

The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel

Episode #403

"Everything is Bellmore"

Written by

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Directed by

Daniel Palladino

8th Revision CHERRY: 3/09/2021

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REVISED PAGES

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CAST

MIRIAM “MIDGE” MAISEL	Rachel Brosnahan
ABE WEISSMAN	Tony Shalhoub
SUSIE MYERSON	Alex Borstein
ROSE WEISSMAN	Marin Hinkle
JOEL MAISEL	Michael Zegen
SHIRLEY MAISEL	Caroline Aaron
MOISHE MAISEL	Kevin Pollak
LENNY BRUCE	Luke Kirby
IMOGENE CLEARY	Bailey De Young
ZELDA	Matilda Szydagis
CHESTER	Connor Ratliff
ETHAN MAISEL	Nunzio & Matteo Pascale
ESTHER MAISEL	Avigayil & Emunah Rosenblatt
ASHER FRIEDMAN	Jason Alexander
CORINNE	Veanne Cox
PAULY AUERBACH	Saul Rubinek
EDIE	Barbara Miluski
BUZZ GOLDBERG	Brandon Uranowitz
STEVIE	Jill Abramovitz
GABE	Chris Eigeman
BOISE	Santino Fontana
CLIFFORD	Peter Gerety
NANCY	Maddie Corman
TRIXIE	Nancy Cantine
CHARLIE	James Monroe Iglehart
AMELIA	Lauren Schaffe
GERALD	Kevin Loreque
MYRON	Bruce Winant
J.J.	Damon Daunno
MONSIGNOR RICCI	James Ciccone

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CAST CONT'D

RABBI HUEBSCH	Stuart Zagnit
AKIVA BERGMAN	Joshua Turchin
AKIVA'S MOM	Deb Radloff
OLDER WOMAN BEHIND THEM	Lynda Rodolitz
GUY IN CROWD	Eli Trichon
JOSIAH	Jesse Weil
MAN'S VOICE (O.C)	
ANOTHER GUY (O.C)	
ALIYAH MAN	Philip L. Sherman
SHLOMO BEN NASAN (ALIYAH)	David Rosenberg
GORDON FORD (ON TV)	
GROUCHO MARX (ON TV)	

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MIDGE'S BEDROOM

KITCHEN

HALLWAY

FOYER

GASLIGHT CAFÉ

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VILLAGE VOICE OFFICES

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JACKIE'S SIDE

HALLWAY

COLLINS' SIDE

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ASHER'S HOUSE (MIAMI)

GORDON FORD SET (ON TV)

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DAYS & NIGHTS BREAKDOWN

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THE MARVELOUS MRS. MAISEL

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FADE IN:

1 INT. THE WOLFORD - STAGE - NIGHT (N1) 1

Celestial music plays as we come up on a painted backdrop of blue sky and white, wispy clouds. Several golden temple trumpets are lowered on wires into frame. Then, descending from above - a girl in a homemade angel outfit, looking heavenward. She has wings, a halo, and wears a diaphanous, puffy skirt. When she lands on stage, the celestial music cuts out, and the house band starts to play a burlesque version of "Blow, Gabriel, Blow." The temple horns begin to awkwardly bounce to the music.

In a wide shot, we see that the house is about a third full, mostly guys. They whoop and holler as the angel stripper moves around a little and removes her skirt. More whoops and hollers as she removes her flowing top. She's now in a bikini top and bottom, with her wings still on. She then takes the bottoms off, revealing a G-string. She turns her back to the crowd and takes off her bikini top. More whoops, more hollers. She then turns around and uses the wings as fans to cover her. She comes out toward the thrust of the stage for her big finale. When she's done, she disappears behind the falling curtain to applause from the guys.

Behind the curtain, our angel heads toward the wings as the celestial backdrop rises and the next backdrop (with a Roaring Twenties theme) is lowered.

GIRL IN ANGEL OUTFIT

The guy at table six took his dick
out again.

A girl dressed in a flapper outfit, TRIXIE, walks on stage to get in place. But someone up high has yanked on the wire that lowered our angel, and the heavy metal contraption at the end of it begins to swing like a pendulum, back and forth. Trixie is soundly conked in the head by the swinging metal and goes down hard.

TRIXIE

Mother fucker!

A couple guys rush out of the wings to see to Trixie, who's rubbing her head in pain. We spot MIDGE in the wings as well.

She witnessed it all but can't do anything about it because she's got to go on. She heads around the curtain and out to a mic that has been set up on stage.

MIDGE

(to the crowd)

That was the sweet, saintly
Philomena. Heavenly, wouldn't you
say?

TRIXIE (O.C.)

(loud enough for all to
hear)

Mother fuck, my fucking head!

MIDGE

And that was Philomena's foul-
mouthed friend, Philadelphia.

GUY IN CROWD (O.C.)

Take it off!

MIDGE

Sweet thought, but I think I'll
keep it on...

ANOTHER GUY (O.C.)

Take it off!

Others join in and it becomes a cacophony of guys, at
different tables and at different times, yelling, "Take it
off!"

MIDGE

(as if considering it)

Guys, hear me - by the time I
finish unzipping, unfastening and
unhooking the medieval contraption
of rayon and rubber that is my
girdle, you'll all be back in bed
with your wives telling them how
much you hated working late.

More shouts for her to "Take it off!" Someone throws
something onto the stage.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Well, you didn't say you were going
to throw an oily, crumpled dollar
bill at me. Now it's coming off.

There's whoops and hollers from the crowd. Midge glances in
the wings and sees a guy around 50, BOISE, giving her the
thumbs up.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Oops. No time. But hold on to your Great Gatsbys, guys, 'cause here comes our salute to... The Roaring Twenties!

The band launches into the "Charleston" song as Midge heads to the wings. But when the curtain comes up, instead of the Roaring Twenties, there's a large basket set against a backdrop featuring a desert landscape. The lid comes off the basket and a stripper dressed in a harem girl outfit emerges. She seems confused by the music. When Midge spots the mistake, she races back to the mic.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

But first: Sapphira - Lonely Harem Girl!

ANGLE ON the band in the pit. The band's leader, a Black pianist named CHARLIE (40s), doesn't look happy as he stops the band.

CHARLIE

(to Midge)
What the hell?

MIDGE

I didn't know!

CHARLIE

(muttering)
No one knows shit around here.
(to band)
Three, four!

The band awkwardly launches into stereotypical harem girl music, and Sapphira resumes her striptease as Midge hurries back toward the wings.

2 INT. THE WOLFORD - WINGS/BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS (N1) 2

It's busy backstage, with stagehands and girls getting ready. Midge appears from around the wings and comes down the stairs, where she finds Boise.

MIDGE

Boise, what happened to the Roaring Twenties?

BOISE

Trixie got beaned by the wire...

MIDGE
I saw. I heard.

BOISE

...So we went with Harem Girl.

MIDGE

Without telling me.

BOISE

You were on stage...

MIDGE

Getting the crowd excited for a sexy flapper. We confused them.

BOISE

Look - as long as some girl's out there shakin' her chi-chi's, those guys don't care how the fuck they're dressed.

MIDGE

I disagree. With Sapphira the Harem Girl, they're anticipating sultry, mysterious chi-chi's, not the bippity-boppity chi-chi's of the Roaring Twenties girl.

BOISE

Look, no one's confused because no one's hardly listening to you.

MIDGE

I take offense at that.

BOISE

(heading away)
You all do.

MIDGE

(heading her own way)
We can do better than this, Boise!

BOISE

(receding)
Talk to Clifford! He signs the checks.

Midge disappears into the large dressing room.

3 INT. THE WOLFORD - DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS (N1)

3

Midge enters, almost colliding with a girl in a Can-can Mademoiselle outfit who is heading out.

MIDGE

Ooh - excusez-moi.

The girl moves on. Midge looks around the room of women, all in the process of getting ready to go on or getting ready to leave. Some are chatting with the girls next to them.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Hey, everyone. Boise's not so great with formal introductions, so I wanted to introduce myself. Hi. I'm Midge. Mrs. Maisel. I'm the new MC here at the Wolf. So, if any of you want to add a dash of humor to your routines, consider me your comedy consultant.

They completely ignore her, still getting ready, still chatting.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Okay, well... As you were.

A frustrated Midge exits.

4 INT. THE WOLFORD - BACKSTAGE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (N1) 4

Midge comes out of the dressing room and as she stops to pour a cup of coffee, we catch a glimpse of SUSIE playing craps at the loading dock with a few guys. She's about to roll the dice.

SUSIE

Come on, six! Come on, six!

She rolls as Midge heads into the owner's office.

5 INT. THE WOLFORD - OWNER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS (N1) 5

Midge enters. Sitting behind an old metal desk is the building's owner, CLIFFORD, late 70s. His clothing is ruffled, but he still tries to look dapper. He's absent-mindedly flipping the pages of an accounting ledger.

MIDGE

Clifford - cup of coffee for you. I know you like one right around now.

He takes the cup, smells it.

CLIFFORD
(suspicious)
Smells fresh.

MIDGE
It's supposed to.

Clifford just grumbles an inaudible response and sips his coffee.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
So, I would love to suggest some small improvements that I think would make the club all that it can be.

He grumbles a little as he continues scanning the ledger.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
A better system for announcing the acts would be great. Plus, there are a lot of avoidable injuries. Maybe we should have a safety meeting.

Clifford grumbles something inaudible.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
In the Catskills, I was frequently voted safety monitor for various activities - water sports, backpacking. We were hiking once, and the rabbi thought for sure he got bit by a snake. I sucked on that man 'til he almost passed out. On his ankle, that is. Turned out to be just a couple of mosquito bites, but people sure got a laugh out of it.

Clifford mumbles something.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
Anyway, have a, have a... think on that, and...

Midge has noticed that Clifford has dozed off, hot coffee cup still in hand. She carefully takes the coffee from him and puts it on the desk.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
(to the sleeping Clifford)
That's a safety risk, too.

She exits.

6 INT. THE WOLFORD - LOADING DOCK/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (N1) 6

Midge joins Susie, whose craps game has broken up. Susie's counting her money.

MIDGE
Fucking angel.
(to Susie)
Let me bum one.

Susie hands her a pack of cigarettes, and Midge takes one out and lights it.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
Did you hear what happened out there? The flapper got her head smashed in.

SUSIE
I heard the cursing. Sounded kind of funny.

MIDGE
It wasn't funny. It's sloppy. This place has a lot of work to do.

SUSIE
It's a strip club. As long as a girl's out there shaking her chi-chi's, none of it matters.

Midge sighs in frustration. Boise yells out from the end of the hall.

BOISE
Midge! Sapphira's wrappin' up!

SUSIE
I'll see you tomorrow.

MIDGE
(heading off)
See you tomorrow.

