

[2.18]The Club

The Club

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Transcript {Brandon Westerheim}

ACT ONE

Scene One - KACL

Frasier is on the air, doing his show.

Frasier: Well, we've got time for one more call. Roz, who've we got?

Roz: We have Sid in Bremerton on three.

Frasier: Hello, Sid. I'm listening.

Sid: [*stiltedly*] Hello, Dr. Crane. I have a terrible fear of talking on the phone to people I do not know. I freeze up. It is a severe handicap in today's fast-paced, highly competitive world.

Frasier: Sid, are you reading what you're saying?

Sid: Uh... [*shuffling papers*] Yes, I am. The only way I can comfortably communicate on the phone is to write everything out I wish to say in advance.

Frasier: Well, what if someone asks you a question you haven't anticipated?

Sid: Uhhhh... [*shuffling papers*] Thank you, Dr. Crane, for your most insightful comment. G-Goodbye. [*hangs up*]

Frasier: Wait, Sid! Sid, if you're listening, your insecurity is rooted in your fear of making a mistake. In order to beat this thing, you're going to have to practice. If you work at it very hard. Then, one day, you too may achieve the command and confidence to which we all aspire to... be having. [*confused look*] This is Dr. Frasier Crane, wishing you good mental health.

Frasier gets up and walks into Roz's booth.

Roz: That was a show good, Frasier.

Frasier: Thank you, Roz.

Niles enters the booth.

Niles: Knock, knock!

Frasier: Oh, Niles! What are you doing here?

Niles: Oh, just stopped by to see how you'd like to go to lunch next week at the Empire Club.

Frasier: You know someone who's a member?

Niles: No, but you may.

Frasier: What are you up to? You have that same smug look you had

on your face when you found that recording of Kirsten Flagstad's 1932 *Gotterdammerung* in the discount bin.

Frasier walks into his booth. Niles follows.

Niles: If you think I look smug now, wait till you see me next week. If all goes well, my lapel will be sagging under the weight of a solid gold membership pin.

Roz enters Frasier's booth.

Roz: Well, you'll certainly fit right in with all those greedy, arrogant bluebloods who wouldn't cross the street to spit on the rest of us.

Niles: Don't jinx it, Roz, I'm not in yet. There's still the cocktail party next week where they screen prospective members, and from what I hear, those can be grueling.

Frasier: So, how did this all come about?

Niles: Oh, really I give the credit to Maris. She spent five years carefully cultivating the right relationships until finally this week, fortune smiled upon us: Old Judge Clement suffered a massive stroke, and, lo! a vacancy opened up.

Frasier: Gives new meaning to the phrase, "a stroke of luck."

Niles chuckles.

Niles: It gets better! There are actually two vacancies, so my chances are double. Edgar Van Cortland has been indicted in that savings and loans scandal. Frasier, I think my time has come.

Frasier: Well, I'm very happy for you.

Niles: That's very generous of you, especially knowing you've always dreamed of a membership yourself. A lesser man would be jealous. [beat] You're not, are you?

Frasier: Not at all.

Niles: Did I mention that they have a planetarium on the third floor?

Frasier: So?!

Niles: I think my work here is done.

Niles exits. Frasier picks up his briefcase and walks into Roz's booth.

Roz: So, Niles is getting into the Empire Club?

Frasier: Well, it would appear so. More power to him. After all, he deserves to have lunch in that private dining room, and read the *Wall Street Journal* in that fabled mahogany library...

Roz: It's eating you up inside, isn't it?

Frasier: Like a carnivorous bacteria. If he gets into that club I should too!

Roz: [picking up phone and dialing] Well, what if I happen to know someone very high up who could probably get you invited to that cocktail party?

Frasier: Oh Roz, don't toy with me!

Roz: [into phone] Mr. Strickland, please. Just tell him it's Roz.

Frasier: Walter Strickland, Jr?!

Roz: Senior.

Frasier: [gasps] Roz, how did you ever get to know someone so important?

Roz: The less you know the happier you'll be.

FADE OUT

Scene Two - Frasier's Apartment

Daphne, her hair done up in curlers, is ironing clothes on the dining table. Martin enters with Eddie.

