

It's All In The Writing

By Pam Hardin



Knowing Her



That's a hell of a fashion statement. David thought, staring at Maddie's messy attire in *Knowing Her*.

Knowing Her dealt with one of the oldest emotions in the world – and one of the funniest when it came to David and Maddie - JEALOUSY. The episode aired in *Moonlighting's* second season and showed sides of both Maddie and David that we hadn't seen before. We got a hint that maybe, just MAYBE, David cared about Maddie more than he would dare to admit in the first season episode *The Next Murder You Hear*. When his "business partner" showed feelings for a dead man, David did what any concerned partner would do. He got drunk, poured his heart out to a bartender, and eased his sorrows by singing *Respect* into a pretzel stick! It got worse for poor David when his brother Richie came to town in the second season opener, *Brother, Can You Spare A Blonde?* and seemed to sweep Maddie off her feet. We suffered with him as we watched the spectacle, until Maddie reassured him that Richie was no threat,

and that she would have "dropped him at the terminal."

Turnabout is fair play, and now it's Maddie's turn to bristle a little. This time, we see how she reacts when someone else has David's attention. A fabulous episode written by Jeff Reno and Ron Osborn, *Knowing Her* was originally titled *Blast From*

the Past. Jeff Reno observed, "I always liked that episode. It felt like it got to a bit of a new emotional place with Maddie and David." It is quintessential *Moonlighting* – running the gambit from hilarious to poignant and back again. *Moonlighting* alumni from director Peter Werner to composer Alf Clausen, among others, remember it as something special.

In their interview in the June/July 2003 issue of *Moonlighting Strangers*, Jeff and Ron said that there were at least four drafts of the script. "We wrote it much too jokey at first," Jeff said. He continued, "We got to a draft where I would guess probably seventy percent of what you saw on the show was ours, the draft you actually watched, but it took awhile to get there." In a later conversation for this article, Jeff also commented, "Having time for all those drafts was actually a luxury. From that point on, a lot of first drafts were being

filmed because we were writing ahead of the camera. And we'd more or less gotten the hang of it by then." Ron added, "This was our first script on the show and part of our learning curve as half-hour writers working in single camera long form."

Before this episode, we knew very little about David and Maddie's "past" other than Maddie was a successful model who went broke. But we knew nothing about David's life before the day Maddie stepped into his office to fire him. That is, until Gillian Armstrong entered the scene. *Knowing Her* opens, as do so many episodes, at the beginning of the workday at Blue Moon. But the opening we saw wasn't the one that was originally written for *Knowing Her*. Jeff told *Moonlighting Strangers*, "I remember the first scene we ever wrote for the show, it was the "limbo scene", where David had organized a limbo party for everyone in the office. It was written for the *Knowing Her* episode but Glenn was stuck and needed a First Act scene for the show that was filming at the time (*My Fair David*). He liked the scene and used it in the other show. It worked great, but we had to come up with a whole new First Act for ours. That's when we came up with the bit about Maddie, getting caught in the rain, discussing chivalry while being soaked to a bone."

So this is how the opening scene played. Maddie has had a bad morning. She is late for work after having to change a flat tire in the rain. But determined to save face, Maddie

gathers up all the dignity she can and trudges into the office to the chipper sounds of Gene Kelly's *Singin' in the Rain*. Of course, David can't resist rubbing it in, particularly after he takes one look at her very unglamorous appearance. The banter between them is typical Maddie and David – another hilarious debate of the battle of the sexes, missing only a little extra dialogue from an earlier version of the script. It's also worth noting here that every detail of the rain, Maddie's disheveled appearance, and the music is in the script. However, the very funny shot of looking at David's expression and shot through Maddie's legs wasn't. Director Peter Werner explained to *Moonlighting Strangers* (April/May 2003 issue), "Sometimes that stuff would be something we'd come up with on the set. But that's a reference to *The Graduate*. You know, that shot through Mrs. Robinson's legs." Once David knows he's pushed Maddie far enough, he chivalrously volunteers to buy her some new nylons because, he tells her, "Appearances count. You want to attract clients, you gotta dress for success, or in your case, dress period!" With that last little jab, he leaves Maddie alone in her office.

