



Audition Form – Steel Magnolias

Please bring this completed form with you to the audition.

Name _____

Address _____

Cell phone _____ (Do you text? Yes / No)

Email _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Phone No. _____

Any medical concerns the production crew should be aware of: _____

Occupation _____ Age _____ Height _____

Work or school hours _____

If you are familiar with this play, is there any part that interests you? _____

Would you accept another part if not offered any listed above? _____

Would you consider working on the crew or technical team? _____

Experience: Although not required to be cast, please list some of your theater background. *Some of this information may be used in the playbill for the show.*

Do you have ANY conflicts with the rehearsal/performance schedule? _____

Please list ALL conflicts below (be as specific as possible to dates, times). Additional conflicts after being cast may not be accepted?

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Character Descriptions

TRUVY JONES – 40ish. She is the owner of the beauty shop in fictional Chinquapin Parish, Louisiana, where Steel Magnolias is set. Truvy loves her work as a hair stylist and is, in fact, obsessed with everything having to do with hair (e.g., “Baltimore is the hair capital of the world!”). She is married to a “slug” who spends most of his time parked in front of the TV and is the mother of twin 18-year-old sons (“Poot” and Louie) who will soon be moving out and leaving her “nest.” She may be a bit vain in terms of being honest about her age and size. Physically, she is, in her own words, built for “comfort not speed” and could be described as a bit “top heavy” (or buxom). She’s a frustrated romantic and apprehensive about soon being alone with only her negligent husband. A church-going woman (a Methodist), Truvy is a gossip – but never a mean or vindictive one. She soon becomes a surrogate mother of sorts for Annelle, her “semi-daughter.” Truvy is a bit naïve about the world at large, but, like all the “magnolias” in the play, she is kind, caring, and resilient. The actress will have to be believable styling hair and manicuring nails onstage.

ANNELLE DUPUY-DeSOTO – age about 19 (one of the other characters describes her by saying: “she can’t be more than 18”). A young hairstylist, when the play begins she is applying to Trudy’s beauty salon for a job. Recently married to a shady character named Bunky Dupuy, her fugitive husband has taken off with her car, money, and even most of her clothes, leaving her in an understandably fragile state. She is justifiably nervous and concerned about her finances and her future. From Zwolle, Louisiana, she is naïve about the ways of the world. She has quite an emotional arc over the course of the play: moving from a shy, insecure, anxious girl to a young woman who gradually finds confidence and maturity with a new job and enthusiastic interest in the local Baptist church. She becomes a surrogate daughter of sorts to motherly Truvy and, over the course of the play, meets a young man named Sammy DeSoto, marries him, and becomes pregnant with her first child. Very good at heart, at times she gets over-zealous with her religious beliefs. A lovable, sweet girl, Annelle is shy, private, and creative. The actress will have to be believable shampooing and styling hair onstage (training will be given).

CLAIREE BELCHER – age late 60s to early 70s. The former “First Lady of Chinquapin,” she is a “grande dame” who has only recently lost her husband (Lloyd) of almost 50 years, the former Mayor of the town. She is still adjusting to being a new widow. Clairee is from a wealthy and distinguished family (the Marmillions) and is confident in her social position in the town. Physically, she has a sweet tooth and is likely a little plump, a feature which she exaggerates; she is also attractive and stylish. She has a son and daughter-in-law who live in Tickfaw, Louisiana; is next-door neighbor to the Eatentons; best friend forever to Ouiser Boudreaux; and an enthusiastic gossip. She develops three interests that shape her life over the course of the play: the local high school football team; the local radio station KPPD, which she eventually buys; and viewing theatre. She is described as having “a smart mouth” and also has a self-deprecating type of humor as she frequently makes fun of herself. She has “plenty of money.” In one scene, Clairee has a hoarse voice from yelling herself silly at a football game; the actress must pull off the hoarseness without being inaudible to the audience.

SHELBY EATENTON-LATCHERIE – age about 25. Shelby is the “prettiest girl intown.” She is ideally blonde (can be wigged if necessary), slim, charming, ebullient, and appealing. The daughter of M’Lynn and Drum Eatenton, sister to Tommy and Jonathan, and soon to be wed to Jackson Latcherie, Shelby is free-spirited and tends to speak her mind, which often brings her into conflict with her mother. She takes her life in her hands when she decides to get pregnant despite doctors’ warnings of her fragile physical condition (she is severely diabetic). She works as a pediatric nurse in a hospital with newborn babies, including premature ones, a career path which increases her resolve to give birth to her own child. There is something ethereal, dainty, elegant and graceful about Shelby –

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one senses that she has always been beautiful and popular and, despite her health challenges, an easygoing and happy person. After giving birth to her child (an event that happens between Acts I and II), Shelby is elated to have a baby but, as a result, suffers more severe medical problems as well as the onset of marital problems with her challenging husband. The actress must pull off a creditable diabetic attack in Act I.

