

622 MRS TRI-COUNTY TRANSCRIPT

Hal is in the garage, trying to hold a large piece of wood steady so he can saw through it.

Hal: Oh, jeez. Oh! (calling) Hey, can one of you boys give me a hand?

Malcolm: What do you need?

Hal: Just hold this steady. Thanks, Malcolm. I'm glad it's you. Whenever Reese helps, he always seems to hurt himself. (starts up saw and cuts through the wood, with the blade inches from Malcolm's head)

Cut to the boys' bedroom, where Malcolm and Reese are sitting on the bed, laughing. Dewey comes in.

Reese: Wait, how about this: Mother's wonderful, quiet dignity.

Malcolm: No, her sensitive, quiet dignity. (they laugh)

Dewey: What are you guys doing?

Malcolm: We were at the mall, and they have these entry forms for the Mrs Tri-County contest. Look at these questions: "how does your mother bring joy into your life?" (they laugh again)

Reese: Like the time she shaved the word "liar" into my head.

Malcolm: Always finds time to dote on our personal appearance.

Lois: (comes to the door) What's so funny? (the boys turn around, scared)

Malcolm: (making up cover story) Uh, Reese saw a Japanese guy on the Internet puke into an electric fan.

Reese: They are ahead of us in so many ways. (Lois walks off and the boys all crack up laughing)

Cut to the kitchen, where Lois is sorting through the mail, where she is joined by Hal.

Hal: All right, how bad is it?

Lois: Nothing past Second Notice so far.

Hal: Wow. What's that?

Lois: Apparently I've been entered into the Mrs Tri-County Pageant.

Hal: What?

Lois: The boys entered me in this Pageant.

Hal: (quoting letter) "Lucky to have her in our lives." "Too special to be kept a secret." "She suffers in silence." Oh, can you believe this?!

Lois: I know, they do all these horrible things, and then they go and do something like this.

Hal: Yes, well they're good boys.

Lois: God, I think of suffering through all those Pageants, slaving for my sister all those years. Susan was always the big star, and I was her invisible little troll. Carrying her gowns for her Queen of Harvest festival. Ironing her sash for Ms Mammogram.

Hal: Well, no-one every appreciates the star maker, Lois.

Lois: Once I was hemming her dress for Dairy Princess, and a photographer stood on my back to take her picture.

Hal: Bastards wouldn't know a Dairy Princess if it came up and bit them on the ass.

Lois: Boy, it would really show her if I entered this Pageant.

Hal: (chuckles) What?

Lois: Oh, it wouldn't hurt to go down there and see what it's all about.

Hal: Great, let's do it.

Cut to the boys' bedroom, where Hal, who is furious, is reprimanding the boys.

Hal: You little monsters! You have really done it this time!

Malcolm: Dad, it was a joke. I didn't know Reese was going to mail the stupid thing.

Dewey: We were just goofing around. I can't believe she took it seriously.

Hal: You're right, Dewey. Your mother actually believes her sons love her. What a moron! I've got it. Why don't you just blindfold your mother and throw her down some stairs?! That'd be fun!

Malcolm: We're sorry.

Reese: Yeah.

Hal: Well, it's too late for 'sorry'. Here's what's going to happen: we are all going down to the Civic Centre as a family, and you boys are going to do everything in your power, to make sure this is the most un-humiliating night of your mother's life!

Cut to the family arriving at the Civic Centre.

Lois: Wow, this is a big deal. I have to be honest, I'm feeling kind of nervous, here.

Hal: Awww.

Mr Herkabe: (yelling at a lady) You don't pay my wage. I have to look at the structure, and you call this a Gift Bag?! I saw two judges with the Mini Lipstick Set AND the Lemon-Scented Moisturiser.

Malcolm: Mr Herkabe, what are you doing here?

Mr Herkabe: I happen to be one of the judges. What, may I ask, are you doing here?

Malcolm: You know, curiosity. It's kind of a sociologically interesting -

Mr Herkabe: My God, your mother's in the Pageant.

Malcolm: Well, technically.

Mr Herkabe: Hmmm. And I happen to have certain powers that might influence that outcome, isn't that interesting?

Malcolm: What?

Mr Herkabe: I just think that's really interesting. Don't you find it interesting?

Malcolm: Yeah, guess I'm going to have to.

Lady: (running over carrying a box) I'm sorry Sir, they were out of the Moisturiser, but I found these.

Mr Herkabe: Fine. I'll take the, (looks at jar) Smoked Almonds, the... oh, just give me the whole box. (empties the box into one of the Gift Bags)

Lady in Charge: All right ladies, sign in. You'll get your schedules, your parking permits and your dressing area assignment. Also, make sure that you get back here by 3.00 sharp, for a group photo with the State's Largest Pumpkin.

