

FINAL DRAFT
as of 9/13/78
Show #10

MEL

ALICE

"Who Ordered The Hot Turkey?"

(#166810)



WARNER BROS.
TELEVISION

FINAL DRAFT

September 13, 1978

ALICE

"Who Ordered the Hot Turkey?"

Written by

Tom Whedon

Produced by

Madelyn Davis and Bob Carroll, Jr.

Directed by

William Asher

"Turkey"

FINAL DRAFT REV. - 9/19/78

"ALICE"

"Who Ordered the Hot Turkey?"

CAST LIST

ALICE.....LINDA LAVIN
MEL.....VIC TAYBACK
FLO.....POLLY HOLLIDAY
VERA.....BETH HOWLAND
TOMMY.....PHILIP McKEON
DETECTIVE SGT. RALPH HILTON.....
ED (TURKEY FARMER).....
CONNIE RAYMOND (TV REPORTER).....
REGIS.....
JIM (CAMERAMAN).....
FIRST KID.....
SECOND KID.....
THIRD KID (ABOUT FIVE YEARS OLD).....

ALICE

"Who Ordered the Hot Turkey?"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY

(IT'S OPENING TIME IN THE DINER. THE
GIRLS ARE BUSTLING ABOUT. MEL IS NOT
THERE)

ALICE

(LOOKING OUT THE FRONT WINDOW)

I wonder where he could be.
It's not like Mel to be late.

VERA

Mel said he was going to have
a date last night. Maybe he...

(IMITATING MEL)

... 'got lucky.'

FLO

If he got lucky, it means his date
got unlucky.

VERA

You don't suppose Mel got his
days mixed up and he thinks today
is Thanksgiving?

FLO

Speakin' of Thanksgiving, what

* time do you want us for dinner

* tomorrow, Alice?

ALICE

* Well, the children's home said
* kids could come
over around noon.

VERA

My parakeet and I will be there
around eleven.

ALICE

Your parakeet?

VERA

Yes. If you don't mind, I don't
want him to be home alone.
Thanksgiving can be very
emotionally rough on birds.

ALICE

Sure, bring him. The kids might
get a kick out of him. Does he
talk?

VERA

Yeah. I left him with Mel one
weekend and now he says...

(IMITATES A PARAKEET)

"Stow it!"

FLO

I'm going to make the candied
yams tonight. You want me to
bring anything else?

ALICE

I don't think so.

(GOING OVER A MENTAL LIST)

I ordered the turkey from the market. I reserved the pies at the bakery. Vera's bringing the salad. I'll make the stuffing. We're all set.

VERA

What a neat idea of yours, Alice, to have the kids from the settlement house for Thanksgiving dinner.

FLO

I'm so excited. I never had a kid before. I feel just like a mother.

ALICE

I just wish my apartment were bigger so we could have more kids. There must be twelve other kids who are going to have to spend Thanksgiving at the settlement house.

*
*
*
*
*

FLO

Shoot. That doesn't seem fair.

ALICE

It sure doesn't.

(MEL SAILS IN, WITH A BIG GRIN ON HIS
FACE)

MEL

Good morning, all!

FLO

What kept you, Mel?

MEL

I was wheelin' and dealin',
Florence, wheelin' and dealin'.

(HE STANDS AS IF EXPECTING THEM TO ASK
HIM TO ELABORATE)

ALICE

Well?

MEL

I ran into a guy who's gonna sell
me eight Thanksgiving turkeys for
5 bucks apiece.

FLO

* Five bucks! They must be older
* than Methuselah.

MEL

* I didn't see them, but the man said
they were young, plump and broadbreasted.

FLO

* Just your type.

ALICE

That's awfully cheap, Mel. Maybe
they're not fresh.

MEL

He said if they were any fresher,
they'd be eggs. X

ALICE

Wait a minute! What do you want
with eight Thanksgiving turkeys?
The diner's gonna be closed tomorrow.

MEL

Guess again.

VERA

(TAKING HIM AT HIS WORD)

Um... The diner's going to be
open tomorrow.

MEL

Right, Vera! We're all working
tomorrow!

FLO

When donkeys fly!

*

ALICE

Mel, we've made plans!

FLO

You gave us the day off.

MEL

I'm taking it back. You can
have Christmas off instead.

ALICE

~~Mel!~~ *YOU CAN TAKE A WALK TILL UR HAT FLOATS*

MEL

plans to me
I figure I can get twenty
dinners offa one turkey.
I'll charge five bucks for
a complete* dinner. No place
in town can match that price.
I'm gonna clean up.

ALICE

Wait just a minute, Mel. Flo
and Vera and I have planned
dinner at my house with Tommy
and three homeless kids.