M'LYNN (Mary Lynn) EATENTON – age early 50s, though she has the look and constitution of someone a decade younger. Socially prominent in the town, married to Drum Eatenton, a successful and affluent man, M'Lynn is herself a career woman who works as a counselor at the local Mental Guidance Center. She is mother to Shelby and two sons, Tommy and Jonathan. She worries a great deal about her headstrong daughter and the two clash frequently over some of Shelby's life choices, specifically Shelby's choice to have a baby. M'Lynn challenges her daughter only because of a genuine and deeply-felt concern and worry for her child. Lynn also has some marital problems with her husband which eventually get better when they together find peace later in the play's action. In Act II, we learn that M'Lynn and Drum have just marked their 30th wedding anniversary. M'Lynn is smart, articulate, concerned, and kind. The actress playing M'Lynn has a difficult acting challenge to pull off in Act II, Scene 2, the day of Shelby's funeral, in a scene which requires a display of legitimate and heartfelt emotions as she suffers a wrenching breakdown over the loss of her child. It is a tall acting order.

OUISER (pronounced "Weezer") **BOUDREAUX** – age late 60s to early 70s. A wealthy curmudgeon, she is acerbic but ultimately lovable. Possessed of a sharp tongue, she can be sardonic, severe, sarcastic, scathing, severe, snarky, and stinging – BUT the bars must never totally mask that a good, kind, and caring woman exists beneath the veneer of a brittle older woman. She is dear friends with the ladies in the neighborhood, though she and M'Lynn's husband Drum are opposing parties in a longtime feud. Ouiser is a single lady, having been previously married to "two total deadbeats"; she is also the mother of "three ungrateful children." In her own words, she has "more money than God." She and Clairee are friends of many decades and, likely because of this, they tease, taunt, and torment each other relentlessly. Her closest companion is her mangy and disreputable old dog, Rhett, for years on his "last legs." As Ouiser herself says, "I'm not crazy – I've just been in a bad mood for forty years." The actress playing Ouiser needs to have a strong sense of comic timing and to not be afraid to "go there" with a strong attack on the character's outward bile and nastiness. Also, we may explore having Ouiser smoke onstage (but we would use stage cigarettes).

Setting

The action is set in Truvy's beauty salon in Chinquapin, Louisiana, where all the ladies who are "anybody" come to have their hair done. Helped by her eager new assistant, Annelle (who is not sure whether or not she is still married), the outspoken, wise-cracking Truvy dispenses shampoos and free advice to the town's rich curmudgeon, Ouiser, ("I'm not crazy, I've just been in a bad mood for forty years"); an eccentric millionaire, Miss Clairee, who has a raging sweet tooth; and the local social leader, M'Lynn, whose daughter, Shelby (the prettiest girl in town), is about to marry a "good ole boy." Filled with hilarious repartee and not a few acerbic but humorously revealing verbal collisions, the play moves toward tragedy when, in the second act, the spunky Shelby (who is a diabetic) risks pregnancy and forfeits her life. The sudden realization of their mortality affects the others, but also draws on the underlying strength—and love—which give the play, and its characters, the special quality to make them truly touching, funny and marvelously amiable company in good times and bad.

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Audition Scenes

Clairee (while telling everyone about her gay nephew) I'm such a nosy old thing. I asked him how he...met people. 'Cause in my day you could tell by a man's carriage and demeanor by which side his bread was buttered on. But today? In this day and age? Who knows? I asked Marshall, "How can you tell?" and he says "All gay men have track lighting. And all gay men are named Mark, Rick, or Steve." (laughs) He is such a nut...track lighting (laughs).

Shelby (talking to her mom about her pregnancy and her possible health problems) 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 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.

M'Lynn (talking, through tears, about the last minutes with Shelby) I stayed there. I kept on pushing...just like I always have where Shelby was concerned...hoping she'd sit up and argue with me. But finally we all realized there was no hope. At that point I panicked. I was afraid that I wouldn't survive the next few minutes while they turned off the machines. Drum couldn't take it. He left. Jackson couldn't take it. He left. It struck me as amusing. Men are supposed to be made of steel or something. But I couldn't leave. I just sat there holding Shelby's hand while the sounds got softer and the beeps got farther apart until all was quiet. There was no noise, no tremble. Just peace. I realized as a woman how lucky I was. I was there when this wonderful person drifted into this world, and I was there when she drifted out. It was the most precious moment of my life so far.

