


Mad Men Recap: Bye, Bye Birdie

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SnoopK8

May 13, 2015

Hello Trashies. Well, this week's ep was quite the kick in the balls, was it not? Jesus.

Previously: Don walked out of a meeting and didn't return; Trudy whined about having no friends and being the object of suburban scorn; Betty went back to school; Don took to the highways.

Continuing our theme from last week, Don is driving. It's night and he gets pulled over. The cop asks for his license and registration and what he thinks he is doing. Don says, "Driving."



...while intoxicated

The cop says, "Don't be smart. We've been looking for you. You knew we'd catch up with you eventually." Oh shit.

Or not... Don wakes up in a motel room.



I know there's a waitress in here somewhere

It was just a dream. But it does inject a sense of impending doom into the proceedings that will permeate the hour. (Okay, maybe that's a little melodramatic, but still, it's a dark episode.)

Back on the east coast, Pete is administering minor first aid to Tammy in Trudy's kitchen. Trudy comes in with her friend Shari and asks what Pete is doing back so early. He says Tammy got stung by a bee, but luckily she is not allergic. Trudy's friend gives Pete the eye and says she's terribly allergic.



But I'd still like to see your stinger

Pete's like, "who cares, whore." Trudy thinks Tammy needs rest, so cuts short her date with Pete. Pete leaves after promising to take Tammy to Friendly's on Sunday. Ooh, I could go for a coffee Fribble right now. After he's gone, Trudy's friend praises Trudy for not poisoning Tammy against Pete, and asks how she can exhibit so much restraint. Trudy says she has to be nice to Pete for Tammy's sake and she doesn't appreciate her friends constantly bringing up her failed marriage.



Speaking of poison, would you like an apple?

Don is in a motel room talking on the phone to Sally, who's at school. They discuss field hockey and Sally's upcoming trip to Madrid.



Don says he'd like to go to Madrid, but it doesn't have a two-headed cow like Wyoming. Apparently he's been on the road for a while. He's in Kansas now, but heading to the Grand Canyon next. They hang up so Don can call Bobby and Gene before they go to bed.

Betty walks up the stairs at college, but is having trouble, like she can't breathe. Uh oh. She stops to rest for a minute and a guy asks if she is lost. She says no, she's also a student. Just then, she falls on her face up the stairs.



Everyone rushes to see if she's okay. She he says she's fine; it's just her pride that's hurt.

Pete gets into the elevator at McCann, and who should join him but that drunken dog-abandoner, Duck Phillips.



He's heading up to the 28th floor where the bigwigs hang out so Pete asks if he's there to replace Don. Duck says he's done it before and asks if it's true Don walked away from a couple of million dollars. Pete ignores the question.

As I'm sure you recall, Duck left the ad biz to become a headhunter. He asks to speak to Pete privately. Pete hustles Duck into his office so no one at McCann will think he's looking for a job. Duck says employers should always think you're unhappy. Pete says for once, he actually IS happy and yells at Duck to drunkenly stagger into someone else's office.



But I'm a functional alcoholic now

Duck needs a favor. He wants Pete to go to dinner with Learjet to convince them to let Duck hire an in-house marketing man. It would also benefit Pete and McCann because it would give them an inside track into all the super rich CEOs who fly Learjets. Pete doesn't want to, but agrees "for old time's sake" and because Duck helped Pete after the McCann merger.

Somewhere in the Midwest, Don's car breaks down.

At the hospital, a nurse addresses Betty as "Mrs. Robinson," which is what the boys who dropped her off called her. Apparently, the nurse hasn't seen any Dustin Hoffman movies lately.




Oh! I get it. I bet your pants aren't really hot, either

The doctor comes in, kicks the nurse out and asks if Betty can call her husband. Betty says she's fine, it's only a broken rib and she can drive herself home. The doctor says he looked at her x-ray, and he thinks it's more serious. She can use the phone at the nurse's station. Oh shit, that can't be good.

A little later, Henry slams into the car, angry and threatening to sue the doctor and hospital for scaring Betty. He says he's going to call all sorts of important people, including the governor. Betty is resigned and asks about her car. Henry says he'll have his secretary come in a cab tomorrow and drive it back. He says she's going to be fine. She goes to light a cigarette, but Henry grabs the pack out of her hands and throws it away.

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A tow truck drops Don and his Sears-bag suitcase at a motel in Alva, Oklahoma. The owner and desk clerk, Del, says the mechanic called ahead and reserved a room for Don.