Enter Gillian Armstrong, and we think we're about to move to the standard client expose part of the episode. To Maddie and the viewers, it's another client, another case. Peter Werner was present when actress Dana Delany was cast as Gillian. He remembers thinking, "Oh, God, this girl is great." Gillian starts to tell her story about a missing locket, but when David walks in and sees her sitting there, "dressed and

everything," we all discover very quickly that this case will be different. The music and mood change immediately. Alf Clausen composed a seductive theme for Gillian that we hear for the first time here. We'll hear it again later in the episode in an amazing melodic tug of war with an equally seductive version of the *Moonlighting* theme. Gillian acts innocent enough about the chance meeting with David, but we discover that they lived together three years ago, and so despite the fact that the agency's name was changed, we are already suspicious that Gillian knew exactly who she'd meet there. In the script, Maddie asks him directly, "You two lived together?" David non-chauntly responds, "No. Not really. I just didn't have a place of my own at the time." In the episode though, it is just implied. When Maddie asks him if they "went out", he replies that they "stayed in mostly." After some small talk, Gillian leaves Maddie's office, and David almost wistfully watches even after she's gone. Maddie tries to get his attention back, as she will try to do through the whole episode, admitting to him, "My goodness, I've never seen you like this before." Neither have we.

David wastes no time in going to see Gillian in her hotel room. "Talk about the hand of fate!" We find out more about their relationship and how Gillian left David because he couldn't give her the "good life" she wanted. Gillian tells him that she's married but separated. There is some more extra dialogue between them in the script, but we come away knowing pretty much what we know from watching the episode. After a heated argument, Gillian goes out to the bal-

cony and the railing gives way. David, who had followed her out there, catches her. In his initial anger towards her, he wasn't buying her as a victim, but now he becomes convinced that her life is in danger.

The next scene occurs the following morning in Maddie's office. David is waiting for her. He sheepishly asks her for a favor with a wounded puppy dog look. She agrees to go see Harlan Armstrong, Gillian's husband, for him, but warns him, "Next time someone I used to sleep with leaves his wife, I'll be sure to ask you to give the little lady the once over!" For the first time, we hear them mention the locket, so we assume Maddie briefed him on the case in an earlier off camera conversation. So while David already seems "lovesick," in his words, Maddie tries to focus on the case. She visits Harlan to ask him if he knows anything about Gillian's missing locket and tries to get a feel for whether he might be any kind of a threat to Gillian. In a dark scene, literally, Harlan tells Maddie of the heartache he feels over losing Gillian. Harlan begins to look more like the victim rather than the ogre that Gillian described. As Maddie is leaving his office, she receives a phone message from David asking her to meet him at the hospital. It seems that Gillian is the victim of another "accident".

Maddie meets David at the hospital and finds out that Gillian has just had her stomach pumped after an overdose. After having met Mr. Armstrong and her general uneasiness of David's relationship with Gillian, Maddie doesn't believe for a minute that he is responsible for these "accidents". Since the light-hearted opening with Maddie coming to work drenched by

the rain, the episode has had a somewhat dark tone to it. That is, until now. Going nose to nose, Maddie tells David in no uncertain terms that he is "not thinking clearly about this woman or this case!" And for the first time, David playfully tells her that she is "JEALOUS!" To which she answers, "Stop reasoning with your underwear!" The tit for tat ends with Maddie's classic line "A gnat with a lobotomy could fool you!" So, there! It's out in the open. Maddie and David won't admit that there's anything between them, but it clearly makes each of them crazy to see the other with anyone else.