Martin: Whew! I think I need more comfortable shoes. My dogs are killing me.

Daphne: Pardon?

Martin: My dogs. My feet. What do you call them in England?

Daphne: Well, we mostly call our body parts by their rightful names. Except my uncle Harold. He named parts of his anatomy after the royal family. He walked on the Queen's pins, he sat on the Duchess of Kent. He was quite a jolly fellow. That is, until Aunt Kate caught him introducing the Prince of Wales to a cocktail waitress.

Frasier enters, wearing a tux.

Frasier: Daphne, are you almost finished with that?

Daphne: Yes I am, Dr. Crane. You'll have the handsomest midriff at the Club tonight.

Daphne gives Frasier the freshly ironed cummerbund.

Frasier: Thank you. I hope my date concurs.

Martin: Who are you taking to this shindig?

Frasier: Dr. Susan Anderson. She's as boring as unbuttered toast, but she's a brilliant physician, and been socially well-connected.

Martin: Isn't Niles a little ticked off at you horning in on his big party?

Frasier: Well, yes, he was, at first. But, then I convinced him that we could be of help to each other. If we work together, we can secure both vacancies.

Martin: Boy, you and Niles - it's been the same since you were kids. If one of you has something, the other one always has to have it too. [*the doorbell rings*] I had to buy two Balinese lutes, two découpage kits, two pairs of lederhosen. When you finally moved out of the house that was one embarrassing garage sale.

Frasier answers the door. It is Niles, who is also wearing a tuxedo.

Frasier: Hello, Niles.

Niles: Ready to go?

Frasier: No, actually, I'm still waiting on Susan; she's at the hospital.

Martin: Where's Maris?

Niles: Uh, she stayed in the Mercedes, practicing her vivacious giggle. Let's go over our strategy. I've prepared a crib sheet on each person on the membership committee. There you are...

Frasier and Niles sit on the couch. Niles takes some practice cards out of his pocket and gives them to Frasier.

Frasier: Hmm... School ties... business affiliations... hobbies... mistresses.

Niles: Oh, oh, oh! Now I've also done some research on our competition, and frankly, I don't think we have to worry. One of them flies coach.

They both chuckle condescendingly.

Frasier: We're as good as in!

Niles: Yes, yes...

Frasier: Unless... oh, Niles! I just had the most terrifying thought.

Niles: Hmm?

Frasier: What if some other candidate has gone to the trouble of researching... the skeletons in our own closet?

Frasier and Niles slowly look to Martin, who is opening a beer. Beer sprays all over his face, after which he attempts to wipe it off with his shirt.

Niles: Well, that's as bad as it gets.

Frasier: I wouldn't be so sure. I don't think the membership committee would look kindly on your being arrested for mooning President Nixon at the campaign rally.

Niles: I was young and firm and in love with an anarchist. Besides, that's pretty minor compared to your suicide attempt.

Frasier: [*indignantly*] It was not a legitimate attempt. I only stepped out on that ledge to get Lilith's attention.

The phone rings.

Niles: [*getting up*] Oh, you know Frasier, perhaps Maris and I should head on over without you. We can't have the other candidates getting a leg up on us.

Frasier: Oh, that's a good idea, Niles. I'll see you there.

Niles: Alright. Bye, Dad.

Martin: Good luck.

Niles: Thanks.

Niles exits.

Frasier: [*answering phone*] Hello? Oh, Susan, Susan! Oh my goodness, I've been expecting you. Are you in the car? Oh no, you're still at the hospital? Well, of course I understand. Well, you were a sweetheart to agree to go in the first place. I'll call you tomorrow. [*hangs up*] Fat chance.

Martin: Stood you up, huh?

Frasier: This is disastrous!

Martin: Well, just go stag.

Frasier: No, I've RSVP'd for two. I'll look like some loser who couldn't even scrape up a date.

Martin: Wait a minute. What are we worried about? We've got our very own Cinderella right under this roof.

Daphne enters, heading for the kitchen.

Daphne: Well, that's the last time I try to get grout up without wearing rubber gloves. I've got so much gunk under my nails I look like I've been worming a pig.

