[10.18] Roe to Perdition

Roe to Perdition

Written by Jon Sherman Directed by Jerry Zaks

Production Code: 10.18

Episode Number In Production Order: 228

Filmed on:

Original Airdate on NBC: March 18, 2003

Transcript written on May 7, 2003

Transcript (Kelly Dean Hansen)

Skyline: Lights come on in various buildings.

ACT I

[Scene 1 - A small specialty foods store. Frasier and Niles walk in.]

Niles: Oh, uh, get a cart.

Frasier: Oh, could you get it, Niles, please? They're so small they

make me feel like I'm some sort of fairy tale giant.

[Niles gets a cart. It looks like a child's toy.]

Niles: Hey, any thoughts about what to serve?

Frasier: Well, I thought we might serve a house-cured gravlax with crème

fraiche and a sprig of dill.

Niles: Oh, in other words the usual.

Frasier: For your information, Niles, people happen to like it.

Niles: Yes, people like animated musicals.

[NB: I can't let this pass. I love animated musicals.

And both Kelsey and David have done voice parts in animated musicals.

So there! - Kelly Dean Hansen]

Frasier: Oh, honestly.

Niles: Frasier, look! Caviar.

Frasier: They haven't had any in ages. This is just what we need to make

our soiree soignée. [chuckles and examines the caviar] Whoa.

Good heavens. It's \$100 an ounce.

Niles: Well, it must be mis-marked. [to the owner] Excuse me! Is the

Beluga really \$100 an ounce?

Robert: [heavy French accent] Yes.

Frasier: Well, isn't that rather a lot to pay?

Robert: To you, yes. To the fish who gave up her life so that you could

spread her unborn children on a cracker, it's not so much.

[N.B. Francois Giroday reprises his role as Robert from [5.17], "The Perfect Guy".]

[A man in black, with a leather jacket, approaches them.]

Petyr: [heavy Russian accent] You know, the reason for such high prices

is the Russian mafia. They control this market.

Niles: [stupidly] The Russian mafia controls Robert's Gourmet Goodies?

Frasier: [impatient with Niles] He means the caviar market, you ninny.

Petyr: I have Beluga for sale. Top quality, fair price.

[Petyr gestures for them to follow them. He exits the store. Somewhat surprised, they follow him out to the patio.]

Petyr: [handing Frasier a card] The name is Petyr. I recently arrived

on my cousin's ship, the Caspian Queen with beautiful

Beluga caviar. But because of those gangsters, we cannot sell.

So I do it like this. Quietly. How much you want?

Frasier: How do we know this isn't some sort of scam?

Petyr: It's no scam.

[He reaches for a bottle inside his coat, and hands it to Frasier.]

Petyr: Look inside.

[Frasier looks at the caviar, stunned. Petyr pulls out a cloth napkin.]

Petyr: You taste!

[Frasier and Niles each take small spoons from the napkin. While Frasier samples the caviar, Niles wipes down his spoon with his trusty handkerchief. Frasier's face expresses that the caviar is divine.]

Frasier: You really must try this, Niles.

[Niles does so. His facial expression is equally ecstatic. Petyr gives them a questioning look.]

Niles: It's like being kissed by a lusty mermaid!

[Petyr takes back the spoons. Niles is still licking his as it is taken.]

Petyr: So, you are interested, yes?

Frasier: Maybe, but how can we be sure that you are not Russian mafia yourself?

Petyr: [gravely] Because for six generations my family fished the Caspian. Then ten years ago, the bastards come. They burn my father's boat. [with increasing passion] They steal my mother's salt so she cannot prepare the roe. And if they know I sell Beluga for \$40 an ounce! They would cut out my tongue and pluck out my eyes!

Niles: Did you say \$40 an ounce?

[Petyr nods and smiles. Fade out.]

[Scene 2 - Frasier's apartment.

Daphne is preparing the table. Niles is pacing. Frasier is also waiting.]

Niles: Shouldn't our caviar be here by now?

Frasier: It'll be here, Niles, I gave Roz explicit instructions.

Niles: What if we've been swindled? What if the tins are filled with

sand?

Frasier: Niles, I am, as you know, an excellent judge of character. And in Petyr, I saw an honest, hard-working fisherman.

