

Navy Bean Soup

Wes Wetzel



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ArtAge Publications

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NAVY BEAN SOUP

By

Wes Wetzel

CAST

MDJ: Madam Du Jour.

COOKY: Cooky Boatwright.

OSV: The offstage voice.

PROPS

<i>2 small tables</i>	<i>1 12-gallon washtub, or bigger</i>
<i>Cutting board</i>	<i>1 meat pounder</i>
<i>1 meat cleaver</i>	<i>1 chef's knife</i>
<i>1 12-foot-long hose</i>	<i>1 container of salt</i>
<i>1 slab of bacon</i>	<i>2 onions</i>
<i>1 flyswatter</i>	<i>1 dead branch (sage, if possible)</i>
<i>1 sign saying, "Never trust a skinny cook"</i>	

A mini-play about Madam Du Jour, a T.V. personality hosting a men's gourmet cooking show. Her guest chef is Cooky Boatwright, a recently retired U.S. Navy cook. Cooky has a pronounced paunch and wears either a sailor hat or a cook's hat, a dirty T-shirt way too small which doesn't cover his ample belly, and a very dirty white half apron. On his belly has tattooed "No handhold." Cooky is a bit of a slob and is not right for Madam Du Jour's fancy gourmet cooking show, which she is soon to find out.

The play opens with Madam Du Jour behind one table filled with the cooking paraphernalia. The other table, at 90 degrees to their table, is a make-believe stove. A short hose is on the floor. The sign saying "Never trust a skinny cook" is visible to the audience.

OFF STAGE VOICE: Are you ready, Madam Du Jour ?

MADAM DU JOUR: I'm set

OFF STAGE VOICE: Are you prepared, Mr. Boatwright?

COOKY: *(from offstage.)* Aye.

OFF STAGE VOICE: Okay, here we go. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2- 1, roll 'em.

MADAM DU JOUR: Thank you, viewers, for joining us once again for Men's Gourmet Cooking. Our guest chef for today is Cooky Boatwright, whose whole adult life has been in preparing gastronomical delights of the highest quality. I've yet to meet him, so together we can greet our latest gourmet chef. Here's Mr. Boatwright.

(Cooky enters carrying his 12 gallon tub of beans.)

COOKY: "Burp." *(he covers his mouth with his fingers and looks sheepishly at MDJ.)*

MADAM DU JOUR: Cooky, you told me earlier that you went to Chefs' School. Do you have a specialty, like maybe decadent desserts?

COOKY: Mrs. Do Jer, *(mispronouncing her name.)* I think I said I'd been to Cooks' School. *(very proudly.)* I'm a graduate of the Navy's Cooks' School at Great Lake Naval Station, Class of '82, Week 10. *(reaching in his sailor's hat and pulling out his graduation certificate.)* See here, here's my diploma.

MADAM DU JOUR: *(not wanting to handle this messy paper, holds it by one corner.)* Oh, yes, I see. Why, it says, "Suma Cum Lard."

COOKY: Oh, yes, I graduated with honors.

MADAM DU JOUR: Oohh. Well, I'm sure that's as good as any chef school. But it's not "Mrs.," it's "Madam" and it's "Du Jour."

COOKY: Please, Mrs. Dee Jur, I know a madam when I see one and you're... you're just not the type.

MADAM DU JOUR: It's just a name, Cooky, like a stage name. My real name is Hildegard Lessar.

COOKY: Oh, well, I knew you weren't a madam. As for desserts, I don't make 'em. I'm not a pastry chef, but I make fantastic potato biscuits, especially if I have real flour and real potatoes.

MADAM DU JOUR: And what if you don't?

COOKY: I make it anyway and see if they can guess.

MADAM DU JOUR: I imagine you must have some great "Sea Stories" to tell.

COOKY: Sure have. For instance there is the time that the Galley Chief was conducting a tour for a group of elderly ladies. When one of the ladies noticed a Baker squishing dough in his armpit, she asked, "What is he doing?" "Making biscuits," replied the Chief. "How unsanitary," she said. The Chief replied, "Lady, you should be here when he makes doughnuts." The lady fainted.

MADAM DU JOUR: I wonder if you made that up. But tell us, what have you chosen to demonstrate for the folks today?

COOKY: My very favorite: Navy Bean Soup.

MADAM DU JOUR: (*disappointed.*) Oh, well, good. Everyone needs to know how to make a fine soup.

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Now, buy the entire show – such fun!