

SIDES

MARGOT/JOEY

JOEY

You've been listening to this music all day.

MARGOT

So, what?

JOEY

It's giving me a headache!

MARGOT

Then, honey, take an aspirin. I left a bottle of Excedrin in the medicine cabinet.

JOEY

I don't need an aspirin.

MARGOT

Then take a power nap.

JOEY

I'm not tired.

MARGOT

Joey, it's Christmas Eve. These are Christmas carols. It helps with the mood of the holiday.

JOEY

Well, it's not helping with my mood.

MARGOT

I think an argument could be made that nothing is going to help with your mood.

JOEY

What's that supposed to mean?

MARGOT

You this do every year. The fretting, the pouting.

JOEY

I'm not pouting.

MARGOT

The complaining. And then I put on some music, we go out to eat, exchange presents, and the spirit of the season triumphs again. It'll happen this year, too. Just wait.

MARGOT/BRANDY

BRANDY

I'm not wearing that dress in public.

MARGOT

What's wrong with it?

BRANDY

I'm gonna walk into the restaurant, and everyone's going to stare.

MARGOT

If they do, it's only because you look so beautiful.

BRANDY

And then they're gonna laugh.

MARGOT

Now, why would they laugh?

BRANDY

Because it's too Christmassy.

MARGOT

It's Christmas Eve, Brandy. How can anything be too Christmassy?

BRANDY

It's a green dress with red and white trim, mom! I'm gonna look like a Christmas tree!

MARGOT

You're exaggerating things!

BRANDY

I might as well pin ornaments to it in case there's a single person on the planet who misses the point.

MARGOT

Okay, fine. Dress yourself.

BRANDY

Thank you. I will.

MARGOT

But I laid your brother's clothes out for him, and I'd appreciate it if you'd help him get dressed.

BRANDY

I think he can dress himself.

MARGOT/JEFFY/SAM

JEFFY

Aunt Margot?

MARGOT

I'm sorry? Do I know you?

JEFFY

It's me. It's Jeffy!

MARGOT

Jeffy?

JEFFY

Your neff!

MARGOT

Oh, Jeffy! I'm sorry! I just didn't recognize you at first!

JEFFY

You mean the hair?

MARGOT

Well, yes, that's certainly part of it!

SAMANTHA

He looks beautiful, don't you think? Sort of like a young Jerry. Smooth and streamlined. Totally hip!

MARGOT

Who's Jerry?

SAMANTHA

Jerry Garcia, Auntie Em! The Grateful Dead!

MARGOT

And who are you?

JEFFY

Oh, my bad. This is my girlfriend, Samantha.

SAMANTHA

So good to meet you. Love the digs!

MARGOT

Thank you, I think.

SAMANTHA

Say, there, Auntie Em, I don't mean to be forward, especially since we just met, but do you mind if we step inside? It's kind of frosty out here!

MARGOT

Well, maybe it's because you're not wearing shoes?

JEFFY

We worried that might be a problem, but we don't believe in shoes.

MARGOT

You don't?

SAMANTHA

They're a bourgeois convention.

MARGOT

They are?

JEFFY

A corporate plot to keep us enslaved.

MARGOT

It is?

SAMANTHA

But, in a pinch, we've got flip flops in the bus. Handmade. All natural.

MARGOT

Good to know. Come on in.

BRANDY/JEFFY/SAM

BRANDY

You're a songwriter?

SAMANTHA

Struggling, but I just cut my first album.

BRANDY

What's it called?

SAMANTHA

Coming back to the light.

JEFFY

Do you want to hear the title track?

BRANDY

Seriously? Yes!

SAMANTHA

Right here?

JEFFY

Right now! Let's do it, baby! Let's jam!

SAMANTHA

(Singing - A cappella)

The Neolithic era liked to work with rock
And use them as a kind of metaphysical clock
They stacked them all together in the shape of a tomb
And they sat inside the structure, a proverbial womb

The building had a hole in it to welcome the rays
The lintel built on top of it to limit the days
Its purpose was to pinpoint the return of the sun
That day in deep December that would promise some fun.

JOEY/MARGOT

MARGOT

Oh, right. I almost forgot about the potatoes.

(SHE starts tossing potatoes to him.)