Susie exits as Midge hustles down the hallway. As she passes Boise:

MIDGE (CONT'D)
Who's next?

BOISE
Annie Oakley.

MIDGE

Thank you.

BOISE

Or Brenda the Bird Girl!

MIDGE

(frustrated scream)

Aaggghhh!

Harem Girl finishes her act. Midge hustles on stage just as the curtain comes down on the Harem Girl. She hits the mic.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Hey there - ya miss me?

GUY IN CROWD (O.C.)

Take it off!

MORE GUYS (O.C.)

Yeah, take it off! / Take it off!

Midge sighs as she prepares to continue her set.

7 EXT. VILLAGE STREET - LATER (N1) 7

We follow Susie as she makes her way down the dark street.

8 INT. SUSIE'S OUTER HALLWAY/APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER (N1) 8

We're still following Susie as she heads to her door, which is slightly ajar. As she opens it, she spots CHESTER, who seems weirdly subdued.

SUSIE

Chester, you left the fucking door open again! How many times do I gotta--

Susie opens the door wider and discovers a 60-year-old woman (NANCY) is in the apartment, too. She looks like a sad-faced librarian and is a bit perfunctory.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

(to Chester)

Is this something icky?

NANCY

You must be Susie.

SUSIE

Yeah?

NANCY

I'm Nancy. Jackie's sister.

SUSIE

Oh.

(looks around)

Well, he's--

NANCY

Dead. He's dead.

Susie can barely comprehend what was just said.

SUSIE

I'm sorry, what?

NANCY

A stroke. Sometime this afternoon.

SUSIE

A stroke?

She looks at Chester. He's in shock as well.

NANCY

I was actually at his bedside before he passed. He was still talking...

SUSIE

(weakly)

Yeah, he likes to talk...

NANCY

His final words were actually for you.

SUSIE

For me?

Nancy takes out a piece of paper.

NANCY

I wrote them down so I wouldn't forget.

(reads)

'Susie: The guys are coming to sand the floor at noon. Be there to let them in. They're flaky, so fuck knows if they'll show...

(MORE)

NANCY (CONT'D)

Remember, Monday's a holiday, so don't put the garbage out Sunday night. We already got one ticket from the city...'

Still in shock, Susie clumsily sits in her chair.

NANCY (CONT'D)

(continues reading)

'If you're going to make spaghetti sauce, push the curtains back, because you splash a lot, and you can't get sauce out of that fabric. It's just too delicate...'

Nancy continues reading Jackie's last words as Susie stares off into space.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD:

"THE MARVELOUS MRS. MAISEL"

9 EXT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - NEXT DAY 9
(D2)

Another beautiful, Upper West Side day.

MIDGE (O.S.)

Plastic. The modern miracle.

10 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM (D2) 10

A dozen young women, including IMOGENE, are gathered in the living room for a Tupperware party hosted by Midge. The party's been going on a while, and most of the women wear silly hats made out of pieces of Tupperware from some game they played. They sit in a circle surrounding a magical, multi-colored display of Tupperware for sale, all shapes and sizes. Cocktails are evident, and Imogene is already pretty sloshed.

MIDGE

And ladies - these are some of the finest plastic products on the household market.

IMOGENE

(tipsy; overly enthused)
They sure are!

MIDGE

There's so much to choose from -
there's so many convenient sizes,
so many vivid colors... And you're
going to want it all. This...

(holds up a piece)

Is the Wonderlier.

IMOGENE

That's such a cute name. I love
that name...

MIDGE

And for sizable suppers...
(holds up a larger piece)
The Large Wonderlier...

IMOGENE

(way too enthusiastic)
Well, I have to have two of
everything! Now. It's just so
good. Sign me up!

Midge notices something off to the side.

MIDGE

(to one of the women)
Here, pass the Wonderliers around,
ladies and I will be right back.

IMOGENE

(to all)

Oh, ladies, do I have a story for you...

Midge takes us to ROSE, who is not part of the party, but has commandeered one of Midge's guests, who's also in a funny hat.

ROSE

(to the girl)

You'd have fewer leftovers and less need for Tupperware if you weren't just cooking for one. Can we set up a lunch?

MIDGE

Mama, Jean here is missing out on the demonstration.

(to Jean)

Why don't you get back to the group, Jean.

Jean heads back to the group.

ROSE

Miriam - I'm trying to make a sale here.

MIDGE

Well, so am I! Beat it.

Midge returns to her spot and picks up the tail end of the story Imogene is telling.

IMOGENE

...She's making dinner, and in comes a burglar...

(dramatically)

...With a gun. She screams, he shoots, and the Tupperware she was holding stops the bullet!

The ladies react, impressed.

IMOGENE (CONT'D)

I mean - they don't even mention that in the literature!

MIDGE

Imogene...

Midge motions for Imogene to join her off to the side.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Dial it down, woman.

IMOGENE

(dead serious)

Midge - do you want to make some sales or not?

MIDGE

Yes--

IMOGENE

Showing them how to burp a two-quart is not going to move product. And you are here to move product! Now sell.

Imogene returns to the girls. Midge rejoins the group.

MIDGE

Ladies, I think it is time to get those order forms out and when that's done, I'll announce the winner of the silliest Tupperware hat.

A serious-looking ZELDA has approached. She whispers something in Midge's ear. Midge's face falls.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Oh, my god...

IMOGENE

What... Are you okay?

MIDGE

Uh... Everyone, please excuse me.
(turns to Imogene)
Imogene?

IMOGENE

I got it.

Midge rushes out and up the hallway. Imogene sits in Midge's place.

IMOGENE (CONT'D)

Let's drop the bullshit, ladies, and make some deals.

11 INT. SUSIE'S APARTMENT - LATER (D2)

11

Susie sits at her table. It's crowded with empty beer bottles, a drained whiskey bottle, and two bottles of wine.

She's currently starting on her second bottle of whiskey. She looks like hell, red eyes, drunk, and stunned. Midge and Zelda are busy in the kitchen. There are bags of groceries, bouquets of flowers still in their paper, and Tupperware containers everywhere. Chester sits in a corner, a plate of hardboiled eggs on his lap. Trays of cookies and cakes are cooling. There are piles of sandwiches and fried chicken. Uncooked casseroles, meatloaf, and a roast sit, waiting to be cooked. There's a pot of something on the hotplate. Midge takes a plate of sandwiches over to Susie.

MIDGE
You need to eat.

SUSIE
Mm-hmm.

Midge puts the plate down in front of Susie and heads to the sink. Susie pours more whiskey in her glass and knocks it back.

ZELDA
This hotplate is no good.

Midge starts to load the fried chicken into a Tupperware.

MIDGE
I don't think all this is going to fit.
(calling back to Susie)
How's the sandwich?

SUSIE
Great.

Susie downs more booze. Midge takes the chicken to the fridge and opens it. It's already packed with Zelda's food.

ZELDA
(re: hotplate)
It's hot here, cold here...

MIDGE
Okay, we're officially out of room.

ZELDA
What? No. The pudding has to go in there.

MIDGE
Don't think so.

Zelda pushes Midge aside and tries to find room in the fridge.

ZELDA

(a curse)

Oh, strudel! Okay, we can freeze the chicken - where's the freezer?

MIDGE

Up there.

ZELDA

What is this place, the Gulag?

Midge grabs the coffee pot and goes over to Susie.

SUSIE

(a little slurry)

I made Zelda mad. I didn't know you could make Zelda mad.

Midge takes Susie's booze cup from her and puts a coffee cup in her hand.

MIDGE

Trade you.

Midge takes the booze cup to the sink as Susie pours a big slug of whiskey in her coffee cup and drinks.

ZELDA

All the lady magazines say you should defrost once a month. This is crazy.

SUSIE

Mmmm, good coffee.

ZELDA

(to herself)

Agh, you've got ants.

MIDGE

You should've called me.

SUSIE

I called you.

MIDGE

I mean the minute you found out. I don't want you sitting in a dark apartment, drinking for hours by yourself at a time like this.

CHESTER

I'm here.

SUSIE
(to Midge)
Now you're mad just like Zelda.

ZELDA
I'm not mad.

Zelda grabs a knife and starts hacking away violently at the ancient ice in the icebox slot.

SUSIE
Jackie's dead.

MIDGE
I know, honey.
(picks up Susie's cup and
sniffs it)
Really?

Midge takes the cup and puts it in the sink.

SUSIE
He was here all alone and then bam.
Old Gianni upstairs said he heard a
thud, called the cops. They loaded
him in a car, took him to Bellevue,
and by nine o'clock, that was it.
He was gone.

Susie picks up the whiskey bottle. Midge hands her a fresh
cup of coffee. Susie immediately spikes it again.

MIDGE
Well, he wasn't sick. He didn't
suffer. We should be grateful for
that.

SUSIE
It was the chili dogs. I warned
him about those chili dogs. The
fucking guy subsisted on chili
dogs.

ZELDA
The ice wins. We have to eat it
all now.

MIDGE
When's the service?

SUSIE
Don't know.

MIDGE
Well, how can I get ahold of his
sister?

SUSIE
Don't know.

MIDGE
Did she leave a card?

No. SUSIE

MIDGE

Maybe she wrote something down?

ZELDA

You have one fork!

SUSIE

(exploding)

She didn't write anything down! I don't know where the funeral is! I don't know where the sister is! Or who the sister is! I just know that last night, when I wasn't here, the biggest pain in my ass ever, dropped the fuck dead in my apartment!

Susie grabs a cup of cutlery and slams it down in front of Zelda.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

Forks!

Beat.

MIDGE

I'm sorry.

ZELDA

I'm sorry, too.

SUSIE

I don't want to stay in this apartment. Someone died here. It's creepy.

CHESTER

It's not the first time.

SUSIE

Huh?

CHESTER

There've been a lot of deaths in this room.

MIDGE

What?

CHESTER

I researched the apartment's history at the municipal archives before I moved in.

SUSIE

Why?

CHESTER

Because that's the first thing you do before you move into an apartment.

SUSIE

No, it's not.

CHESTER

(eating an egg)

There was a decapitation. A woman was eaten alive by maggots. Identical twins were disemboweled to music. A pipe exploded, drowning an entire family. Then there's the crib deaths...

MIDGE

Chester! Just eat your eggs.

CHESTER

Hey! Four choking deaths right in this corner! Maybe don't rush me!

Chester glares at them as he slowly eats an egg and Susie takes another swig of booze.

12 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 12
(N2)

Midge is throwing her first family dinner party at her new apartment. She and Zelda come in from the kitchen and put more platters and bowls of food on the table, which is set for six. Family voices can be heard from the living room.

ZELDA

I hope it's enough. Mr. Moishe likes squash. I didn't make enough squash.

MIDGE

I'll skip the squash so there's squash for Moishe.

ZELDA

(welling up)

It's so nice that we're all together again.