Martin: [*to Frasier*] Trust me, the English accent'll sell it.

Frasier looks dubious.

FADE TO:

THE CRANE SCRUTINY

Scene Three - The Empire Club

Frasier and Daphne enter a very luxuriously furnished clubroom. Men in crisp tuxedos mingle, drinking expensive liqueurs. Frasier is dazzled by the opulence of the club.

Frasier: Oh... oh, yes... oh, it's everything I've ever imagined it would be and more!

Daphne: What's that smell, Dr. Crane?

Frasier sniffs the air.

Frasier: [breathlessly] That's power. Oh, Daphne, listen, call me Frasier. I don't want people to know that you work for me, all right? If they ask, we've been dating for six months.

Daphne: Alright, Frasier. [she laughs] Anything else, Frasier? Now, are we in love, or is this just a physical thing, Frasier? [she grins]

Frasier: Oh, now just stop that!

Frasier and Daphne walk in arm in arm. Suddenly they spot Niles, who rushes over to greet them.

Frasier: Oh, Niles, Niles! How goes the chase?

Niles: Brilliantly! [he sees Daphne; breathlessly] Daphne!

Daphne: Evening, Dr. Crane.

Niles: What are you doing here?

Daphne: Oh, Frasier takes me everywhere, don't you, sweetheart? I think I'll go sample some of the hors d'oeuvres. Back in a minute, darling.

She moves off.

Niles: [apoplectic] "Sweetheart?" "Darling?"

Frasier: Listen, my date canceled, Daphne's filling in, all right? You can't honestly think that I would end up going out with Daphne?

Niles: Well, you are a man. She is a goddess... whose bedroom is, after all, only forty-one steps from your own.

Frasier: On a completely unrelated topic, where's Maris?

Niles: The last I saw, she was apologizing to one of the other candidate's wives. Apparently, Maris bumped an entire chafing dish of crabmeat into the poor woman's décolletage.

Frasier: Accidents will happen.

Niles: Yes. As long as they keep the hors d'oeuvres flowing, they will.

Frasier feels the back of one of the leather armchairs.

Frasier: [gasps] My god! Niles, feel this leather! Oh, I have had pudding stiffer than this!

Niles: Oh, Frasier! [points to a man filling a pipe nearby] Kenneth Spencer!

Frasier and Niles take out a small blue index card, scan its contents, and stroll over to Kenneth Spencer.

Frasier: Yes, Niles, I'm sure it was very satisfying being Phi Beta Kappa at Yale, but surely you would have been happier to wear the orange and black of Princeton.

Kenneth Spencer overhears and looks up suddenly.

Niles: Of course, anyone who's anyone went to Princeton.

Spencer: Excuse me, I'm Kenneth Spencer. I couldn't help but overhear you. As it happens, I went to Princeton.

Frasier/Niles: [seemingly surprised] Oh, no!

Niles: What are the odds?

Frasier: Allow me. [shaking hands] I'm Dr. Frasier Crane, and this is

my brother, Dr. Niles Crane, the eminent psychiatrist.

Niles: My brother is too kind. He was already eminent when my eminence was merely imminent.

Daphne approaches.

Daphne: Here, try this caviar, Frasier.

Frasier: Thanks.

Daphne: I'm sorry it took so long, but I met the most charming gentleman, Edgar Van Cortland.

Frasier: Van Cortland? I thought he lost his membership in the S & L scandal.

Spencer: Actually, he was acquitted of all charges and reinstated in the club.

Frasier: Oh, he was innocent?

Spencer: No, just acquitted.

He chuckles, and the Crane men join in, but the shift in Frasier and Niles's attitudes is immediate and drastic.

Niles: So does that mean that there's only one membership?

Spencer: Yes - oh, but not to worry. If one of you should be selected, you can always bring the other along as a guest.

Niles: Well, if only one of us can be honored with a membership, I hope it will be you, Frasier.

Spencer: That's a very noble sentiment.

Niles: Well, I know how much it means to him. We can't risk another splashy suicide attempt.

Frasier chuckles lightly, and puts a brotherly arm around Niles's shoulders.

Frasier: That's very amusing, Niles, using humor to defuse a tense situation. I'm sure that stood you in good stead when you were in prison for threatening the president.