Why don't you prep a few of these? If we start now, they should be ready to eat in a couple of hours. Then, we can drop a slice or two of Velveeta Cheese over them, and we'll be all set! We'll have a White Trash Christmas at midnight!

JOEY

Okay. Not a perfect meal, but it'll do.

MARGOT

What is wrong with your thinking?

JOEY

What do you mean?

MARGOT

We need a piece of meat, Joey! Meat! As a cornerstone to this mediocre and embarrassing meal! And potatoes are a great idea, but we've got starving people in our living room, so why don't you just buy them instead?

JOEY

So, you want me to run to Gelson's?

MARGOT

Oh, you're quick! But why don't you drive, instead of run? It'll speed up the process.

JOEY

Oh, for crying out loud! It's an expression! Run? Drive? It's all the same!

MARGOT

Maybe in your world, but not in the real one, where people actually live. Now, here are your keys.

JOEY

You want me to go this minute?

MARGOT

I want you to go this second! Time's a-wasting!

JOEY

What kind of meat do you want me to buy?

MARGOT

Something already cooked!

LESLIE/MARGOT/BEN/JEFFY/SAM

BENJAMIN

So, I hate to be so forward, but we're standing out here in the rain. Can we please come inside?

MARGOT

Oh, yes. Come on in. Here, let me take your coats for you.

LESLIE

It's a jacket.

BENJAMIN

Blazer.

MARGOT

Well, whatever they are.

(BENJAMIN and LESLIE step into the house, and MARGOT takes their "coats" for them.)

BENJAMIN

Say, Margot. You wouldn't happen to know who parked that VW Bus on the street?

MARGOT

No. No idea at all.

BENJAMIN

What's the phrase? There goes the neighborhood!

(To Leslie)

Remind me to have it towed later.

(JEFFY and SAM enter from the back room.)

JEFFY

Cool threads, bro!

BENJAMIN

Excuse me?

SAMANTHA

He digs your costume, man.

BENJAMIN

Is that right?

JEFFY

Dude! Wearing it like a boss! Where'd you score it? Thrift store?

BENJAMIN

Hong Kong.

JEFFY

Wicked skyline! I'm Jeffy! Auntie Em's neff!

SAMANTHA

And I'm Sam!

JEFFY

And we're part of the Freckleton fam!

BENJAMIN

Jeffy?

JEFFY

Short for Jefferson. My old lady digs American history, and she thinks Tommy J was the last true intellectual to run this country. You know, Declaration of Independence and all.

BENJAMIN

Yes, I'm aware of the man's accomplishments.

JEFFY

I bet you are.

(Reciting)

"We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed, by their Creator, with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." Tommy J's the man!

BENJAMIN/LESLIE

BENJAMIN

And, as I started to tell you, before my wife tried to make a joke out of it, we don't participate in the ritual of Christmas, either.

LESLIE

Actually, folks, if we're gonna get technical about it, he might say he doesn't participate in the ritual of Christmas, but we do. And, personally, I celebrate the sun. Trees, plants, flowers. I celebrate them all. I even celebrate the dirt in our backyard. I'm Irish. I celebrate everything. I'm Catholic, too, so I feel sort of guilty about it. In fact, I was celebrating, a little while ago, and despite my guilt, I'd like to keep celebrating, if you know what I mean.

(SHE holds up the two bottles of wine.)

Need a glass, though.

PAPA T/DICKENS/BRITISH SOLDIER/GERMAN SOLDIER

DICKENS

I am the Ghost of Christmas Past . . .

PAPA T

You are?

DICKENS

. . . Christmas Present . . .

PAPA T

You're both?

DICKENS

. . . and Christmas Future.

PAPA T

I don't understand. How can you be all of them at the same time?
And why you do look like Charles Dickens?

DICKENS

Because I am Charles Dickens! And I created these characters!
Now, be quiet! I am here to show you three visions. If you obey
the message of these visions, your house will be saved for the
glory of Christmas. Disobey, and all will be lost.

PAPA T

Message? What message?

DICKENS

Don't you ever shut up?

PAPA T

I'm just trying to understand what you're telling me.

DICKENS

For the last time, be silent!

(ANOTHER CRACK OF THUNDER is
heard.)

Here are the Ghosts of Christmas Past.