MIDGE

Oh, Zelda, no, you've been crying
for two days...

Zelda retreats into the kitchen and we follow Midge into the living room where Rose, MOISHE and SHIRLEY are having drinks and hors d'oeuvres. They are in the middle of discussing something.

SHIRLEY

So, I figured only Moishe-y knew
him.

ROSE

You must've encountered him at some
point, Moishe. We know his family
from the Catskills.

MOISHE

I know the parents, a little. And
the grandfather - saw him in the
shower once after racquetball.
Wrinkliest nutsack I've ever
seen...

SHIRLEY

And he's seen some beaubs.

ROSE

Oh dear...

MIDGE

We're talking about the bar mitzvah
boy? Akiva?

ROSE

Moishe was asked to do an aliyah at
his service, and he swears he's
never met him.

MOISHE

And it's a short list of people you
pick to do an aliyah at your bar
mitzvah. You'd think you'd pick
someone that knows who the fuck you
are.

SHIRLEY

(self-pityingly)
Well, it's nice just to be wanted
by someone. Anyone...
(at Rose)
Our house is so empty now.

ROSE

Abe and I will visit soon, Shirley.
I promise.

SHIRLEY

(pressing hard)
Tuesday?

ROSE

I don't know about Tuesday.

SHIRLEY

(pressing harder)
Wednesday? I'll make my cabbage.

ROSE

It'll be soon. You have my word.

SHIRLEY

(pressing)
Your word's fairly meaningless,
Rose. You know it, I know it. So
let's set a date...

The front door opens and JOEL comes in with ETHAN.

JOEL

Hello! The youth have returned!

Ethan runs into the living room.

MOISHE

Ethan, come here. Grandpa's gotta
pick your brain...

JOEL

(to the group)
Saw Abe coming up behind me.

ROSE

His hours are so unpredictable
these days.

JOEL

(looking around)
Wow. Look at this place.
(to Midge)
It's all back together.

MIDGE

(nods; sensitive subject)
The is new.
(points to end table)
The old one was chipped.

JOEL

I remember when Ethan chipped it.

ANGLE ON Moishe with Ethan.

MOISHE

(to Ethan)
Akiva Bergman. Doesn't ring a
bell, huh?

ETHAN

No.

MOISHE

Don't rush - think, think.

Zelda enters. She's obviously holding back tears.

ZELDA

I've got dinner for you and Esther
in the kitchen, Ethan. Say
goodnight.

ETHAN

Goodnight.

The rest ad lib goodbyes and goodnights to Ethan as he leaves
with Zelda.

SHIRLEY

Maybe you bought the kid an ice
cream once, huh? You know, and it
was so special, it really meant
something.

MOISHE

I don't go around the Catskills
buying ice cream for little boys I
don't know. There's plenty of
those guys crawling around up
there, you know what I'm saying?

ROSE

No. What are you saying?

SHIRLEY

Remember Daniel Sandberg? With the
coke-bottle glasses?

ROSE

I do. He'd drive up with his
mother.

MOISHE

They called him Danny Deep-Pockets.
Went around asking boys to dig in
his pants for candy corn.

ROSE

I knew nothing about this.

SHIRLEY

Then there was Tom from Buffalo,
with the girly bangs.

MOISHE

They called him Tommy Touch-Butt.

ROSE

You're making this up.

Quite unexpectedly, Susie wanders in, wearing a pair of old,
oversized men's pajamas. She still looks like she's in shock
as she wordlessly sits shoulder to shoulder next to Midge.
Rose and Midge knew she was there, but the others didn't.

MIDGE

Uh Moishe, Shirley - you remember
Susie? From Yom Kippur?

MOISHE/SHIRLEY

(still mystified)

Hi. / Hello.

Susie just stares ahead, not focusing on anything.

JOEL

(to Midge)

What, uh... What's going on?

SUSIE

(abruptly and loudly, to no
one in particular)

A guy died!

MOISHE

Oh my god.

SHIRLEY

Who? Your husband?

MIDGE

Her roommate. Jackie, from the Gaslight.

JOEL

Shit. I knew him.

(to Susie)

What happened?

SUSIE

(bluntly)

I just told you! He fucking died!

JOEL

(backing off)

Right. Sorry.

SUSIE

So did a lot of people in my apartment. Chester's got a list.

MOISHE

Cheeky Chester?

Susie snuggles a little closer to Midge as ABE enters, annoyed.

ROSE

Abe. Just in time to eat.

ABE

(to Joel)

Did you not see me behind you?

JOEL

Yeah, but--

MIDGE

(stands)

Let's eat, everyone. Before it gets cold.

As Midge gets up, Susie gets up with her and sticks super close as they all head to the table.

ABE

I had to stand there and watch the elevator take you up to the ninth floor, stop, come back down, then I had to get on, take it back up - that's twenty-seven floors...

MIDGE

You'll survive, Papa... It's family style, everyone. Forget your manners and dive in.

They all start serving themselves. Susie doesn't have a plate, but is sitting in a chair right next to Midge.

ABE

Well, good thing I made it, because I have a fun piece of news. For everyone.

ROSE

Oh, let's hear it.

ABE

I've been-- I've been assigned...

Abe is distracted by Zelda, who has come up next to him to serve something. She is quietly weeping.

ABE (CONT'D)

(looks to Midge for help)
Why is Zelda crying?

ZELDA

(through tears)
I didn't make enough squash and I'm just so happy.

MIDGE

We're good from here, Zelda. Why don't you take a break?

Zelda goes back to the kitchen.

ABE

So, the Village Voice has assigned me, its chief theater critic, to review... A new Broadway musical by our own Buzz Goldberg.

JOEL

Buzz has a show? Like, a real show?

MIDGE

Yeah, that musical he's been workshopping at Steiner for, what, eight years now?

ABE

It's a real success story. Did very well in New Haven, has a lot of good buzz, pardon the pun. And there's an opening night ticket for each and every one of you.

The whole family ad lib happy responses.

ROSE

Opening night!

MIDGE

Fun.

MOISHE

(happy, impressed)
Abe - what a score.

SHIRLEY

I already don't have anything to wear.

ROSE

I'm so proud of Buzz. He never gave up on the show.

SHIRLEY

We must have seen it at the resort about twenty times.

MOISHE

And that song! You can't get it out of your head.

SHIRLEY

(to Midge)
You were in a version of Buzz's show one year, weren't you, Miriam? Up at Steiner?

MIDGE

(proudly)
I played Clare Landsburg in the summer of 1953.

SHIRLEY

And he dropped you, right?

MIDGE

(a bit defensive)
No. I wasn't dropped.
(MORE)

MIDGE (CONT'D)

I did the show for a while and it went very well, and then I made way for another lucky young lady to play the role.

SHIRLEY

I thought he dropped you. Because you can't sing or act.

MOISHE

Or dance. That's how I remember it. You couldn't sing or act or dance.

ROSE

Please, people, she's no Judy Garland, but she gave it her best shot.

MIDGE

Right, no, I'm not Judy Garland, but who is, besides Judy Garland?

SHIRLEY

And you froze that one time. Remember? You came out on stage and couldn't remember your line?

MIDGE

(even more adamant)
One time, Shirley. I froze one time.

SHIRLEY

I'd seen the show so much that I knew the line.

MOISHE

Everybody did. The whole room was yelling out the line.

MIDGE

(to all, adamant)
I was not fired from the show. Okay?

There's a beat.

ABE

(to someone)
Is this all the squash?

ZELDA (O.C.)
(distraught)
Ooohhhh!!!

A minor distraction. They carry on.

ABE
Oh, and Joel - regardless of the elevator incident, I'm not leaving you out. There's a ticket for you, as well. Two, actually, if you'd like to bring a friend.

MIDGE
(much amused)
Yeah, Joel. Bring a friend. Archie, or...
(working the homonym)
...Maayyy-be someone else.

JOEL
(doesn't like homonym humor)
There is no one else... One ticket will suffice, Abe.

ROSE
You know Joel, I still consider you a family member, and it seems a shame that you're alone.

SHIRLEY
Oh, there was a perfectly good girl I set him up with last week. Lena Brofmann.
(to Joel)
It was a boy, by the way.

MIDGE
(to Joel)
Wow. You work quick.

JOEL
Excuse me, Ma, for not wanting to go out with a pregnant divorced woman.

SHIRLEY
She's not divorced. Her husband died.

SUSIE
(morbidly, loud)
Everyone dies.

JOEL

Can we change the subject?

Rose and Shirley are on either side of Joel at the table.

ROSE

Shirley, I'm disappointed. You have a matchmaking professional in the family, after all. Use me.

SHIRLEY

My god, you're right.

Rose produces one of her business cards.

ROSE

It says call for an appointment, but there's no appointment necessary for you.

As Rose holds her card out for Shirley, Joel grabs it.

JOEL

Please don't give her your card, Rose.

SHIRLEY

It doesn't matter. I know her name, I know her number.

JOEL

Rose, change your name, change your number.

As the chat continues, Moishe starts practicing his aliyah, with Abe correcting him. Zelda stands in the doorway, still moved by the group and blowing her nose.

Midge focuses on Susie, who still stares straight ahead. She puts a fork in her hand, encouraging her to eat. But Susie just maintains her far-off look.

15 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY/FOYER/LIVING ROOM - LATER 15
(N2)

Dinner's over and guests are gone. We can just discern "The Gordon Ford Show" coming from the TV. Rose, in her nightgown, crosses from her bedroom to the bathroom.

ABE (O.C.)
Rose? Is my bathrobe in the
bathroom?

Rose exits into the bathroom as Abe emerges from the bedroom
in his pajamas.

ABE (CONT'D)
Rose? Rose?!

ROSE (O.C.)
What, Abe?

ABE
I thought you were looking for my
bathrobe.

Rose emerges from the bathroom.

ROSE
No, Abe, I'm getting ready for bed.

Rose goes back into the bathroom. Midge comes out of the
kitchen, still in her dinner dress. She heads toward the
living room, a couple of beers in hand.

ABE
Rose?

ROSE (O.C.)
No! Your bathrobe is not in here.

ABE
(to Rose)
Well, then where is it?

We follow Midge into the living room, where Susie lounges on
the couch, watching TV. Midge sits next to her and watches
for a beat as GORDON FORD continues to interview GROUCHO
MARX.

GROUCHO
You look terrible, by the way.

The audience laughs, as does Gordon.

GORDON FORD
Thank you, Groucho.

GROUCHO
I'm not laughing. This isn't a
bit. It's more like a national
emergency.

More laughter.

GORDON FORD

Well you look fantastic. Trim and rested. What's your secret?

GROUCHO

I'm 28.

Midge hands Susie a beer.

MIDGE

Here.

The interview continues on TV.

SUSIE

Both of Groucho's parents are dead.

MIDGE

Maybe you should get some sleep.