Daphne: Why didn't you have him deliver it here?

Frasier: What? I don't want him knowing where I live!

[The doorbell rings. Frasier answers. Roz is wearing sunglasses.]

Roz: The Russian bear hunts by night!

Frasier: Very funny, Roz, come on. Give me that. [She hands him a small insulated cooler.] All right, let's have a look.

[He opens the cooler and grabs a tin. He and Niles look at it and speak with awe and wonder.]

Frasier: [whispering in awe] Oh! Niles!

[Niles swoons. Frasier beams.]

Daphne: It's beautiful.

Roz: I don't get what the big deal is about caviar. I had it once.

It was nothing special.

Frasier: Well, Roz, a lot of things can affect caviar. Where did you

have it?

Roz: On a mini-bagel at the Tucson Doubletree.

[Niles immediately offers Roz the tin.]

Niles: Here, try this.

Roz: [sampling the caviar] Hmmm. Wow.

Frasier: Mm-hmm.

Roz: That's good.

Frasier: Yes.

Roz: That's really good. What's your little party for tonight?

Frasier: Invited guests. I'm sorry, Roz.

Roz: What?

Frasier: [shepherding Roz out the door] Thank you for your help. See you later.

[Martin enters as Roz exits.]

Martin: Oh, hey, Roz.

Frasier: Oh, hi, Dad.

Martin: Hey! Hey, everybody. Check this out! I just went to the ATM for \$20, as you can see from this receipt, and it gave me \$60. I won 40 bucks!

Niles: You mean the bank lost \$40.

[He hangs up his coat.]

Daphne: You know, you can't keep that. It's bad karma.

Martin: Sorry. This is America. A land built on the principle, "Finders Keepers."

Daphne: Oh, come on. There's a toll-free service number right here on the receipt. Just call them and tell them what happened.

Martin: Why should I?

Daphne: Because otherwise, you could end up like my brother Nigel and his baby teeth.

[General silence. The three Crane men all roll their eyes and look at each other uncomfortably. After a long pause, Niles takes the inevitable "Daphne family story" bait.]

Niles: [deadpan] What happened with your brother Nigel and his baby teeth? Daphne: Well, like any child, the first time he had a tooth fall out he put

it under his pillow at bedtime, and sure enough, the next morning he found that Winston Churchill had left him a shiny new coin.

Martin: Question.

Niles: No, Dad, we're not stopping. Go ahead, Darling.

Daphne: Well, instead of being grateful, he got greedy and went off to

school, punching people in their mouths and scooping up their teeth. [Martin reacts to this.] Of course, it didn't work and he got kicked out of school, became a thief, and eventually went to prison.

[Martin doesn't "get it." He looks at Frasier, who tries to lead Daphne to the story's "moral."]

Frasier: Where he... fittingly had all of his teeth knocked out...?

Daphne: No, he lost his teeth years earlier in a rock-eating contest.

Now that's an interesting story. We were renting a house next to a quarry at the time...

Martin: [unwilling to take any more] All right, all right, I'll call the bank!

[He rises. Fade out.]

[Scene 3 - Frasier's apartment.

The soiree is going very well. Frasier is speaking to a couple.]

Mr. Michaels: Very kind of you to have us here, Crane.

Mrs. Michaels: Yes, it's wonderful. But then you must be used to hosting successful parties.

Frasier: [matter-of-factly] Oh, not really. Something's usually on fire by now.

Frasier: Well, I wish I could tell you but it's uh... a private

source.

Mr. Michaels: Well, perhaps I should mention then that, uh, this is for our yacht party, at which there just might be room enough

for another guest.

Frasier: Okay, what are we talking here?

Mr. Michaels: Well, maybe five, six ounces?

Frasier: [sucking up] Let me go see what's in the refrigerator.

Mr. Michaels: Thatta boy, Crane!

[Frasier exits to the kitchen, where Niles is gathering the tins of caviar. Martin is on the phone, in the background.]

Frasier: Niles, what are you doing?

Niles: Oh, good news. Emile Sinclair is crazy about the caviar. If we sell him the rest, he distinctly implied he could get our squash lockers moved further from the showers. Isn't that fantastic?

Martin: [on the phone, enunciating] Per-son-al.