MEL

Well, forget it. You're working.

VERA

But what'll we tell those kids?

*

MEL

Tell them Thanksgiving is really
next Sunday. What do kids know?

ALICE

I don't believe this.

MEL

Listen. You three are working
and that's all there is to it.
So stop bellyaching. You're
going to get plenty of tips.

FLO

Mel, on behalf of Alice, Vera
and me, and in keeping with the
spirit of Thanksgiving, kiss
my grits.

MEL

How would you all like to be
fired?

FLO

How would you all like to
find three waitresses who
will work on Thanksgiving?

ALICE

Hold it. Can't we compromise?
We'll work if you let the kids
eat here.

MEL

Okay, okay. They can eat in the storeroom and have leftovers.

ALICE

Mel, it's the dining room or nothing.

*

MEL

*

Okay, they can eat leftovers in the dining room.

*

*

FLO

*

No, Mel -- a full turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

*

MEL

All right, if they eat fast.

FLO

Mel, you're all heart.

*

VERA

And tum-tum.

MEL

Okay. We've got a lot of work to do. Vera! I'm putting you in charge of the decorations. Little cardboard turkeys and pilgrims and junk like that. Flo! Go round me up some day-old bread for the stuffing.

FLO

That's not hard to do around here.

*

7.

ALICE

Eight turkeys are going to be some
job to prepare. Are they properly
dressed?

VERA

(FERVENTLY)

Oh, I hope so!

MEL

Of course they're properly dressed.
Keep an eye peeled for the man with
the turkeys. He should be here any
minute.

(MEL GOES TO THE STOREROOM)

ALICE

I hope the three kids don't
mind eating here at the diner
instead of my apartment.

VERA

We could blindfold them.

ALICE

Hey, we just got a place
bigger than my apartment.

VERA

What do you mean, Alice?

ALICE

Now we've got room for all
those other kids at the
settlement house who don't
have anywhere to go.

*

VERA

That's right.

FLO

You think you're gonna talk
Mel into giving away twelve
more free dinners?

*

FLO

You'd have a better chance asking
Dracula to give blood.

VERA

Dracula would give blood. After
all, none of it's his.

ALICE

Well, you're probably right,
but I'm gonna give it a try.

(MEL COMES INTO THE KITCHEN. ALICE
GOES IN TO MEET HIM. MEL IS AT THE
GRILL)

ALICE (CONT'D)

Mel, you were so warm about
feeding those three orphans.
How'd you like to feel warmer?

MEL

What are you talking about?

ALICE

There are twelve more kids at
the home who have no place to
go. You could give those kids
a Thanksgiving they'll never
forget.

MEL

Must
~~No way~~. Those kids will be
taking up seats that I need
for paying customers.

*

ALICE

You can feed them early before the regular customers get here.

FLO

Yeah, Mel, think about what a nice gesture that would be.

VERA

Please, Mel.

(MEL THINKS A MOMENT)

MEL

You want me to tell you what I think of the idea?

ALICE

Don't bother. How can I expect the holiday spirit from somebody who sends threatening Valentines.

MEL

I think it's a terrific idea and I'm going to do it.

VERA

(LISTENING AT PASS-THRU)

Hurray!

FLO

Well, what do you know about that?

ALICE

Mel, please accept my apology.

MEL

Forget it, Alice. I just called the TV station and told them Mel's Diner is giving Thanksgiving dinner to three orphans. They're gonna put me on the evening news.

*

ALICE

Please accept a withdrawal of
my apology.

MEL

UPPT Do u mean
This is perfect. With twelve
more orphans, I'll look twelve
times as good.

VERA

Four times as good.

FLO

Mel, you're the pits.

MEL

You asked me to do something and
I'm doing it. What's the beef?

*

FLO

... Mel, you're doing the right
thing, but you're doing it for the
wrong reason.

VERA

Isn't that better than doing the
wrong thing for the right reason?

(ALICE GIVES HER A LOOK)

(A SHIFTY-EYED MAN WEARING A WINDBREAKER
ENTERS FRONT DOOR)

REGIS

(TO FLO)

Is there a guy named Mel around
here?

*

*

*

MEL

(COMING OUT OF THE KITCHEN)

Hi! You got my turkeys?

REGIS

You got my forty bucks?

MEL

(COUNTING OUT FOUR TENS)

Now you're sure these turkeys are
fresh?

REGIS

(TAKING THE MONEY)

They're right off the farm. They
haven't even had time to unpack.

(CALLING OFF)

Harry! Bring 'em in. Where do
you want 'em?

MEL

Just stick 'em in the freezer.

REGIS

I don't think they're gonna be too
happy in the freezer.