SUSIE

Can't sleep.

MIDGE

You want a little something? My mother has some pills.

SUSIE

Oh, I know. I've been through your mom's pills. She's got a lot of 'em. She has three different places she hides them, in case you're wondering why that woman has a sewing kit.

A big laugh is heard coming from the TV. The girls watch for a beat.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

I found Jackie's sister, by the way. She asked me if I would speak at the service.

MIDGE

What did you say?

SUSIE

I was trapped, so I said yes. What am I going to say, no?

MIDGE

You sure you're up for that?

SUSIE

(sighs)

I'll try not to fuck it up too
badly.

Midge smiles sympathetically and pats Susie's head.

MIDGE

Get some sleep.

SUSIE
Leave your beer.

Midge puts the beer down in front of Susie and heads off.

16 EXT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING - ESTABLISHING 16
(D3)

17 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING (D3) 17

Abe and Rose sit at the table with Ethan. ESTHER is in her high chair. Abe reads the paper, and Rose is focused on her grapefruit. Zelda is making them blintzes. Midge enters the room all dressed to go out for the day. She pours herself some coffee.

MIDGE
Eat fast, Ethan, we've got a big,
fun day planned.

ETHAN
Okay.

MIDGE
(looks at her reflection in
the toaster)
Does this necklace work?

ROSE
(without looking up)
If you have to ask...

MIDGE
Changing the necklace.

Midge exits.

MIDGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mama? Can I borrow your banana
pin?

ROSE
It's in my jewelry box! But if
you're going to do bananas on your
dress, change your cherry earrings.
Too much fruit seems lazy.

Susie drags herself into the kitchen. She looks comatose as she drops into her chair.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Good morning, Susie.

Zelda sets a plate of blintzes in front of her.

MIDGE (O.C)

Ethan Shimon Maisel! Move your tuchus! I mean it! We cannot be late.

ROSE

That's right, Ethan. You can't be late for the doctor.

Ethan looks at Rose, screams, and runs out of the kitchen, right past Midge, who is walking back in.

MIDGE

Mama! We don't tell him he's going to the doctor. We tell him he's going on a fun subway adventure.

ABE

Well, the cat's out of the bag now.

ETHAN (O.C.)

I hate the doctor!

Zelda picks up Esther.

ZELDA

Come on, Esther. Let's go talk your brother off that ledge.

ETHAN (O.C.)

The doctor's the worst!

Zelda exits with Esther. Midge looks at Susie, who is just staring at her blintz.

MIDGE

Morning, Susie.

SUSIE

I got a blintz.

Midge looks at Abe and Rose and motions with her head to follow her. The three of them head out of the kitchen.

18 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER (D3)

18

Midge turns to Abe and Rose.

MIDGE

Okay, look, I need one of you to stay with her.

ROSE

What?

MIDGE

There's no way I can take her to the pediatrician's with all her talk about people dropping dead.

ABE

Well, I certainly can't take her to the Village Voice. I'm still new there. I might get a nickname today.

Midge looks at Rose.

ROSE
No.

MIDGE
Fine. We'll do rock paper
scissors...

Midge holds out her hand as the phone starts ringing in the background.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
Ready? One - two - three!

Midge comes up scissors. Abe and Rose just stare at her, flummoxed. Midge sighs.

ABE
Who won?

19 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - SAME TIME (D3) 19

Susie's poking her blintz around on her plate with a fork as Zelda deals with someone on the phone.

ZELDA
One moment, please.
(then)
It's for you, Miss Susie.

Susie gets up and takes the phone.

SUSIE
Hello?

20 INT. GASLIGHT CAFE - SAME TIME (D3) 20

A scruffy, unfriendly looking guy, J.J., is on the bar phone. We will INTERCUT for the remainder of the phone call.

J.J.
Hey Susie, it's J.J. You hear
about Jackie?

SUSIE
Yeah, I fucking heard about Jackie.
I was living with him, moron.

J.J.
Well, he left some boxes here.

SUSIE
Boxes of what?

J.J.

I don't know. Stuff? Junk? I don't know.

SUSIE

And what do you want me to do?

J.J.

I don't know. You want me to dump 'em? I don't care.

SUSIE

Don't dump 'em. I'll come by sometime this week.

J.J.

Okay, but they're taking up space.

SUSIE

Yeah, so are you.

As Susie hangs up, on the phone we hear:

J.J. (V.O.)

Hey, you looking for a new roommate?

SUSIE

(to Zelda)

I'm gonna watch TV.

Zelda hands Susie a cup of coffee and Susie exits.

21 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - FOYER - SAME TIME (D3)

21

Susie emerges from the kitchen and pays no attention as she passes Midge, Abe and Rose on her way to the living room.

MIDGE (O.C.)

Guys, it's rock paper scissors. Each thing beats something else. It's a kids game for gods sake.

ABE

(to Midge)

But what if I chose 'heat'? 'Heat' would melt the scissors...

ROSE

And burn the paper.

ABE

So heat would beat everything but
rock.

MIDGE

(annoyed)
Heat is not an option.

ROSE
Water would rust the scissors and
ruin the paper.

ABE
(to Midge)
Are the scissors brass or steel?

MIDGE
How 'bout we just flip a coin.

22 INT. TEA ROOM - LATER (D3)

22

The tea room is filled with the usual assortment of elegant ladies. Rose sits at her power table and a mousy young girl of twenty, AMELIA, sits opposite her. Teacups and slices of cake sit on the table in front of them. Rose is looking over a form as Amelia eyes the cake hungrily.

ROSE
And your hobbies are knitting,
needlepoint, and weaving.

AMELIA
I own my own loom.

ROSE
Alright. Well, we'll put that into
column two. Remember, we discussed
this? The after-marriage
revelations?

Amelia starts to reach for the cake.

ROSE (CONT'D)
(shakes her head no)
Mmm-mmm.

Amelia snaps her hand back. Rose looks up at her and smiles.

ROSE (CONT'D)
I promise you, Amelia, we will find
you the perfect mate.

AMELIA
(eyeing the cake again)
You think so?

ROSE
I do.
(pulls cake farther from
Amelia)
I really do.

AMELIA

Because every time I meet a man, I never know what to say.

ROSE

It doesn't matter what you say. The man's not listening to you anyhow.

SUSIE (O.S.)

Rose!

ROSE

(sighs, annoyed)
Yes, Susie?

We find Susie sitting at a neighboring table. She has crayons and some sheets of paper. She holds up a page filled with drawings.

SUSIE

My page is full.

ROSE

Well, then turn it over.

SUSIE

Both sides.

ROSE

What about the other pages?

SUSIE

All full.

ROSE

Then we will get you more paper.

Susie sits back and pouts. Rose turns back to Amelia.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Alright, Amelia.

(slides her a business card)

Tell your mother the meeting went well, and the address to send the check is on the back of the card.

AMELIA

Okay. Thank you.
(gets up; hopefully)
I'm very excited.

Amelia heads off. CORINNE rushes up.

CORINNE

Good? Was it good?

ROSE

Very good. I need to use the restroom. Susie? Tinkle time.

SUSIE

(pouting, kicking the chair)

I already went.

CORINNE

Rose, you'll have to delay your break for a bit.

(excited)

You have a walk-in.

ROSE

Another one?

CORINNE

Another two! Word of your prowess is spreading like melancholia.

ROSE

My goodness - it's all happening so fast.

CORINNE

It's thrilling. You already have three confirmed kills this month. Three matches, three engagements. So much god damn happiness.

ROSE

(smiling proudly)

Contain yourself. We're in a tea room. People are steeping.

SUSIE

(loud)

Rose!

ROSE

(exasperated)

What?

SUSIE

I'm bored. I'm hungry. I want to leave.

ROSE
I'm working, Susie. We'll leave
when I'm done.

SUSIE
Hate this!

ROSE
(to Corinne)
Get her some more paper, will you?

CORINNE
Of course. Question - why is she
here?

ROSE
A gentleman passed away in her
apartment, and she can't go back.

CORINNE
Oh. Is he blocking the door, or...

ROSE
I don't know. Go get the next
person signed in?

CORINNE
Yes. Of course.

Corinne hurries off.

ROSE
(to Susie)
She's getting your paper.

Beat.

SUSIE
You're a matchmaker, huh?

ROSE
That's right.

SUSIE
You really think there's someone
out there for that gorgon that just
left?

ROSE
Yes.

SUSIE
She's got a hunchback.

ROSE
I can fix that.

SUSIE
Really? You gonna blind the guy?

ROSE
(firmly)
Susie! This is a business! Now, you are my daughter's manager - and a plumber before that. So you should understand business. I will send the gorgon to my hairstylist, and she will fix her hair, and I will teach her about foundation and mascara and lipstick and deodorant, and we will get her a girdle, and she will sit up straight, and we'll destroy her loom, and she will have a husband. Because there is someone out there for everyone.

Rose stares at Susie, clearly referring to her.

SUSIE
What are you looking at me for?

A waitress sets a bowl of whipped cream in front of Susie and walks away.

SUSIE (CONT'D)
What's this?

ROSE
I ordered it for you.

SUSIE
For me? The whole thing?

ROSE
Yes.

SUSIE
And it's just whipped cream?

ROSE
And a spoon.

SUSIE
And I can just eat it? It doesn't have to go on anything?

ROSE
That's right.

SUSIE

(beat)

Rose Weissman, I would follow you
into hell.

ROSE

That won't be necessary.

Corinne walks the next candidate in - an equally sad specimen
of a woman.

ROSE (CONT'D)

(to candidate)

Oh, hello.

SUSIE

Yikes!

ROSE

Susie!

SUSIE

Sorry.

ROSE

(to the sad girl)

You must be Mirabelle? I'm Rose.
What a lovely dress. What can I do
for you?

Mirabelle sits down. Susie eats her whipped cream as Rose
goes to work.

25 EXT. BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT (N3)

25

A searchlight beams into the sky and well-dressed patrons are filing into the Midtown theater. A red carpet is set up along the sidewalk. The marquee above it reads:

"They Came, They Danced"
A Musicale In The Mountains
Directed by George Abbott

We ANGLE ON Joel, Moishe, and Shirley as they await the Weissmans. Shirley's in her fur coat.

JOEL

Ma, there's sweat running down your neck.

MOISHE

(a warning)

Let it go...

SHIRLEY

It's opening night. Why would I not wear my best?

JOEL

It's 80 degrees out. You're gonna melt.

MOISHE

Let it go...

SHIRLEY

I want to be buried in this coat.

JOEL

That may happen tonight.

MOISHE

Let it go...

JOEL

There they are.

An overhead shot as Abe emerges from the taxi and dramatically twirls his cape around and onto his shoulders with a flourish. He holds a hand out for Rose. Midge and Susie, sticking close, come around the other side. They all hook up with the Maisels.

ABE

Follow me, everybody.