Frasier: Yes, well, it would be, Niles, if the Michaelses weren't equally enamored of it and dangling an invitation to a yacht party.

Niles: [gasping] That is a pickle! Martin: [to the phone] Check-ing.

Frasier: Niles, why don't we just call Petyr and order some more caviar?

That way we can satisfy both Sinclair and the Michaels.

Martin: Cus-to-mer Ser-vice!

Frasier: You know, Niles, this caviar connection could really open some doors for us, hmm?

Martin: [now yelling into the phone] Per-son-al!

Niles: What you doing, Dad?

Martin: Oh, this stupid bank's automated voice system. It's like a maze!

Frasier: All right, give it here. [taking the phone] You just push "O," and you'll get an operator. Little trick I learned. Another menu, hmm. Sometimes it's a star. [He tries it.] All right, maybe "1" will get me back to a main menu. Ah. Here you go.

Martin: Got me to the right department?

Frasier: No, but if I remember my high school Spanish correctly, you just qualified for a small-business loan.

[Martin is frustrated. He takes the phone. Fade out.]

[Scene 4 - Bank lobby.

Daphne and Martin approach the counter. A male teller greets them.]

Teller: Hi, can I help you?

Martin: Yes, uh, I was at one of your ATM's yesterday, and it gave me back more than it should have, so I want to...

Teller: [interrupting] Okay, for that you're going to need to complete an ATM trouble report [producing one] and then take it to our operations officer at the desk over there.

Martin: You mean I have to fill this out before I can give you 40 bucks?

Teller: Yes, sir.

Martin: But your sign says, "Making banking simpler!"

Teller: Yes, sir.

Martin: Well, this isn't simpler, it's more complicated.

Teller: Yes, sir, it is.
Martin: Oh, forget it.

[He and Daphne leave the counter and walk to a table.]

Martin: I knew this was going to be more trouble than it's

worth.

Daphne: A little paperwork's a small price to pay for a clear conscience.

Martin: Yeah, meanwhile, I'm out 40 bucks.

Daphne: It's not your money!

[They approach the desk indicated by the teller. A male officer greets them.]

Officer: Can I help you?

Martin: Yes, uh, I had some trouble with one of your ATM's.

Officer: Oh, I can't help you. I need a manager.

[He exits to the rear.]

Daphne: I'm proud of you. Trust me, when this is over, you'll feel

better.

Martin: You really think so?

Daphne: I'm sure of it.

Martin: Ah, maybe you're right. Maybe I will feel better. And if you're right about that karma stuff, I got a good thing

coming to me.

Daphne: [looking out the window] Uh-oh. How much money did you put

in the meter?

Martin: Oh, son of a bitch!

[The bank manager, a woman, enters.]

Manager: Hi, Mr. Crane, I'm Bree, Todd's manager. I wanted to apologize for the trouble you had with our ATM. And make sure that you

got your \$40.

[She offers him the cash.]

Martin: What, uh, oh, no, no! You don't need to give anything to me.

The machine accidentally gave me \$60 instead of \$20, so I need

to give *you* \$40.

Manager: So, you want to put this in your account?

[Daphne rolls her eyes.]

Martin: No, no! I want you to take it, plus this \$40, and put it back

wherever it came from.

Manager: Well, I'm afraid I've already done the paperwork. Now, you'll need to speak with our branch manager, and he's out of town.

Martin: This is ridiculous!

Manager: I'm sorry. Although, there is one other possibility. Let me

try something.

Martin: Thank you.

Manager: Don't mention it.

[She picks up the phone and dials. Martin glares at Daphne.]

Manager: [in the "enunciating" tone previously used by Martin] Per-son-al.

[Martin sighs and sinks into a chair. Fade out.]

[Scene 5 - Café Nervosa.

Frasier and Niles are seated. Niles is checking "order slips."]

Niles: Sandoval, four ounces.

Frasier: Right.

Niles: Smoot, five ounces.

Frasier: Right.

Niles: McBean, ten ounces.

Frasier: Hmm, ten?

Niles: Yes, I know it's a lot, but he promised me the use of his Sonoma estate.

Frasier: Yes, well, for ten he should. You know, for eight, the Ashworths gave me the use of their box on the opera's opening night gala.

