

## The Party Pie of the Year

### Scene 1

*(Scene opens with two tables set up— both are covered, with various cooking paraphernalia including bowls, wooden spoons, pie pans, boxes, and other containers along with an old fashioned telephone. The table on stage right is the kitchen of Verona K. Jenkins. The supplies and phone on the table are organized and neat. The spoons are lined up, the bowls are stacked and the flour, sugar and salt tin cans are lined up straight. A dainty apron hangs from the side of the table. An empty glass vase sits in the middle of the orderly table. The table on stage left is the kitchen of Carolette B Correy. The kitchen supplies are less organized and randomly placed on the table. The telephone is covered by a dishtowel. The light cues up slowly like sunrise. Verona enters stage right wearing a bathrobe over a nightgown and house shoes with curlers in her hair. She reaches both arms into the air and stretches, yawning, then smiling as she steps into her kitchen. She approaches her table and begins to hum gaily. By pantomiming, she grabs a kettle and as she holds it under the faucet to fill it with water, she turns her head, facing the audience and strains her neck and back, as if looking out a window. She turns back to the kettle, shuts off the running water and puts it on the stove. Turning back around, she places her hands flat on the table and looks out the window again. She picks up the phone and dials a number and continues to look out the window. The phone rings (coming from Carolette's kitchen). After the second ring, Verona looks down and begins doing small things around the kitchen, not looking out the window. From stage left, Carolette enters, slowly dragging her feet and rubbing her eyes. She looks at the kitchen counter and does not see the phone as it continues to ring. She begins looking around, semi-frantic, crouching under the table, mimicking opening cabinets. After the fifth ring, Carolette picks up the dishtowel and reaches for the phone and as she does, Verona hangs up.)*

### CAROLETTE

Hello?...Hello?

*(Realizing the line is dead, Carolette throws the receiver down, tosses the dishtowel over her shoulder and exits. As she exits, Verona looks out her window again, rubbing her hands together. She shrugs then exits. Carolette reenters dressed in a house dress now and begins straightening up her kitchen. She wipes at the counter and a cloud of flour puffs up and Carolette coughs and waves at the air with her hand, coughing. As she continues to clean, Verona enters stage right, dressed in a dress too with her hair out of curlers, but pulled back away from her face. She picks up the apron and ties it around her waist. Carolette goes in front of the table and opens the shades on her window. She goes back to the back of the table, picks up the phone, dials, then leans over the table, and puts her fist under chin. As Verona is tying her apron, the phone rings, and she picks it up after the first ring.)*

### VERONA

Hello?

CAROLETTE

Hello, V.

VERONA

Oh, Carolette, good mornin'! How are you?

CAROLETTE

Fine, doin' just fine. How 'bout you, darlin'?

VERONA

Never been better!

CAROLETTE

That's swell, dear. Did you happen to be the one callin' me this mornin'?

VERONA

Oh, yes, that was me. I hope I didn't wake you, sugar...

CAROLETTE

No...of course not! (*yawning*)

VERONA

Well, last night I got up to get me a glass of water, and I recall seein' your kitchen light still on. It was mighty late too. I was just makin' sho' you knew tomorrow is the Fair.

CAROLETTE

(*laughing*) Now, 'rona, why would I forget?

VERONA

Well, seein' how you was a bit late last year and missed the entry time, I just didn't want that to happen again.

CAROLETTE

You know that's only 'cause I couldn't find my grandma's paisley pickle dish at the last moment and I had to use my glass butter dish...that was worse than missing out on the whoole thing.

VERONA

Like I told you then, next time that happens, honey, you just come on over inta my kitchen an' get whatcha need. (*Putting her hand to her heart*) My kitchen's always open.

CAROLETTE

Thank you, Verona, you're my best friend. But I know, you were just....destine to win the Picky Pickle Pick. My simple rum, vinegar pickles had nothing on yo' cajun pickle chunks...

VERONA

Oh, Carol, but what about your Brown Sugar Pear Bread, from the year before? It was divine. Simply, divine.

CAROLETTE

It was the judge's favorite food that year....but I'm sure it ain't even close to the heavenly taste, yo' cookin's' gonna have this year.