Abe leads the group through the doors.

26 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER (N3) 26

Abe leads the group into the grand theater. A house manager, GERALD, approaches.

GERALD

Mr. Weissman. Welcome. I'm
Gerald, the House Manager.
(holds out an envelope)
Your tickets, sir.

ABE

Thank you. Do you like my cape?

GERALD

It's very natty.
(to Shirley)
Ma'am, would you like to check your-

MOISHE

Let her wear it...

GERALD

Anything else you need, let me
know.

Gerald crosses away.

ABE

(off tickets)
Okay, looks like we have five in
the orchestra and two in the
mezzanine.
(hands Joel two tickets)
Here you go.

JOEL
(re: Susie, concerned)
We're sitting together? Away from
you guys?

ABE
Yup.

JOEL	SUSIE
(a bit panicked)	(a bit panicked, grabs
Oh, hey, is there, no, can	Midge's arm)
we, I-I-I would love to maybe	No. No. No. No. No. No.
switch, or...	No. No. No. No.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Maybe I can sit with Midge?

SUSIE
(jumping in)
I wanna sit with Midge.
(to Midge)
Yes? Midge? Yes? Yes? Midge?
Yes?

MIDGE
(re: her ticket)
Well, the five are fifth row
center, so...

She gives them a look indicating that she is not giving up
the better ticket.

JOEL/SUSIE
(simultaneous, quiet and
pathetic)
Damn. / Damn.

Bells toll. The curtain is imminent.

ABE
That's our cue, everybody. Let's
go in.

Abe takes Rose's arm and leads her toward the door. So does
Moishe with Shirley. Midge keeps up with them, and trailing
is the very awkward hangdog couple, Joel and Susie.

27 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - MEZZANINE HALLWAY - LATER (N3) 27

We can hear the show in progress - it's a musical number and
we can hear the audience's enthusiastic response. A theater
door opens and Susie emerges.

She goes to the railing and looks down at the lobby, where the staff is preparing an after-show party.

28 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER (N3) 28

Susie makes her way across the party area, lighting a cigarette as she goes. She saunters over to some posters on easels, advertising former productions. First up: "Death Comes For The Archbishop." She moves to the next poster: "Death of a Salesman." She moves to the next: "Dying To See You!" She sighs, turns and heads toward the exit.

29 INT. BROADWAY THEATER - LOBBY - LATER (N3) 29

The show's been over for a while and there's still a happy, electric buzz in the room. A select portion of the audience has gathered for the invitation-only opening night party set up in the lobby. Everyone's in a good mood and a little tipsy.

We find Abe, Rose, Moishe, Shirley and Joel together, champagne glasses in hand. Abe is happily chatting up someone he knew from Steiner, and so is Joel, with a guy about his age. (During the scene, they all wave to various people they know from Steiner.)

SHIRLEY

(to Rose and Moishe)

Are my feet on the ground? Oh! I wanna see it again! And again and again...

MOISHE

And that song! With the full orchestra... Yowza.

ROSE

(spots something)

There he is. There's our Buzz.

We ANGLE ON Buzz, who has just entered and has become the new center of attention. Abe has rejoined the group.

ABE

(watching Buzz; pleased)

That is a very big smile on that boy's face.

ROSE

Well, he's earned it.

SHIRLEY

I remember a couple of summers ago,
it was the cutest thing, Buzz came
up to me and said--
(suddenly yells out)
Kitty Carlisle Hart!

ABE/ROSE

Who? / What was that?

SHIRLEY

(pointing across the room)
That's Kitty Carlisle Hart! From
'To Tell The Truth'! My favorite
game show!

She takes out an autograph book.

MOISHE

Go get 'em, tiger!

SHIRLEY

(to some people in her way)
Kitty!

She dashes off to confront Kitty Carlisle Hart.

Rose is with Joel.

ROSE

(pointing to off-camera
girl)
Her?...

JOEL

(not getting it)
Her...

ROSE

Do you find her attractive?

JOEL

Rose, please don't feel the need
to--

ROSE

(re: the girl)
Oops. Never mind. Didn't see the
mole 'til she turned. Would you
find her attractive without the
mole?

Midge joins them.

MIDGE

I made two rounds of the place. No sign of Susie.

JOEL

Good. Three songs in, she pulled out a bag of Cheetos and told everyone who shushed her they'll be dead someday. It's good she's gone.

PAULY AUERBACH from Steiner approaches.

PAULY

There they are. The ones that got away.

Midge, Rose and Abe ad lib greetings to Pauly.

MIDGE/ROSE

Pauly, hi. / Hello, stranger.

ABE

How are you, Pauly?

PAULY

Broken-hearted without you at the resort this year.

ROSE

Maybe next year.

PAULY

How about our boy?

They watch Buzz still being congratulated by well-wishers.

PAULY (CONT'D)

He had such big dreams, but who knows from dreams...

ABE

'A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight.' Oscar Wilde.

PAULY

And now look at me - a big shot financial investor in Buzz's dreams.

ABE

(impressed)
Pauly - you macher!

PAULY

It's a small slice, but the thing is - you hear that song, you take out your wallet.

EDIE approaches Midge.

EDIE

Miriam Maisel, look at you, all dolled up.

MIDGE

Hello, Edie. Good to see you.

EDIE

(pleasantly)

I was just talking to someone - you were the star of this show one year, weren't you? Up at Steiner?

MIDGE

(proudly)

Clare Landsburg, summer of '53, at your service.

EDIE

(still pleasant)

Then you got dumped, right?

A beat as Midge collects herself.

MIDGE

(defensive, touchy)

No, Edie, I wasn't dumped...

EDIE

Fired, whatever you wanna call it.

MIDGE

It was just a fun vacation thing I did one year. That's all. I'm not an actress.

EDIE

Oh, you don't have to tell me, I was there!

MIDGE

It's really good to see you, Edie.

Shirley rejoins them.

SHIRLEY

That Kitty Carlisle Hart - she's like Houdini! I cornered her in a stall in the bathroom and when I kicked the door open, she wasn't there!

(holds up something)

But I got her shoe. Everyone - look for a limper.

ON Abe and Rose.

ROSE

(watching Buzz)

Abe, he's free.

ABE

Oh, let's grab him while we can.

They approach Buzz.

ABE (CONT'D)

There he is.

ROSE

Buzz, dear, we are so proud of you.

Rose hugs him.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I loved everything about it. But that one character - Iris. I mean, I hated her, but I loved her, too.

BUZZ

Thank you, Mrs. Weissman.

(turns to Abe, nervous)

Abe... You didn't bring your press hat.

ABE

It clashed with my cape.

Abe whips his cape around.

ABE (CONT'D)

Fun, right?

BUZZ

That's amazing.

Abe then hugs Buzz, surprising him.

ABE

I knew you when you were a pisher.
The kid who fell into the lake on
day one, holding a live mic!

BUZZ

I like making a big entrance.

ABE

Are you happy, Buzz? Be happy.

BUZZ

I am. This is the best night of my life.

One of the lead producers, MYRON, has a microphone and addresses the assembled.

MYRON

Hello, everyone.

(re: the mic)

Can you hear me okay?

People ad lib that it is working.

MYRON (CONT'D)

Yes? Very good. Thank you all for coming tonight, for supporting our show. It means the world to us. But let me bring the true star of the night up here to speak. The man who wrote the music, the lyrics, the book - my friend, and yours - Buzz Goldberg!

The group applauds as Buzz comes up and takes the mic.

BUZZ

Whoo. Thanks, everyone. So... Big night. I haven't breathed since the curtain came up. Breathe, Buzz, breathe.

(the group laughs)

Thank you, Myron, for guiding the ship and teaching me so much... And to our director, Mr. George Abbott - I think you have a future in this business, sir.

(more laughs from the group)

To my dramaturg and roommate, Kevin, I owe you everything. Thank you, Kevin. And to the people who inspired me so much, who inspired this show - my Steiner Resort family. Because you are just that. Family.

Pauly starts doing the Steiner Resort chant.

PAULY

Steiner!
(clap clap)
Steiner!
(clap clap)
Steiner!

He stomps. Everyone else, including the Maisels and Weissmans and Buzz, happily join in.

ALL THE STEINER GANG

We're finer!
(clap clap)
Finer!
(clap clap)
Finer.

They stomp the rest of the chant. The Steiner chant continues as Abe leans into Rose.

ABE

(to Rose)
I need to go. My deadline's
tonight.

ROSE

Go, go - we'll see you at home.

We follow Abe as he walks away from the happy group, who finish the song and applaud.

30 INT. GASLIGHT CAFE - NIGHT (N3)

30

A MUSICAL ACT is on stage, and the place is somewhat lively as Susie enters, directly from the theater. She takes a look around the place - lots of memories of Jackie here. She makes her way to the bar and joins J.J.

SUSIE

(re: the band)
Two guitars. Jackie would've hated
that.
(to J.J.)
Hey.

J.J.

You going to the opera or
something?

SUSIE

Just get me Jackie's boxes.

J.J. picks up a dilapidated box from the floor and sets it on the bar. It's got "Jackie D." scrawled on it.

J.J.

There's a couple others. This fell
out of one of 'em.

J.J. holds up a Slinky and then becomes obsessed with making
it work as Susie grabs the box and sets it on a table. She
starts going through it, pulling things out. She holds up a
set of dog tags.

SUSIE

(reads the tags)
'Jacopo Dellapietra.' Jackie was
in the army?

J.J.

(still focused on the
Slinky)
Dunno...

She pulls out a couple other things (one being a pipe), then
opens what looks like a small jewelry box.

SUSIE

A Bronze Star?

J.J.

Some kind of medal.

She takes out a bundle of letters that are tied together.
She slips one of them out of the bundle and opens it.

SUSIE

(re: the letter)
Who's Darla?

She smells the scented letter. She continues to dig through
the box as J.J. continues to play with his Slinky and the
band continues to play a song.

31 INT. VILLAGE VOICE OFFICES - LATER (N3)

31

Abe enters, still in his cape, and still a little toasted.
GABE is the only one there, except for one guy asleep on the
table.

GABE

(re: Abe's dress and cape)
Abe Weissman. Stop right there.
Give me a three-sixty.

Abe does a turn for Gabe.

GABE (CONT'D)

A cape is not an easy thing to pull off, my friend.

ABE

I make it look easy.

GABE

You ready to work?

ABE

Yes, I am.

GABE

Sorry for the tight deadline. It's the way it happens sometimes.

ABE

I thrive on deadlines.

Abe takes his cape off somewhat dramatically and sets it down. He sits and puts a piece of paper in a typewriter.

GABE

I'll be downstairs if you need me.

ABE

You bet.

Abe begins typing as Gabe heads away. After just a few seconds, he pulls the paper out of the machine.

ABE (CONT'D)

Got it!