Niles is about to object, when Frasier squeezes his collarbone enough to make him gasp. Mr. Drake, the club president, calls from across the room.

Drake: Kenneth? Kenneth!

Spencer: Excuse me.

Kenneth Spencer moves off. Niles and Frasier begin bickering furiously, with Niles yelping in pain as Frasier tightens his grip on him. Daphne finally stops them.

Daphne: Oh, stop it! Do you intend to stand there running each other down and ruin both your chances?

Frasier: No, no.

Niles: Of course you're right.

Daphne: Thank you.

Wentworth, a butler, approaches them.

Wentworth: Cocktails, gentlemen?

Frasier: Oh, yes, I'd like two ounces of your best 18-year-old Lowland single malt scotch.

Drake: [*sitting in one of the armchairs*] There's a discriminating choice.

Niles: Yes, my brother has an extensive knowledge of fine wines and spirits - undoubtedly acquired during the years when he was shackled up with a barmaid.

Niles gives a light chuckle, and hurries off. Frasier smiles at Drake, and chases after Niles.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Scene Four - Café Nervosa

Frasier and Roz are sitting at a table in the corner.

Roz: So my mom says, "how come you never bring your boyfriends out to meet me?" And I say, "Mom, the plane trip to Wisconsin takes four hours, and that's longer than most of my relationships last."

Niles enters and takes a table, and apparently does not notice Frasier.

Frasier: Oh, there's Niles. No, don't look at him! Pretend we don't even see him.

Roz: Real mature, Frasier.

Frasier: Thanks to that backstabber, I will never get to say the phrase I've been rehearsing for a lifetime: "If you need me, I'll be at my club."

Roz: Frasier, this is so boring! Don't you both owe each other an apology?

Frasier: Well, yes! But I was the first to apologize last time. Oh, wait - that means it's his turn! Oh, goody, I can be mature about this!

Frasier gets up and slowly walks over to Niles's table.

Frasier: Niles.

Niles: Frasier.

Frasier: After last night's behavior, I believe an apology is in order.

Niles: I agree... Well?

Frasier: "Well," what?

Niles: It's your turn. I apologized first last time.

Frasier: No, you didn't!

Niles: I did so! I distinctly remember. It was after that shouting match at the Monet exhibit. I had my secretary leave a heartfelt apology with your service.

Frasier: So you did. That means it is my turn again... Damn! [he pauses] I'm sorry.

Niles: Me too!

They both begin to apologize to each other profusely.

Frasier: I can't believe we just turned on each other like that.

Niles: It was embarrassing. My only excuse is that all my life, I have dreamed of belonging to an exclusive club like the Empire. Even as a child, when I formed clubs with my teddy bears, there were always two or three who didn't make the cut.

Niles's cell phone rings.

Niles: Hello? Yes, this is Dr. Crane. [to Frasier] It's the club. [into phone] Yes? I see. Well, thank you for considering me. If you'd care to speak to my brother he's right here. [he hands the phone to Frasier:] Be gracious.

Frasier: [dejectedly] Hello? Yes, I see. Thank you very much for calling. Goodbye. [he hangs up and stares at the table]

Niles: Don't let it get you down. We got along fine without them

before and we'll get along fine now. [*Frasier is silent*]
 We are getting along without them, aren't we?

Frasier: Niles...

Niles: Oh my god... you got in.

Frasier nods.

Niles: ...Congratulations. I'd better go break the news to Maris.
 [*he gets up*]

Frasier: Believe me, Niles, your getting passed up like this has drained every drop of joy from this.

Niles: Thank you. You're a good brother.

Niles exits the café. Roz comes over and hugs Frasier.

Frasier: YES!!! I got in, I got in! I got... shout it from the rooftops! Lattes for everyone! This is the proudest day of my life!

Niles has reentered the café to get his coat and sees Frasier rejoicing. He gives him an icy glare.

Frasier: [*puts a hand on Niles's shoulder*] Of course, what really matters is family.

Niles disgustedly takes Frasier's hand off and exits.

FADE TO:

Scene Five - Frasier's Apartment

In the kitchen, Martin is dangling a piece of meat above Eddie.