VERONA

That depends on what concoction you create, my dear! (*Laughs. Carolette laughs back for a few seconds, they both laugh lightly for a few seconds, then quiet down.*)

VERONA

So? What category you thinkin' bout enterin' in?

CAROLETTE

Oh...I hadn't thought much about it, I mean, I was up in the kitchen all night, workin' on something good, but I ain't too sure...I mean, I wanna be fair to all the other ladies, yet I want something new...ya' know...I was thinkin' about...(*apprehensively*) the Party Pie of the Year.

VERONA

Well ain't that a kicka, I was thinkin' 'bout enterin' that myself. A real special recipe...

CAROLETTE

Oh? Your famous strawberry rhubarb?

VERONA

No...it's a classic, but this year, I thought I'd...go all the way with somethin' new...somethin' to really make the judges jump with pie-pleasin' joy. Bushberry Pie.

CAROLETTE

(*laughs, shocked with disbelief*) My Bushberry Pie?

VERONA

Heavens, Carol! What'da ya mean, *your* Bushberry pie? (*Laughing*) You know it was me, who first baked that pie. It was last spring...when Herbie brought all those blackberries over from the bushes down by the creek...you remember!

CAROLETTE

I remember it was *my* idea to add the blueberries. If it weren't for my blueberries, it'd be a blackberry pie! It's the second batch a' berries that makes it Bushberry!

VERONA

It mighta' been yo' idea to grease the pan with butter instead of margarine! But it's still *my* pie.

CAROLETTE

Well, if it ain't my pie, then how come I got a recipe card for it? Got it right here. Got it, despite the padlock, I know Miss Verona K Jenkins keeps a padlock on her super-secret recipe box!

VERONA

How'd you get a'hold of that?

CAROLETTE

I told you...it's *my* recipe. Why wouldn't I have the card?

VERONA

*(scoffs)* Hmph!

CAROLETTE

Got it all, all 12 ingredients and 10 steps to make the perfect summer pie...

VERONA

*(calming down)* Now that's funny...

CAROLETTE

What?

VERONA

My recipe card says 13 ingredients...

CAROLETTE

What?

VERONA

Yeah, got it right here, the killer ingredient. Makes my mouth water thinking 'bout it right now.

CAROLETTE

Well, you go on and make your silly pie, V! 'Cause you know what Mrs. Sweetwater always says, *(Verona mouths along with her)* 'More waste, less taste.'!

VERONA

Go on! 'Cause at least my crust won't be sticky from too much butter! *(slams the phone down)*

CAROLETTE

*(gasps)* Well! *(Drops receiver onto hook and stomps off stage.)*

VERONA

Who does she think she is! Stealin' my recipe...It is *my* recipe. *My* pie. Well, I'll show her! I'm gonna make the best darn pie this county ever had! *(She pulls out a large recipe box with a padlock on it. Her eyes dart back and forth across the room, then she pulls out a key tied to a string around her neck out and unlocks the box. She takes out a stack of cards and begins shuffling through them. Carolette enters carrying a large sack of flower under one arm and a handheld mixer in the other hand. She drops the sack of flower on the floor And stands there with the mixer in her hand.)*

CAROLETTE

Who does she think she is? Makin' a Bushberry Pie when she knows good and well that it is *my* recipe...If I could only figure out what that 13<sup>th</sup> ingredient was! She puts her elbow down on the table and rests her chin on her hand. She scratches her head with the mixer in thought.) What could it be? *(She looks around the room but suddenly fixes her eyes forward, looking out the window. She drops the mixer and runs out of the room.)*

VERONA

Here it is! 'Verona's Bushberry Pie.' Let's see. Sugar...*(She turns around and scans her kitchen for the sugar. As she is looking, Carolette enters, crouching down with a pair of binoculars in her hands. She slowly approaches the opposite side of the counter and putting the binoculars to her eyes, she slowly raises up, looking out the window. Verona continues searching for ingredients.)* Flour...baking soda...vanilla...*(Verona looks up at the window and her eyebrows scrunch up. As she does this, Carolette ducks. Verona turns back around and Carolette returns to spying.)* Blackberries...*(Verona turns back around sharply and sees Carolette. She gasps, runs to the window and draws the curtains. Carolette moves her head frantically trying to still get a look. She gives up and returns to the other side of the counter. Verona slaps her hands across each other in a satisfying manner and returns to gathering ingredients. Carolette paces her kitchen, then stops and picks up the telephone and dials, with a cool grin on her face. The phone rings in Verona's kitchen. Verona turns and looks at the phone suspiciously, then finally picks up on the third ring.)*

VERONA

Hello.

