)* Great. Now we just have to dry it.

BETH: - but look, I've been thinking, and I've changed my mind: I think we ought to be worried about this Sheriff MacDuff character, after all.

MAC: You know what? I've changed my mind, too. I don't think we have a thing to worry about.

BETH: Not a thing?

MAC: Not a thing. MacDuff's not worth worrying about. Come on, let's get the money and go.

BETH: But - but - he's still the sheriff -- he might have, I don't know, informants or something!

MAC: We'll need some garbage bags to put all this money in when it's dry. I'm gonna pop next door to the convenience store and get some, OK?

(MAC exits.)

BETH: *(shrugs)* Oh well.

(SHE starts unloading her wet clothes into the drier. When SHE's done with that, SHE proceeds to look into the washer with the money. SHE pauses, studies the situation, and then either find a place to sit down, or lean against the washer, awaiting MAC's return.)

HATTIE: So how come whenever the sheriff talks, he always says "my mama, bless her soul." What's that all about?

PATTI: You know he never knew his mother, right?

HATTIE: I didn't know that.

PATTI: Yeah, she died when he was itty-bitty.

MATTIE: Childbirth, I heard.

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PATTI: Well, yeah. C-section, technically.

MATTIE: Ouch.

PATTI: There were some kind of complications. I never heard the whole story. But I know he was born prematurely.

HATTIE: Oh, that is so sad.

MATTIE: You didn't know that?

HATTIE: I never knew that.

PATTI: I thought everyone knew that.

HATTIE: How'd you know that?

PATTI: Mama used to talk about it some when we were little?

HATTIE: How come Mama never told me any of these things?

MATTIE: Because you never paid attention, Hattie, that's why.

PATTI: It's just like in school, remember? You almost flunked out of that because you didn't pay attention.

HATTIE: I did so pay attention.

PATTI: Remember that time in geography we had that assignment to draw a map of where we lived, and Hattie drew this map of the county that showed Birnan Wood overlapping with Dunsinane Hill?

MATTIE: Oh, I remember that! And the teacher put it up on the bulletin board for parent's night and everyone laughed about it for weeks!

HATTIE: Hey! You're making fun of me!

PATTI: We're not making fun.

HATTIE: Besides, it could happen, you know. They're talking about expanding the national forest boundaries, you know.

PATTI: Really? I hadn't heard that?

HATTIE: See, now you're the one not paying attention.

MATTIE: I wish they'd put in some more ballfields, instead.

(SHERIFF MACDUFF enters.)

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