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\$2.95 • AUGUST 22, 1994

NEW YORK

**Tonya. Lisa Marie.
John & Lorena.
Roseanne & Tom.
Paula & Gennifer & Bill.
They're everywhere.
Lock up your Twinkies.**

White Trash Nation

By Tad Friend

Waitress turned model
Anna Nicole Smith



A Little Ol' Chat With Anna Nicole Smith

SHE ROLLS OUT OF THE DRESSING room, a strapping country girl come to town to be photographed: cutoffs, rollers, a gilt T-shirt, her 22-carat engagement ring, an object you could see across a football field, borne casually on the left hand. She is—what else?—Texan. She is absolutely unapologetic about the size of her breasts (enormous), her diamonds (enormous), her thighs (truly enormous), and her (enormously deep) twang.

"Listen," says Anna Nicole Smith, introducing herself, "I been pukin' my guts out." Initially, she quite enjoyed her two-pound-plus lobster last night, but as we know, old lobsters can be tricky.

It's a shy, even graceful opening, given what most of us know about her. Anna Nicole's saga is, naturally, enormous: a high-school dropout at 16, then a waitress in Mexia, Texas, and a mother at 18. She mails nekkid pictures of herself to *Playboy*, whose editors transform her into a Playmate (May 1992) and subsequently into the Playmate of the Year. The ad campaign for Guess? jeans follows, and, presto, America has its fecund antidote to mesdames Evangelista, Turlington, and Moss. In fact, she makes those other girls look nearly dead.

Speaking of nearly dead: Where is Mr. J. Howard Marshall II, the 89-year-old Texas oil baron whose estimated \$500-million fortune she married into at Houston's White Dove wedding chapel just a few weeks back? Being wheelchair bound, Mr. Marshall doesn't participate too much in Anna Nicole's incessant traveling.

Still, things are looking up in the photo studio, especially now that Pierre De Jean, Anna Nicole's bodyguard and road manager, has returned from the pharmacy with the anti-nausea suppositories. Pierre is a big black guy in a tan, vested leisure suit. In a Barry White-killer-disco-stud fashion statement, Pierre wears thin black leather gloves and a woman's white hairband.

In the dressing room, we all settle down for a chat. "I hated high school," Anna Nicole says definitively when asked if she was a cheerleader. "Got beat up by a guy and I quit. In the eleventh grade. Then I went to work in th' Krispy Fried Chicken." She smiles and rolls the phrase around in her mouth again. "*Krisp' Frahhhd Chick-unn.* It's in *Ma-HAY-ya* on the main drag. There's no chicken like it!"

As the pedicure specialist mas-

sages her leg, Anna Nicole studiously takes a paring knife to a lemon, sections it, carves the meat out, sprinkles salt on the lemon, and eats it. A home remedy?

"Yeah," she says, smiling softly and chewing, "lemon, salt, and Coca-Cola." "Diet Coke," says Pierre, laughing.

Right now she's up for the Marilyn Monroe role in the remake of *Niagara*, she's doing cover shoots for *Cosmopolitan* and *Marie Claire*, and she's very, very happy, especially about her marriage to Mr. Marshall. "The engagement ring is a marquise—22 carats—and my wedding band is baguette diamonds all the way around," she breathes.

"Pierre," I say, "I hope you're packing heat."

"When I put these gloves on," says Pierre, chuckling, "get out of the way."

Later, in the studio, Anna Nicole half sings to a Marilyn Monroe CD she's brought along: *Find a gentleman who is shy or bold or short or tall or young or old. As long as the guy's a billionaire! It's a song from*

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes. Tiffany's! Cartier! she purrs. Talk to me, Harry Winston, tell me all about it!

"We fooled everybody," she says, meaning her quick decision to marry. "No one knew nothin'." Pierre says, "She picked up the phone and said, *Do it*, and it was done."

She says, "Then I got the last-minute jitters, but I did it, and I'm happy I did it. I'm very much in love with my husband. And he's very much in love with me."

"He's been askin' for years," Pierre chimes in.

She leans forward to emphasize her point. To give her tender middle some room, she's undone the top of her shorts. A tanned and downy V-shaped chunk of that magnificent belly is visible in the cleft of the zipper. It is an important belly, having set not only last night's aged lobsters but entire staffs of magazines, ad agencies, and, to date, one oil fortune in motion. "I wanted to get myself established first,"

Anna Nicole says matter-of-factly, "so that people wouldn't think, Oh, she's just marryin' him for money. I coulda married him four years ago, if I'd just wanted to get rich. But I didn't."

WILLIAM BOOT