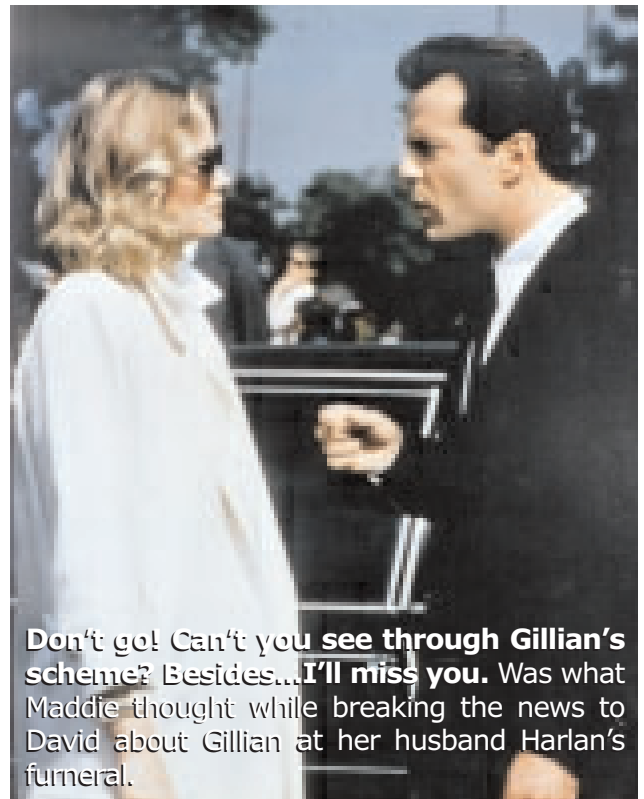
David, driving Maddie's car, meets Gillian for a romantic evening in the moonlight. One version of the script describes every expression and movement between them along with the lyrics to The Isley Brothers' *This Old Heart of Mine*. But Ron Osborn remembered, "Jeff and I had written a 3 or 4 page scene when David and Gillian met out in the park, where they talked and bantered, building up to their kiss then "Bam!" Husband is killed. I don't remember if the scene was our best work or not...I suspect not. But it didn't matter because Glenn simply cut all the dialogue we had and replaced it with the Isley Brothers song. I remember reading those pages and thinking, "Hmmm, much better!" Nothing we could have written...or Glenn, I suspect...could match the heat of those two people saying nothing against that song." Gillian sees Harlan spying on them and goes to have it out with him while David reluctantly watches from a distance. A fight ensues, a shot rings out, and Harlan ends up dead. Lucky for Gillian, she has a witness. David. Maddie meets David at the police station and

encounters a hooker, who adds some levity to the grim situation. "What? They raid the Bel Air Hotel, too?" David comes out of the interrogation room after some obviously grueling questioning, telling the detective he'll have to "get back to you on the Jetsons' maid." In the script, David and Maddie actually discuss the case, as if anyone remembers that by now! David tells her that they found the locket on Harlan. But then Gillian appears and David's attention is diverted again.

The script is very specific here. It describes Maddie from David's point of view, as he backs away from her and moves closer to Gillian. The camera stays with him so that Maddie appears more distant to us as he moves farther away from her. Symbolizing the competition between Maddie and Gillian, a bluesy version of *Some Walk by Night* is intertwined with Gillian's theme as David moves towards Gillian and away from Maddie. As he embraces Gillian, Maddie turns away. In his interview with *Moonlighting Strangers* (Winter 2004), Alf Clausen remembered "how unbelievably effective it was of having both of those themes fight each other for David's attention." That, and the camera direction, enhanced a very emotional scene that had relatively few words of dialogue in the script.

The next day, not only does David not show up for work, but he doesn't even call Maddie as he

had promised. Agnes senses what Maddie is feeling, as she almost always does with both Maddie and David. The script includes a great scene that did not end up in *Knowing Her* but was later re-written for *I am Curious... Maddie*. Allyce Beasley, in her interview in this issue, remembered the scene where Agnes asks Maddie if she wants to "get wrecked... Bombed? Polluted? All the boy detectives do it!" She recalled, "It was cut out of one episode that we did and then they wrote it back into another episode." As it aired in *I am Curious...Maddie*, Sam was in the picture and the conversation was about whether you're ever sure you're ready to get married. But as written for *Knowing Her*, Agnes sees that Maddie is down about David and Gillian, and at the bar, they talk about men and specifically, David Addison. As they drink, Maddie rambles on about how men treat beautiful women and Agnes