Gabe hasn't even reached the door yet. He heads back to Abe, confused. Abe hands him the page and Gabe reads as Abe grabs his cape to put it back on.

GABE

What is this?

ABE

My review.

GABE

(reading)

'"They Came, They Danced" opened last night at the Mark Hellinger Theater. Your mother might like it.'

(that's the whole thing)

I can't publish this.

ABE

Why not?

GABE

Well, for one, it's supposed to be a thousand-word review and it's about a thousand words short.

ABE

I could add some adjectives.

GABE

Abe - I need specifics.

ABE

Specifics...

GABE

If you think someone's mother would like the show, then tell me why you think someone's mother would like the show. Do I really need to tell you this?

ABE

(weirdly casual)

No - I know. But in this case, I would really rather not get into all that.

GABE

I'm sorry?

ABE

Yeah, I just don't think specifics are what people need. Or want. I don't know if you've ever done any research on this, but I-I-I think I'm right about this...

Gabe thinks for a beat.

GABE

Abe...

ABE

(breaking, comes clean)

Okay, Gabe - here it is! The show was terrible, okay?! Terrible! A travesty...

GABE

Okay...

ABE

They took a cute, charming musical, conceived in the Catskills, cast with a fun group of resort guests, all of whom were good except my daughter, and turned it into a bland, cynical, bloated three-hour piece of contrived inanity... The costumes - terrible. The sets - terrible. The script - terrible. It's got one song.

GABE

One song?

ABE

That they reprise five different times, because they know they only have one good song. They're duping the audience, Gabe, and that kills me.

GABE

Great. Write that down.

A beat as Abe considers this, calmer now.

ABE

We've known this kid ten years. I watched him fall into a lake. I pulled him out...

GABE

Maybe you shouldn't have.

(off Abe's look)

Dark thought, I know. But Abe, how about this - skip the specifics. Use the show to get to the big picture - your thoughts on everything that's wrong in the theater today. Get angry. Be personal. That's why we hired you, Abe. For your voice.

Abe sighs as he considers this.

GABE (CONT'D)

Don't let 'em get duped.

Abe thinks for a beat. He then takes his cape off, untheatrically this time, and sits back down in front of the typewriter. He puts paper in and starts typing.

32 INT. CHAPEL - STAIRCASE - DAY (D4)

32

Midge and Susie, dressed somberly, come up the stairs.

MIDGE

You okay?

SUSIE

Yeah. I just - maybe I should've worn something else.

MIDGE

Like what?

SUSIE

I don't know. Like a dress.

MIDGE

I don't - I can't - I'm trying to picture - have you ever worn a dress?

SUSIE

Of course I've worn a dress. I was a baby once.

MIDGE

Okay.

SUSIE

You know, helpless.

MIDGE

Sorry.

SUSIE

I was fucking adorable in a dress.

They reach the top of the stairs. There are two rooms on either side of the landing. One is full of nicely dressed mourners, milling about. Outside of the room is an easel with a card reading "Collins." The doors of the room on the other side are closed, with an easel outside and a card on it reading "Dellapietra."

MIDGE
(re: the quiet room)
This way, I guess.

Midge heads toward Jackie's room. Susie glances back at the packed Collins gathering for a beat and then follows after Midge.

33 INT. CHAPEL - JACKIE'S SIDE - CONTINUOUS (D4)

33

They open the doors and find dozens of chairs have been set up but the only people in the room are Nancy and the cleric she's chatting with, MONSIGNOR RICCI. Jackie's casket is up front, next to a small bouquet of flowers and an easel with a faded picture of Jackie on it. Susie and Midge stop in the doorway and look around the empty room.

SUSIE
Did you get the time wrong?

MIDGE
I did not get the time wrong.

SUSIE
'Cause you have a problem with time.

MIDGE
I did not get the time wrong.

Nancy spots them and comes over.

NANCY
Susie, thank you for coming.

SUSIE
Yeah, sure. Uh... Nancy, this is...

NANCY
(to Midge)
You must be Miriam. The comedian?

MIDGE
Yes. I'm so sorry about Jackie.
I'm really going to miss him.

NANCY
You know, he sent me clippings about you all the time. He was very proud.

MIDGE

Oh, well that's really sweet.

NANCY

I saved you both seats, but...

She indicates two seats that have been tagged with pieces of paper with Susie and Midge's name written on them.

SUSIE

Where is everyone?

NANCY

Oh, well, I sent the word out. I went through his phone book, and the Monsignor made some calls. Just didn't get much of a response.

The Monsignor motions to Nancy.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

Nancy crosses away, joining the Monsignor.

MIDGE

(sadly, touched)
He saved my clippings.

Susie glances out the door.

SUSIE

(unhappy)
Chester!

Susie's POV - Chester has taken a seat at the Collins memorial and is eating from a plate of food.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

(louder)
Chester!

Chester sees her. Susie motions for him to come over and he does.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

What - the - fuck?

CHESTER

They have onion sandwiches.

SUSIE

Sit!

Susie takes the plate of food from him.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

And don't breathe out.

Chester makes his way to the very back of the room and sits in the last row of seats.

MIDGE

I didn't think Jackie thought I was funny.

Monsignor Ricci is at the front of the room.

MONSIGNOR RICCI

Well, it's past three now, so we should probably get started.

Midge and Susie take their seats. Midge peels her name off the back of her chair and folds it up.

MIDGE

I'm keeping this.

Susie looks around the room. A dark cloud is settling over her. Monsignor Ricci takes his place behind the podium.

MONSIGNOR RICCI

Welcome, everyone. I want to thank you all for coming out today to say good-bye to one of our favorite sons, Jacopo 'Jackie' Dellapietra. I'm Monsignor Armano Ricci of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the church that Jackie was so active in all of his life.

MIDGE

He went to church?

Susie shrugs.

MONSIGNOR RICCI

I've known Jackie since he was a little boy. And I would be lying if I said we didn't find a need to keep a tight lock on the altar wine. Many a morning we found that the blood of Christ had been replaced with Dr. Pepper.

Chester laughs way too loud at this. Susie shoots him a look. He shuts up.

MONSIGNOR RICCI (CONT'D)

He was also the first one to lend a hand. Now, I can't prove that he was the one who built a new platform for the manger scene when the old one got destroyed by vandals, but I'll bet it was him. Lots of little stories about Jackie I could share, but I think I'm going to turn the podium over to someone very special to him. Someone he always referred to as one of his closest friends. Susie.

Beat. Midge looks at Susie.

MIDGE

That's you.

SUSIE

No. He said one of his closest friends.

MIDGE

Well, unless another Susie just walked in...

(trying to help)

Hey. Tits up.

Susie gets up and goes to the podium.

SUSIE

Um... Hi. I guess I'm Susie.
And...

She looks back at the casket and then out to the empty audience.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

Um... Nancy asked me to talk.
So...

Susie looks over at Jackie's picture again. She frowns, getting angrier and angrier.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

Fuck this.

Susie grabs Jackie's picture.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

Follow me!

Susie marches out of the room. Midge, Nancy, Monsignor Ricci and Chester follow after her, confused.

34 INT. CHAPEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (D4) 34

Susie marches across the hallway and into the crowded room, followed by Jackie's sad guest list.

35 INT. CHAPEL - COLLINS'S SIDE - CONTINUOUS (D4) 35

The Collins service has still not started and people are milling about as Susie marches toward the front of the room. There's a casket and a portrait of Old Lady Collins on a much fancier easel. Susie slaps the picture of Jackie in front of it. The room looks at Susie, confused and a tad afraid. Midge and Chester grab a couple of seats as Nancy and Monsignor Ricci stand to the side, also confused. Susie stands at the podium in front of the fireplace and addresses the crowd.

SUSIE

Hi. Sorry. I'll just be a minute here. I'm supposed to say a few words about Jackie Dellapietra, who's over there in the empty loser room across the hall, but, well, I can't talk about him to an empty room. That's not how it should go. That's not how he should be remembered. Or not remembered. 'Cause apparently, no one remembered, because no one showed up. Except four people. Four people to send you off. Where the fuck was everyone? A man dies, you show up at his funeral, right? And this was Jackie. I mean, he never hurt anyone. He just lived his life, did nice things, he fixed up my shitty apartment. Put up curtains, he painted, he made stew, he built whatever the fuck it was he built for the fucking Monsignor over there.

(indicates the Monsignor)

But apparently no one gave a shit. No one noticed. Fuck, I live with the guy and I didn't notice.

(MORE)

SUSIE (CONT'D)

We slept very close, I mean, I knew personal things about him. You know, he snores, certain foods did not agree with him - you kept the window open on those nights. I knew his laundry day, I knew when he cut his hair, shit like that. But I never knew... him. I never knew he fought in the war. I never knew he got a medal for bravery. I mean, they don't just hand those out. You got to get shot, or-- or save somebody, or blow up a fucking tank... A medal is a big deal! He collected Bazooka Joe comics. He kept the little ticket stubs to the opera. He had a baseball signed by Babe Ruth! Can you fucking believe that - Jackie met Babe Ruth! He kept it in a shoebox like an asshole, but he had it... I mean, this guy lived a life. And I never knew any of this.

(beat)

It was just a minute ago I found out I was his friend. No, sorry - one of his closest friends. I had a close friend, and I never knew it. And where the fuck is Darla? She couldn't take off one afternoon to come and pay her respects to a man she wrote fifty-one fucking idiotic letters to? A heart over every 'I'! What was so important she couldn't take the time off to come and give this man a proper send off? She better be dead.

A beat as the crowd takes this in.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

You know, I really don't understand is how this decent guy, a guy who worked his ass off his entire life, how is it he could barely afford to sublet the corner of my shithole apartment? I mean, he never caught a break. He never got ahead. How fucked up is that?

(MORE)

SUSIE (CONT'D)

All these fucking horrible assholes in the world that just get shit handed to them, and this guy fought in a war! He traveled and, oh! He won a Lindy contest! I didn't know Jackie could dance! Half the time it didn't seem like he could walk! But there is a first place ribbon sitting in this fucking weather-beaten, rat-eaten, fucked up, little box that he shoved in a corner. A man's life. In a shitty box. A really good man's life. A man who deserved something and he wound up sprinkling sawdust on vomit at the Gaslight!

(angry, determined)

This can't continue, okay. I can't stand by and watch this happen to some other poor slob. So I'm dedicating the rest of my miserable fucking life to finding the Jackies of the world, the ones you walk by, the ones you don't see, the ones who never catch a break, and I'm going to make sure that they never, ever, end up in my fucking apartment!

Everyone still looks a little confused, a little shocked, but somewhat touched, too. Susie grabs Jackie's picture and starts off. She stops.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

(re: Old Lady Collins)

Oh, and really sorry about this lady. I'm sure she was very nice, too.

Susie marches back out of the room. Midge gets up and follows.