Hookers are gonna run ya extra

He says if Don blew a rod, he could be there indefinitely. (Wait – Don blew A-Rod?, how did that happen?) Don says he thinks it's just a rocker arm, so he'll take the nightly rate rather than the weekly one.



Rocker arms are easy to replace

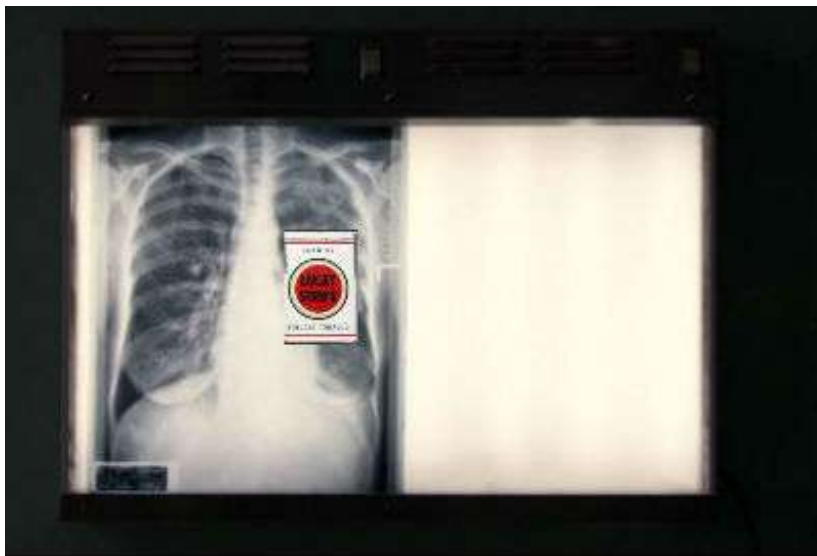
Back in NY, Pete sucks up to Mike Sherman from Learjet about how glamorous the company is. He thinks Learjet should hire a marketing person, and Duck should be the person to do it.

He also suggests that Learjet change its strategy to go after corporate executives rather than Hollywood stars. Mike says he agrees and asks if Pete is advocating for himself or for McCann.



Mike says he asked Duck for “a real knickerbocker” with the right name, the right schools and the right family. It slowly dawns on Pete that Duck has tricked him into a job interview. He says he’s happy at McCann, but he’s glad to have met Mike. They agree to have an after-dinner brandy on Duck’s dime.

Next day, at the doctor’s office, it doesn’t look good.



The doctor tells Henry the cancer has spread from Betty’s lungs to her bones and her lymph nodes. Oh shit, you guys. They can treat it, but the treatment would just be palliative at this point. She has nine months to a year. Betty just stares silently into the distance. Nooooooooo.



That whore Megan got a million bucks and all I got was a mid-level bureaucrat and cancer

Don reads *The Godfather* in his motel room when a young guy named Andy comes in to clean.



Andy is the “maid and the messenger.” He says the mechanic called and Don’s rocker arm has to come from Tulsa. Don says he’s gonna need another book. Andy suggests he go for a swim, since “the chlorine must have killed all the piss in the pool by now.” Don asks what else there is to do in town. The answer is not much besides revival meetings and high school football. Don asks where he can get a drink. You would think Don would carry emergency back-ups, but I guess not. Andy says that’s a little more complicated, but he thinks he can rustle up a bottle. Don gives him money.

Don heads out to the pool, where he sees a woman sunbathing.



AKA "prey"

He eyes the woman until her husband and kids come out, and then he dives into the pool. Good move. Take a cold shower, Don.

Duck calls Pete from a phone booth in Grand Central, imploring him to come down there. Pete says he would only do so to throw Duck under a train. He says he better have gotten that lousy job he inadvertently interviewed for.

Duck says Pete did get it and it's not lousy. He hasn't even negotiated and he's already got Pete \$100K a year, plus benefits and unlimited Learjet flights. Not too shabby. Only problem is, the job is in Kansas.



What's "Kansas?"

Duck asks him to have dinner with Mike on Saturday with wives because it's down to Pete and one other candidate. Duck wants Pete to turn it into a horse race. Pete protests that a) he doesn't have a wife, b) he still has four years left on his contract and c) if he walks away now,

he will lose a million dollars. Duck says that's great! Now he knows Pete has a price. He tells Pete to meet Mike Saturday at the Grill Room in the Four Seasons.

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Betty brushes her hair in the bathroom. Henry comes in with a pad on which he's written treatment options.