(HARRY COMES THROUGH THE DOOR CARRYING
CRATED LIVE TURKEYS. ALICE, FLO AND VERA
ALL LOOK AT MEL, WHO IS STUNNED)

DISSOLVE TO:

FADE IN:

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY

(SHORTLY AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF THE TURKEYS. MEL IS TAKING THE LAST OF THE CRATES INTO THE STOREROOM. THE GIRLS ARE OBSERVING)

MEL

This is the last of 'em.

(HE DISAPPEARS INTO THE STOREROOM)

VERA

Do you think they'll feel at home
in the storeroom?

FLO

Sure. Mel's putting them right
next to the cranberry sauce.

MEL

(COMING OUT OF STOREROOM)

I didn't know they were going to
be live turkeys.

ALICE

No wonder you got them for such a
good price. Hey, since they are
live, what are you going to do
about...

(SHE GLANCES AT VERA)

... correcting that?

MEL

Huh?

ALICE

(GLANCING AT VERA AGAIN)

I mean, who's going to, you know...

(HIDING IT FROM VERA SHE MAKES A
THROAT-CUTTING GESTURE AND SOUND)

... them?

MEL

Oh! The turkeys! No sweat. I'll
get Charley the butcher to kill
them.

VERA

Kill them!?

(SHE DISSOLVES IN TEARS)

*ALICE
Goes MEL*

MEL

What's with her?

ALICE

Mel, what did you expect? This
is the girl who had to go to bed
for three days when she heard that
Morris the Cat died.

MEL

What did she think was gonna
happen to those turkeys?

FLO

(TO VERA)

Mel's right, honey. Now you've
had turkey for Thanksgiving before,
right?

(MORE)

(VERA NODS)

FLO (CONT'D)

Every Thanksgiving?

(VERA NODS)

Well, where do you think those
turkeys came from?

VERA

(DISSOLVING)

The Safeway!

FLO

(LOSING PATIENCE)

Vera, those turkeys were just like
the ones in the storeroom.

VERA

No they weren't! Those turkeys
didn't have feet and feathers and
heads and laughing brown eyes!

FLO

Sounds like my date last night.

ALICE

(TO THE RESCUE)

Vera, darling, it's the turkey's
destiny to end up on the table,
with stuffing, and sweet potatoes...
That's what they were put on this
earth for... It's like being 'born
to dance.'

*

16.

VERA

You really think so?

ALICE

Absolutely.

VERA

Mel?

MEL

Yes, dear?

VERA

How is Charley the butcher
going to ... do it?

MEL

(DEMONSTRATING WITH HIS CLEAVER)

Probably like this...

(VERA DISSOLVES AGAIN)

ALICE

Vera!

VERA

But that's so cruel!! Isn't there
some other way?

FLO

Mel could talk to them and bore
them to death.

*

ALICE

Come on, Vera, please don't carry
on this way.

VERA

I'm okay.

(VERA, SNIFFING, STARTS FOR THE STOREROOM)

FLO

Where are you going?

VERA

I'm going to the turkeys to be with
them in their last hour. I hope
they don't cry. I can't stand to
see a grown turkey cry.

(SHE HURRIES INTO THE STOREROOM AS THE
OTHERS STARE AT EACH OTHER)

DISSOLVE TO:

FADE IN:

INT. STOREROOM - DAY

(CONTINUOUS ACTION. VERA COMES INTO THE STOREROOM. SHE LEAVES THE DOOR OPEN. THE TURKEYS ARE IN CRATES. SHE GOES STEALTHILY UP TO ONE OF THE CRATES AND WHISPERS TO THE BIGGEST TURKEY)

VERA

Psssst! The reason I'm whispering is I didn't want to alarm the others. But I noticed you before. You looked so intelligent. As a matter of fact, you look a lot like my Uncle George. He had red wattles, too... I think it was from shaving too closely...

(SHE GLANCES AROUND FURTIVELY)

Listen... Mind if I call you George? Do you know what's going to happen to you? Well, it's like this, George -- it's sort of like... Let me put it this way; you were born to dance. What I'm trying to say is... I hope you haven't made any big plans for Christmas. Oh! I didn't mean to depress you. As Ronald Colman put it so beautifully in 'Tale Of Two Cities,' 'Tis a far far better thing that you do now than you have ever done...'

DISSOLVE TO:

*

19.

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY (CONTINUOUS ACTION)

(MEL, ALICE AND FLO ARE IN THE KITCHEN
AREA, STARING AT THE OPEN STOREROOM DOOR)

MEL

(CALLING)

Vera, stop talking to the turkeys.

(TO ALICE)

It's crazy. Who talks to turkeys?

ALICE

Vera does. Anyway, what do you
care?

