

# UNUSED STORY OUTLINE

## "WHO WILL BE MISS TAXI?"



This funny and incredibly detailed story outline—practically a script—was evidently planned for the never-to-be sixth season of *Taxi*. It was eventually

brought to life as the "Who Will Be Miss Boston Barmaid?" episode of *Cheers*.

TAXI "Who Will Be Miss Taxi?" Story Outline—David Lloyd 12/14/79

### ACT ONE

#### GARAGE

Bobby and Tony are talking. Bobby is in a jam; he has a bit part in an off-Broadway show and has been consistently upstaging the lead actor, who has finally gotten fed up and threatened to punch his face off. Bobby is scared.

Tony sympathizes but says maybe he could teach Bobby a bit about self-defense so he could handle the other guy. Bobby resists—is a lover not a fighter and doesn't want any part of it. Before Tony can persuade him, Alex enters with the paper (a tabloid that could be either the *News* or the *Post*) and asks if they've seen it?

Reverend Jim joins them and Alex directs their attention to Page 36 and the article on the "Miss Taxi" contest. They all gape, and we gather from their comments that there are pictures of the five finalists and one of them is Elaine!

As they're murmuring about that, Elaine enters and Alex, concealing the paper, asks her how she feels about the "Miss Taxi" contest. She is very scornful on the subject; it's nothing but a beauty contest—a bunch of women cab drivers send in their pictures and the paper's readers vote on the prettiest and name her "Miss Taxi." She finds it demeaning and can't imagine what kind of woman would allow herself to be party to such a thing.

Alex nods . . . he thought that was her opinion. In that case, she won't want to look at the paper . . .

Which of course prompts a scuffle which Elaine wins; she grabs the paper, takes one look and flips. It's not only her picture, but in a bathing suit! She rushes to the phone to call the paper—Louie suggests she not make the call, but she does and demands to know how they



dare run such a picture without her permission. It turns out they got a signed release from her with the picture and was immediately declared one of the finalists. Already votes are pouring in for her.

Off the phone she ponders how it could have happened—and then the light dawns. Louie! He admits it cheerfully; he thought it would be good publicity for the Sunshine Cab Co. if one of its drivers were named Miss Taxi—it would impress the new owner. Where did he get the picture? Her kid gave it to him; Louie told him it was for her license renewal. In a bathing suit? In case you ever had to drive a water-taxi. And you forged my signature on the release form? Not at all, says Louie—you signed it yourself; you sign dozens of things for me in the course of a week. Yeah, she says—but I read every one of them first. There is such a thing as carbon paper, Nardo . . . !

Elaine is furious; the guys don't see why. How would you like to see your picture in the paper—in a bathing suit? she asks. They discuss how they would react. The point is, they say—she's very pretty. That's all very well, she says, but the idea of having all the newspaper readers drooling over her, fantasizing about her, and eventually wrapping their garbage in her is too much! Then withdraw says Alex. Too late, she says—and besides she has a better idea; she'll wait until the vote is announced and the winner crowned at the Union Hall, and then refuse the title! Much more publicity that way.

She looks at the pictures again, hers and the other finalists. You know, she says—there's only one thing that would be worse than being in this contest with those women. What, they ask? Losing!

DISSOLVE TO:

THE UNION HALL

[jacksonupperco.com](http://jacksonupperco.com)

Where the vote is to be announced. It's days later. Elaine and the guys come in. Elaine concedes that things have been a bit different since her picture appeared; she's enjoyed the status of a minor celebrity. Guy got in her cab and called her by name. (Alex hates to break it to her, but does; they all have their names on the ID plaque; people get in his cab and call him by name, too.)

Bobby comes in late and nervous; the other actor is really mad now (maybe some further bit of upstaging took place) and has threatened to beat him up if he shows up at the theater the following day. Tony now insists; at the garage later he will give Bobby a boxing lesson and show him all he needs to know to take care of the guy.

Tony also tells Elaine confidently that he's just scouted the competition and she can't lose tonight—it's oink city. Elaine bristles; that's exactly the attitude that makes her despise this kind of thing. They're like cattle with everybody feeling he has a right to criticize their looks. When she gets up there she's gonna let them have it! If she gets up there, says Alex. That's what I meant, she says.

A guy from the paper gets up, announces the tabulation, talks about the heavy response, then announces the winner: it's Elaine. Our guys cheer and go wild.

She gets up, goes to the stage with great determination. The guy hands her a kind of cheesy-looking award and says "I give you the crown of Miss Taxi," she says "I have something to

**HAILING  
T A X I**  
  
**257**

say," he says "And with the crown this year, Miss Nardo, comes an invitation to appear on the TV show, 'Wake Up New York,' tomorrow morning. Congratulations!" and Elaine says "Yeah, well, I just want to say one thing: Thanks to everyone who voted for me!"

ACT BREAK

ACT TWO

THE GARAGE—THAT NIGHT

Alex is giving her a lot of grief of the "your majesty" variety; Louie is baiting her for not taking the stand she said she was going to. Elaine, however, has an explanation; if she had done it at the Union Hall it would have reached a handful of people at best. But when she appears on "Wake Up New York" she'll be able to make a statement that will reach a large audience.

[jacksonupperco.com](http://jacksonupperco.com)

So, says Alex, you're really going to renounce your crown on television tomorrow morning? Absolutely, she says—and tell them a few things about how demeaning beauty contests are while I'm at it. And that was why you didn't say anything at the coronation? Why else? she asks. I thought maybe it was the thrill of victory, says Alex. Get out of here, she says. He gets out of there.