She doesn't want to hear it. He asks what does she think Nelson Rockefeller would do in this situation? Betty's like, "why don't you just go marry Nelson Rockefeller then." No, she yells that he would probably DIE. Like she is going to. Henry tells her to keep it down so the boys don't hear. She says she doesn't want them hearing anything until she figures out what to tell them and could he maybe help her with that instead of chasing his tail? Henry says she's being morose. He says she's a lucky woman and has been her whole life. She tells him to stop yelling at her.

Don comes out of the shower to find more books on his bed. Andy comes back with a bottle and asks for another \$10. Don says he already gave Andy \$10 and he's not gonna pay \$20 for a bottle of whiskey and some old books that were left behind. Andy says he walked all the way into town on his flat feet and it was difficult. Don's not impressed, but let's face it, he's not gonna let a paltry \$10 come between him and that life-giving ambrosia, so he gives Andy the money.



Sucker

Don asks if Andy's parents know he's running a scam out of their business. Andy says his parents live in Woodward, and it's none of their business how he gets rich. Andy says Don is rich and asks how that happened. Don says he was in advertising. Andy says, "You got so rich, you don't have to work no more?" Don avoids answering the question by correcting his grammar.



Whatever, dude. I already got your money

Pete puts Tammy to bed. Trudy tells him to take the pie Tammy made him.

Don drinks whiskey and watches TV in bed until the TV goes black.




He goes out to the front desk where he finds Del's wife, Sharon. She says she'll get him a new TV as soon as she fixes the typewriter she's fussing with. Don looks at it and fixes it in like two seconds.



Sharon asks if Don learned to type in the army. He says no, night school. She asks if he was in the service. He's like, "whyyyyyy?" But it's just because her husband wants to invite him to the American Legion on Saturday. Everyone in town who's a vet and likes to drink will be there. Don says he doesn't know if he'll be around on Saturday unless she knows something about his car that he doesn't. She says the mechanic will overcharge him, but don't worry, he'll get 'er done. She goes off to get him a new TV.

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Pete's at Trudy's kitchen table eating pie. He asks if she would join him at the dinner Saturday with Mike Sherman. She's like, hell to the no. That's not part of her job description anymore.



Besides, I have my Skinny Girl empire to worry about

Pete says nobody understands his business like she does. He asks if she would consider it for "old time's sake." She says she's jealous of his ability to be sentimental about the past, but unfortunately, she remembers things exactly as they were.

Next day, Sally comes back to her dorm with her roommate to find Henry lurking there. He kicks the roommate out and tells Sally that Betty is sick. Sally wants to call Betty right away. Henry says Betty doesn't want any of the kids to know yet and he only broke her confidence because she refuses to get treatment and maybe Sally can talk some sense into her. Sally says she doesn't know what to say. Henry breaks down into sobs as Sally tries to awkwardly comfort him.



On the bright side, Don's got his car back! He pulls up to the motel, where Del is out front. Don says it's a good time to settle the bill. Del asks if Don's sure he doesn't want to come with him tonight?



I would love to, but I have to wash my hair in the next county tonight

Del says he knows Don's not in a hurry because he clearly has no friends and has only made two phone calls in six days. Del says he'll give Don the room for free that night and throw in another night if Don fixes the Coke machine. He leaves to get his tools. I guess it's settled then.

In Rye, Henry comes into the kitchen with a Sally surprise. Betty just looks at him, knowing he told Sally and walks out.



How dare you summon my loved ones

Henry goes after her as Bobby asks why Sally is there. Sally says she got in trouble at school again, but she doesn't want to talk about it. Luckily Gene doesn't talk, so that's not a problem.



You're the dummy. No YOU'RE the dummy

At the American Legion, Del informs Don that the event is a fundraiser for one of the vets whose house burned down. Don donates \$40. Del asks Don his rank and location in the service.



Don is hesitant, but finally says he was in the 7th Infantry in Korea and he was a lieutenant. Del screams it out for everyone to hear. Why is this stressing me out so much?

Back in New York, Pete's having dinner with his brother Bud. Bud only wants shrimp cocktail because he has "other plans" later. Pete says if Bud needs him to be an alibi, he'd better just come out and ask.

Pete asks how you know if something is really an opportunity. Bud says chicks these days put out for anyone, including both of his chins.

But Pete's talking about work, not sex. He asks about risk-assessment, noting that Bud is taking a risk tonight by making plans with his floozy. Pete says Bud's wife knows what's going on; how does he feel now knowing that? Bud's like, hey it's not my fault if the ladies love me.



This Bud's for you, amirite, ladies?

Pete asks even so, why act on it? Bud's like, that's just the way I am. Plus, our dad was like that.

Pete is on a roll and asks why they always have to look for something better? Why is the grass always greener? He says, "It feels good and then it feels bad two years later when you find someone had your bastard love child and gave it away without telling you."