MEL

She might confuse them.

(TWO MEN COME IN THE FRONT DOOR, ONE IN
A SUIT AND TIE, RALPH HILTON, THE OTHER
IN WORK CLOTHES, ED. FLO GOES UP TO
THE MAN IN THE SUIT)

FLO

Have a seat, gentlemen. No need
for a reservation.

HILTON

I'd like to speak to the owner.

FLO

Mel! There's somebody here to see ya!

(MEL COMES OUT)

MEL

You want to see me?

HILTON

(PRODUCING BADGE)

Detective Sergeant Ralph Hilton,
Phoenix Police.

MEL

Yeah?

HILTON

Last night a truck from the Black
Canyon Poultry Farm was hijacked.
We've received word that the
hijackers are trying to dump their
load in this area. We're on the
lookout for some hot turkeys.

(ALICE AND FLO TURN TO MEL, WHO LOOKS
AGHAST)

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY

(CONTINUOUS ACTION. SERGEANT HILTON
AND ED ARE CONFRONTING MEL AS ALICE
AND FLO LISTEN)

MEL

Are you accusing me of harboring
stolen turkeys? Me? Listen, I'm
the owner of this diner. I've got
a ^{top} reputation ~~to uphold~~.

???

MEL SHARPES

(ALICE AND FLO SHOOT EACH OTHER A LOOK)

HILTON

We're not accusing you of anything.
I was just wondering if we could
have a look around.

(HILTON AND ED GO INTO THE KITCHEN,
LOOKING AROUND. MEL FOLLOWS THEM.
ALICE AND FLO WATCH THROUGH PASS-
THROUGH)

MEL

Do you have a warrant?

HILTON

What do you care if you've got
nothing to hide?

MEL

I just don't want a bunch of cops
nosin' around disturbin' my
customers.

ED

(LOOKING INTO THE DINING AREA)

What customers?

MEL

Well -- uh -- they're not here
now.

FLO

A lot of them go out for lunch.

MEL

* Hey, I know the law: no warrant,
* no search...Out!
*

HILTON

(TO ED)

C'mon.

(TO MEL)

We'll be back with a warrant.

MEL

I don't know why you bother. There
aren't any turkeys here.

(A TURKEY WALKS OUT OF THE STOREROOM.
MEL, HILTON AND ED STARE AT TURKEY)

HILTON

No turkeys? What's that?

MEL

Uh -- a dog.

HILTON

A dog?

MEL

Yeah. He's dressed for Thanksgiving.

(HILTON LOOKS AT HIM)

Here, Rover.

HILTON

Okay, fellow, that's enough.

(VERA RUSHES IN FROM STOREROOM)

VERA

(APOLOGETICALLY)

I just let George out of his cage
so he could have a little fresh air
and exercise. It seemed only fair
-- sort of like a last cigarette
-- except that --

VERA AND ALICE

... turkeys don't smoke.

(VERA SHOOS TURKEY BACK INTO THE
STOREROOM -- WE HOPE)

*Go, Go Lover
HE'S ALITTLE NERVOUS FOR
THE THANKSGIVING PLAY*

MEL

(NERVOUSLY)

I completely forgot about the
eight turkeys out back. But they
aren't stolen. I paid good money
for them.

HILTON

(TO ED)

That turkey one of yours, Ed?

ED

Yep.

MEL

How can you tell? Turkeys look
alike.

ED

Didn't you see that gold band on
its left leg?

FLO

Mel thought that meant it was
married.

MEL

I swear I didn't steal those turkeys.

HILTON

No one said you did.

(MEL SIGHS IN RELIEF)

That's not what I'm booking you for.

MEL

Booking me?

HILTON

Right. For receiving stolen goods.

ALICE

Officer, I think there's been a
little mistake here. I'm Alice
Hyatt. Florence Jean Castleberry
and I were present during the
transaction involving the
aforementioned turkeys.

HILTON

That makes you accomplices.

(ALICE REACTS)

FLO

I'm Florence Jean Castleberry.
Alice Hyatt and I were miles away
from here --

ALICE

Now wait a minute. Mel didn't
know those turkeys were stolen.
None of us did. Isn't that right,
Flo?

FLO

I didn't even know they were turkeys.
I'm a vegetarian.

ALICE

Look, Mel bought those turkeys out
of the goodness of his heart so that
he could give a free Thanksgiving
dinner to some of the kids from the
Shelter.

MEL

That's right, isn't it, Flo?

FLO

'Goodness of his heart' doesn't
ring a bell with me.

ALICE

Would you deprive poor, underprivileged
kids of their chance at a little
happiness?

ED

(CUTTING IN)

Look, those turkeys were on their
way to be sold anyway.