Don't go! Can't you see through Gillian's scheme? Besides...I'll miss you. Was what Maddie thought while breaking the news to David about Gillian at her husband Harlan's funeral.

recalls a dream she once had, both talking at the same time, neither listening to the other. The conversation is telling, maybe too much so. Agnes is more direct with Maddie than she typically is, telling Maddie that she knows Maddie is upset about David and "that Gillian woman." Maddie is also more open than usual, maybe due to the alcohol. She almost dreamily says, "Along comes someone who stands when you say "sit"...who rolls over when you say "stand"...and you can't help but...wonder..." It's clear who she's talking about, but it doesn't seem in character for Maddie to be quite so revealing to Agnes, alcohol or not.

David does show up for work the next day, very apologetic for not calling the day before, in a very sweet scene with Maddie in his office. After one look at each other, they each launch in to full page monologues going the full length of a script page where they are both talking simultaneously and, of course, not hearing a word the other says! Too bad because Maddie was trying to gently warn him that she doesn't trust Gillian, and David was telling her that he's planning to go away with her. So with nothing else to say to each other, David leaves for Harlan's funeral and a frustrated Maddie is left behind muttering, "Idiot!" She hardly has time to fret about it because Detective Barber comes in looking for David. He tells Maddie that he needs to clear up one little thing about Harlan's shooting. It seems that David reported that he heard "a shot" while Gillian claimed she pulled the trigger twice. Detective Barber leaves and a light bulb goes off in Maddie's head!

She follows David to the funeral and

the last, absurdly brilliant, scene of the episode begins. Maddie confronts David as the coffin is being placed in the hearse and again calls him "an idiot." She accuses Gillian of being a murderer and he responds by calling her a "little green eyed snake." Surrounded by the hushed tones of a funeral, they begin to bicker just like always. "One bullet, alive!" Two bullets, dead!" When Maddie finally confronts Gillian right in front of David, he finally sees it all clearly. Of course, it wouldn't be a classic *Moonlighting* episode without a madcap chase scene, so Gillian heads for a car and Maddie and David jump in the hearse, and off they go! Jeff Reno and Ron Osborn talked about writing the last scene. Ron recalled, "I will never forget, we were kind of stumped on the this final action scene, and late at night came up with the idea of doing a car chase that was at a funeral where the antagonist takes off in the lead hearse, and the whole funeral party thinking it is leaving, takes off after it." The episode has come full circle. It ends with the same kind of terrific silliness that it began with. There is a full out farcical chase peppered with some classic lines. David ponders how Gillian "really made a chump outta me." Maddie comments that she always thought "the first time I was in one of these things, I'd be on my back." Luckily, David is not too heartbroken to respond, "Don't tempt me!" The chase ends, Gillian is caught, David apologizes to Maddie, and we have only the tag left, and it's a good one!

David comes into Maddie's office, using his own key, and singing, "She said Dave if you ain't got no money..." He pulls out a single, red

rose from his leather jacket. He places it on her desk, turns out the light, and closes the door behind him. The credits start to roll. But then he comes back in, turns the light back on and goes to Maddie's desk to write a note. "Dear Maddie, You're right. Sometimes I AM an idiot! Love, D." By the way, the "Love" is not in an early version of the script. Nice touch, David! He leaves the note with the rose, turns off the light, and closes the office door again. More credits roll. Then, the light comes on again! He comes back in the office, looks at the note, laughs to himself, wads it up, takes the rose, and leaves Maddie's office one last time, singing, "Well, someone made a big mistake when he said life was a bowl of fruit..." So close! Why didn't he leave the rose? Because it's only the second season. Because neither of them would dare to admit how they really feel yet. And they definitely can't admit it FIRST. Just wait until next season! There are all kinds of flowers in their future!

Special thanks to Jeff Reno and Ron Osborn for their help on this article. It was a real pleasure meeting you both!

Beginning on the next page are several scenes from *Knowing Her* that were not broadcast.

Script courtesy of Pam Hardin