

# The Pie Ladies

Sherry Piros





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**ArtAge Publications**

Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President

PO Box 19955

Portland OR 97280

503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998

[bonniev@seniorthatre.com](mailto:bonniev@seniorthatre.com)

[www.seniorthatre.com](http://www.seniorthatre.com)

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THE PIE LADIES

by

Sherry Piro

CAST

KITTY: Age 50-70, she is the group's leader, keeping the Pie Ladies on track.

LUCILLE: Age 50-70,, she is quiet, friendly, helpful, and proper.

GLADYS: Age 50-70, she is savvy, quick to grasp nuances, an organizer.

DULCIE: Age 50-70, she takes things too literally, not the sharpest tack in the box.

NADINE: Age 50-70, she's the motherly one of the group, concerned with doing what needs to be done.

VELDA: Age 50-70, she has a sharp tongue and a quick wit. She and Dulcie quarrel like sisters but really are friends.

PASTOR MAXELL

IRENE: Possible new church member

SADIE: Local news writer

*The set and blocking directions are given for performing this play in situations where there is no stage or curtain. If a curtain is available for your group, feel free to adapt.*

*One exit is to the rest of the house. Another exit is to the outside. There is a table center front of stage that will seat six and hold a few cookbooks and a few cooking supplies: bowls, rolling pins, etc. A smaller table is behind them for the majority of the props: apples, cans of cherry and blueberry pie filling, flour canister, measuring cups, etc. A coffee pot and cups are at the far left end of the prop table.*

THE PIE LADIES

*(At rise, Dulcie, Gladys, Kitty, Nadine, and Lucille are seated, drinking coffee and making small talk.)*

VELDA: *(entering from R. with her coffee cup.)* Okay, the eleventh annual pie-making day can begin. Everything breakable has been put away.

GLADYS: That's good. Last year was... *(she implies disaster by her facial expression.)*

*(Everybody glances over at Dulcie.)*

DULCIE: What's everybody looking at me for?

VELDA: Failing memories are such blessings, aren't they, dear.

DULCIE: Failing memory!! I distinctly remember the broken coffee pot. Was there more?

VELDA: *(exasperated huff.)*

LUCILLE: I'll help out... you know... *(referring to Dulcie with her eyes.)*

KITTY: Again this year, our mission today is two dozen of our famous apple, blueberry, and cherry pies for the church supper.

*(A musical member of the group starts "da da duh da" to the theme from Mission Impossible. The others join in.)*

KITTY: It is NOT "Mission Impossible." We've done it before. We can do it again.

GLADYS: The thing is: the pies stay the same, but we're a year older.

LUCILLE: A year old. A year wiser. A year better at pie making.

*(Except for Nadine, they grumble and rise, then tie on aprons during the following. Nadine remains seated with her arms folded across her chest.)*

GLADYS: If we weren't so darn good at this, they wouldn't count on us every year.

LUCILLE: Our pies are the reason people come to the supper, you know.

VELDA: Don't tell that to the chicken 'n biscuit ladies.

DULCIE: Oh no. You can't tell them anything!

KITTY: Aren't you going to make pies with us, Nadine?

NADINE: NO.

ALL OTHERS: (*swiveling around to look at her.*) NO??!!??

LUCILLE: Of course she's making pies with us.

GLADYS: It's a tradition!

NADINE: That's just it! Tradition! Doing the same thing year after year!

GLADYS: What's wrong with that?!

NADINE: Year after year we make apple, blueberry, and cherry. I want to make different ones this year!

KITTY: But people want the traditional old favorites.

NADINE: That's just what I mean – TRADITIONAL and OLD! Why not try something exciting and new?

KITTY: People don't come to a church supper for excitement!

NADINE: Well, I wasn't suggesting a pie made with Viagra!

LUCILLE: Ladies! Ladies! Why don't we see what other kinds there are. (*handing out cookbooks.*) THEN we can fight about it.

(*All women, except Nadine who has her own recipe cards, open cookbooks and find the pie section. As they mention a recipe, they point it out in the cookbook or hold the page open. After rejections, they turn pages to find new recipes.*)

GLADYS: Don't know why we have to do this. People expect certain pies at the church supper. Makes 'em feel comfortable.

NADINE: Also makes 'em feel bored. They're secretly hoping for something – anything – out of the ordinary.

GLADYS: What nonsense!

VELDA: Well now, Nadine has a point.

GLADYS: And that would be...?

VELDA: "Variety is the spice of life."

GLADYS: At our age, spicy food is the LAST thing we want.

NADINE: (*holding up a recipe on a card.*) You only say that because you haven't tasted Spiced Mud Pie!

ALL OTHERS: Spiced Mud Pie??!!