(A BRITISH SOLDIER, played by the
actor playing "Jeffy," appears.)

DICKENS

World War I. The German-French border. The trenches.

(A GERMAN SOLDIER can be heard
off-stage.)

GERMAN SOLDIER
(Off-stage)

Halt! Wer geht es?

JEFFY/BRITISH SOLDIER

A friend.

(THE GERMAN SOLDIER enters.)

GERMAN SOLDIER

Sie sehen nicht wie ein Freund.

JEFFY/BRITISH SOLDIER

I don't look like a friend? Well, I wouldn't talk.

(HE offers the GERMAN SOLDIER a
cigarette.)

Cigarette?

GERMAN SOLDIER

Nein. Ich rauche nicht.

JEFFY/BRITISH SOLDIER

You don't smoke?

GERMAN SOLDIER

Rauchen ist schlecht fur die Lungen.

JEFFY/BRITISH SOLDIER

How can you be worried about your lungs? We're in a war. We're
in trenches. We're shooting at each other.

GERMAN SOLDIER

Einem gesunden Korber fuhrte ze einem gesunden Verstand.

PAPA T

What's he saying now?

DICKENS

He said that a sound body leads to a sound mind.

GERMAN SOLDIER

Ein gesunder Geist wird zu einem Seig.

DICKENS

And a sound mind will lead to a sound victory.

GERMAN SOLDIER

Danke, aber fur das Geschenk.

ROMEO/JULIET

DAISY/JULIET

O Romeo, Romeo! 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy; Thou art thyself, though not a Montague. O, be some other name! After all, what's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Alas, my own father, a Capulet, has consigned me to marry Paris on tomorrow eve. But I have a plan.

(SHE picks up a cup on the coffee table.)

This fake poison, given by the Friar, will render me stiff and stark and cold, and appear like death. Paris will be deceived, and then I will be restored to life with Romeo.

(SHE drinks from the cup, then falls to the ground.)

A MOMENT . . .

. . . and then MATTHEW enters. HE is now ROMEO. HE finds Juliet "asleep," but believes her dead. Sadly, HE stares out the window.)

MATTHEW/ROMEO

Oh, what darkness through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet, alas, is the setting sun.

(HE reaches into his pocket and pulls out a vial.)

This dram of real poison, such soon-speeding gear as will disperse itself through all the veins that the life-weary taker may fall dead.

(HE drinks it.)

The drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

MARGOT/ELIOT/BRANDY

MARGOT

Oh, my! Who do we have hers?

ELIOT

I am Obi-Wan Kenobi! The greatest Jedi Knight of them all!

BRANDY

Oh, really? You're him now?

(HE points his light saber at Brandy.)

ELIOT

(Quoting)

"It's over Anakin. I have the high ground."

BRANDY

Would you quit pointing that thing at me? Or do you want me to take it away from you and beat you with it?

MARGOT

Please, Brandy. It's too early.

BRANDY

Tell him that.

ELIOT

(Quoting)

"You can't win. If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you could possibly imagine."

BRANDY

Put it away, Ewok. Or I'll tell everyone your feet stink.

ELIOT

No, they don't!

BRANDY

They smell like bad cheese!

ELIOT

Mom? Tell her to stop it!

BRANDY

Ew! Limburger!

BENJAMIN/JOEY

JOEY

No, sir.

BENJAMIN

Not trying to cause trouble here. Just let me through, so I can see with my own eyes if my son is here or not. And then we can all go about our day.

JOEY

I said no. This is my house. Bought it with my own money. And I have the right to decide who is welcome in it, and you're not on that list.

BENJAMIN

Let me through.

JOEY

You have my answer. Now, you're gonna get out of my house, or I'm the one who is going to call 9-1-1 and have our local police arrest you for trespassing and violating a court mandated restraining order.

BENJAMIN

Oh, please! You made that same empty threat, last night!

JOEY

And I would've carried it out, but you ran like a baby, when I tried to offer you a slice of ham.

BENJAMIN

Babies don't run, sir. They crawl. Now, I'm going up that staircase, so get out of my way.

(HE tries to weasel his way around
JOEY, who shoves him to the
ground.)

BENJAMIN springs to his feet and
drops into a karate stance.)

JOEY

Seriously?