Bud gets up to make a phone call.

In Oklahoma, the vets are sharing war stories. They call over another dude who served in Korea and Don almost shits his pants, but it turns out the guy was there after Don. Don is relieved.



Korea? What's Korea. I never said I was in Korea

A girl jumps out of a cake and, as Lane Pryce might say, puts on a bit of a burlesque.



Pete's having a drink back at his hotel, but why is he staying in a hotel? Anyway, someone is pounding on his door, and of course it's Duck. He yells at Pete for standing him and Mike Sherman up, but Pete says he never agreed to the dinner.

Pete says Duck is being "very menacing." Heh. Duck says he's just happy, because Pete is on a lucky streak. Mike called, angry that Pete didn't show, and Duck told him it was because Pete was insulted by the offer.

So Duck says Mike is going offer Pete a company car, use of a plane, a signing bonus and he is going to get Pete out of his McCann contract. He's even going to get him nearly \$1 mil in stock options, with McCann throwing in the rest. Pete doesn't understand, since Lear is a tiny account. Duck says it's all about the passengers who use Learjet – they are who McCann is after and Jim Hobart is very excited. Pete's like, you went to Jim Hobart, you stupid wino??




Who you calling a wino? I'm a gin man

Duck says Pete is "charmed" and on a lucky streak. Duck says he's been there and it doesn't last long, so enjoy it. Pete kicks him out, kind of like how Duck kicked Chauncey out.

How's it feel, asshole?



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The vets are super drunk and telling dirty jokes and war stories. Don is not really saying anything. One guy tells a story about coming upon some Germans in a forest on the Germany-Belgium border. Even though the Germans wanted to surrender, the GI and his pals made them start digging and killed them one at a time. One of the other vets says they did what they had to do to come home.

Don's really drunk, but he decides this would be a good time to share that he killed his CO. He tells the story of how the real Don Draper got blown up, but he leaves out the part about stealing his identity and living a lie for 30 years. After that, they all need another drink. They call Andy over to get them another bottle and break into a chorus of "Over There." Even Don sings.



I feel pretty! Oh so pretty!

Back in Westchester, Sally's lying awake in bed when Betty comes in. She says Henry shouldn't have scared Sally and that she wanted to tell her herself. Sally is bitter and says Henry doesn't know that Betty won't get treatment because she loves the tragedy. Betty is calm and says she's learned to believe people when they tell her something's over.

Sally says Betty could still have a year. Betty asks what would that year be like? She says she watched her mother die and she wouldn't do that to Sally. She says she's fought for plenty in her life and it's not a weakness to know when to move on. She's not a quitter.



I may be selfish and emotionally stunted, but I'm no quitter

She gives Sally an envelope with "instructions" that Sally needs to open the minute she's dead. Jesus. Betty says things happen very quickly when people die and Henry won't be able to handle it. She says that Sally's going back to school in the morning and she doesn't want her to alarm her little brothers. Betty leaves and tells Sally to go back to sleep. Like Sally will ever sleep again after that.

1,500 miles away, another Draper is asleep, or more likely, passed out, in his motel room. Suddenly, Del, Sharon, and two of the vets from the Legion Hall rouse him and accuse him of stealing the fundraising money. They beat him up and take his car keys, saying he's not getting them back until he gives the money back. Don's like WTF. Don does not have good luck in motel rooms.



It's 4 am in Connecticut, and Pete is at Trudy's door. She's obviously alarmed, but he says he has good news. He was offered a job with "supernatural" origins, and he's thinking the benefits might be supernatural too. He wants Trudy and Tammy to move to Kansas with him and start over. Trudy says they both know what happened can't be undone.

Pete's like, why not? He says they're not even through half their lives, aren't they entitled to more? He wants to start over; he's not dumb anymore and he's aware he could lose her love. She says he never lost it, but she can't let him hurt her again. He says he loves her too; he's always loved her and never loved anyone else, except for that small Peggy blip, but who's counting. Oh, and let's not forget the crazy housewife he was obsessed with.


Anyway, she says “do you think you can come here at 4 in the morning when I’m disoriented and say the things I wanted you to say two years ago?” He says, “I said it ten years ago and I’ll say it again: ‘I do.’”



Aww, I hope these crazy kids make it

Trudy says she WILL move to Wichita with him. They kiss and then Pete leaves after making plans to have a family dinner on Saturday.

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Next morning, Don sits on the bed, nursing his wounds, when someone knocks on the door.