NADINE: Right here. (*reading.*) "Chocolate laced with cinnamon. Makes your mouth think it's in the Caribbean."

GLADYS: That's handy when the rest of your body is back here in \_\_\_\_\_ (*fill in state.*)!

LUCILLE: Look! Here's a recipe for Grapefruit Meringue Pie. What do you think Pastor Maxwell would say to that?

KITTY: He'd say, "Let us pray. There is always an answer in prayer, even if the answer is NO!"

DULCIE: Excuse me. I'll be right back. (*she exits*)

LUCILLE: Hey, listen to this: Full O' Nuts Pie.

GLADYS: Is that a comment on the church supper cooks?

NADINE: Here we go! Chocolate Rum Pie! (*from her cards.*)

VELDA: Or Bourbon Apple Pie! *(from a cookbook.)*

KITTY: Rum!?

GLADYS: Bourbon!?

KITTY AND GLADYS: At church?!

NADINE: It sounds good to me!

LUCILLE: Rum and bourbon... I'll bet some people would buy more than one piece.

VELDA: Could be quite the money-maker!

KITTY: No! We have to uphold our reputation as the church pie ladies.

GLADYS: We have to go with our tried-and-true menu.

VELDA: Yeah, we know--

VELDA, NADINE, LUCILLE: Apple, blueberry, and cherry.

KITTY: Well, we've got a lot of pies to make. Let's get started. Crusts first!

NADINE: Oh, all right. But NEXT year...

*(They ad lib for a couple seconds while they get flour, water, bowls, pastry cutters, measuring cups, etc. assembled and ingredients measured. Dulcie enters from right. The other women continue to work through Dulcie and Velda's conversation.)*

DULCIE: Uh, Velda, I...uh...had a little trouble with your toilet.

VELDA: Oh. Okay.

DULCIE: What do you mean "Oh. Okay?" Didn't you wonder where I've been so long?

VELDA: Dulcie, it is not my custom to wonder about your bathroom activities.

DULCIE: But I said I'd be right back! Didn't you notice I was gone?



VELDA: Now that you mention it, it was quieter for a while.

DULCIE: But I need to explain.

VELDA: Explain what?

DULCIE: Your toilet.

VELDA: You don't need to explain my toilet to me. We're already intimately acquainted.

DULCIE: But I tried to fix your toilet.

VELDA: Tried?

DULCIE: I started out wiggling the handle gently, you know? *(she pantomimes wiggling with just her index finger and thumb. The other fingers are extended as if drinking from a dainty cup. She makes dainty sound effects, like ching, ching, ching.)*

VELDA: So far, so good.

DULCIE: But when that didn't work, I was a little more vigorous *(she pantomimes wrapping her whole hand around the handle and working it up and down. She can make more forceful sound effects, like boogle, boogle, boogle.)*

VELDA: "Boogle, boogle, boogle?"

DULCIE: I finally took off the tank cover and jiggled something disgusting inside. *(as she talks about this, she pantomimes removing the cover and hands the imaginary cover to Velda who takes it from her. Then Dulcie 'reaches' into the toilet tank and 'moves' something, all the while with a disgusted look on her face.)*

DULCIE: And that's when it happened. *(she pantomimes taking the imaginary cover back from Velda and replacing it on the toilet.)*

VELDA: WHAT happened?

DULCIE: Just a little 'oopsie.'

VELDA: A what?

DULCIE: An oopsie. *(she takes a toilet handle out of her pocket and hands it to Velda.)*  
Sorry.

VELDA: My toilet handle! This year you break my TOILET?!

DULCIE: I didn't break your toilet. It just came off in my hand.

VELDA: Yeah, after you played The Anvil Chorus on it!

DULCIE: It must have had a screw loose or something.

VELDA: Well, it would take one to know one.

DULCIE: Velda, it's only a toilet!

VELDA: But it's the only toilet I have!!

DULCIE: I'll pay for repairs.

VELDA: Attention, everyone! Attention, please! *(making an announcement.)* We can't  
bake pies here today. My toilet is broken.

GLADYS: Well, we weren't planning on baking them in the toilet!

LUCILLE: What's the problem?

VELDA: The handle is here *(holding it out, dramatically.)* and the toilet's in there  
*(pointing right, dramatically).*

DULCIE: I said I'll pay for repairs!

NADINE: I'll bet I can fix it.

VELDA: *(the martyr.)* No, that's all right. I'll fix it sooner or later.

DULCIE: I knew it! This has happened before, hasn't it!

VELDA: Never. But my late husband was a plumber, and he taught me all about  
toilets, inside and out.

*(The other ladies have overlapping responses.)*

KITTY: Good thing my husband was an accountant.

GLADYS: Too much information.

LUCILLE: Great foresight!

NADINE: At the rate we've been drinking coffee, SOONER would be better than later.

VELDA: I'll be right back. I'm going to the garage for a screw driver!

KITTY: *(teasing.)* Oooo. At this hour of the morning?!!

NADINE: Sounds good to me!

GLADYS: Make mine a double!

DULCIE: All I want is a cup of coffee. Anyone else?

*(The others decline. Dulcie gets her cup of coffee and takes a sip. It's hot. She blows on it. While waiting for it to cool, she picks up a section of newspaper that was near the coffee maker. She stands UR, reading the paper and sipping her coffee.)*

KITTY: How many crusts have we got so far?

LUCILLE: I've got a double started.

NADINE: Me too.

GLADYS: Who's got the flour?

DULCIE: Would anybody like to hear a few happy thoughts while you're working?

GLADYS: Not as much as I'd like to see you working with us.

DULCIE: I will. Right away. But listen to this for a couple seconds. *(she reads from paper.)* Mother, father, and toddler were killed during a home invasion. Suspect was high on crack cocaine at the time. And in the column left of that one: Stress is now the number one cause of death in America. And right below that is: The Natural Conservation Society reports that bats are dying, honey bees disappearing, and Asian carp invading at unprecedented rates.

*(Velda re-crosses the stage, returning to the bathroom. Her hands are encased in yellow rubber gloves and she is carrying a screw driver aloft, almost as if it were a scepter.)*

LUCILLE: You'll never win the Miss Merry Sunshine award, Dulcie.

*(The others ad lib agreement.)*

DULCIE: That's my point... one bad news item after another. But here's the most startling: In her book, *Homeland Librarians: the Quiet Terrorists*, author Chris Hanford reports that librarians have formed an underground network via the interlibrary loan system. Experts warn that this is a sleeper cell for a group that wants to take over the American way of life.

LUCILLE: That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard...I was a librarian, and if over-worked, under-paid librarians are forming sleeper cells, it's because they need naps! *(A brief moment of silence, broken by Velda yelling loudly from the bathroom.)*

VELDA: DULCIE!! COME HERE AND HOLD THE SCREWDRIVER!!!

DULCIE: I don't have any yellow gloves! *(she exits right, holding her hands up as Velda did. In a moment of inspiration, she grabs one of Velda's dish towels.)*

GLADYS: How did things get so messed up when they used to be so good?

NADINE: Well, now, wait a minute. When were things so good?

GLADYS: When we were young. When our parents were young...

NADINE: Life was good when we were young!?! Not when my legs were red with cold because girls weren't allowed to wear pants in public.

LUCILLE: And not when I had a death grip on the dentist chair because all dental work was done without Novocain.

GLADYS: You're forgetting those wonderful neighborhood games of Hide and Seek and work-up baseball.

KITTY: And the days when women weren't expected to do it all – job, home, family.

NADINE: Okay, but would you give up your cell phone and refrigerator to go back then?

KITTY: Noooo, but you gotta admit, today's not perfect either.

*(Dulcie and Velda enter.)*

VELDA: You'll be glad to know the toilet works.

DULCIE: I know I am!

VELDA: No one's working on pies. What's going on?

GLADYS: No, we got distracted, thanks to Dulcie.

DULCIE: How can it be my fault? I wasn't even here!

LUCILLE: Remember that ridiculous article you were reading about librarians being terrorists?

DULCIE: Yes, I do, and I got it all worked out. There IS a connection!

LUCILLE: Why would you waste good brain space on such insanity?

DULCIE: What else do you do when you're holding a screwdriver in a toilet tank?

LUCILLE: All right. Let's hear it.

DULCIE: It goes like this: Librarian has a lot of the same letters as libertarian and that's like the word liberal which sounds like Libya where there are a lot of Muslims, and some of them want to kill us so, obviously librarians are a threat to all Americans!

LUCILLE: Of course! What hadn't I thought of that!

DULCIE: (*putting her hands on Lucille's shoulders.*) So do we turn her in now or wait for the reward money?

(*Velda grabs hold of Dulcie's arms.*)

VELDA: Let's turn Dulcie in for a reward. She's a toilet terrorist!

GLADYS: We shouldn't even have to worry about terrorists!

KITTY: It's definitely not the world we grew up in.

GLADYS: Yeah. Nowadays we lock our doors all the time. We never used to, day or night.

DULCIE: We didn't either, and one time we found a stranger asleep on our sofa.

KITTY: A strange man asleep on your sofa! What did you do?

DULCIE: Well, we let him stay for two weeks.

KITTY: You let a stranger hang around for two weeks?

DULCIE: Oh. Well, after he showered and shaved, he turned out to be Uncle Ned, back from seven years in Poysippia.