BENJAMIN

I must warn you, sir, before we take this to the next tragic step, that I am trained in the martial arts. These hands and feet, to quote the great Bruce Lee, should be considered lethal weapons.

(Quoting)

"If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant."

DAISY/JOEY

DAISY

And you weren't any better!

(To Everyone)

When I went away to college, last year, my Dad contacted several of his professor friends, who teach at the academy, and he asked them to keep an eye on me.

JOEY

What's wrong with being a protective parent?

DAISY

And then he paid my roommate, Stephanie Licken, one hundred dollars per month, if she'd send him e-mail reports about who I was spending time with.

JOEY

(To Daisy)

I want to know how you found out.

DAISY

How do you think? She got drunk one night in the dorms and confessed the whole thing.

JOEY

That was not part of our agreement.

DAISY

You mean the confidentiality agreement that you had her sign?

JOEY

I was just trying to insure my investment.

MATTHEW/DAISY

MATTHEW

(To Benjamin)

And that's why you faxed the restraining order to the academy's administration demanding that Daisy and I take different classes and live on opposite sides of the campus?

DAISY

Which meant that as theater majors, we couldn't act or be involved in any of the same plays.

MATTHEW

I had to sit out our production of Oh, Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feelin' So Sad or risk being expelled from school!

MATTHEW

And it was the biggest hit of the year! But despite all of that . . .

DAISY

. . . or maybe because of it . . .

MATTHEW

. . . we started seeing each other, anyway.

DAISY

On the sly.

MATTHEW

At night.

DAISY

When no one was looking.

MATTHEW

And that's how we fell in love.

(THEY hold hands in a show of solidarity and love.)

DAISY

And, yes, we talked over the legal stuff . . .

MATTHEW

. . . and debated on whether or not to move forward with it . . .

DAISY

. . . but, after last night . . .

MATTHEW

. . . and then, today . . .

DAISY

. . . it's pretty obvious that even a favorable court decision won't deal with the real problem here.

PAPA T/JOEY/DAISY/BENJAMIN

PAPA T

"See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate."

JOEY

Excuse me?

PAPA T

"And dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?"

BENJAMIN

Are you talking to me?

PAPA T

Yes, you!

(To Joey)

And you!

(To Daisy)

And you, too!

DAISY

Me?

PAPA T

"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child."

(To all three: Joey, Benjamin, and
Daisy)

I'll sue you! I'll sue you back! I'll take you to court! I'll take you to court! I'll punch you in the face! I'll kick you in the head! I'll run away from home! And then I'll post it, pin it, tweet it, and take a photo of it for my Instagram account!

(To Benjamin)

And you'll probably win your side of it . . .

BENJAMIN

Thank you.

PAPA T

. . . you'll hire the best lawyer money can buy, who'll cite some obscure law, zoning or otherwise, then deliver a four-hundred page brief full of legal mumbo jumbo, and take every single word ever uttered out of its original context.

JOEY

Exactly!

PAPA T

(To Joey)

And you? Building a ten-foot high wall in your backyard? So that no one in your family can ever see, much less talk to these neighbors of yours?

PAPA T (Cont'd)

Because a little dog urinated on your flowers? Don't you think that's a little extreme? A little paranoid? A little over the top?

JOEY

Easy, Papa T!

PAPA T

And you, Miss Daisy? You're going to take your father to court to get this absurd restraining order ameliorated?

DAISY

We said we weren't going to do that anymore.

PAPA T

So instead you're going to run away and say goodbye to your mom, your dad, your sister and brother? You're going to say goodbye to me? I'm seventy years old. You might never see me again.

CHIP/JOEY/MARGOT

JOEY

Keep the change.

CHIP

Excellent, bro! Very cool!

JOEY

We're just thankful you could deliver on Christmas!

MARGOT

But we're sorry that you have to work!

CHIP

Don't be. Best tips of the year.

MARGOT

But don't you miss being with your family?

CHIP

As if. Too much drama. So, I skyped them, right after I got back from a couple of killer hours at the Wedge.

MARGOT

What were you doing there?

CHIP

Body surfing. What else do you do at The Wedge? And, anyway, tomorrow night is the start of my own week-long party with the old lady!

MARGOT

What are you talking about?

CHIP

(Dramatically)

Kwanzaa!