CAROLETTE

Well, Hiiiiii...

VERONA

What do you want?

CAROLETTE

Well, I was just lettin' you know I was going to the store, to pick up a few things and I was wonderin' if you needed anything.

VERONA

No, I'm set, thank you.

CAROLETTE

Well, alright. If you need me, you'll know where I'm at.

VERONA

Hmph.

CAROLETTE

Ta ta...*(They hang up. Carolette slips out of her kitchen.)*

VERONA

*(laughing lightly to herself)* She can shop all day at the store and she won't be able to figure out that last ingredient, I guarentee it. And why did she ask me if I needed anything? She think maybe I was gonna tell her what I needed....tell her the last ingredient. Haha, well, she's definitely got another thing comin'. *(As she has her back turned, she hums. Carolette enters crawling on Verona's side. She makes her way around to the opposite side of the counter. She sits facing the audience and reaches her hand over her head, groping the counter.)*

CAROLETTE

That card has to be around here somewhere. *(She continues searching, and suddenly Verona turns around and sees Carolette's hand. Verona stumbles backward in shock. Just as Carolette fins the card and holds it up, Verona snatches Carolette's hand. Carolette shrieks.)*

VERONA

Carolette Betsey Correy! What in the name of Betty Crocker are you doing?!

CAROLETTE

*(Standing up)* Oh, I, uh, I was just coming to see if I could borrow a cup of sugar. *(Picks up a measuring cup from the counter and holds it towards Verona.)*

VERONA

I thought you was going to the store? Ain't they got sugar there?

CAROLETTE

Well, I uh, had no gas...plus Harold's got the car...and I figured you probably had enough to share...*(tries to take a peak at the recipe card Verona now clutches in her hand.)*

VERONA

Carol...Now I know what you was trying to do. You were trying to steal my recipe card for the Bushberry Pie! Well, here it is! *(holds it high in the air above her head)* I hope this proves to you that this is *my* recipe. *(Carolette jumps and tries to snatch the card out of Verona's hand. A chase ensues and the women rush around the kitchen counter. They scrap for a while. Then they both suddenly notice Verona has dropped the card on the floor. They both rush to it and both grab it at the same time. They pull and struggle then finally rip the card in two. Verona sits on the floor mortified. Carolette jumps up and runs out of the kitchen. She soon appears in her own kitchen.)*

CAROLETTE

I got it! I got it! I got the final ingredient! *(Panting, she reads the card to herself)* What? There's only 12 ingredients on here! It must be on the last half! *(She screams and runs out of her kitchen, the lights go dark on her side of the stage.)*

VERONA

*(Standing up, Verona smiles then laughs to herself. She places the card on the counter.)* Better get on bakin' that pie for this afternoon!

*(The lights go out. The kitchens are cleared away and the tables that served as the countertops become tables and are pushed a little closer together. A sign with each of the lady's names appears on her respective table. When the lights come up again, both women enter at the same time carrying pie trays. When they see each other they stop suddenly, then slowly walk up to their tables and set the trays down on the tables.)*

Scene 2

VERONA

*(Scoffs.)* Good afternoon, Carolette. I see you made my pie after all.

CAROLETTE

Why, hello, Verona. I don't know what you're talking about though. This here's my own pride and joy.

VERONA

Well, in that case I hope the judges don't get a bad taste in their mouth after eatin' your pie right before they get to mine!

CAROLETTE

You don't gotta worry about that one bit 'cause I'm gonna have 'em convinced my pie's the winner after just one bite...

VERONA

If they don't choke and die!

CAROLETTE

Now, you listen here...(They start toward each other. Mrs. Sweetwater enters wearing a big sun hat and carrying a clipboard. They both regain composure with giant beaming smiles.)

CAROLETTE & VERONA

Mrs. Sweetwater!

MRS. SWEETWATER

Hello, dears. It's good to see you both entering the Party Pie competition this year. You both have such good tastes. Well, what do you have here Ms. Carolette?

