

There She Is

Written by Garry Lee Wright
Tuesday, 17 October 2000 18:00

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Q: I'm so mad at all them media for making fun of the Miss America pageant. I been watching it for a real long time and I sure do like the good, clean, family entertainment, especially that part where the girls come out half-naked in their bathing suits.

A: The pageant has had a long run and reign, dating from a time when Miss America had to crank-start her Model T before driving off with that fabulous tiara. In fact, the annual tribute to women who were born pretty has become such an anachronism that her handlers decided the only way to avoid its inevitable extinction was to retool the show with state-of-the-art production values. Or, as the press release puts it: "Even grannies will be groovin' when they experience Miss America's new 'club-style' set design and this year's slammin' Miss America soundtrack."

Q: Wow, that sounds pretty contemporary.

A: Not only that, they're trying to live down their cheesecake image by skipping the promenade past the judges in favor of a "fast-paced production number reminiscent of the annual event's beachside history."

Q: But they're still wearing those hot-looking bathing suits, right?

A: Right. But instead of the parade of states at the top of the show, the camera "discovers each young woman on-screen framed by web page background."

Q: Hey, isn't that the beginning of Monday night football?

A: Yes, but with more padding. And then each contestant's voice will be "digitized" as she announces her state, college, and name.

Q: They want to make sure she gets it right?

A: Exactly. And then, get this: "It's every contestant for herself during the new behind-the-scenes segments that will air live following each commercial break. The backstage

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camera will capture contestants' reactions and opinions about the show and the other contestants.... Move over Survivor."

Q: Survivor! Does that mean one them will walk around naked like that Richard guy?

A: No. In fact, a big rule they want you to know about is no thongs allowed.

Q: They probably want to keep everything dignified. Is that because so many former Miss Americas go on to solve the world's problems?

A: That's it. Like Miss America 1999 Nicole Johnson, whose latest feat was being "engaged Easter weekend to [investment banker] Conn Jackson, whom she met through blind date last fall."

Q: Good for her. Will TV viewers miss anything important this year?

A: Friday night's festivities, in which the 51 contestants "show us their shoes in the most creative and imaginative ways possible!"

Q: Their shoes?

A: Right. In fact, Donald Trump's pastry chef will be creating a "spectacular chocolate display with the classic 'Show Me Your Shoes' theme."

Q: I'd sure like to be a judge at this historic event.

A: You're in luck. This year, "a member of the American public will serve as a Miss America judge on Saturday night as part of the 'Instant Celebrity Judge' contest. This regular Joe or Jane will be chosen prior to the telecast based on an interview-round question he or she had submitted."

Q: Oooh, I've got a good question. How come the one who wins always cries?

A: The shoes are real tight.

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