Niles: But that's the same weekend as the black and white ball? When are we going to sleep?

[They laugh cheerily.]

Frasier: Sleep is for people without social lives.

[They continue to chuckle and clink their coffee cups. Roz approaches.]

Roz: So, boys, where's my cut?

Niles: What are you talking about?

Frasier: I promised her a cut, you see, I was so busy at work taking orders I needed her help.

Roz: You know what it's really good on? Scrambled eggs. And pizza. And potato skins!

Frasier: Yes, Roz, welcome to caviar.

Roz: At work, during the show, I'm just sitting there thinking, "Two hours to caviar. One hour to caviar." You don't have any on you do you?

[Frasier and Niles exchange glances.]

Niles: Uh, no, no, we're expecting some momentarily.

Roz: Cool. You think it'd be good on a cheese Danish? I think it would. I'm getting one.

[She rises. Petyr approaches the table with a small cooler.]

Petyr: Gentlemen.

Frasier: Oh, Petyr, hello!

Petyr: Yes, hello, but I'm afraid also goodbye.

Frasier: Hmm, what? Niles: What-what do you mean, goodbye? Petyr: All these orders I fill for you, it draws too much attention. It's too risky for me. Frasier: What-what are you saying, that there's no more caviar? Petyr: [placing the cooler on the table] This is my last delivery. Frasier: [looking inside frantically] But this isn't nearly enough! Niles: We've made commitments to some very powerful people. If we disappoint them, there's no telling what they might do! Petyr: They will break legs? Cut off thumbs? Niles: Worse! There'll be gossip. Frasier: Petyr, please, just one more delivery! Petyr: [rising] I cannot, the danger is too great. [He exits.] Frasier: Petyr! [gasping] Dear God! We're ruined, Niles. We owe people all over town. Niles: I know. Roz: Is some of that mine? Can I have it now? Frasier: Roz, Roz, I'm terribly sorry. It seems our supplier is going out of business, and every ounce of this is spoken for. Roz: Well, that's too bad. Oh, well, whatever, I was thinking of giving it up, anyway. Too much salt. Frasier: Yes, good girl. All right, Niles, we can't panic. I think I may have a plan. Niles: [sarcastically] I like it. Frasier: We may have to bite the bullet and buy retail. Niles: Petyr's stuff is much better quality. Our friends will notice the difference. Frasier: Not if we cut it with what's left of the good stuff. Niles: Well, how much is there? Frasier: There's... [He notices the cooler is gone, as is Roz] Frasier: Roz!! [They chase after her. Fade out.] END OF ACT I ACT II [Scene 6 - Robert's Gourmet Shop. Frasier and Niles enter worriedly. Niles: This will cost us a fortune. Frasier: Well, what else can we do? [approaching Robert] Excuse me. Do you happen to know where we can get [pausing] five pounds of Beluga caviar? Robert: There's not that much Beluga in all of Seattle. Niles: Thank you. [They move away.] Niles: What are we going to do? Frasier: All right, just give me a chance to think, Niles. Ah... What was the name of the boat... Niles: [enthusiastically interrupting] H.M.S. Bounty! Frasier: [qlaring with irritation] This isn't Trivial Pursuit. Let

me finish! What was the name of the boat that Petyr said he

sailed on?

Niles: Caspian Queen.

Frasier: Right! Niles, if we can find that boat, perhaps we can get

enough caviar to solve our problem.

[Roz enters. Upon seeing them, she quickly spins the other way, but they have already seen her.]

Frasier: Roz?

Roz: [emerging] Hey, what are you guys doing here?

Niles: I think the question is, what are you doing here?

Roz: You know, shopping, for stuff...

[She pretends to look at the merchandise.]

Frasier: You're looking for more caviar, aren't you?

Roz: Of course I am! You took all mine!

Frasier: That was ours! You know, Roz, I think you may have a

little problem.

Roz: [desperately] You're the one with the problem! Not me. This is

all your fault. You made me try it. Now I crave it! I really

hate you!

Frasier: Now, Roz, you know you don't mean that. Now, come on. Listen.

It's just possible that we may be able to get some more from our old supplier.

Roz: [excitedly] Is that true? Is he right? I'm sorry I said I hate

you.