36 INT. THE WOLFORD - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT (N4)

36

There is a lot of pre-show hubbub as Midge enters the stage door. She hooks up with Boise.

MIDGE

Boise. How are you?

BOISE

Busy.

MIDGE

Are things going to go smoother
tonight?

BOISE

Hope so.

MIDGE

There'll maybe be a more accurate run-of-show list, maybe Philomena's wire contraption won't cause any major head injuries...

BOISE

Run-of-show...

MIDGE

Yeah?

BOISE

(rapidly, off the top of his head)
Sexy Angel, Sexy Soviet Spy, Roaring Twenties, Pouty Poet, Cleopatra, Harem Girl, Sexy Nurse, Can-Can Mademoiselle, Rising Venus, Rosie the Riveter, China Doll, Sailor Girl, Sleeping Beauty.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

(tries to repeat but is always behind)
Sexy Angel, Sexy Spy, Roaring Twenties, Pouty, Pouty what?, Harem Girl, slow down, Sexy Something, Can-Can Mademoiselle, ya didn't make a list, huh?, Rosie Doll, Sailor Girl, Boise, Boise, wait...

Boise's walking away.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Boise, wait, I can't memorize all that! Write it down for me!

FAMILIAR VOICE (O.C.)

I thought I recognized that unique combination of lilt and intensity.

She turns and is very surprised to find LENNY BRUCE coming up the hallway.

MIDGE

What the hell are you doing here?

LENNY BRUCE

(wondering the same)
Oh, well, I hate to steal your line, but... What the hell are you doing here?

MIDGE

(pressing)
You have to leave. I'm about to go on.

LENNY BRUCE

Oh shit, are you stripping now? I knew the Shy Baldwin thing was tough, but there's nicer places...

MIDGE

I'm the comic.

LENNY BRUCE

Here?

MIDGE

Yes. And I'm about to go on. And I'm still honing and experimenting. So go away.

LENNY BRUCE

You want me to go away?

MIDGE

Yes.

LENNY BRUCE

(smiles)

Because I would make you nervous.

MIDGE

You would make me nervous.

He smiles again.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Don't smile. Bad smile.

LENNY BRUCE

I got a story for you. Back in high school - Mepham High, in Bellmore, out on Long Island - I took this speech class. One day, the teacher stands me up in front of everybody and gives me a topic - zoos, are they good or bad, some shit like that. I was supposed to be against 'em. Told me to take five full minutes to make my case. Now, I'm feeling fairly confident about the subject, so I start my little spiel, goin' on about how animals shouldn't be in cages, and how we're the real animals for putting them there in the first place, when all of a sudden, I get beaned in the head by an eraser.

(MORE)

LENNY BRUCE (CONT'D)

I check to see who threw it, and it was the fucking teacher. Now, I'm surprised, to say the least. But I continue my little speech with a masterful segue into the science of evolution and how we're no less animal than any other of God's creatures, that is, if God exists - I threw that in - when another fucking eraser hits me in the fucking head. And it's like that every ten seconds for the rest of my speech, something coming at my head: erasers, chalk, crumpled paper, a half-eaten apple... But I soldier on and get through the five minutes. Afterwards, I ask my teacher, 'What was that all about?' And she says, 'Mr. Schneider,' for I was Schneider at the time, 'Mr. Schneider, I was simply training you to block out distractions. It's your job to stay focused, despite whatever's coming at you. And you did good.' This seemed like bullshit at the time, but it turned out to be a very valuable lesson. It trained me for what I do now... So tonight, Mrs. Maisel, your version of erasers and chalk and half-eaten apples will be me staying for your gig.

MIDGE

No - this isn't Bellmore.

LENNY BRUCE

(dead serious)

Everything is Bellmore.

BOISE

(from down the hall)

Mrs. Maisel! Time to start the show!

LENNY BRUCE

(to Midge)

I think it's time to start the show.

MIDGE

(beat; reluctant)

Fine. Stay. But do not sit where I can see you.

LENNY BRUCE
(heading away, smiling)
Oh, now I'm definitely gonna sit
where you can see me.

MIDGE
(more to herself)
Shit.

Lenny strides away. Midge looks nervous.

37 INT. THE WOLFORD - STAGE - MINUTES LATER (N4)

37

The place is about a third full. Midge comes out from the wings and steps up to a mic.

MIDGE
Hello there, not many ladies and
many gentlemen, I'm Mrs. Maisel,
your host and guide for the
evening...

There's some scattered applause for this, but some very big
applause coming from Lenny and his table of several other
guys. They are seated ringside, as close as they can get.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
This is a very weird job I have.
I'm a woman who comes out here to
make men laugh who are here to see
women take their clothes off.

Whoops and hollers from the guys.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
Easier job for a man.

An empty, crumpled pack of cigarettes hits Midge in her mid-
section. She looks at Lenny, who is pretending he didn't
throw it.

MIDGE (CONT'D)
And a tricky balancing act for me.
But not as tricky an act as Sandy,
our stripping contortionist, who
uses a common household plunger to
balance her - nah, I'm not gonna
spoil it for you, just don't leave
before seeing it.

More whoops and hollers. A waitress's pad hits her, and
several coins rain down on her from Lenny and his friends.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

And what am I supposed to talk
about in between strippers, huh?
Baseball? Kittens? Grandparents?

A bunch of straws hit her.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

I mean, how do you keep a starving
man's interest when you're
performing between a chocolate
donut and a cheeseburger?

She is bombarded by crumpled up bar napkins and matchbooks.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Not that you're all paying
attention to me.

She heads toward a table of several guys who are talking with
each other and completely ignoring her.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

See these guys right here?...
(lowers her voice a little)
These guys are ignoring me and just
talking to each other. What are
they talking about? Just the stuff
you'd expect at a joint like this.
I can hear them, so let me recreate
the conversation.

She does the following at a quick pace, and at her normal
volume, and using slightly different voices for each guy.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

(as the first guy)

You know what I hate worse than
being stuck in traffic when ya
gotta piss real bad? The fact that
Aristotle relied so much on
opinions based on non-scientific
reasoning...

(as second guy)

I disagree. I believe a person can
reason perfectly well in
circumstances where we cannot claim
to have scientific understanding.
So I defend the philosopher
Aristotle...

(MORE)

MIDGE (CONT'D)

(as third guy, exploding)
Jesus Christ, you and your fucking
Aristotle! It's Aristotle this,
and Aristotle that...

(as the first guy)
You know he buggered young boys...

(as second guy)
It was a different time, don't you
know! You can't apply modern
standards to ancient figures...

(as herself; same fast
pace)
Sidebar: 'Gee, Miriam Maisel, how
do you even know all this stuff
about Aristotle, you seem very
girly with your pretty make-up and
your fashionable hairstyle and your
Park Avenue heels,' and I say,
'Well, my father would read
Aristotle to me as a child and I
absorbed facts about the old fart
even though I don't know what the
fuck any of it fucking means!'

The table of guys she's been talking about suddenly pay
attention to her.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

(to the guys)
Didn't mean to interrupt.

The audience laugh and applaud. Midge looks to Lenny and his
table. They are applauding, and Lenny looks impressed.

MIDGE (CONT'D)

Thank you. See you in a few!

Music begins to play for the next strip act (which we do not
see) as Midge heads toward the wings. She looks down to
Lenny Bruce. He nods to her - good job.

As the curtain opens behind her, Midge throws the cigarette pack back at Lenny and he catches it. Midge disappears into the wings.

38 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY (D5) 38

ALIYAH MAN (O.C.)
--Bawruch ahtaw Adonoy, Eloheinu
melech ha-olawm, ahsher bawchar
bawnu meekol hawahmim, v'nawsan
lawnu es torawso. Bawruch ahtaw
Adonoy, nosein hatoraw.

CONGREGATION (O.C)
Awmein.

39 INT. TEMPLE - DAY (D5) 39

The ALIYAH MAN and the bar mitzvah boy, AKIVA, and RABBI HUEBSCHÉ stand at the bimah.

AKIVA
...Shomayr habreece vihachesed
li'ohavav ulshomrei mitzvosav
l'elef dor. Umshalaym lisonav el
panav liha-aveedo lo yi'ahchayr
lisono el panav yeshah-lem lo.

Midge, Abe, Rose, Joel, Moishe and Shirley are amongst the gathered. So are three Steiner Resort alums, sitting in different spots: Pauly, with his wife; STEVIE, with her husband and kids; and Edie, with her sister. None of them look in too good a mood.

MOISHE
(to Shirley and Joel)
Now that I'm here, looking at
little Akiva, I still have no
fucking idea who that kid is.

SHIRLEY
Me, neither.

MOISHE
And they got me going last in
order. It's the best spot.

SHIRLEY
Mystery.

ANGLE ON Rose and Midge. Rose spots someone.

ROSE
Oh, there's Stevie.

Stevie is sitting a few rows away. They get her attention and wave to her. But when Stevie spots them, she frowns and looks away.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Maybe she didn't recognize us?

MIDGE

(mystified)

No, she recognized us.

ANGLE ON Joel - who has Shirley on one side of him, and a girl his age, who he does not know, on the other. Joel looks at the girl. He looks at her again. He finally addresses her.

JOEL

Look - out of respect for you, I want you to know... This - you and me - I'm not in the market right now. No matter what Rose Weissman or my mother told you. It's not going to happen.

The girl looks super confused. JOSIAH, the man next to her, about their age, leans toward Joel.

JOSIAH

Excuse me, buddy - do we have a problem here?

JOEL

No. No problem.

JOSIAH

Then leave my wife alone?

JOEL

Oh, sure. Sorry.

(then)

And good Shabbos, by the way.

A humiliated Joel leans away from them, looking over at Rose, who motions to him that she has no idea who the girl is. The aliyah man finishes.

CONGREGATION

Awmein.

ANGLE ON Rose - spotting another person she knows. She waves, but this person also looks away from her.

ROSE

Abe - are you noticing anything odd
in here today?

ABE

(oblivious)
Hmm? Not me.

Moishe starts warming up his voice.

MOISHE

Me-me-me-me-me...

SHIRLEY

From the diaphragm, Moishe-y,
always from the diaphragm.

RABBI HUEBSCH

(to the crowd)
We now call to the bimah for the
final aliyah...

Moishe gets ready to go up.

RABBI HUEBSCH (CONT'D)

Shlomo Ben Nasan, yaw amode maftir.

MOISHE

(confused)
What the hell.

SHLOMO BEN NASAN approaches the rabbi.

SHLOMO BEN NASAN

Bawrechu es Adonoy hamevorach.

CONGREGATION

Bawruch Adonoy hahmevorawch l'olam
vaw-ed.

Shlomo continues chanting as a woman, AKIVA'S MOM, approaches
Moishe. During the following, Shlomo and Akiva do their
thing.