Reese: Look at all these old broads trying to look hot. I mean, don't they know we're done with them?

Lois: (sees someone she knows) Donna? (approaches her) Donna, is that you?

Donna: Lois.

Lois: I haven't seen you since Miss Teen Guessing Power.

Donna: What a memory you have. Was that time when the judges carried me around on their shoulders? Oh, Darlene, Jeannie, Anne, look who's here.

Ladies: Hi!

Lois: Look at all of you, I can't believe you're still doing Pageants.

Lady: Well, I actually quit a few years back. It was time to get to know my kids a little better. But then September the 11th happened, and we just can't let them win.

Donna: So, where's your sister?

Lois: Uh, Susan isn't here. I'm entering this myself. (the ladies fall silent)

Donna: Oh, I love stuff like that.

Lady: Don't feel bad. The rest of us don't have a chance either. Donna somehow got Nina Peruchi to coach her.

Lois: Nina Peruchi? How did you manage that?

Donna: Well, Max got a nice bonus for Christmas. And let's just say, I had a Yeast Infection until he wrote the check. (Nina Peruchi approaches her)

Nina: (angrily) Is that your chin?!

Donna: No, Nina.

Nina: Is that your smile?!

Donna: No, Nina.

Nina: Is that your bust?!

Donna: No, Nina.

Nina: Oh. (walks off)

Lois: She is amazing.

Lady: She pioneered the use of backstage laxatives.

Hal: (walks over) Lois, if we don't sign up right now, we're going to get a dressing area without a hook! (leads her off)

Donna: Well, I think we know who's winning Mrs. Deluded.

Ladies: (laughing) Oh, Donna! You're terrible.

Reese: I didn't think it was possible, but the Mrs Tri-County Pageant's about to get even uglier.

Cut to the Wilkersons' house where Hal and Lois are planning for Lois's Pageant entry, while Dewey washes the dishes from dinner.

Hal: I made the appointment for your facial tomorrow. I don't want to pick out jewellery until after we choose the gown. (puts picture in front of Lois) Now, the red one is nice. It's tasteful, it really sets off your hair. But the blue one has a nicer drape, and you cannot beat its 'wild' factor. (takes pictures away) You know what, let me worry about that. You can concentrate on your talent.

Lois: I don't know, Hal. I'm not even sure you can call it a 'talent'.

Hal: What are you talking about?! It is going to be great. That's why I blacked out the next three hours for you to work with Dewey.

Dewey: Dad, I have homework.

Hal: Oh, just buy it from the guy Reese buys his from.

Cut to the Civic Centre.

Lady in Charge: Ok ladies, I know you've all done it a million times before, but let's just walk through it once anyway. Blue line ladies cross over the red mark. Green line cross over the yellow mark. Blue line, stop at the orange marks, step left across to the green line. Green line stop at the black marks, step right across to the - (sees Lois) Green line.

Mr Herkabe: Malcolm, I need you to do a job for me. It's urgent. I've been exchanging some very meaningful glances with one of the contestants.

Malcolm: You know they're all married, don't you?

Mr Herkabe: Yes, of course, and that's why it would be indecent of me not to be discreet. (holds up piece of paper) Darlene Fisher. Green sweatsuit. I need you to pass her this note for me.

Malcolm: You want me to find out if she likes you? Forget it.

Mr Herkabe: I respect your stand, Malcolm. And I want you to know, this will in no way affect my judging of your mother. Or will it? (Malcolm snatches the note from him and walks off. We see Mr Herkabe's Judges Manual on the empty seat next to him, which Reese, who is hiding under the chairs, swipes)

Cut to a different room, where it's Lois's turn to give her speech.

Hal: Ok, you're next. No matter what question they ask you, remember to use your key phrases. "Empowering women", "The beauty within", "helping those in need". And don't forget, end with "May God Bless America."

Lois: Right, right. And where do I say the stuff about world peace?

Hal: No-no-no-no-no, we got rid of that. You don't want to come off like a Liberal nutcase.

Darlene: (giving her speech) Yes, I am a mother, but I also have to remember that I am a woman. A woman who is not afraid to give, because it feels so good. Thank you. (audience claps, and Lois goes to the seat)

Judge: Ok, Lois. Here's your question, if you're ready: "How has motherhood kept you young?"