Frasier: Roz, Roz, it's all right.

Roz: Are you going to get it today? I love you!

[She throws her arms around Frasier. Fade out.]

[Scene 7 - Frasier's apartment.

Martin is ready to relax in his chair. As he sits, the phone rings. He reluctantly begins to rise, when the doorbell rings. He falls back in his chair. Again the phone rings. He rises and, after indecision, answers the phone.]

Martin: Hello? Oh, no I'm sorry. Frasier isn't here. [becoming irritated] Sure you can place an order. [irritated singsong] Let me transfer you to that department.

[The doorbell rings again as Martin is speaking. He hangs up and opens the door. It is Daphne, carrying her supplies and the mail.]

Martin: Hi, Daph.

Daphne: Hello. The postman gave me your mail.

Martin: Oh, thanks.

Daphne: You ready to get stretched?

Martin: Oh, you mean we're working out today?

Daphne: [impatiently] We work out every day.

[She begins to set up.]

Martin: Yeah, I know. [examining mail] Oh, postcard from the bank! Uh, "Dear Mr. Crane, we apologize for the inconvenience. We have evaluated your request [with amazed irritation] and credited your account \$80?!"

[Scene 8 - Bank lobby.

Martin is in line. Daphne quickly enters.]

Daphne: There's no spaces. I parked your car in a loading zone.

Martin: No, no, pust pull around front and wait for me. This won't

take long.

Daphne: You're sure?

Martin: Yes. And you better get back to the car before Eddie starts

to panic.

[Daphne rushes out. Martin approaches the counter. The teller is female.]

Teller: [cheerily] Hi! How can I help you make banking simpler?

Martin: [agitated] I'll tell you how you can help me. I'm going to talk,

and you're going to listen, and you're going to do exactly as I

ask.

Teller: [apprehensive] I think I should go get a manager.

Martin: [angrily] No, no managers!

Teller: Oh, but our policy is...

Martin: Now this is real simple and I know you can handle it. Now what I want you to do is... [as he speaks, he reaches inside his coat]

Guard: Hold it right there, Mister!

[He turns and sees the guard pointing a gun at him. He quickly raises his hands.]

[Scene 9 - Bank lobby.

Time fade. Martin and Daphne are seated at the back desk. Daphne is holding Eddie. A dignified, bearded gentleman speaks to them.]

President: Mr. Crane, as the president of the bank, I want to assure
 you that it is not our policy to draw firearms on customers
 trying to make a deposit.

[Daphne rolls her eyes and tosses her head back.]

Martin: [wearily] It wasn't a deposit.

President: Now, I'm sure that neither of us wants to turn this into

a protracted legal battle, so if you would simply sign this

non-disclosure agreement here, here, here, and here...

[Martin puts on his eyeglasses.] Our attorneys have authorized

me to compensate you for your troubles in the amount of

\$10,000, which can be credited to your account.

[Martin and Daphne are stunned.]

Martin: Ten grand?!

President: Plus the \$40 from our original mistake.

[Martin gives Daphne a look, seeking "approval." She obviously grants it.]

Martin: [feigning weariness] Oh, what the hell, I just want to get it

over with. [He signs the forms.]

President: That's wonderful. Now, is there anything else I can do for you?

Daphne: [bemused] Could I open an account?

[Fade out.]

THEY CALL HIM VLAD THE IMPORTER

[Scene 10 - A dark ship's interior.

Frasier calls from above and descends a ladder. Two Russians sailors are seated, playing chess.]

Frasier: Ahoy? Ahoy? Is anyone there? [He descends into the cabin.]

Vladimir: Who is there?

Frasier: Oh, hello. I'm Dr. Frasier Crane, and this is my brother, Dr.

Niles Crane. Uh, we're interested in purchasing some Beluga

caviar.

Vladimir: This is not a shop. I have nothing for sale.

Niles: See, let's go.

Frasier: No, no, no, Niles, Niles. This is how the game is played.

Maybe he thinks we're Russian mafia.

Niles: Oh, yes, people make that mistake about us all the time.

Frasier: Petyr gave us this card, and told us that this was his cousin's

boat. Are you sure you can't help us?

