

THE RED VELVET CAKE WAR

BY JESSIE JONES
NICHOLAS HOPE
JAMIE WOOTEN



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

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SPECIAL NOTE ON LOGO

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*We dedicate this play to Winkie Lee,
accomplished journalist and dear friend.*

AUTHORS' NOTES

The roles of Grover and Purvis can be doubled, as can the roles of Cee Cee and Mama Doll.

Gaynelle's living room is the only set. All other locations should be suggested by lighting.

We strongly suggest all action involving Newt Blaylock's prosthetic eyeball be mimed.

We also suggest up-tempo music be played pre- and post-show, at intermission, and especially during scene transitions.

The characters who populate Sweetgum, Texas, should be portrayed as real people, not Southern caricatures.

All of the characters portrayed in *The Red Velvet Cake War* are fictional creations, and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

THE RED VELVET CAKE WAR received its world premiere at Johnson City Community Theatre in Johnson City, Tennessee, on October 8, 2010. It was directed by Joe Smith; the assistant director was Shannon Skinner; the scenic design was by Kaeli Gardner; the costume design was by Linda Wakely; the hair/wig supervision was by Jayme Hill; the makeup design was by Derek Smithpeters; the lighting and sound design were by April Gardner and Eric Hyche; and the stage manager was Colleen Dunne. The cast was as follows:

CEE CEE WINDHAM Sabra Hayden
GAYNELLE VERDEEN BODEEN Debbie Shoun
LAMERLE VERDEEN MINSHEW Jean Bashor
AUBREY VERDEEN Steve Bashor
JIMMIE WYVETTE VERDEEN Donna Deason
PEACHES VERDEEN BELROSE Joy Nagy
BITSY HARGIS Vicky Livesay
NEWT BLAYLOCK Larry Bunton
SHERIFF GROVER LOUT Aaron Bradley
ELSA DOWDALL Angie Hyche
MAMA DOLL HARGIS Betty Casey
PURVIS VERDEEN Jeff Light

THE RED VELVET CAKE WAR received its Southwest Regional premiere at Theatre Off The Square in Weatherford, Texas, on that same evening, October 8, 2010. It was directed by Jon R. Kruse; the scenic design was by Chuck Hudson; the costume design was by Debby Herbel; the lighting and sound design were by Nikolai Braswell and Wally Jones; and the stage managers were Debby Herbel and Melissa Teague. The cast was as follows:

CEE CEE WINDHAM Laurie Jones
GAYNELLE VERDEEN BODEEN Cynthia Daniels
LAMERLE VERDEEN MINSHEW Joyce Eckstein
AUBREY VERDEEN Duncan Alexander
JIMMIE WYVETTE VERDEEN Catherine Wise
PEACHES VERDEEN BELROSE Peggy Osburn
BITSY HARGIS Karen Dohoney
NEWT BLAYLOCK Ray Shannon
SHERIFF GROVER LOU Wally Jones
ELSA DOWDALL Cynthia Sadler
MAMA DOLL HARGIS Darlene Woodruff
PURVIS VERDEEN Jordan Nissen

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

CEE CEE WINDHAM, late 40s to 50

GAYNELLE VERDEEN BODEEN, late 40s

LAMERLE VERDEEN MINSHEW, late 60s to 70

AUBREY VERDEEN, late 80s

JIMMIE WYVETTE VERDEEN, 40s

PEACHES VERDEEN BELROSE, late 40s

BITSY HARGIS, late 40s

NEWT BLAYLOCK, 50s

SHERIFF GROVER LOUT, 50s

ELSA DOWDALL, 40s to 50s

MAMA DOLL HARGIS, 80s to 120

PURVIS VERDEEN, 50s to 60s

PLACE

In and around the home of Gaynelle Verdeen Bodeen,
Sweetgum, Texas, USA.

TIME

The present.

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Thursday morning, mid-July

Scene 2: A few minutes later

Scene 3: Moments later

Scene 4: Seconds later

Scene 5: That afternoon

Scene 6: Friday evening

Scene 7: Early Saturday morning

ACT TWO

Scene 1: Later that morning

Scene 2: One hour later

Scene 3: That afternoon

Scene 4: One hour later

THE RED VELVET CAKE WAR

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Morning, mid-July, lights up center stage on a small counter-top, the set of Hospitality House, a low-budget cable access program in Sweetgum, Texas. Cee Cee Windham, sassy and stylish, addresses the “camera.”