Lois: (after a short pause) I'm sorry, but I have a problem with the question. Motherhood definitely does a lot of

things, but the one thing it does not do is keep you young. Oh my God, it ages you horribly. Youth is about having choices, but once you're a mother, you have no choices. You're stuck loving your children. You get grey hair loving them, you lose sleep loving them. You lose out on all those other things that you always thought you'd do. But even with all of that, the amazing thing is, you're ok with it. It's like some wonderful...curse. (everyone claps, and Hal motions her towards him) That was amazing. I don't know how you came up with that crap, but you nailed it.

Judge: (Donna is next to speak) Ok Donna, here we go: "What aspect of being a woman do you find most fulfilling?"

Donna: (mimicking Lois) What kind of stupid question is that?

Judge: Excuse me?

Donna: I don't mean that you're stupid. The question is - I mean - I'm not fulfilled. It's awful being a woman, right? Right? I'm cursed with children too. I never wanted to have kids, I just wanted to - but, I do love America. How about our country, huh? (starts clapping, but is the only one who does)

Hal: Did you see that? She went up like the Hindenburg.

Lois: I guess I'm really doing ok.

Hal: So, are you going to keep wasting time high-fiving yourself, or are we going to get back to work?

Cut to the house, where Lois is practicing her talent, accompanied by Dewey on his keyboard.

Hal: Ok, honey. That was pretty good. Unfortunately, there are three counties full of women, who are pretty good. We need a winner!

Lois: I think this would be going so much better if I could sing, or dance, or play a musical instrument.

Hal: We'll get to you, Lois. Right now, Dewey is our problem. Now son, I don't know anything about music. But this is how you should be playing. Now, in the middle part, you're doing de-dum, de-dum, de-dum, de-dum, and I want to hear more of Whop! De-de-de, whop! De-de-de, whop! De-de-de, whop!

Dewey: That's never going to happen.

Hal: You know, I really don't need this from you right now. (gets angry) We've got one day to get the dress ready, our shoes aren't dyed, and we have no idea where we're going with our hair!

Lois: Hal, calm down. What's happening? I thought this was supposed to be fun. (Hal pretends to be happy and laughs)

Cut to the boys' bedroom, where Reese is reading the Judges Manual, when Malcolm comes in.

Malcolm: Mom had better win this thing. I'm getting to know way too much about Herkabe's love life. Have you got anything yet?

Reese: This Judges Manual has like 200 pages of these really specific rules on what's attractive and what isn't. There's a whole page on ankle symmetry. And you know what I learned?

Malcolm: What?

Reese: I'm beautiful!

Malcolm: What are you talking about?

Reese: Everything on my face is at the absolute standard of perfection. My lips are exactly twice the length of the distance between my eyes. My filtrum is gracefully tapered. My earlobe is the perfect 1.4 centimetres, and it just goes on and on. You can measure me if you don't believe it.

Malcolm: Are you going to help Mom or not?

Reese: I understand your anger, Malcolm. Unattractive people can become very threatened by this. It's probably why I've so few friends.

Cut to the Civic Centre, where it is the night of the Pageant.

Mr Herkabe: Malcolm, I need a favour.

Malcolm: I already did you a favour with Darlene.

Mr Herkabe: Which worked out spectacularly. And aphetically. And repeatedly.

Malcolm: What else do you want?

Mr Herkabe: I need you to break up with her.

Malcolm: What?

Mr Herkabe: She's gotten so clingy, and dependent. She's suffocating me. Feel free to judge me, but remember who's judging your mother. (pulls piece of paper from his pocket) Give her this note. At first, I toyed with the idea of lying to her, but I decided to tell her honestly, I find her repellent. It's better to be classy.

Hal: (calling from where he and Jamie are sitting) Malcolm! Find your brother and get back her. The judges need to see all of us gazing adoringly up at your mother. Those Hendersons are making us look like chimps. (to Dewey) Psst... his smile is fading. Give him another hit. (Dewey pulls out a bottle of water, pours sugar into it, then hands it to Jamie)

Lois: I don't know how you do this. I've never felt such butterflies in my entire life. Good luck, everybody.

Nina: (approaching Donna) Your mascara is crumpling. What did I tell you about blinking?! (Reese taps her on the shoulder) What is it?! (turns around and gasps) I know.

Announcer: Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Mrs Tri-County Pageant. Here's your host, Channel Two's Dave Nelson.

Dave: (singing) Hey there, Mrs Tri-County,
A lady from head to toe,
Mothers, a Maid, a Teacher and a Hottie,
All wrapped up in woe.

It's time to sparkle and start the show,
So come on, and take a bow,
America needs you like never before,
And 'MOM' is just an upside-down WOW! (continues singing as the contestants prepare backstage)

Donna: I lost a pin... oh, I've lost a pin! This isn't happening! (Lois gives her one of hers) Hold on... what are you doing? Now you're hair's ruined.