AKIVA'S MOM

Mr. Maisel. Hi, I'm Akiva's mom.
Sorry for the misunderstanding.
Some signals got crossed on our
end. Akiva mumbles. We're working
on that.

MOISHE

(pleasant)

Oh, sure, sure. I figured
something happened.

AKIVA'S MOM

I mean, my son wouldn't even be able to pick you out of a lineup... Hope you didn't practice too hard.

MOISHE

(chuckling)

Not at all, actually. Thanks for the heads up.

AKIVA'S MOM

Thank you.

CONGREGATION

Awmein.

Akiva's mom heads off. Moishe is pissed, as is Shirley.

SHIRLEY

He couldn't pick you out of a lineup? Little prick.

MOISHE

(off the chanting; loud)

You call that a voice?

People around Moishe turn to him.

JOEL

Pop - ssh.

ANGLE ON Abe and Rose. Abe notices someone glaring directly at him - Rabbi Huebsche. He looks around and feels like he's definitely on the receiving end.

ABE

(to Rose)

I'm seeing your point now.

ROSE

So it's not just me...

Shlomo Ben Nasan and Akiva finish the aliyah.

CONGREGATION

Awmein.

RABBI HUEBSCH

Yasher koiach. Akiva, you did a wonderful job. Now, before we proceed with Hagbah, please tell everyone here about your Torah portion. In one word, what is it about?

AKIVA
(proudly)
Bravery.

RABBI HUEBSCH
Yes, well, bravery is very
interesting, Akiva, and very noble.
But is it as important as...
(turns and stares at Abe)
Loyalty?

All the Maisels and Weissmans are aware that something is
happening, but don't know what.

AKIVA
(confused)
I guess.

MIDGE
(to Abe)
Papa, what did you do to the rabbi?

ABE
I did nothing to the rabbi.

Akiva tries to get back to the words he has prepared.

AKIVA
But, um, no one's braver than my
Uncle Saul. He helped liberate the
Jews of Auschwitz and now owns
three restaurants, one of them dine-
in.

RABBI HUEBSCH
But one must keep in mind how
important it is for a community
such as ours to be loyal to each
other.

Again, the rabbi stares at Abe. More in the crowd are
focusing on Abe, including Stevie, Pauly and Edie. Abe is
confused.

ABE
(to the gathered)
Do I have something on my shirt?

STEVIE
Shame on you, Abe Weissman!

ABE
What did I do?

STEVIE

Poor, innocent Buzz.

Several others in the congregation agree. "Terrible!" "So mean!" "Hurtful!" "You should be ashamed!" "A shanda."

ROSE

(to Abe)

What did you do to Buzz?

EDIE

Your husband killed his show.
Wrote horrible things about it in
that farkakte paper of his. It was
the boy's life's work!

ABE

The Village Voice is not 'my'
paper.

MIDGE

Papa, what did you write?

ABE

I wrote what I saw.

More jeers from the gathered: "Shame on you!" "How dare you, Abe!" "Just terrible!" "A shanda." "Schmuck!"

ABE (CONT'D)

Look, people, I'm a journalist.
And sometimes, writing a bad review
is part of my job. It's what I owe
the public. So please, let's have
some respect and give the floor
back to Rabbi Huebsche.

RABBI HUEBSCH

(just as mad)

What's more important, Abraham -
your 'public' or your people? We
escaped the jaws of Hitler for

OLDER WOMAN BEHIND THEM

(seated behind them)

Slander. That's what he wrote.
Lies and slander!

More hubbub from the crowd as they complain about Abe and compare notes on what he wrote. Underneath it:

ROSE

Abe, what is this review? What did you write?

OLDER WOMAN BEHIND THEM

Here. See for yourself.

She passes them a copy of the paper. Midge takes it and reads. As she's doing this:

STEVIE

(at Abe)

I talked to Buzz last night and he was inconsolable. Says he wished he'd drowned in the lake that day.

ABE

He would have, if I hadn't saved him.

STEVIE

Just to kill him again?

MIDGE

(reading)

'To watch "They Came, They Danced" is to reside in hell. I felt an anger and despair I had not felt since I was a young man realizing that the American Dream came with an enormous asterisk.' Oh, Papa...

ABE

What - I'm paid to speak the truth. I'm paid to be honest.

STEVIE

Were you this honest when your daughter stunk up the show in '53?

MIDGE

(much umbrage)

Now once and for all, people - I may not be Mary Martin or Jessica Tandy, but I was a decent Clare and I did not stink up the show. My singing isn't perfect, but in musical theater, character is more important than technique.

Midge is drawn away into a side argument.

PAULY

Abe Weissman - you stood there, sipping champagne, making small talk, quoting Oscar Wilde, hugging Buzz, toasting Buzz... All while holding the knife of Cain behind your back.

ABE

Oh, Pauly, don't be so dramatic.

PAULY

You're the only one who can speak truth?

ABE

Truth, huh? Truth? Well, there's nothing in the Hebrew Bible indicating that Cain killed Abel with a knife. So much for your truth.

PAULY

Yes, there is. The Book of Genesis, Cain killed Abel, and it's implied that it was with a knife.

ABE

Rabbi, chime in here.

RABBI HUEBSCH

The Torah says that Cain was a worker of the ground.

ABE

Exactly, so it was most likely a hoe or a trowel. He didn't carry a knife.

PAULY

And not that you care, but my hard-earned nest egg - kaput!

ABE

You said you invested a small slice, Pauly. Don't exaggerate for effect!

PAULY

Small for the show - big for me!

JOEL

You know, the show was not very good.

Joel is now pulled into his own side argument with a couple people, including Josiah, as Abe continues addressing everyone else.

ABE

I was nice in this review. I very kindly used the show to talk about the rot at the heart of the American theater instead of listing all its faults.

EDIE

What about the song?

ABE

It has one good song! That's it. You can't have a musical with one good song!

(off Rose's attitude)

And I don't know why you're on their side. That character you loved to hate? The rude, hectoring busybody? It's you.

ROSE

I beg your pardon.

ABE

Her name was Iris. Rose, Iris... She sipped sherry, had a fortune teller, two kids...

EDIE

You ruined the show and now you've ruined poor Akiva's bar mitzvah.

AKIVA

Yeah, I wish I hadn't invited you, Mr. Weissman.

MOISHE

(still miffed)

No offense, but there were a lot of problems with your invite list, kid.

PAULY

So you didn't like it. Fine. You have to kill it for everyone else? It's a nice little show, it isn't doing any harm.

ABE

It is! Because out there, there's a great show that isn't getting the resources it needs to be seen.

MOISHE

What show?

ABE

What do you mean, what show?

MOISHE

What show? What's this great show that's sitting out there with no resources and no money?

ABE

There's ten shows out there that could use resources. Twenty.

SHIRLEY

What are the twenty shows?

MIDGE

He's saying that if you give to one thing, you're taking from another.

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
(from somewhere in the
balcony)
This from the girl who stunk up the
Catskills with her ham acting!

MIDGE
Who said that? Don't hide! Who
said that?!

ABE
Stop, everybody, stop!

Everyone calms down.

ABE (CONT'D)
I am a distraction. And
apparently, an enemy of the people.
So I will leave so that you can
carry on with the ceremony.

He turns to Rose. She nods to say she'll go with him.
Everyone watches as they make their way into the aisle.

ABE (CONT'D)
But there's something you all need
to know going forward...

He stands in the aisle, before the whole congregation, and
fixes them with steely eyes.

ABE (CONT'D)
(dead serious)
You are the frog... I am the
scorpion. I sting... Because it is
my nature.

There's a long beat as Abe waits for them all to take this
in. Abe and Rose then head up the aisle.

ABE (CONT'D)
(to Rose)
Damn, I wish I had my cape.

40 INT. MIDGE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - THAT NIGHT (N5)

40

Rose sits at the table, sipping sherry, and Abe is at the
desk area. Both are exhausted from the day at the temple.

ROSE

So what if I make demands, I mean,
how hard is it to make room
temperature water? It's the
temperature of the room.

ABE

Hey, do we know a Mr. Fibbi?

ROSE

Fibbi? What kind of a name is
that?

ABE

It says '4:30. Mr. Fibbi called.
Will call back.'

ROSE

Doesn't ring a bell.

ABE

Zelda never takes the first name.
I keep telling her to do that.

ROSE

The staff always seemed so happy to
have their mistakes corrected.
(the phone rings)
And there is a certain way to cut a
grapefruit. God made those
segments for a reason.

Abe answers the phone.

ABE

Hello?

ASHER

(very pleasant)
Abe? It's Asher.

ABE

(pleased)
Asher. This is a surprise.

41 INT. ASHER'S HOUSE - MIAMI - SAME TIME (N5)

41

Asher sits in a chair of his Florida house.

ASHER

Really? I'm a little surprised
that you're surprised.

ABE

Why?

ASHER

Well, a friend sent me this thing you wrote. In the Village Voice. You review this show.

(looks at paper)

'They Came, They Danced.' Sounds like a piece of shit.

ABE

That's putting it mildly.

ASHER

Then you got a little nostalgic at the end. With the asterisk and the American Dream. Which segued nicely into something the two of us did back in the twenties.

ABE

My editor likes me to get personal.

ASHER

(angry)

But did he like the fact that you fingered the two of us for a federal fucking crime, Abe?!

ABE

What are you talking about?

ASHER

The nifty little paragraph about art and anarchy where you describe very vividly how you and I set a federal building on fire.

ABE

Oh, that was years ago. No one cares.

ASHER

The FBI does.

ABE

What?

ASHER

They want to see us in the New York field office next week.

ABE

The FBI hasn't contacted me.

ASHER

They will. Trust me. So kiss your loved ones goodbye and grab your toothbrush, Abe, because you and I are gonna be breaking rocks at Leavenworth. Which is gonna be hell on my gout. See you in New York!

ABE

Asher!

Asher has hung up. Abe hangs up, sighs. It's been a long day. He sits back down and looks at the note again.

INSERT: ON THE NOTE. It reads: "4:30. Mr. FIBBI CALLED."

ABE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Mr. Fibbi...

Rose continues drinking her sherry.

42 INT. GASLIGHT CAFE - SAME TIME (N5)

42

A small ocarina combo performs on stage. The picture of Jackie is displayed on an easel. We PAN the full house and land on Midge and Susie. They each have a drink in hand. Susie smokes Jackie's pipe. They hold up their drinks.

SUSIE

To Jackie - a man who didn't suffer fools gladly and thought everyone was a fool. A man whose love of ocarinas summed up his total lack of musical taste. A man who borrowed ten bucks from me the day before he died, because somehow, he knew. A man who knew how to drive me crazier than any person in the fucking world except you. A man who was... My friend.

MIDGE

To Jackie.

SUSIE

To Jackie.

They clink glasses and drink.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW