

ACT ONE

SCENE 2

ANGEL
SHY
JEWEL

START

Two girls, ANGEL and SHY, walk up to the porch of the Chicken Ranch. ANGEL is the most obvious-looking whore you'll see all night. SHE has a wild hairdo, and city whore clothes, bright makeup, the works. SHE wears dark glasses. SHY is the opposite. A country girl, young, fresh off the farm, maybe even gawky. SHY hesitates outside the place.

ANGEL. You don't have to worry about nothin'. Just let me do th' talkin'. And try not to act like you just rode in on a load of turkeys.

SHY. I'm scared.

ANGEL. Well, take off then. Nobody's holdin' a gun to your head.

SHY. I know it. (ANGEL checks her makeup in a hand mirror, lifts her glasses exposing a black eye.)

ANGEL. I shoulda just let you find your own way out here. (SHY nods.)

ANGEL. (Continued.) Out of all them people on the bus how come you to ask me where this place was at?

SHY. You just looked like you might know.

ANGEL. Thanks a lot! Takes one to know one! Come on, follow me. (Angel wiggles sexily into the parlor of the Chicken Ranch. SHY strides in behind her like SHE is following a plow, and hangs by the front door, not sure whether SHE wants to be there or not.)

ANGEL. (Continued.) Hello! Is the Madam here?

(JEWEL, an older black woman, comes out of the kitchen. SHE eyes ANGEL.)

JEWEL. She ever hear you call her "Madam" and you won't stay here. She got more pride than the U.S. Marines. We calls her "Miss Mona."

ANGEL. Well, okay. Can we see her?

JEWEL I don't suppose you want to sell her no Tupperware. (SHE laughs uproariously at her own joke.) Hold on a minute, honey, I'll get her. (Calling.) Miss Mona, there some girls down here to see you.

MISS MONA. All right, Jewel, I'll be right down.

(ANGEL wiggles over to the STAGE LEFT stairs and perches herself, showing a knee. In other words, showing her wares for the interview.)

SHY takes a pickup truck rear view mirror out of her brown paper sack and checks her appearance, maybe pinching her cheeks for color.

MONA enters at the head of the stairs beautifully coiffed like Tammy Wynette and outfitted in a theatrical lounging costume.)

MISS MONA. (Continued.) Well now . . . What happened? Did the Texas Rangers raid Galveston again. (SHE notices SHY standing by the door.) Or was it a hurricane? I never had girls linin' up for jobs before.

ANGEL. Are you hirin' on anybody?

MISS MONA. Maybe. And maybe not. I'm kind of choosy about who lives in this house. Right, Jewel?

JEWEL. Yes, M'am.

(MONA crosses to ANGEL, takes off the dark glasses, exposing black eye.)

MISS MONA. Pimp whup up on you, honey?

ANGEL. I wadn't holdin' out on him!

MISS MONA. Uh huh! (To SHY.) Honey, you comin' or goin'?

SHY. Yes, M'am. I mean I'm comin'.

MISS MONA. Then why don't you take a seat?

SHY. Yes, M'am. (SHE shuffles over to the STAGE RIGHT stair and sits.)

MISS MONA. (Sitting in wheel chair, CENTER.) So. How much experience have you all had?

ANGEL. Amateur or professional? Ha, ha!

MISS MONA. For money, hunny!

ANGEL. (Sobering.) About four years.

MISS MONA. (To SHY.) How about you?

SHY. None.

MISS MONA. None, huh? Well, Thursday I'm gonna have a whole house full of college boys and they probably hadn't had none either.

ANGEL. College boys?

MISS MONA. Yeah, the winning seniors from the Texas Aggie-Texas U team gets treated to a night here on Thanksgiving by their Alumni Association.

ANGEL. That sounds like fun.

MISS MONA. It's bad for a workin' girl to get to enjoying it too much.

ANGEL. The Johns usually see to it that I don't.

MISS MONA. Hunny! We don't call 'em "Johns" here. We don't call 'em "Tricks." Not even "Customers," no we call 'em . . . Guests.

ANGEL. Guests?

MISS MONA. Guests. We make 'em feel at home, without makin' 'em feel at home, if you get what I mean.

ANGEL. (*Grinning.*) I think I do. Well, to tell the truth. I'm sick of workin' spots all over the state. Movin' all the time from Hotel to Motel. Pimps beatin' you up, takin' your money, bell-boys makin' you give 'em free pussy.

MISS MONA. Now hold it right there. I don't allow my girls to talk like that. Couldn't you just say "free samples?"

ANGEL. (*A bit dubious.*) Yes, M'am. Anyway, I couldn't save any money, and these pimps . . . these uh . . . sample salesmen?

MISS MONA. Now that's very ladylike.

ANGEL. Anyhow, they took my money and they beat my ass . . . my person, and half the time when I did get busted they wouldn't even be around to bail me out.

MISS MONA. I don't want nobody around here who's got law troubles. They after you for anything?

ANGEL. Aw, no, M'am! I'm clean as a whistle! (*SHE whistles. Looks as innocent as possible. MISS MONA stares at her steadily.*)

MISS MONA. How many times you been vagged for prostitution?

ANGEL. Not many.

MISS MONA. *How many?*

ANGEL. Maybe . . . six? Prob'ly not even that many.

MISS MONA. Hot checks?

ANGEL. No.

MISS MONA. Assault?

ANGEL. None of that. (*MONA checks her neck.*)

MISS MONA. Clawin' and scratchin'?

ANGEL. I told you everything.

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END