Ouiser (arguing with Clairee over going out to get cultured in New York) Let's get one thing straight. I don't see plays because I can nap at home for free. I don't see movies because they're all trash and full of naked people. And I don't read books because if they're any good, they'll be made into a mini-series. And as far as Owen is concerned, Clairee, a dirty mind is a terrible thing to waste. We are friends. He would like more. I'm dealing with that. But I am old and set in my ways. Besides, I can't help that men find me desirable.

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Side 1 - Clairee, Truvy, Shelby, M'Lynn

CLAIREE. Truvy, you shouldn't give up your Sundays.

TRUVY. Well, you know how neurotic Janice Van Meter is about her appearance.

CLAIREE. (To Annelle.) Janice is the current mayor's wife. (Sweetly.) We hate her.

TRUVY. Now Shelby ... fill me in on the reception.

SHELBY. There's going to be ferns and twinkly lights. There'll be magnolias in the pool.

M'LYNN. I just hope your father doesn't get any magnolias from Ouiser's side of the tree. We'll never hear the end of it.

SHELBY. The wedding cake will be by the pool. The groom's cake will be hidden in the carport.

M'LYNN. Shelby and I agree on one thing.

SHELBY. The groom's cake. It's awful! It's in the shape of a giant armadillo.

TRUVY. An armadillo?

SHELBY. Jackson wanted a cake in the shape of an armadillo. He has an aunt that makes them.

CLAIREE. It's unusual.

M'LYNN. It's repulsive. It has gray icing. I can't even think of how you would make gray icing.

SHELBY. Worse! The cake part is red velvet cake. Blood red! People are going to be hacking into this animal that looks like it's bleeding to death.

M'LYNN. The rehearsal supper was an experience.

SHELBY. It wasn't that bad. It was out at Jackson's uncle's place on the river.

M'LYNN. They served steak and baked potatoes. They went to a lot of trouble.

SHELBY. His family loves to barbecue.

M'LYNN. For dessert they served an original creation called "Dago" pie. I think that says it all. Jackson is from a good old Southern family with good old Southern values. You either shoot it, stuff it, or marry it.

SHELBY. They are simply outdoorsy, that's all.

TRUVY. Did you all do anything especially romantic?

SHELBY. We drove down to Frenchman's Point and went parking.

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M'LYNN. Shelby, really.

TRUVY. Oh, boy. The romantic part. This is what really melts my butter.

SHELBY. Then we went skinny dipping and did things that frightened the fish.

M'LYNN. Shelby.

CLAIREE. It's been a long time since we've had a youngster in this place, hasn't it?

SHELBY. We talked, and talked, and talked.

TRUVY. I love those kinds of talks ... in the arms of the man you love.

SHELBY. Actually we fought most of the time.

TRUVY. What?

SHELBY. Because I told him I couldn't marry him. (Shock all around.)

M'LYNN. What?

CLAIREE. Why would you go and do a thing like that?

SHELBY. It's O.K. now. We worked it all out.

TRUVY. Oh. It was just one of those last-minute jitter things.

SHELBY. No. But the wedding's still on.

TRUVY. Thank goodness. (Pointing to Shelby's hairstyle.) 'Cause this is going to be in the hairdo hall of fame.

CLAIREE. You scared us, Shelby. That wasn't a nice thing to do to your mama. You should never say something like that to a woman who's marinating fifty pounds of crab claws.

M'LYNN. Ouiser. The judge has not decided whose tree that is exactly.

OUISER. It's mine! (Enter Annelle with glass of water.) Be that as it may ... it would not be too much to ask for me to have one blossom to brighten my home. I am all alone except for my dog.

CLAIREE. You need something in your life besides that dumb animal ...

OUISER. Put a lid on it, Clairee. I was standing there looking at my ... my naked magnolia tree when I saw Drum across the way loading what appeared to be a cannon. I asked him what happened to all those magnolia blossoms. He said the wind probably blew them off during the night. Then I asked him how the wind managed to blow them all off into your pool. Then he fired at me! Is that rude or what?

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M'LYNN. They're blanks. And Drum would never aim a gun at a lady.

OUISER. He's a real gentleman. I'll bet he takes the dishes out of the sink before he pees in it.

M'LYNN. That's uncalled for.

OUISER. All I know is my poor animal has to be sedated. He has a condition.

