

OFFED AT THE BAKE-OFF
By Matt Steele and Mike Steele
(Excerpts may be used royalty free for auditions.)

AUDITION 1-- for 1 m, 1 w

In this scene, the Mysterious Woman and Detective find themselves alone.

M. WOMAN: *(To DETECTIVE.)* It's just us again. Alone.

DETECTIVE: I don't know if we should fool around right now. I want to at least attempt to figure out who murdered those students.

M. WOMAN: *(Sits on CR couch.)* Come on. We can cuddle for a bit.

DETECTIVE: If you insist.

(DETECTIVE sits on CR couch on top of cushion that SISTER placed whoopee cushion under. SFX: Flatulence sound.)

DETECTIVE: *(Cont'd.)* That wasn't me.

M. WOMAN: Sure it wasn't.

DETECTIVE: No, really. It wasn't.

(SFX: Flatulence sound.)

M. WOMAN: Oh! *(Giggles.)* Well, that one was me.

DETECTIVE: Um... But still, the first one wasn't me.

(SFX: Flatulence sound.)

M. WOMAN: Oh! There I go again. Don't be embarrassed. We all do it. Some of us more than others.

(SFX: Flatulence sound.)

M. WOMAN: *(Cont'd.)* I can't help it, sometimes.

DETECTIVE: *(Pulls whoopee cushion out from under CR couch cushion.)* No, but really, that first one was not me.

M. WOMAN: Come and kiss me.

DETECTIVE: *(Leans in to kiss her but hesitates.)* It stinks in here now!

M. WOMAN: You don't have to be so rude about it. Have you ever smelled your breath?

DETECTIVE: If we're going to cuddle, let's find a less pungent place.

(DETECTIVE and M. WOMAN exit UR.)

AUDITION 2 -- for 2 m, 4 w

In this scene, Ethel and Brutus try to stop Brutus from eating so many sweets, while Thelma, Velma, and Blanche vent to Ernest.

ETHEL: *(Cont'd.)* So she carries them on her person, does she? Well, what are we waiting for? She has to be somewhere in this inn. Let's find her, snatch those confidential confectionary instructions right from underneath her nose, and destroy them before she can make any more sweets.

(BRUTUS exits UL. ETHEL begins to exit UL, slowly.)

ETHEL: *(Cont'd. Calls to UL exit.)* That's right, let's move quickly. Don't worry, Brutus. I'm right behind you.

(BRUTUS re-enters UL, lifts ETHEL, and flings her over his shoulder.)

ETHEL: *(Cont'd.)* You remind me of my Ernest back in the good old days. Giddy up!

(BRUTUS exits UL carrying ETHEL. ERNEST enters UR. He carries an ice bucket.)

ERNEST: Ethel! Ethel! Where did you go? I found an ice bucket. Ethel! You can't hobble much faster than I can, so you couldn't have gone far.

(THELMA, VELMA, and BLANCHE enter UR.)

THELMA: *(To VELMA and BLANCHE. Indicates ERNEST.)* Look at him, sisters. What a pitiful display. This is what one becomes when he is partnered with a continuously defeated contestant like Ethel Edinberg. Ernest's hearing loss is likely due to the loud weeping Ethel produces in his ear after each loss. *(Approaches ERNEST.)* Excuse me, Ernest.

(ERNEST doesn't respond as if he cannot hear.)

THELMA: *(Cont'd.)* Ernest! *(To VELMA and BLANCHE.)* He cannot hear us.

VELMA: He sure can't.

BLANCHE: He sure can't.

THELMA: *(Taps ERNEST on the shoulder.)* Ernest!

ERNEST: *(Startled.)* Ahhhhh! *(To THELMA. Indicates his heart.)* You almost made my ticker tick its last tock. How long have you been standing there?

THELMA: Long enough to see that if you were a contestant, you would be in violation of rule thirteen in the twelfth index of the Official Knotting Bake-Off Rulebook. The rule states: "All contestants must adhere to the regulations set by local law enforcement, regardless of how ridiculous, annoying or tyrannical these rules may be." Detective Detective told you to stay in your room as he looks for clues, and even though you are not a contestant, that would be a wise rule to abide by right now, would it not?

ERNEST: *(Strains to hear.)* Eh?

THELMA: It would be safest to abide by this rule, would it not?

ERNEST: Say that again.

THELMA: Return to your room.

ERNEST: You heard a boom? Must be thunder. There's a storm outside, you know.

THELMA: Listen carefully. You should return to your room.

VELMA: *(To ERNEST.)* You sure should.

BLANCHE: *(To ERNEST.)* You sure should.

THELMA: *(Indicates VELMA and BLANCHE.)* Of course, we are judges. Therefore, we can do whatever we please.

VELMA: We sure can.

BLANCHE: We sure can.

THELMA: And after enduring thirty-three years of contestants who do not follow the rules, we have a mind to break some ourselves. We have developed such incredible disdain for the bake-off.

VELMA: We sure have.

BLANCHE: *(Hesitantly.)* We sure have? *(Gestures that Ernest might hear them.)*

THELMA: Do not fret, Blanche. Ernest cannot hear a word we are speaking. Oh, how tired we are of contestants baking and whining and overstuffing us with their buttery, sugary concoctions. Every year, they bake something creamier, something flakier, something moist-i-er. Our taste buds cannot take much more if this. And how exhausting it is to listen to contestants drone on and on about how hard they have worked on their entries. We pretend to care about this nonsense. *(Indicates clothespin on nose. To ERNEST.)* But do not let the clothespins fool you. These uncomfortable garments are simply a ruse. We could not care less. Every year, after we are presented with the bake-off desserts and leave to deliberate in private, we merely sneak away to tune into the latest episode of *The Ed Sullivan Show*. We rarely even taste the entries. In fact, the only reason Marjorie Margarine wins every year is because she slips my sisters and me a hefty load of cash if we declare her the victor. *(Sighs.)* Whew! It certainly feels good to get that off our chests.

VELMA: *(Sighs.)* It sure does.

BLANCHE: *(Sighs.)* It sure does.

ERNEST: If you don't like judging the bake-off, why don't you just quit?

THELMA: Well, you see, J & J Toothpaste offers us quite a large stipend, and... Wait a moment. You mean to tell me you heard what my sisters and I were discussing?

ERNEST: *(Strains to hear.)* Eh?

THELMA: You heard the reprehensible things we just said?

ERNEST: Come again?

THELMA: You heard that we despise judging the bake-off?

ERNEST: Of course. Your voice went in and out, but I caught the gist of it. Your attitude is most unfair. My wife has entered the contest every year for the past thirty-three years. She's put her life and soul into this contest. I've seen her come home from the Knotting Shore upset and defeated all because you judges have been too lazy to even give her pies a chance. After over three decades of discouragement and anguish, my wife has become a broken shell of a woman. Because of you, her once vibrant spirit is gone.

(BRUTUS enters UL with ETHEL on his back, giving her a piggy back ride, unseen by ERNEST.)

ETHEL: Yahoo! Ride 'em, cowboy!

(BRUTUS gallops around the stage as THELMA, VELMA, and BLANCHE watch. ERNEST does not notice. BRUTUS exits UR with ETHEL on his back.)

From: *Offed at the Bake-Off*- By Matt Steele and Mike Steele

Published by: Eldridge Publishing Co.

<http://www.histage.com/playdetails.asp?PID=2588>