Martin: Beg! Come on, boy, we've been working on this, you can do it.
 Beg?

Eddie stays sitting and does nothing.

Martin: Sit! Good boy! [*he gives him the meat*]

Frasier enters the kitchen.

Frasier: Dad, what are you doing?

Martin: I'm teaching Eddie a new trick.

Frasier: With my twenty-six-dollar-a-pound imported prosciutto?

Martin: Aw, wait'll you see it. It's worth it!

Frasier: Not unless he can sing the love duet from *Tosca*.

Frasier leaves the kitchen. Martin follows.

Martin: Where you going?

Frasier: [*getting his coat*] Down to the Empire Club. I've come to a moral decision. I'm going to insist that they give Niles my membership.

Martin: [*sitting down in his chair*] Wow! That's a hell of a gesture.

Frasier: Yes well, I put myself in Niles' place. After all, he's spent the last fifteen years diligently trying to climb Seattle's social ladder, then I waltz in and within two years I'm known throughout the city. To top it all off, I end up grabbing the prize he's wanted most of all. It just isn't fair.

Martin: You're a good kid, Frasier.

Frasier: Thank you, Dad. [*Daphne enters, carrying a laundry basket*] I might as well say this while I still can: "If anyone needs me... I'll be at my club."

He starts to exit.

Daphne: Oh, yes, the club. The club that I helped you get into. Of course, now that you're done with me, I'm just cast aside... [*hangs her head*] unappreciated, unloved, and forgotten.

Frasier: Yes well, I see the prosciutto isn't the only imported ham in the house.

Frasier exits.

Daphne: Give me your shirt. I'm not going down without a full load. [*Martin takes off his shirt*] Have you got anything white?

Martin: Yeah, but you're not getting 'em.

The doorbell rings and Daphne answers it to Niles.

Daphne: Hello, Dr. Crane.

Niles: Hello, Daphne. Hello, Dad.

Martin: Niles.

Niles turns to speak to Daphne, but she has already disappeared out the door, lowering his spirits further.

Niles: Just passed Frasier in the hall. Where was he off to?

Martin: He went to the Club.

Niles dejectedly feigns laughter.

Niles: No wonder he was evasive. I hope you don't mind my stopping by. I just had to get out of the house, and Lord knows I had no place else to go. [*he collapses on the couch*]

Martin: You know, Niles, you may get into that club yet.

Niles begins to chuckle but stops and lifts his head.

Niles: What are you talking about?

Martin: That's why Frasier went down there: to tell them to give his spot to you.

Niles: [*sits up*] Dad, is this one of your sick jokes?

Martin: Well, I thought you'd be happy! He's giving up his own membership.

Niles gets up angrily.

Niles: What exactly did you think I would be happy about?! This is humiliating - my big brother going down there to make them take me?

Martin: Well, his heart's in the right place. You could show a little gratitude.

Niles: Dad, they made their decision. If they didn't take me on my own merits I certainly don't want them to take me out of pity. I don't care if they invite me now, I don't even care if they beg!

Eddie suddenly gets up on his hind legs and starts to beg.

Martin: Good boy!

Niles exits.

FADE TO:

HE AIN'T HEAVY...HE'S MY BROTHER

Scene Six - The Empire Club

Frasier is once again at the Empire Club. He sees Wentworth.

Frasier: Excuse me, is the club president here?

Wentworth: Yes, Dr. Crane. Mr. Drake is over there.

He points to a slightly elderly gentleman sitting in one of the central leather armchairs.

Frasier: Thank you.

Frasier walks over to Mr. Drake.

Frasier: Excuse me, Mr. Drake?

Drake: Yes?

Frasier: Dr. Frasier Crane.

Drake: [*shakes hand with Frasier*] Oh yes, of course! The new blood. Please, sit down.

Frasier: Thank you. [*does so*] Sir, I've come here on a matter of personal business. It's about my brother, Niles. You see, Niles is a sort of... [*sinking into chair*] Oh... ohhhh! Oh my God! This leather's as soft as a baby's bottom!

Drake: Yes, on family night we bring the babies in and do a blindfold comparison test.

