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# US

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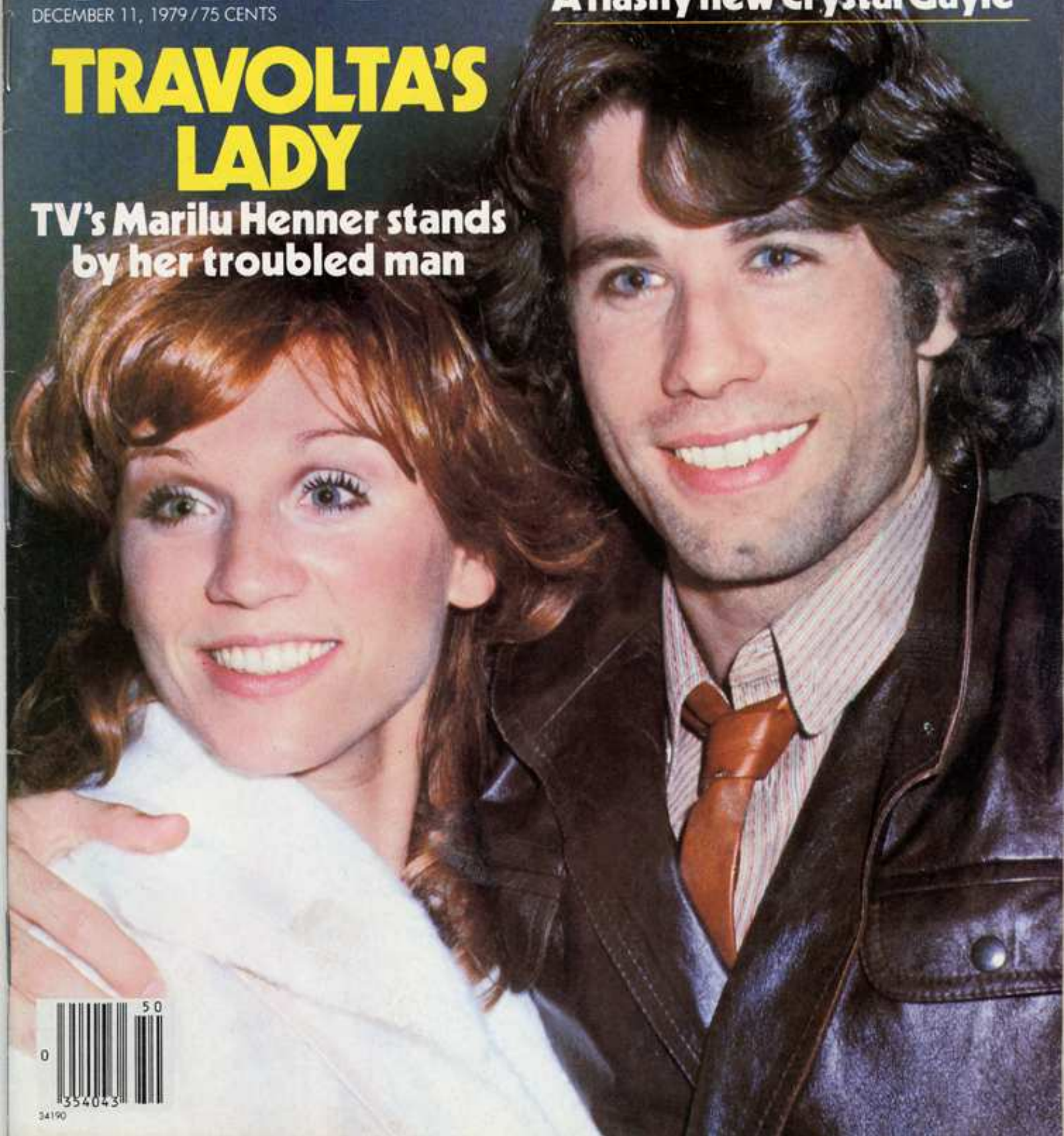
## TRAVOLTA'S LADY

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A flashy new Crystal Gayle



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# A sleek and sexy new look for country music's Crystal Gayle



## Crystal Gayle

## crystal and sexy new look for country music's Crystal



Crystal's CBS-TV special (Dec. 12) will feature both her new glamour image (left) and an over-the-shoulder look at her country-girl roots (above).

By Robert Windeler

During the summers when she was a little girl in Wabash, Ind., Brenda Gail Webb slipped her slightly chubby frame into frilly skirts ("with glitter on the tail") hand-sewn by her mother and dutifully sang in her big sister's shows. In her late teens, Brenda let her Queen of Country Music sister, Loretta Lynn, change her name to Crystal Gayle. Loretta later composed Crystal's country hit "I Cried the Blue Right Out of My Eyes."

Well, Crystal's a big girl now. On Dec. 12, a month shy of her 29th birthday, Crystal will cut loose from that long Lynn shadow with a prime-time CBS-TV special that showcases her new look: sleek, slinky, very sexy. Photographer Francesco Scavullo started her new glamour look on the cover of her just-released LP, *Miss the Mississippi*, so Crystal insisted Scavullo make his TV debut as co-director of her special.

Crystal's clout comes, of course, from her string of platinum albums and pop-blues-country hits like last year's "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue" and the current "Half the Way." Her confidence comes from the belief instilled by Loretta and the other Webbs that "you can do anything you want to." Her help comes mostly from





label change from United Artists to Columbia.

But it's Crystal who keeps the Hollywood producers at bay. "I need time to get ready," she reasons. "I've seen too many singers try to act and too many actors try to sing."

While Crystal keeps a country singer's schedule—120 days a year on the road—she shuns the usual country accouterments. She has never owned a touring bus, won't take a duet partner of the opposite sex and refuses to let a rhinestone near her person.

Today, Crystal dismisses the talk that sister Loretta, 44, and other country queens resent her breaking ranks and crossing over into pop. "My sister never tried to label me," Crystal insists. "Loretta believes I should sing what sounds right to me."

Still, Crystal has always been the rebel of the family. The eighth child of Clara and Melvin Webb, a coal miner who died of black lung disease in 1959, Crystal was born in Butcher Holler, Ky. The family moved to

Wabash soon after, so Crystal has no trace of the Webb drawl. She still sees the family at Christmas and other holidays—all except Loretta, that is. "When I'm home she's not," Crystal laments, "and when we do see each other, there are so many people around we have to lock ourselves in the bathroom just to talk."

Bill and Crystal have just moved to an eight-and-a-half-acre spread in Nashville, with a pasture for Bill's old mare and a pool for Crystal's sister Betty and her five children. With 30 nieces and nephews, she feels no pressure to have kids of her own. "I keep saying I'll add to that total in the future. Right now, I'm concentrating on my career."

Work helps keep her in poster-girl shape (98 pounds on a 5-foot-1-inch frame). And while she'll continue to wear jeans and sweatshirts offstage, the new glamour image in clothes and makeup is in for performing. "It's time," she affirms, "for a mature look—a different side of Crystal." □



Crystal and husband at their Nashville farm (top). The children (above) are just part of her TV special. For now, motherhood will have to wait.