(INDICATING MEL)

If he wants to buy 'em from me
I'll drop the charges.

HILTON

(TO MEL)

Well?

MEL

How much?

ED

I'll let you have them for a
hundred dollars.

MEL

A hundred dollars for the same
turkeys?

ALICE

You haven't got any choice, Mel.

MEL

(GRIMLY GOING TO THE CASH REGISTER)

One hundred bucks!

I CAN BUY MY OWN RACE HORSE

(MEL COUNTS OUT SOME BILLS, HANDS
THEM TO ED)

MEL

There you are...One hundred dollars.

ED

* Thanks. So long... Happy Thanksgiving!

(HE AND HILTON LEAVE)

MEL

I'd like to get my hands on one
of those dumb Pilgrims.

CUT TO:

*

28.

INT. STOREROOM - DAY

(CONTINUOUS ACTION. THE DOORS TO THE CRATES ARE OPEN AND ALL THE TURKEYS ARE GONE. VERA IS IN THE OPEN BACK DOOR WAVING GOODBYE)

VERA

Goodbye, George. Goodbye, Ruth.

Goodbye, Irving. Goodbye, Wilma...

Be careful! And if you see a bunch
of parsley on a platter, don't lie down.

(SHE CLOSSES THE DOOR)

VERA (CONT'D)

It is a far, far better thing that
I do now than I have ever done.

(MEL, FLO AND ALICE COME INTO STOREROOM)

MEL

Come on - Help me get those birds to the butcher
(LOOKING AROUND)

Vera! What did you do?

VERA

(DRAMATICALLY)

What had to be done. They're free!

Free!

MEL

You dumb broad!

(HE MENACES WITH FIST)

A hundred and forty bucks!

(MORE)

*

28A.

(HE RUSHES TO THE DOOR. VERA BARS
THE WAY)

MEL (CONT'D)

Get out of my way! I'm going after
those birds!

VERA

You're going to have to deal with
me first!

(MEL PICKS HER UP AND PLACES HER IN
BACK OF HIM. HE OPENS THE DOOR AND
RUSHES OUT)

*

29.

MEL

(SHOUTING)

Here, turkey, turkey, turkey!

VERA

You see. He doesn't really care.
He doesn't even know their names.

ALICE

Vera, how could you let them go?
What about dinner for the kids?

VERA

I don't care! Let 'em eat ham.

FLO

Ham? Vera -- where do you think
ham comes from?

VERA

I thought it came from Baked Virginia.

ALICE

It comes from pigs!

(VERA REACTS, SHUDDERING)

(MEL COMES BACK WITH A HANDFUL OF
TURKEY FEATHERS)

MEL

I almost got one, but he pecked
me on the hand.

(HE RUBS HIS HAND)

*

29A.

VERA

Good!

MEL

Vera, why did you do such a
dumb thing?

VERA

I couldn't help it. I didn't
want to let them go, but then I
looked into George's eyes -- and
at his red wattles -- and I thought
about Charley the butcher and it
was like sending my own uncle to
the gallows!

*

30/31. /

ALICE

Well, what do we do now?

MEL

We'll just have to buy more turkeys.

VERA

(FEARFULLY)

Where are you going to buy them?

MEL

I don't know. At the supermarket,
I guess.

VERA

Oh, thank goodness! I thought you
meant you were going to buy more
real turkeys.

(THEY STARE AT HER)

DISSOLVE TO:

*

FADE IN:

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY

(THE FOLLOWING MORNING. THE DINER IS DECORATED FOR THANKSGIVING. FLO AND VERA ARE SETTING TABLES. ALICE IS ON THE TELEPHONE)

ALICE

(INTO PHONE)

But I'm told you're the biggest turkey farm in the country. Don't you have one left?... Uh-huh.

Thanks. Goodbye.

(SHE HANGS UP, SHAKES HER HEAD TO FLO AND VERA)

There's not a turkey left in the whole city of Phoenix.

FLO

Wait a minute! What about the one you ordered at the market?

ALICE

I cancelled it yesterday. Those poor kids. What are we going to do?

FLO

Well, we can do what my mother did one year when we were too poor to afford turkey. She glued feathers on a possum.

*

32A.

ALICE

Well, at least you had four
drumsticks.

(MEL COMES BUSTLING IN WITH A LARGE
CARTON)

MEL

Guess what I just found!?

ALICE

Mel! You did it!

FLO

You saved the day.

VERA

In the nick of time like a Pilgrim
father played by John Wayne.

(MEL HAS SET THE CARTON DOWN. OPENS IT)

ALICE

Where in the world did you find a
turkey?