Frasier looks incredulous.

Drake: [*stern*] That's a joke, Crane.

Frasier: [*suddenly laughing*] Oh, yes! Yes, indeed, yes. Darned good one too, sir. Yes, as I was saying, although my brother may seem a bit priggish at times, believe me, he's one of the most discriminating people I've ever known. In fact, I think you'd be hard pressed to find a bigger snob in this room, I mean...

Wentworth approaches, carrying a tray containing two glasses and a bottle of port.

Wentworth: Excuse me, sir, I thought you might enjoy a glass of port.

Frasier: [*Reading label*] 1896?!

Drake: What are you trying to say, Crane?

Frasier: [*raises his glass*] Glad to be aboard, sir! [*then:*] No, no, no... No, I came down here to simply say that my brother deserves membership more than I do, and I would like to step down in his favor.

Drake: Are you serious?

Frasier: Yes, yes I am... after all, blood is thicker than port. [*sips the port*] I stand corrected!

Drake: Let me be candid with you, Crane. We all liked your brother, but some were quite firm about accepting anybody in the entertainment business. I'm afraid "radio psychiatrist" falls into that category.

Frasier: Radio psychiatrist? But Niles...

Niles enters just in time to hear:

Frasier: Mr. Drake, there's been a terrible mistake.

Niles: No, Frasier, there hasn't.

Frasier gets up hurriedly.

Frasier: Niles!

Niles: Dad told me you would be here, trying to get me into your snooty little club. Well, you needn't bother.

Frasier: Niles, you don't understand!

Niles: No, you don't understand! You don't need to be the big brother anymore. I don't need you to fight my battles!

Frasier: But, Niles-!

Niles: No, butt out!

Frasier: Okay...

Niles: [to Mr. Drake] And as for you, you've made it quite clear how you feel about me, so I'd like to share how I feel about you. I'd sooner spend my leisure time in a smelly bus station than spend one moment with you smug, elitist bigwigs, with your clichéd oriental carpets and your overstuffed chairs. [feels chair] My God, it's like a baby's bottom! [then:] You can't reject me, because I reject you! Yes, I'm talking to you, Fuzzy! I prefer to remain Niles Crane, Everyman. [he throws his arm over Wentworth's shoulders] Friend of the average Joe.

Frasier: Niles, they got our names mixed up. I didn't get in, you did.

Niles: What?

Frasier: It was you they wanted all along.

Niles: Really? I'm in? [to Wentworth] Good God, don't just stand there, man, fetch me some port and step lively!

Drake: [to Wentworth] Will you escort these gentlemen out?

Niles: Oh, no, no, no, no... [sits in chair, and begins to rub his cheek on the wing] You can't think that I meant those things that I was saying before.

Wentworth: Excuse me, sir, I'm afraid I must ask you to leave.

Niles: [stands up defiantly] You and who else?

Someone taps Niles on the shoulder. Niles turns around and sees a very large butler standing there.

Niles: Ah...

Frasier: Niles, come along. We don't need this club. Let us leave with the dignity with which we came. [exits]

Sadly, this is too much to ask from Niles:

Niles: But-but no... there's, there's been a misunderstanding, I do want to be one of you. Perhaps you could put me on probation...

The butler tries to drag him away, then just picks him up and carries him out, as Niles continues to plead.

Niles: I could just come part time, or perhaps afternoons, or just one afternoon - Thursday's a slow day - or you can pick the day, I wouldn't even have to talk to anyone, I could just sit in a chair and not say a word...

The last we see of Niles is his hand, as it frantically grabs the doorjamb to delay his bouncing.

Niles: Please, please, please! Oh, let me stay, I belong here!

As his hand disappears, we FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

Credits:

Frasier is relaxed on the couch, reading a paper. Eddie is on his hind legs, begging. Frasier gives him a piece of meat, yet Eddie does not stop. Frasier angrily throws the entire tray of meat on the floor and continues to read.

Guest Appearances

Guest Starring

W. MORGAN SHEPPARD as Mr. Drake
MITCHELL EDMONDS as Kenneth Spencer
JIM NORTON as Wentworth

Guest Caller

GARY SINISE as Sid

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