CEE CEE. Hi, everybody! I’m Cee Cee Windham, your hostess here on *Hospitality House*, the number-one cable access show in the tri-county area. As you know, Thursday means a visit to our What-Me-Not Workbench, where we’ll create a craft that is nothing but C.D.P. — cute, darlin’ and precious! But first, let’s check out this week’s calendar of exciting cultural events in Sweetgum to see what’s going on. (*Picks up a blank piece of paper, checks both sides.*) Well, not much. Now, our guest today is none other than my very best friend. We’re celebrating the good news that those pesky charges of attempted murder filed against her by her newly *ex*-husband and his *lady friend* have been dismissed! So, now that she’s not being sent up to the big house, let’s give a good ol’ Texas howdy to Gaynelle Verdeen Bodeen! (*Canned music plays as Gaynelle Verdeen Bodeen, late 40s, a walking nervous breakdown, enters and tentatively joins Cee Cee behind the counter.*) Gaynelle, we haven’t seen much of you since the *unfortunate incident*. Anything you’d like to say to all your friends and neighbors who’ve missed you so much? (*No answer. Gaynelle stares terrified at the “camera.”*) Gaynelle? (*Elbows her.*)

GAYNELLE. (*Shouts.*) NOT GUILTY!

CEE CEE. (*Into the "camera."*) Two of the sweetest words in the English language. (*Gaynelle slowly sinks out of view. Without missing a beat, Cee Cee pulls her back up by the collar.*) Now, Gaynelle, I know you're ready to get crafty. Here's a mat for a photograph we're going to dress up with various doo-dads. So, let's just hit the back of it with every gal's favorite weapon, the hot glue gun! (*Does so.*) Now, what would you like to do with this little heart?

GAYNELLE. (*Fixates on the heart.*) Oh, I'll tell you what I'd like to do with it! (*Snatches the heart, puts it on the mat, pounds it.*) I'd like to pound that sucker until it's flatter than roadkill, just like *Sumner* did to mine! (*Increasingly fervent.*) Then grind it into the ground and just see how *he* likes it! Yeah! Let's pound and grind and pound and grind for twenty-seven long, wasted years until you think you can't take it anymore! Yes, yes, yes! (*Bursts into tears, runs offstage.*)

CEE CEE. (*Covers, speaks into the "camera."*) See how easy it is to lose yourself to the passion of craftin'? So, while I finish up, let's hear from our sponsor, Travis Ponder's Bible and Tire Outlet, where they're running a special, "KJV Plus Three." Buy three belted radials and get a free leatherette copy of the Good Book. Folks, that's a deal, unless you're a big fan of Second Thessalonians, which was accidentally printed upside down ... *and* in Korean. But it's not one of the biggies, so you probably won't miss it. Now, y'all run grab you another cuppa and we'll be right back, live, from Sweetgum, Texas! (*Blackout.*)

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by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope, Jamie Wooten

3M, 7W (doubling)

In this riotously funny Southern-fried comedy, the three Verdeen cousins — Gaynelle, Peaches, and Jimmie Wyvette — could not have picked a worse time to throw their family reunion. Their outrageous antics have delighted local gossips in the small town of Sweetgum (just down the road from Fayro) and the eyes of Texas are upon them, as their self-righteous Aunt LaMerle is quick to point out. Having “accidentally” crashed her minivan through the bedroom wall of her husband’s girlfriend’s doublewide, Gaynelle is one frazzled nerve away from a spectacular meltdown. Peaches, a saucy firebrand and the number one mortuarial cosmetologist in the tri-county area, is struggling to decide if it’s time to have her long-absent trucker husband declared dead. And Jimmie Wyvette, the rough-around-the-edges store manager of Whatley’s Western Wear, is resorting to extreme measures to outmaneuver a priss-pot neighbor for the affections of Sweetgum’s newest widower. But the cousins can’t back out of the reunion now. It’s on and Gaynelle’s hosting it; Peaches and Jimmie Wyvette have decided that its success is the perfect way to prove Gaynelle’s sanity to a skeptical court-appointed psychologist. Unfortunately, they face an uphill battle as a parade of wildly eccentric Verdeens gathers on the hottest day of July, smack-dab in the middle of Texas tornado season. Things spin hilariously out of control when a neighbor’s pet devours everything edible, a one-eyed suitor shows up to declare his love, and a jaw-dropping high-stakes wager is made on who bakes the best red velvet cake. As this fast-paced romp barrels toward its uproarious climax, you’ll wish your own family reunions were this much fun!

Also by Jones, Hope, Wooten
LAST ROUND-UP OF THE
GUACAMOLE QUEENS
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