

DOT. Well, Ross is the one who died, not *me*. (*Randa enters with an opened wine bottle and three glasses on a tray. Sets it on the bar.*)

RANDA. It just so happens, I'd selected a fabulous *French* wine for tonight. (*Hands Dot the bottle. Re: label.*) Does that look familiar? Perhaps you came across it when you were in France.

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DOT. Dear, I taught high-school French in Oklahoma. The only *Paris* I ever got to visit was the one in Texas. (*Tries to read label, holds it as far away as she can. Marlafaye takes it, walks bottle across the room.*)

MARLAFAYE. How about now, Dottie? Any better?

DOT. (*To Randa.*) You don't happen to have that label in large print, do you?

RANDA. It's a Côtes du Rhône Grenache. (*Pours a bit in each glass.*) My brother, Alden, he-who-can-do-no-wrong, recently took a break from walking on water and raising the dead to get married. This was served at the dinner. It's an absolutely unforgettable wine. (*They sip, faces contort. Revulsed, struggle to swallow.*)

DOT. And it still is! (*Marlafaye runs to the balustrade, spits over the side.*)

MARLAFAYE. (*Yells down to the street.*) Oops! Sorry, Sister!

DOT. This strikes me as more of a vinaigrette in search of a salad.

RANDA. I don't know what happened. I let the wine breathe.

MARLAFAYE. Maybe you should've given it *CPR*.

RANDA. This is a disaster! I must've bought a bad year. And it's *all* I have. (*Takes glasses and bottle to lower shelf of bar.*)

MARLAFAYE. (*As she strides to her purse.*) Remain calm, citizens. There's no need to fear ... (*Pulls a fifth of bourbon from her purse, strikes superhero pose.*) Whiskey Wonder Woman is here! I give you ... Kentucky bourbon at its finest! (*Opens bottle, takes a sniff.*) Ahhh.

DOT. Wow. All I have in *my* purse is keys, lipstick, and Gas-X.

MARLAFAYE. Yeah, but a good liquor rep is *always* prepared.

RANDA. Marlafaye, you are my hero! The nursing profession's loss is our gain. (*Hurries to bar, grabs three clean glasses.*)

DOT. None for me. I never drink hard liquor. Back when we were dating, I overheard Ross say he thought women who drank hard liquor looked cheap.

MARLAFAYE. Well, unless Randa's brother brings Ross back from the other side, I say throw caution to the wind and have yourself a snort.

DOT. Oh ... well, maybe just a smidge. (*Randa pours, hands a glass to Marlafaye, pours another, hands it to Dot.*) Mmm ... maybe just a smidge more. (*Randa pours again then pours a glass for herself.*)

MARLAFAYE. Girls, here's to livin' single and drinkin' doubles! (*They touch glasses, sip. Dot gasps, coughs.*)

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DOT. Fire! I'm on fire! Water, quick! *(Grabs Randa's glass, drinks, goes into another coughing fit.)* Not water ... bad idea! *(Gradually gets her breath. Marlafaye pats her on the back.)*

MARLAFAYE. They say you never forget your first time, Dottie.

RANDA. Well, this is turning out to be quite a night. And we definitely have enough cheese for the three of us.

DOT. Oh, that reminds me. There are going to be four of us.

RANDA. *Four of us?*

DOT. Yes! I met this nice woman, the manager for this terrific makeup store, Beautiquity, and she is a fireball! Anyway, she's new in town, too, and she tried that hot yoga class and hated it as much as we did. Well, I told her we were getting together tonight and I think you're really going to like her.

RANDA. *(On the spot.)* Wait. You invited her *here?* *Tonight?*

MARLAFAYE. You *did* say the more the merrier.

RANDA. Well, I only hope ... we have enough hors d'oeuvres. I think there'll — *(Sniffs, alarmed.)* My cheese straws! *(Races into kitchen.)*

DOT. Oh, I hope Randa can save them. It's been years since I've had a good cheese straw.

MARLAFAYE. And it's been years since my cholesterol was under three hundred. Considerin' all we've got to eat around here is *cheese*, no chance those numbers will be goin' down tonight. *(Jinx Jenkins, energetic, self-confident, and gregarious, hurries in the side stairs. She wears a low-cut, off-the-shoulder top, short skirt, big jewelry, spike heels, and a purse.)*

JINX. *(Calls.)* Hey, girls! Everyone got your clothes on?

DOT. Jinx! You made it. Jinx Jenkins, this is Marlafaye Mosley.

MARLAFAYE. *Jinx?* That's one humdinger of a name.

JINX. Well, I'm a humdinger of a gal. So, is that Kentucky liquid gold I'm smelling, 'cause, just so you know, bourbon is my favorite color.

MARLAFAYE. I'm thinkin' you're my kind of people. *(Hurries to stage right bar, grabs a glass, pours.)*

DOT. Did you have trouble finding the place?

JINX. Not a bit. I had a late makeover that made me run behind, but it was worth it, my customer told me the cutest joke: An excited woman called her husband at work: "I won the lottery! Come home and pack your clothes!" Husband said, "Ooh! Summer or winter clothes?" Wife says: "All of 'em. I want you out of the house by six!" *(They all laugh.)*

MARLAFAYE. *(Hands Jinx the glass. To Dot.)* Yeah, she's gonna fit in just fine.

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JINX. I wasn't sure what to bring, so I went out and got a big slab of Brie. Everyone loves Brie, right? *(Pulls a large chunk of cheese from her purse. Dot and Marlafaye exchange a look.)*