[The second sailor takes the card and speaks to Vladimir in Russian. He responds and they laugh heartily. Frasier and Niles play along and laugh with them.]

Vladimir: How much do you need?

Frasier: Five pounds.

[Vladimir gives instructions to the other sailor in Russian, who goes to fetch the caviar. Frasier takes the empty seat.]

Vladimir: \$80 an ounce.

Frasier: Well, we were paying \$40.

Vladimir: And now you pay 80.

Frasier: [attempting to bargain] 50.

Vladimir: 80. Frasier: 60. Vladimir: 80.

Niles: I don't think you're doing this right.

Frasier: [glaring at Niles] 70, that's my final offer!

Vladimir: 80.
Frasier: Done!

[The other sailor approaches with a huge tub of caviar and places it on the table.]

Frasier: I want to taste it first.

Vladimir: Go ahead.

[Niles has pulled out napkins and tiny spoons, but Frasier simply uses his fingers. With apprehension, he samples the caviar. Niles observes.]

Frasier: [relieved and delighted] That's the stuff.

Niles: That's enough to take care of everyone and still go out on top.

Frasier: Yes, all right, here's your money. Pleasure doing business

with you.

[A voice on a loudspeaker is suddenly heard outside.]

Agent: Stop where you are! U.S. Customs!

[The Russians frantically scramble out of the cabin. Frasier and Niles run around in sheer panic.]

Frasier: Oh, my God!

Niles: Frasier, we have to get rid of it!

Frasier: Oh, dear God! Oh, dear God! Oh, dear God! Oh, dear God!

Niles: All right, all right, we have to hide it!

Frasier: [shouting] No, Niles, you can't hide it! They're U.S. Customs.

That's what they do! They find things on ships!

Niles: All right. I know one way to get rid of it.

[He pulls out his tiny caviar spoon and begins frantically scooping it

into his mouth.]

Frasier: [incredulous] Can I get you a toast point? Oh, here, for God's

[They both begin to scoop caviar into their mouths with their bare hands. They spill it all over the table in the process. They continue to scoop rapidly as the officer enters the cabin. When they raise their heads, their faces are covered with black fish eggs, as are their hands.]

Agent: What the hell's all this?

Frasier: [like a deer in the headlights, his mouth still full] It's not

ours. We found it.

Agent: What, the caviar?

Niles: [mouth full] Is that what this is?

Agent: Relax, we don't care about that. We're looking for a couple of

Russians who've been smuggling DVD's.

[They indicate the direction the Russians ran. The officer stares at them for a moment, bemused. He then recovers himself and rushes out in that direction.]

Niles: My heart is pounding!

Frasier: I was afraid we were going to get arrested.

Niles: What have we become?

Frasier: I don't know. We got caught up in a nefarious scheme. And for

what? A visit to a wine country estate?

Niles: A box at the opera?

Frasier: Dinner at the governor's mansion?

[A pause.]

Frasier: How much of this do you think we can salvage?

Niles: I don't know, just start scraping.

[They begin to scrape the caviar off their faces and hands back into the tub. They also collect what has spilled onto the table. Fade out.]

END OF ACT II

Credits:

The brothers are placing the caviar in tins to fill their orders. Niles spills some on his sweater and runs into the kitchen. Frasier follows. Eddie leaps onto the table and begins to eat from the large caviar tub. Frasier and Niles re-enter, horrified, and shoo him away. After taking a moment to recover, they continue to fill the tins as before.

Guest Appearances

Guest Starring

JOHN VICKERY as Petyr MICHAEL WINTERS as Bank President FRANCOIS GIRODAY as Robert

Co-starring

SHANNON COCHRAN as Bank Manager
OLEG STEFAN as Vladimir
DEVLIN ELLIOT as Teller #1
SAL RENDINO as Customs Officer (Agent)
J. KENNETH CAMPBELL as Mr. Michaels
SARAH BROOME as Mrs. Michaels

BRIDGET SIENNA as Teller #2 REGGIE JORDAN as Bank Officer NATE BYNUM, JR. as Guard ENDRE HULES as Russian Crewman

Legal Stuff

This episode capsule is copyright 2002 by Kelly Dean Hansen. This episode summary remains property of Frasier, Copyright of Paramount Productions and NBC. Printed without permission.