MEL

I went to my friend, the manager of
Wedemeyer's Delicatessen, and he
was nice enough to give me this.

(WITH THAT, HE TAKES OUT A HUGE DISPLAY
ROAST TURKEY, LEGS IN AIR. THE PLASTIC
KIND, COLORED BROWN ON THE BREAST)

Isn't that a beauty?

ALICE

It's gorgeous!

MEL

Fooled you didn't I?

(HE KNOCKS ON THE TURKEY)

It's plastic.

(THE GIRLS STARE OPENMOUTHED)

ALICE

A plastic turkey?

VERA

Isn't Mother Nature wonderful?

FLO

That's sure something the kids can
get their teeth in -- and leave
them there.

ALICE

Mel, what good is a plastic turkey?

MEL

I'll show you.

(HE HOLDS TURKEY UP ON ONE HAND LIKE
WAITER WITH PLATTER)

I bring it out. The kids get a
look. Then I take it in the
kitchen to carve.

ALICE

And what do you feed the kids?

MEL

Chicken.

ALICE

Mel, the kids know what roast
turkey smells like.

VERA

Maybe get some turkey cologne.

ALICE

That's a lie, Mel. This whole thing
is dishonest.

MEL *DO I WANT ME TO GO*

~~I have to do it or I'll be~~ on TV ^{not}
serving turkey to a bunch of orphans.

ALICE

Good, Mel.

MEL

~~Well,~~ everybody in Phoenix is going
to think I'm a cheapskate.

FLO

Up to now, your secret was safe
with us.

*

MEL

Look, do you broads want to have
dinner for those kids or not?

ALICE

Of course we do, but there's something
awfully wrong with serving chicken
and calling it turkey.

FLO

Don't worry, Alice. Mel's chicken
never tastes like chicken anyway.

VERA

It tastes like plastic, so the kids
will think they're eating turkey.

(MEL GIVES HER A LOOK)

DISSOLVE TO:

FADE IN:

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY

(EARLY AFTERNOON. THE DINER IS FILLED WITH KIDS EAGERLY WAITING. VERA IS TRYING TO KEEP THEM UNDER CONTROL. MEL IS PUTTING PARSLEY AROUND THE TURKEY WHICH IS ON A BIG PLATTER. FLO IS HELPING HIM. ALICE IS LOOKING AT THE TURKEY SKEPTICALLY. THERE ARE PLATTERS OF CHICKEN, ETC. AROUND WITH FOIL OVER THEM)

MEL

(ADMIRING THE TURKEY)

There! That turkey would fool its own mother.

FLO

I'll say this for you, Mel, you got class -- using real parsley.

ALICE

Mel, you're never going to get away with this.

(TOMMY ENTERS THE KITCHEN)

MEL

I'll leave it up to Tommy.

(TURNS TO TOMMY)

What does this turkey look like?

TOMMY

Like the one that used to be in Wedemeyer's window.

MEL

(TO ALICE)

You told him.

TOMMY

For a buck my lips are sealed.

MEL

(THREATENINGLY)

I'll seal your lips.

(TOMMY LAUGHS, GOES TO JOIN THE
OTHER KIDS)

(CONNIE RAYMOND OF THE SIX O'CLOCK
NEWS TEAM, AND HER CAMERAMAN ENTER
THE DINER. HE HAS A SHOULDER MINI-
CAM. HE HAS CHANNEL #10 ON THE CAMERA)

FLO

(EXCITED)

Hey -- It's Connie Raymond of the
Six O'clock News!

MEL

(TO ALICE)

Go out and talk to her. I don't
want her to get too close to this
turkey.

ALICE

I'm not going to be a party to
your fraud.

MEL

It was your idea to invite the kids.
Now come on, help me.

(ALICE, WITH SOME TREPIDATION, GOES OUT
TO MEET THE NEWSCASTER)

ALICE

Hello. I'm Alice Hyatt.

(MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)

I know you're Connie Raymond. I watch you all the time on TV.

CONNIE

Hi, Alice. This should be a very nice story. Kids -- Thanksgiving and a generous, compassionate restaurant owner.

ALICE

Who's that?

(TAKE)

Oh, Mell!

(VERA COMES OVER TO ALICE AND CONNIE, ALL IMPRESSED WITH THE CELEBRITY)

This is Vera...

CONNIE

Hi, Vera.

VERA

This is really a thrill, Miss Raymond. I always see you every night at eleven o'clock, giving the news in my pajamas.

(FLUSTERED)

I don't mean you're wearing my pajamas. I'm wearing my pajamas, you're not wearing anything...

oh, crumbs!

(FLO COMES UP)

FLO

Never mind, Vera...

ALICE

And this is Flo.

CONNIE

Hi, Flo.