SHELBY. Are you sure that's true? Rhett is a very old dog.

OUISER. I am simply going on what the vet tells me.

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Side 2 - Ouiser, Clairee, Truvy, Shelby, M'Lynn, Annelle

M'LYNN. Ouiser. The judge has not decided whose tree that is exactly.

OUISER. It's mine! (Enter Annelle with glass of water.) Be that as it may ... it would not be too much to ask for me to have one blossom to brighten my home. I am all alone except for my dog.

CLAIREE. You need something in your life besides that dumb animal ...

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SHELBY. Are you sure that's true? Rhett is a very old dog.

OUISER. I am simply going on what the vet tells me.

CLAIREE. Which vet?

OUISER. Whitey Black.

CLAIREE. That's your first mistake. Whitey Black is a moron. I'm not even sure he has opposable thumbs.

SHELBY. Miss Ouiser, Daddy is not trying to drive you crazy. He's just trying to make my reception nice. His heart's in the right place.

OUISER. But he cannot do this to my dog! My dog is on his last legs! What am I going to do with the poor animal?

CLAIREE. (Holding up the recipe box.) I've got a lot of good recipes here.

OUISER. (To Annelle.) Darling ... whatever your name is ... would you look out the window and check on my dog while I smack Clairee on her smart mouth? You may not believe this, but these are the dearest friends I have in this town.

ANNELLE. His color's good. His skin is real pink.

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SHELBY. I know for a fact there will be no more gunshots. So why don't you relax, Miss Ouiser? Have some coffee.

TRUVY. Ladies. This is going to work out beautifully. I'm almost through with Shelby. Annelle can shampoo Ouiser. See. Life can be wonderful.

OUISER. All right. As long as there's no more gunshots, I'll stay.

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Side 3 - Ouiser, Clairee, Truvy, Shelby, M'Lynn, Annelle

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 ...

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

OUISER. (Entering in a huff) I could just spit.

TRUVY. 'Morning Ouiser.

OUISER. The parade doesn't even start for four hours and already people are parking on my lawn. It will flatten my grass.

CLAIREE. (Mock sincerity.) Here. Let me hold you.

OUISER. I hate out-of-town tourists.

SHELBY. Hello!

OUISER. Shelby! What are you doing here?

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SHELBY. Being a tourist, I guess. But I won't flatten your grass, I promise.

OUISER. Good God. You've had the good sense to move away from this festival madness. I can't understand why you'd drag yourself back for a couple of firecrackers and drunk teenagers eating on your shoes.

SHELBY. I like it.

ANNELLE. Miss Ouiser. I think you need a healthy dose of Christmas spirit. (Annelle interrupts conditioning Clairee to get a present from the tree.)

OUISER. I have so much Christmas spirit I could scream.

ANNELLE. (Handing her a present.) Merry Christmas!

OUISER. (Opening present.) I just finished putting out my yard decorations.

CLAIREE. Ouiser. Keep off the grass signs are not Christmas decorations.

OUISER. They are bordered in holly. (Pulls out poinsettia earrings.) You made them, didn't you?

ANNELLE. With my own two hands.

OUISER. Your present is ... uh ... back at the house. I haven't wrapped it yet.

SHELBY. How's Rhett?

OUISER. He's getting along. As a matter of fact, he's the poster dog for the Christmas festival. (Ouiser points to a poster on the wall with a picture on it.)

TRUVY. That is Rhett! I didn't recognize him.

CLAIREE. It's nice to see Rhett with some hair again.

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Side 4 - Ouiser, Clairee, Truvy, Shelby, M'Lynn, Annelle

SHELBY. I have to run some errands but before I go ... Miss Ouiser. I have met an old friend of yours.

OUISER. Oh?

SHELBY. Owen Jenkins.

OUISER. Oh.

CLAIREE. Owen? Now there's a blast from the past.

SHELBY. Do you remember him? He remembers you.

OUISER. Of course I remember him. He had the longest nose hair in the free world.

SHELBY. He doesn't now. He hardly has any hair anywhere.

CLAIREE. Owen's been gone from Chinquapin since God was a boy. I'd forgotten he'd ever existed.

SHELBY. Well now Owen lives in Monroe and goes to First Presbyterian. He sings in the choir. One night at choir practice we were doing an especially beautiful Mozart thing and I was moved to tears. He offered me his handkerchief and we got to talking. When he found out where I was from he asked me if I knew you. I said not only did I know you, but you were a neighbor, and your dog has almost killed my father on numerous occasions. He's had a very interesting life. He lived in Ohio somewhere. His wife just died recently and he moved back down here.