LUCILLE: Your uncle spent seven years in (*said awkwardly.*) Poy-sipp-ia?! Was he a missionary to the heathen?

DULCIE: No! Poysippia is a little town in Wisconsin. He was a bartender to the thirsty.

GLADYS: Well, anyway, we're even thinking of installing a home security system.

LUCILLE: We've lost our sense of security.

KITTY: That and a lot more. Homemade meals with everyone around the table are a thing of the past.

NADINE: Yeah, but think how long it took to make those meals. No conveniences in the kitchen or the supermarket. In fact, not even any supermarkets on Sundays.

GLADYS: People didn't used to be so tense. Rushing around all day, in a hurry, over worked. What do they call it ...multi-tasking?

VELDA: That's because almost everything used to require lots of manual labor. Even shifting the car was manual transmission.

LUCILLE: But cars are a lot safer now – air bags, back-up cameras. Have you seen those cars that parallel park themselves?!

DULCIE: I got a personal letter from my insurance company describing those cars. I have no idea why!

GLADYS: And entertainment. Years ago TV shows weren't embarrassing to watch. Nowadays with the suggestive costumes and the suggestive plots and the suggestive dialogue...

VELDA: Gladys! What are you suggesting!

KITTY: Don't forget the radio! Remember the big band music? Soooo much better than today's rip rap.

NADINE: Do you mean hip hop?

KITTY: Rip rap. Hip hop. All sounds like slip-slop to me.

LUCILLE: You'll have to admit that the whole medical field is drastically better than it was.

*(They all ad lib agreement.)*

DULCIE: If we lived in a fantasy world, we could invent a place that would be the best of both yesterday and today.

GLADYS: Yeah but, we don't live in Disneyland.

LUCILLE: Well, maybe we could. Sort of.

GLADYS: What do you mean?

LUCILLE: The other day on the radio, I heard about a guy who created his own country.

NADINE: How could he do that?

LUCILLE: He bought some land and declared it to be his own private country, something like Smithland.

KITTY: And that's not illegal?

LUCILLE: No, because he wasn't claiming independence from the U.S. And he was still paying taxes and obeying all the laws, but he lived in his own "country."

VELDA: It would be like developers who name a subdivision Paradise Valley and then set up their own covenants and stuff.

NADINE: We could do that, ladies.

*(Kitty, Gladys, and Dulcie ad lib comments of consternation, surprise, or doubt; Velda and Lucille ad lib comments of surprise or agreement.)*

KITTY: What do you have in mind?

NADINE: Well, we could buy or rent a place together and declare our own country, one where we'll slow down, eat fresh food together, listen to big band music but still use dishwashers, drive cars with air bags and go to modern hospitals!

KITTY: I like it! Our own little "back to the future" oasis.

NADINE: Exactly!

LUCILLE: The first thing we should do is turn off the fear and hate shows on both TV and radio.

*(The others ad lib agreement.)*

NADINE: I'll make a list. *(she gets paper and pen and starts writing.)*

VELDA: I hope we all agree to keep our cell phones and computers.



*(The others ad lib agreement. Nadine writes.)*

DULCIE: On weekends, we could play table games and pop popcorn.

*(The others ad lib agreement.)*

KITTY: We live more calmly and simply.

*(The others agree.)*

NADINE: We'll need a constitution.

*(The others ad lib comments like Ohhh! Sure. Of course. That's right. Etc.)*

KITTY: And a name!

*(The others ad lib comments like A name! What'll it be? Let's start with the name! Etc.)*

LUCILLE: Well, there's always Pie Ladies Land.

*(The others ad lib acceptance of the idea.)*

NADINE: I'll put it on the list.

VELDA: P'nP Land for Past 'n Present Land?

NADINE: Not bad. *(writing it down.)*

*(The others express the same acceptance.)*

KITTY: Oasis?

NADINE: Good. *(writing)*

DULCIE: What about Simpli-Pie *(as in 'simplify')* Land

NADINE: Interesting.

DULCIE: Write it down.

NADINE: I am. *(writing)* We're not in a rush to decide. Let's sleep on it.

DULCIE: Right now? I'm not even tired.

KITTY: No, Dulcie. AFTER the pies are done.

PASTOR: *(knocking on the door.)* Ladies? Hello?

KITTY: Who's that?

VELDA: I don't know. *(she exits to right, then brings in Pastor Maxwell and Irene.)*

PASTOR: Good morning.

*(Ad lib greetings from all women.)*

GLADYS: Pastor Maxwell! What are you doing here?

PASTOR: Well, I'm here about pies.

VELDA: We almost couldn't make them today, Pastor. Dulcie broke my toilet!

PASTOR: Well, surely you weren't going to bake them in the toilet!

**END OF FREEVIEW**

***You'll want to read and perform this show!***