FLO

Hello, Miss Raymond. I love your news program, and I especially like that little feature you do. You know, 'Rubbin' Elbows With The Stars.' Last week, when Johnny Cash was in Phoenix and you interviewed him I got goose bumps. Do you mind if I rub the elbow that rubbed the elbow of Johnny Cash?

CONNIE

(LAUGHS)

Not at all.

(FLO TOUCHES HER ELBOW TO CONNIE'S ELBOW AND SHUDDERS WITH PLEASURE)

FLO

That Johnny can get to me a whole elbow away.

CONNIE

Well, we'd better get started...

Is this a good angle for you, Jim?

JIM

Okay by me.

CONNIE

Now where's Mel?

(SHE LOOKS AROUND)

ALICE

(CALLS)

Mel?

(MEL COMES OUT OF THE STOREROOM, WEARING
A WHITE CHEF'S HAT, AND A CHEF'S SHORT
WHITE COAT, THE KIND THAT BUTTONS UP
AROUND THE NECK ON ONE SIDE)

MEL

Comin' right up!

ALICE

Mel!

FLO

* Well, la-de-da! It's the Pillsbury
* Doughboy. Punch him in the stomach.

VERA

* Mel -- you're all dressed up like
* a real cook.

*
*
*

CONNIE

Mel, I'm Connie Raymond.

MEL

Hiya, Connie. Happy Thanksgiving
and welcome to our little bistro.

ALICE

(ASIDE TO FLO)

She should stick around and watch
him flambè the grease.

CONNIE

What you're doing for these kids
will make a wonderful Thanksgiving
story, Mel. We hope to tie it in
with another human interest story
we just covered. Eight turkeys
taking a stroll down the middle of
Grand Avenue!

(MEL REACTS AND GIVES VERA A MURDEROUS
LOOK. VERA JUMPS BEHIND ALICE)

Now, Mel, if you'll bring the turkey
from the kitchen, Jim will get an
angle on you and the kids. Then,
we'll zoom in for a close shot of
the turkey.

ALICE

Uh -- How close would that be?

CONNIE

Close enough so the viewer can
almost smell it.

FLO

That'll be the day!

MEL

I'll go get the turkey.

JIM

You're on, Connie.

(HE GIVES HER A CUE)

(MEL GOES TO KITCHEN. THE CAMERAMAN
LINES UP ON CONNIE WHO STANDS IN FORE-
GROUND WITH MIKE)

CONNIE

(INTO "CAMERA")

Hi, this is Connie Raymond, coming
to you live from Mel's Diner on the
outskirts of Phoenix. Thanksgiving
has always been one of our most
festive and joyous holidays. And
today, it has never been more so.

* Children from the Settlement House are about
to have a big turkey dinner because
Mel Sharples, owner of Mel's Diner,
has the Thanksgiving spirit.

(LOOKS TOWARD KITCHEN)

Ah, here comes Mel Sharples with
the piece de resistance.

(MEL ENTERS WITH THE PLASTIC TURKEY ON
A PLATTER)

Did you ever see such a gorgeous
bird?

VERA

It was a test-tube turkey.

(MEL MARCHES AROUND THE TABLES TO CHEERS
OF THE KIDS).

X Back

CONNIE

And now, the moment the kids have
all been waiting for -- we're going
to see Mel carve the turkey.

~~(HE HEADS FOR THE KITCHEN)~~

MEL

(SMILING AND COVERING)

No, we're not. *STAY*

(HE HEADS FOR KITCHEN. CONNIE INTERCEPTS
HIM. BOTH ARE SMILING FOR THE CAMERA)

Believe me, it'll be a lot easier
if I carve it in the kitchen.

CONNIE

But it's a Thanksgiving tradition
to carve the turkey at the table.

~~ALICE~~ MEL

(TRYING TO HELP OUT)

Well, let's start a new tradition
and carve it in the kitchen.

VERA

Wait a minute, why not carve it
out here?

(REALIZES WHAT SHE'S SAYING)

Oh!

MEL

(SMILING THROUGH HIS TEETH)

I'm taking this to the kitchen.

(HE TRIES TO GET PAST CONNIE TO THE
KITCHEN. SHE BLOCKS HIS WAY)

CONNIE

(SMILING THROUGH HER TEETH, LOW)

But we're on the air.

(CONNIE TAKES HOLD OF THE PLATTER, AND THE PLATTER TIPS, CAUSING THE TURKEY TO FALL ON THE FLOOR AND BREAK IN PIECES)

(CONNIE REACTS, SO DO THE KIDS)

VERA

The turkey was a little crisp.

(MEL IS TRYING TO RETRIEVE THE PIECES)

FIRST KID

Does this mean we're not going to have any Thanksgiving dinner?