Lois: So we'll both be a little off. Come on everybody, let's go!

Dave: And please step forward... Charlotte! Ladies and Gentlemen, the judges have unanimously decided that these five women will NOT be going to the next round, and YOU ladies are!

Hal: Woohoo! Ha-ha! (looks at Hendersons) HA!

Dave: We're going to take a short break now, so our lovely five can get ready for... the Glamour Parade.

Reese: (whispering) Malcolm, come here. Malcolm!

Malcolm: Reese, what are you doing? Dad's been looking all over for you.

Reese: I'm leaving, Malcolm. I'm claiming my Birth Right.

Malcolm: What?

Reese: I'm about to become a star. And from what I understand, I have to ruthlessly separate myself from you pathetic hangers-on. And probably eventually sue your asses. Take care, Malcolm. See you in court.

Dave: Well, it may be 70 degrees outside with a 20% chance of rain, but it's about to get a lot hotter in here.

Lois: Where's Jeannie?

Jeannie: We were all going to wear tiaras for Glamour Parade, and, we're all going to wear tiaras. (hands one to Lois)

Lois: Thank you, Jeannie. Thank you, all of you.

Dave: ... as we present the Mrs Tri-County Glamour Parade!
(Lois walks out first, and afterwards all the ladies take off their tiaras and throw them aside)

Lois: What's wrong, what happened?

Lady in Charge: Usually we let the judges decide who gets to wear the tiara.

Dave: Ladies and Gentlemen, please remain calm. There is no reason to panic.

Reese: (approaching Nina) Ok, I'm ready.

Nina: For what?

Reese: Whatever it is you do with beautiful people. I'll give you 20%, and not a penny more. You may have to travel, because I'm going to have a house in Miami, Milan and at Disney World in France. You're welcome to fly in my private jet, but I want you to keep it real. I'd also like a falcon.

Nina: What are you talking about, I can't do anything with you.

Reese: What? Why not? I read the book. I measured everything, I'm perfect.

Nina: It's true. You do have the perfect features for a middle-aged woman. (Reese looks shocked) If you want to, have a sex change and come back in 20 years, and we'll talk. (walks off)

Reese: No! Please! This can't be how it ends. I'm supposed to have three rocky marriages and die in a hotel fire. Don't send me home! I'm too perfect to live like a person.

Cut to Hal outside Lois's dressing room.

Hal: Ok, people reacted badly to the crown thing, so you've got to nail the talent portion. Now, I know you think it isn't a talent, but if you commit, you can make those oversized barbies choke on their own petens. (Lois emerges from the dressing room in her regular clothes) What are you doing? Where's your top-hat and fishnet thigh-highs?

Lois: Just get the car and the kids Hal, and let's just slink out of here.

Hal: Wait, you can't just walk away.

Lois: Yes I can. This whole thing has been a disaster. I don't belong here, and I hate the way those women make me feel.

Hal: Come on, they're just a bunch of bitter hags.

Lois: And I hate the way you've been making me feel. We may have our ups and downs Hal, but this is the first time I ever felt like I wasn't good enough for you.

Hal: You're right. I'm sorry. I mean, I know you're perfect, and for once, I wanted the whole world to know it.

Lois: Well, that's a nice idea, but that isn't going to happen. I don't know why I ever thought I could compete with these women. Hal, I can't handle them. I'm out of my league here.

Hal: What are you talking about? Do you know why those broads pulled that stunt? They're afraid of you, Lois. Right now you are surrounded by a bunch of idiots who fear you. You're not out of your league, you're at home.

Lady: Lois! Where have you been?! Come on, let's go! You're up, you've got to go!

Lois: Whining isn't going to make me go any faster.

Hal: Yes! (runs after her)

Dave: And now, our third contestant Lois, will be accompanied by her lovely daughter, Dewey.

Hal: (to Jamie) There's Mommy. (Jamie leans over to look as Lois performs her whistling talent, and gets loud applause afterwards).

Cut to the Wilkersons' house, where the family are celebrating with

Hal: Would the new Mrs Tri-County like another scoop of Fudge Ripple?

Lois: Well, the sash still has a couple of inches of slack. Keep it coming. (admiring her gift basket) This is so nice. Look at this. A \$40 coupon for new tyres. A box of steaks, a label maker! Oh, this is nice. I wish Reese wasn't too busy sulking to enjoy it with us.

Dewey: Give him a little time.

Cut to the Civic Centre, where Reese, now alone, is walking around and crying.