OUISER. Does this story have a point?

SHELBY. No, not really. He just remembers you fondly, I think.

OUISER. Can't imagine why. He wasn't a bad fellow. But I managed to run him off and marry the first of two total deadbeats.

TRUVY. Unrequited love. My favorite.

SHELBY. Maybe sometime I could arrange for us all to get together.

OUISER. Maybe not.

SHELBY. Why not?

OUISER. Shelby. I managed in just a few decades to marry the two most worthless men in the universe and proceed to have the three most ungrateful children ever conceived. The only reason people are nice to me is because I have more money than God. I am not about to open a new can of worms.

CLAIREE. Do I detect a negativity in your tone?

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M'LYNN. If this is really the way you feel, Ouiser, it isn't healthy. Maybe you should think about coming down and talking to someone at the Guidance Center. We're there to help.

OUISER. I'm not crazy. I've just been in a very bad mood for forty years.

SHELBY. Well, Annelle? What do you want me to do with these old clothes? I need to get them out of the back seat.

ANNELLE. Just bring 'em in.

SHELBY. O.K. Then I'll go finish my Christmas shopping, Mama.

TRUVY. I could shoot you. I haven't even started.

CLAIREE. Please. I haven't even washed the dishes from Thanksgiving.

ANNELLE. What did you get your mama?

SHELBY. I told her this morning what part of it was.

TRUVY. Well, let's hear it, missy.

M'LYNN. I think it's a secret.

OUISER. Obviously, there's no such thing in this room.

M'LYNN. It's up to you, honey.

SHELBY. I'm going to have a baby. (Whoops and joy all around. Except for M'Lynn.)

TRUVY. Congratulations! No wonder you haven't said much this morning, M'Lynn. (Taunts.) Grandma! Aren't you excited? Smile! It increases your face value!

SHELBY. June 21.

TRUVY. And those doctors said you couldn't have children. What do they know? I guess you showed them.

M'LYNN. The doctor said Shelby shouldn't have children. There's a big difference. I guess you showed us all, Shelby.

SHELBY. I've got to get the clothes. Miss Ouiser? Are you bringing your shrimp meat pies to our open house tonight?

OUISER. Don't I always? They'll be there.

SHELBY. Good. So will Owen Jenkins. I opened the worms for you. (Shelby exits.)

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Side 5 - Ouiser, Clairee, Truvy, Annelle

TRUVY. (Truvy remembers.) Now, ladies? Next Saturday we have to make time adjustments. I'm going to be here all by my lonesome. Annelle is taking a well-deserved vacation.

CLAIREE. That's nice. Are you taking a trip?

ANNELLE. Yes, I am.

CLAIREE. Aren't you going to tell us where you're going?

ANNELLE. (Directed to Ouiser.) No.

OUISER. Please Annelle. I don't know how I'll get through the week without this information.

ANNELLE. You'll just make fun.

OUISER. Annelle. You know I love it when you go on and on about your spiritual growth. I just can't get enough.

TRUVY. She has a very nice little trip planned to Camp Crossroads in the Ozarks.

CLAIREE. I don't believe I've ever heard of a Camp Crossroads ...

ANNELLE. It's in the middle of Arkansas. It's a Christian camp. There's just cabins, a chapel, a dining hall in the middle of the mountains with a lake. I will spend a week in Bible study, prayer, and meditation. You're in the middle of nature, surrounded by the beauty of the Lord.

OUISER. Are there waterbeds?

CLAIREE. Ouiser, leave her alone.

OUISER. I'm just trying to find out more about Camp Cross-eyed. I might want to go...

CLAIREE. That's a laugh. You've never done a religious thing in your life.

OUISER. That's not true. When I was in school, a bunch of my friends and I would dress up like nuns and go barhopping.

CLAIREE. Is your boyfriend going with you?

ANNELLE. No. He said he'd rather eat dirt.

OUISER. I'm going to check up on my granddaughter and make sure she's still going to the Episcopal church. This born-again process seems awfully tedious.

ANNELLE. I have to say this, Miss Ouiser. And I don't mean to hurt you. But ... I worry about your faith sometimes.

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OUISER. My faith is fine ... (Affecting a lisp.) Ith my hair that needth the motht work.

CLAIREE. Ouiser, One of these days somebody's going to cut the feet out of your stockings.

TRUVY. Ouiser, have you no shame? ..

ANNELLE. Oh, that's all right, Truvy. I love Miss Ouiser. I pray for her everyday ... sometimes twice.