(THE KIDS START TO GRUMBLE AND TALK)

ALICE

Uh -- kids! Kids -- just a minute!

(ALICE GOES TO THE TABLE WHERE THE KIDS ARE. CONNIE WATCHES, UNDECIDED WHAT TO DO)

Kids, can I have your attention?

(THE KIDS KEEP TALKING. TOMMY PUTS HIS FINGERS IN HIS MOUTH AND GIVES A SHRILL WHISTLE. THE KIDS QUIET DOWN)

TOMMY

Hey, you guys, my mom's talking.

(THEY QUIET DOWN)

ALICE

You know the phrase, 'Don't count your chickens before they hatch?'

Well, this can also apply to turkeys.

(CONNIE BRINGS HER MIKE OVER, AND MOTIONS THE CAMERAMAN TO KEEP ON TAPING)

*MEL KEEP TALKING I'LL BE RIGHT BACK**MEL I'LL BE RIGHT BACK*

FIRST KID

(YELLS)

Here comes the cop-out!

ALICE

Look, life has its disappointments
and it's important that we learn to
deal with them.

SECOND KID

I've already been disappointed. I'm
an orphan.

ALICE

Right. Moving right along, what I'm
here to tell you is that we promised
you a Thanksgiving dinner and you're
going to get a Thanksgiving dinner.
There's just one little thing we're
out of.

SECOND KID

What's that?

ALICE

Turkey.

THIRD KID

(ABOUT FIVE YEARS OLD)

So what? I'm tired of turkey. I've
been through four Thanksgivings.

FIRST KID

What are we going to eat?

ALICE

Anything you want, except turkey.

SECOND KID

Anything? Like chili dogs?

ALICE

Chili dogs?

TOMMY

Sure, Mom. Your average normal
healthy kid is going to pick chili
dogs over turkey any time.

ALICE

Okay, then chili dogs it is!

(THE KIDS REACT)

Which only goes to prove that it
isn't what's on the table that
counts at Thanksgiving, it's what's
in your heart!

MEL

Alice, you took the words right out
of my mouth.

(ALICE GIVES HIM A LOOK)

CONNIE

(INTO CAMERA)

- * A very unusual - but a very heart-
- * warming Thanksgiving. This is Connie
- * Raymond at Mel's Diner.

(ALICE, MEL, FLO AND VERA ALL LOOK
INTO THE MINI-CAM AND WAVE)

ALL

Happy Thanksgiving!

FLO

(LOUDLY, WAVING AND LEANING INTO THE
CAMERA AND YELLING RIGHT INTO ALICE'S
EAR)

Happy Thanksgiving to all my
relatives in Cowntown!

MEL

Flo... this is a local show.
They don't see it in Cowntown.

ALICE

(WINCING AND FEELING HER EAR)

It's okay. I think they heard
her.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

EPILOGUE

48.

FADE IN:

INT. MEL'S DINER - DAY

(IT'S LATER THAT DAY. THE CHILDREN HAVE LEFT. TWO TABLES HAVE BEEN PUSHED TOGETHER AND SITTING AROUND THEM, POLISHING OFF PUMPKIN PIE, ARE ALICE, TOMMY, FLO, VERA AND MEL)

TOMMY

You know, I have a feeling Chili dogs could become a Thanksgiving tradition.

ALICE

You may be right.

VERA

The only trouble with chili dogs for Thanksgiving is they don't have wish-bones.

FLO

With Mel 's chili dogs you can't be all that sure.

ALICE

You know, I was thinking-- We all planned to spend Thanksgiving separately, but we ended up spending it together and that's the way it should be.

MEL

(RAISING HIS GLASS)

Hear! Hear! I can't think of anyone who could have had as nice a Thanksgiving as we did.

EPILOGUE

49.

VERA

Oh, I can.

ALICE

Really? Who?

VERA

George, Ruth, Irving, Wilma....

(ON THEIR LAUGHTER WE:)

FREEZE FRAME:

END OF EPILOGUE

9/19/78

THANKSGIVING PROMO
(11 - 14 seconds)

K.

INT. DINER - DAY

(ALICE, MEL, FLO, VERA, TOMMY AND THE
TURKEY ARE ALL GROUPED AROUND THE TABLE
EATING DINNER. THEY ARE ALL IN THEIR
"ALICE" CLOTHES. THE TURKEY IS IN THE
BABY CHAIR. VERA IS NEXT TO HIM)

ALICE

(TO CAMERA)

From all of us here at "Alice" to
all of you --

ALL

(TO CAMERA)

Happy Thanksgiving!

(VERA TURNS TO TURKEY)

VERA

Smile!