That's the last time I drink moonshine. Oh who am I kidding

It's Andy with ice and another bottle that he says is on him. Don grabs him and throws him on the bed, saying says he could kill him right now. Don knows Andy took the money and set Don up. Don says Andy has shitty instincts for a con man. Andy's all, "I don't know WHAT you're talking about."



Don says Andy is lucky he feels guilty, because that's the only difference between him and "those animals." Andy says he doesn't feel guilty because the guy burned his own damn house down. Don tells him to go the money, pack his bags and get out of town. Andy says he can't leave town without the stolen \$500. Don says the theft is not just a hustle, it's a serious crime.

He says if Andy keeps the money, he'll have to become someone else. That's no way to go through life. AND HE WOULD KNOW. He tells him to go get the money.

Don stalks into the motel lobby with a paper bag full of cash. He gives it to Del who gives him his car keys back. He says he's not paying for the room.



And just WAIT until you see my Yelp review

Out front, Don gets into his car and sees Andy, who asks for a ride to the bus stop. Don tells him to get in.



What can I say? I'm a sucker for wayward wannabe felons

Betty comes into the kitchen all ready for school.

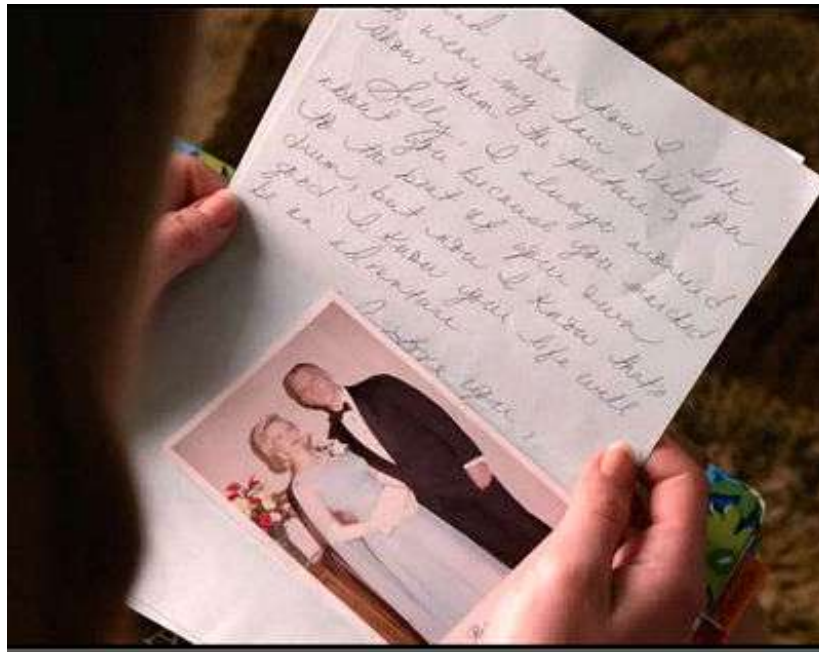


Henry asks where she's going and she says to class. He asks why she's doing that and she says, "Why was I ever doing it?"

Sally's back at school and reads the note with Betty's funeral instructions. We hear Betty's voiceover as the scene flips between Sally reading the note and Betty climbing the stairs to class.



She includes a pic of the dress she wants to be buried in and how she wants her hair and lipstick to be. Of course Betty would be worrying about how she looks dead.



She says, "I know your life will be an adventure. I love you. Mom." Sally cries. Jeeeesus.

Don pulls over to the bus stop. He takes the keys out of the ignition, throws them to Andy and tells him the pink slip is in the glove box. Andy's like WTF? Don says, "Don't waste this." He gets out of the car with his Sears bag and sits on the bus stop bench.



Andy drives off in his car. Don smiles as Buddy Holly's "Everyday" plays us out.

Jesus Christ, you guys. Why'd they have to kill Betty when there is a perfectly good Megan out there? As if Sally weren't screwed up enough already. And who will raise the kids? Will Don come back and be Mr. Mom? How will Gene ever learn to talk?

And now that Don's unburdened himself secret-wise and possessions-wise and apparently job-wise, what will become of him? Is he just going to ride Greyhound for the rest of his life?

At least Pete and Trudy had a happy ending. Well, except for the Kansas part. (Kidding!) Will we see Peggy next week? I feel like we have to, but Weiner might have other plans.

Any predictions for the finale? Will Don wake up in a hospital bed in 1950 Korea and tell us it was all a dream?

And finally, does anyone want to contribute to my post- *Mad Men* bereavement counseling fund?

As always, thanks for reading and have a great week

xoxo,
SnoopK8

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