CAROLETTE

Well (*she says very loud leaning slightly in Verona's direction.*) This is a homemade creation by yours truly...completely original...no help from anyone else, this is *my* invention. (*Mrs. Sweetwater takes a bite, chews it, looks pleased, but scrunches her eyebrows in confusion. She swallows.*)

MRS. SWEETWATER

Why...this tastes exactly like my homemade Bushberry Pie. Right down to the lemon juice! You say you came up with this yourself?

CAROLETTE

Oh...um...no, Mrs. Sweetwater, of course this is your pie! I meant that I...I...baked it myself. Yes, I baked it all by myself in my kitchen. Of course I got this delicious recipe from you! (*Verona who has been snickering the whole time stops and rolls her eyes.*)

MRS. SWEETWATER

Well, it certainly tastes just as wonderful as I make it, if not better.

CAROLETTE

Oh, Mrs. Sweetwater, you're too, too kind.

MRS. SWEETWATER

I'll be right back ladies. I've got to go get me a glass of milk to wash all those berries down!

CAROLETTE

*(Turning to Verona)* You! You tricked me! *(Verona giggles and cuts a piece of her pie and places on a plate for Mrs. Sweetwater.)* Well, if you didn't make a Bushberry Pie! Then what's that you got right there!

VERONA

Oh, just a little secret. Oh! There's Herbie. I better go tell him to make room in the trunk for my trophy. *(She exits.)*

CAROLETTE

*(Stands looking angry and annoyed. She looks at Verona's pie then gets an idea. She cuts out another piece of her pie and switches it with Verona's piece. Verona reenters with her back turned to Carolette. Carolette panics and shoves the extra pie piece in her mouth all at once.)*

VERONA

No, Herbie! I don't care how much you paid for that pig, tell Jimmy to put it in his truck! *(She turns back around.)* Men are so silly sometimes.

MRS. SWEETWATER

*(reenters carrying a glass of milk.)* That hits the spot! And now what do you have Ms. Verona?

VERONA

A secret recipe, I've been saving for this very day...*(Mrs. Sweetwater takes a bite and chews.)*

MRS. SWEETWATER

Hmm...this is good, but...it's so familiar...I believe it's the same as Ms. Carol's pie.

VERONA

What?!

MRS. SWEETWATER

Oh, you two ladies! Next year you're just going to have to get together and plan ahead next time so you don't make the same thing! *(Laughing, she starts off stage.)* The winner will be announced shortly, and you two surely made it a tough decision! *(She exits.)*

VERONA

Why, you!

CAROLETTE

*(Swallows, then winces.)* Wow, V. What'd you put in that? Turnip greens?

VERONA

I'll show you pie, missy! *(She picks up her pie tray and rears it back to throw it. Carolette screams and picks up her own. They face off. Just as they are about to throw, Mrs. Sweetwater enters.)*

MRS. SWEETWATER

Attention everyone, I would like to announce that the winner of this year's Party Pie of the Year Award goes to...*(The two set their pies down but continue to scowl at one another.)*..Mrs. Euits Plume! *(Mrs. Sweetwater exits the opposite side she entered.)* Congratulations Eutis!

CAROLETTE

*(Stares at the ground in disbelief.)* Mrs. Sweetwater's own recipe...and it STILL didn't win! *(She wonders downstage and sits down on the ground, puts her head in her hands and begins to sob loudly. Verona goes over to her.)*

VERONA

Carol, if it makes you feel any better...I purposely made my pie to be bad.

CAROLETTE

Really?

VERONA

Yes, I felt so terrible into tricking you into making Mrs. Sweetwater's pie. I thought maybe you'd win, if my pie was not so good.

CAROLETTE

Not so good? Honey, that was vergin' on straight up nasty...

VERONA

Well, still. I wanted you to win.

CAROLETTE

Aw, V...so...what's the secret 13<sup>th</sup> ingredient to Mrs. Sweetwater's Bushberry Pie?

VERONA

...Friendship. 2 cups of loving friendship, Carol. *(They stand and embrace. With one arm around each other they start off stage.)* Now come on back to my house and I'll cook you some of my world famous Crispy Coctail Cookies. *(Carolette stops, while Verona continues off stage.)*

CAROLETTE

*Your cookies?!?! (She hustles off stage after Verona. Light fade off.)*

THE END