Tony now gives Bobby a boxing lesson to get him ready for the guy at the theater. He explains that most amateurs start out by throwing a roundhouse punch which is easily blocked. Try it, he urges. Bobby, after some hesitation, does . . . and Tony blocks it easily. See? he says. It's the short punches, the jabs, that do the damage. He demonstrates. Bobby tries one . . . and knocks Tony cold.

While he's kneeling on the floor, holding Tony's head in his hand while Tony blinks and clears his head, he gets a phone call from the other actor, apologizing for his loss of temper. Bobby accepts, saying it's better this way, no one gets hurt, no harm done, etc. The guy invites him for a drink and Bobby eagerly accepts, sets Tony's head down, and exits, thanking Tony over his shoulder. My pleasure, says Tony uncertainly. We either go out on that or on a comment from Louie.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE TV STUDIO

Where the host of "Wake Up New York" is introducing Elaine—something on the lines of "If you think that all New York cabbies are fat, bald-headed men who smoke cigars and talk out of the corner of his mouth, my next guest will be an eye-opener, in every sense of the word . . ."

We intercut the guys in the garage watching on a TV set A) to hear her renounce the crown and B) to see if she mentions their names. Elaine appears ready to make a statement, but the host starts right out asking questions which require answers: When did you decide you wanted to drive a cab for a living? She explains not a full-time job, art gallery, just supplement her income for the moment, etc. How do the guys at the garage treat you? Fine, she says. Anybody give you any trouble? No, she says—well, except our dispatcher and he gives everybody trouble; he's a pretty nasty guy. Louie explodes—"Names, Nardo," he complains

HAILING  
T A X I



258

aloud; "would it kill you to mention names? My mother could be watching." Any romances in the garage, the host persists. No, she says. No one come on to you? No, she says. What about you—do you like any of the guys? Well . . . she thinks; one of them is pretty cute . . . (uproar of speculation in the garage) . . . but he knows who he is. (Worse uproar.)

Now Nardo clears her throat and tells the host she has something she wants to say. Fine, he says, but before you do I want to say something myself: I think you're remarkable. At a time when so many people are climbing up on soapboxes to shoot their mouths off or complain about this and that, you've done something much more effective; quietly taken a job in a traditional male field and done it so well you've been recognized with this award . . . I think that's sensational. She blushes (verbally) and says thanks. Now, he says—what's your statement? Oh, she says . . . just that I . . . hope everyone watching will buy Easter Seals . . . (OR SOMETHING FUNNIER)

DISSOLVE TO:

#### THE GARAGE

Where even Elaine is now mad at herself, feels she was coopted, and used. She comes in saying, "I know, I know. I know!" However, rationalization still reigns; one of the staff people on the show told her that guests they discover often go on to The Tonight Show, and if that happened Elaine would really have a forum to denounce beauty contests. Millions of viewers, etc. Right, right, says Alex. Yeah, I know, she says—down again; I blew my chance, didn't I? At which point a guy from the tabloid that sponsored the contest arrives to say they were very upset by the TV appearance. It was clearly stipulated from the beginning that the contest was for "working, full-time cab drivers;" it even said so right on the application form. Elaine says she didn't submit the form, never saw the form, etc. The guy says he's sorry, but they feel they were made to look foolish and the paper's editorial board voted to rescind the victory, strip her of her crown, and crown the runner-up instead.

You can't do that, Elaine protests, but he's already on his way out. She calls after him that she was going to refuse it anyway, never wanted it, etc. (the "you can't fire me—I quit" bit) but he won't even stand still long enough for her to make her renunciation speech to his departing back.

[jacksonupperco.com](http://jacksonupperco.com)

Distraught, Elaine says now she's really blown it; waited so long she never got the chance to tell the world what she thinks of the award. At which point Louie steps out of his cage and offers her his microphone to make her statement. Elaine can't believe it. I've never been in your cage, she says—you never let anyone use your microphone. Yes, says Louie, but you're not yourself, you're out of control, there's no telling what you might do, therefore—and again he gestures for her to step inside.

Elaine does so, pulling down the microphone and asking everyone in the garage if she can have their attention. Louie, meanwhile, sidles up to her and "welcomes" her to "his turf, his hunting ground, his lair." She pays no attention.

Instead, having got everyone in the garage listening, Elaine proceeds to make the speech she wanted to make right along. "I don't know how many of you know what happened to me the last couple of days," she says, "but I won this award. Which I didn't want. And I'd like to explain why. I think so-called beauty contests are undignified and stupid. It's nice to be

HAILING  
T A X I  
259

nice-looking, sure, but nobody wants to be a sex object—we're all people, with minds and feelings and personalities and a lot more than just our physical appearance." Etc. Etc.

And while she is saying all this, behind her Louie does the following: locks the door, pulls down the shades along the side, takes out a bottle of wine, takes out a candelabra (which he lights!), loosens his tie, sprays binaca in his mouth, unscrews the overhead light, and finally pulls the shades in the front as well—immediately after which we hear the music of "Bolero" coming over the PA system.

There follows the sounds of a brief tussle, a squeal from Elaine, then a groan from Louie, after which the door is unlocked and Elaine storms out. After a beat Louie appears at the doorway, on his hands and knees, still groaning, to call after her: "Can I assume from this that I'm not the guy in the garage you think is cute?"

And we can go out on that, or on Louie making an offer: Back in this cage for half an hour and you get a twenty per cent raise and the best cab every night for a year!" to which Jim says "I can't pass that up" and goes in the cage.

[jacksonupperco.com](http://jacksonupperco.com)

END OF ACT TWO

TAG: (Not shot in front of audience)

Shows Elaine in her cab, trying to make her statement individually to passengers as they get in and out. But of course they don't listen.

**HAILING  
T A X I**



**260**

