

ALL.

REFUSED TO SHINE  
MOTHER SHAW.

OH, WHEN THE SUN

ALL.

REFUSED TO SHINE  
OH, LORD, I WANT TO BE IN THAT NUMBER  
WHEN THE SUN REFUSED TO SHINE

*(All hum third verse under dialogue.)*

VELMA. A lot of women can plop a hat on their head, but they can't carry it off unless they have the attitude to go with it. That's what I call "hattitude." Hattitude is something you have to possess in order to wear a hat well.

WANDA. Every hat is not for every woman. For starters, a hat's height should be proportionate to your body. If half of you looks like hat, I'd say that's a problem. *(All hum fourth verse under dialogue.)*

YOLANDA. The thing about this hat is that my Grandma saw it, bought it, and expects me to wear it — but I don't know if it really fits my face. *(All hum riff verse under dialogue.)*

WANDA. You shouldn't wear a hat wider than your shoulders. Elongated or oval faces look better with wide brims. Rounder faces look better in the derby style.

Hats should be simply decorated. *(About Velma — )* Some women think the more stuff you can fit on your head the better, and I've seen hats that look like lamp shades with tropical fruit and birds and ringing bells hanging off them.

YOLANDA. So when Grandma Shaw dragged me off to church, I said to her, "You got me this hat but I'm not sure if it's quite right."

MOTHER SHAW. "Maybe you need to bring it to the front or take it a little to the back."

WANDA. *(About Velma.)* ... And personally, I think sequins and glitter aren't appropriate for daytime or for church. *(Velma eyeballs Wanda.)*

YOLANDA. One Sunday, some woman I didn't even know came up to fix the brim on my hat.

WANDA. *(Eyeing Yolanda, who is wearing an identical polka dot hat with the bow in the front — )* She wasn't looking at me. I don't think anybody else noticed, either. But it jumped right out at me. My hat didn't look good on that girl. I said, "Oh no. Oh, my. Here I go. Now honey, let me show you how to fix that hat." *(Wanda turns Yolanda's hat around so the bow is in the back.)*

YOLANDA. *(Dissatisfied.)* She fixed it all right.

WANDA. They call that working with it. Some women don't know how to wear a hat. They just sit it up there straight. I always cock mine a little to the side. When I get dressed to go to church, I'm going to meet the King, so I *must* look my best. So when I saw that girl in my hat! — No one ever saw mine anymore. Gave it away. Never put it on my head again. Some people can't afford to put a whole lot of money into a hat.



l  
A  
e  
v  
i  
h  
a  
f  
t  
f  
s  
c  
r  
s  
e  
d  
s  
e

Velma or Wanda to wear a blue dress or a blue hat. They'll probably wear white or some other color to let it be known that everybody is in the house.

But I find that women who love hats don't come to a point where they get jealous. It makes you happy to see a hat that looks good on someone. "Girl, you wearing that hat." That's the talk we talk. *(Yolanda almost touches Mabel's hat.)*

MABEL. Listen, never touch my hat! If you don't know, I'm gonna tell you. Don't do it. Not the hat. The only person who'd touch a woman's hat is someone who doesn't wear hats. Admire it from a distance, honey.

Sometimes people touch it by accident, but that's still no excuse. Like when I'm sitting in the pews on Sunday and somebody gets up to pray or something and knocks my hat. All that time you spent fixing it just right on your head is gone, just like that.

Whenever I hear any movement behind me, I duck. But they still get me from time to time. You gotta be careful if you're sitting behind a hat queen.

Same thing with a hug. Church folk like to hug, but there's a certain way to hug a woman in a hat. You can't get all up on her, grabbing her around the neck. If you do that, you must be a person who doesn't wear hats. Because if you wear hats, you already know you're not suppose to get that close when you hug. Both people have to tilt their heads way to the side, in opposite directions, and leave a little space between you. It might sound funny, but it's true.

Over the years you learn ways to keep your hat on your head:

Don't let people touch the hat.

Don't let people knock the hat.

Don't let people hug too close.

Those are the hat queen rules. Don't break 'em.

WANDA. *(Wanting the last word.)* When you present yourself before God ... there should be excellence in all things, including your appearance.

MAN. *(Leading the way into church.)* Hallelujah!

ALL.

WE'RE MARCHING TO ZION  
BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL ZION  
WE'RE MARCHING UPWARDS TO ZION  
THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF GOD

*(As congregation sets up the church. Placing a bench and chairs ... passing out fans — We see a box of light above — a stained-glass window.)*

WE'RE MARCHING TO ZION  
BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL ZION  
WE'RE MARCHING UPWARDS TO ZION  
THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF GOD