

What's on TV?

Drena Heizer





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WHAT'S ON TV?

By Drena Heizer

CAST

NARRATOR: Can be either man or woman

FRANCES (OR FRANK) FONDUE: Can be either man or woman

BOBBY BASSETT: Man

MARY CONTRARY: Woman

CINDY CRAWFISH: Woman

STAGE POSITIONS: Optional, because the actors don't communicate with each other. The narrator can sit down offstage after his first lines and then return for his final lines – unless it is decided to use a 'clicker' (see below), in which case he might sit or stand in view of the audience.

PROPS: A sign on the outside of each stand, labeling each program with large print: DATING, COOKING, GARDENING, PETS. Simple file folders serve the purpose well, with the fold placed over the top of the stand and the lettered side facing the audience.

PERFORMANCE NOTES: This skit depends completely on exact timing, with the actors picking up their lines quickly from the unfinished sentence of the previous actor. Then there needs to be a pause while the audience catches up with the unexpected twist and, we hope, rewards us with a few chuckles.

CLICKER: This skit can be performed with the narrator using a 'clicker' immediately after the previous actor's unfinished sentence, to indicate the 'channel change.' However, this is a tricky bit and must be done very quickly and followed immediately by the next actor picking up his opening line. If the use of a clicker slows down the pace of the skit, then it is best to perform without it.

WHAT'S ON TV?

NARRATOR: Daytime television. Pretty dismal stuff. Soap operas, talk shows, old reruns, cartoons. What I want to know is what ever happened to culture and education? Well, today I was surfing through the TV channels and I came across four different programs that sounded kind of interesting and informative – but they all came on at the same time, so I had to keep flipping back and forth among all four channels, and here is what I heard.

FRANCES: Hi there, folks. This is FIT TO BE FRIED, your favorite cooking show. I'm Frances Fondue, here to tell you how to prepare a wonderful company dinner.

BOBBY: Welcome to YOUR PET DEPARTMENT, the show that's all about our furry friends. This is Bobby Bassett, your pet vet. Today's topic is how to break your pets of bad habits.

MARY: Well, hello. You've tuned into DIRT, your gardening show, and this is Mary Contrary. We will talk first today about creating a compost heap. This is really wonderful stuff for your garden, and it's so easy to put together. I'm going to tell you how.

CINDY: We're back with you today on THE DATING SCENE. I'm Cindy Crawfish with dating tips for you guys from a woman's point of view. Now, women love flowers, so when you go to pick her up for dinner be sure to bring her a lovely bouquet of –

MARY: --rotting leaves and old grass clippings...(pause)...Keep turning these over in your compost pile so it will decompose evenly and make all this goopy, smelly –

FRANCES: --salad for your first course...(pause)...This will absolutely amaze your guests, but allow them only one small serving because there is so much more food coming UP –

BOBBY: --all over the floor...(pause)...Now, you don't want your puppy to do this, so be sure to put down a lot of newspapers for her.

CINDY: When you do these nice little things for her, a woman really appreciates your thoughtfulness, but she may not be able to express her gratitude in words, so don't be surprised if she –

BOBBY: --jumps up and puts her paws on your knees...(pause)...This is a really bad habit that a lot of them have, and sometimes it is difficult to break, but try pushing her off and hollering NO!

FRANCES: --or you can sprinkle on some grated cheese...(pause)...Well, let's move ahead. I promised to tell you how to make those cute little appetizers. First you break two eggs and put them —

CINDY: --in one ear and out the other...(pause)...Your girlfriend won't really LISTEN if you talk about football, because she isn't really interested. So try to talk about something that SHE enjoys, like maybe —

BOBBY: --making a mess on the carpet...(pause)...Now, don't punish her for this. I know some people might spank her with a fly swatter, but don't do that. A fly swatter is only good for —

FRANCES: --beating your egg whites until they form soft peaks. ...(pause).... Be careful not to overbeat them or they won't mix well. Now carefully fold the egg whites into —

MARY: --your old rubber gloves...(pause)...It's a good idea to wear these when you handle the compost because this stuff makes a rather nasty concoction —

CINDY: --for your romantic dinner...(pause)...Since you want to impress the lady with your good taste, be sure to choose a place that has soft lights and nice music. And don't forget —

BOBBY: No matter how much she begs, don't let her eat food from the table...(pause)...You must be consistent in making her eat from a bowl on the floor.

CINDY: And another thing to remember is that a woman always appreciates compliments about her appearance. For instance, admire her hair. Tell her it looks like —

MARY: --a collection of yard waste and old table scraps...(pause)...Almost anything like this can be added to the compost pile, so you see what wonderful nourishment this can provide for your garden. It is always good to toss a shovelful into the —

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