

[4.23]Ask Me No Questions

Ask Me No Questions

Written by Dan Cohen
& F.J. Pratt
Directed by Jeff Melman

Production Code: 4.23
Episode Number in Production Order: 94
Original Airdate on NBC: 21st May 1997
Transcript written on 7th July 2000
Transcript revised on 13th September 2002

Transcript {nick hartley}

Act One

THE QUESTION

*Scene One - Café Nervosa.
Niles and Frasier are sat having coffees.*

Niles: Do you think Maris and I are meant to be together?

Frasier puzzles over this.

FADE TO:

*Scene Two - Frasier's Apartment.
The apartment is empty except for Daphne who puts a gift bag on Martin's chair and then sits at the table. Martin enters from his room.*

Martin: [notices bag] Oh, what's this?

Daphne: I got you a gift.

Martin: You did? What's the occasion?

Daphne: No reason.

Martin: You can't just give somebody something for no reason.

Daphne: Yes, I can.

Martin: No, you can't.

Daphne: Yes, I can!

Martin: No, you can't!

Daphne: You're starting to take the fun out of this.

Martin: But there's no reason for this.

Daphne: Does there have to be a reason?

Martin: Yeah!

Daphne: Oh, would you just open it up?

Martin: Oh, Jeez!

Martin takes a cardigan out of the bag.

Daphne: I knitted it myself.

Martin: Oh, gee!

Daphne: You know, I had a bit of trouble with the rogue collar. I'm surprised you didn't hear me cursing from my bedroom.

Martin: Boy, Daphne, this is really nice. [*puts it on*] I wish I had something to give you.

Daphne: Oh, we're back on that again!

Martin: Yeah, all right, all right, but at least let me pay you for it.

Daphne: Pay me for it?! It's a gift!

Martin: Well, just a couple of bucks for the yarn.

Daphne exits to the kitchen as Frasier enters in his squash gear from the front door.

Frasier: Dad, is Niles home?

Martin: No.

Frasier: For God's sake, I've been standing out front for twenty minutes, we're going to be late for our squash court! Nice cardigan.

Martin: Daphne surprised me with it!

Frasier: You don't seem very happy about it.

Martin: No, well, I'm not, I mean you just don't give somebody something for no reason, that's my rule.

Frasier: Dad! Spontaneous gift-giving is one of life's great pleasures. Didn't you ever give Mom anything without a warning?

Martin: Yeah, you! Where do you think I got the rule from?!

Niles enters on his cellular phone.

Frasier: There you are! Come on, Niles, let's shake a leg! We're going to be late for our court time.

Niles: Okay, just a minute. [*on phone:*] Of course I do, Maris. [*pause*] Well, I miss you more. No, I do. No, I do.

Frasier: Niles!

Niles: [*on phone:*] More than Van Cleef would miss Arpell. [*laughs*] No, I don't. No, you have the prettier laugh. No, you do. No, you do.

Martin: I'm gonna go walk into the ocean!

Martin exits.

Niles: Oh no, I would love to meet you for lunch but you know what Dr. Deutsch said; no meetings outside our therapy sessions. Oh, now, Maris. [*the phone beeps*] Wait, hold on a second, another line. [*switches lines*] Hello?

Frasier: [*speaking into his phone*] Get the hell off the phone!

Niles: [*still into phone*] How rude!

Frasier: [*still in phone*] Please, don't you realise it's also rude to be late for an appointment!

Niles: Oh, you are telling me about being late...

Niles and Frasier carry on their phone argument until Frasier hangs up and faces him.

Niles: How dare you hang up on me! [*switches lines*] Honey, do you mind if we continue this conversation later? Oh, I'll be counting the minutes too. [*hangs up*]

Frasier: Well, I hope you're happy, we've now officially lost our court!

Niles: Well, I'm sorry. I would hope that my attempt to salvage my marriage would be more important to you than a squash game!

Frasier: Well, of course it is. I was just looking forward to playing.

Niles: I enjoy a morning game of squash more than anyone.

Frasier: No, I do.

Niles: No, I do.

Frasier: No, no... Niles, I would love to see you and Maris reconciling, if that's what you want. I'm just afraid you might be going a bit too quickly. Would you like some coffee?

Niles: Please.

Frasier pours two cups.

Frasier: Need I remind you that only last month she served you divorce papers!

Niles: I'm well aware of that, but we're not rushing into anything. We only see each other at therapy. That reminds me, yesterday at the café I asked you a question which you deftly avoided answering. Do you think Maris and I are meant to be together?

Frasier: Right, well, er, that's a tough question. You know, perhaps the better question would be, do you think you and Maris are meant to be together?

Niles: Hmmm, I served you up a question, you clumsily bat it back to me. We've hardly missed our squash game at all! No, no, I'm really interested in your opinion. Let's say you were God.

Frasier: Niles, please, I don't want to play God!

Niles: *[laughs]* Oh, please... no, just play along. Let's say you are the supreme ruler of heaven and earth. What would you do?

Frasier: *[eyes Eddie:]* Well, for starters I'd issue a recall on some of my lesser species!

Niles's mobile rings.

Niles: I still want an answer to that question. *[answers]* Hello? What is it, pumpkin? *[pause]* Now, now, dear, calm down. I'm sure the banging you hear is just the pipes; if one of the servants had actually been walled in during the remodeling, he would have died weeks ago. *[pause]* Okay, if it will ease your mind at all, why don't you have Marta take role call? *[phone beeps]* Hold on a second. *[changes lines]* Hello?

Frasier: *[on his phone]* Get out!

Niles leaves the apartment whilst talking to Maris.

FADE OUT

Scene Three - Radio Station.

Frasier is finishing his show, Roz is in her booth.

Frasier: Well, this is Dr. Frasier Crane saying goodbye and good mental health. *[signs off]*

Roz: *[enters]* Your brother called.

Frasier: Oh, Lord, he must really want an answer to that question.

Roz: No, he just wanted to tell you the wine club meeting was cancelled. What question?

Frasier: Well, yesterday he asked me straight up if I thought he and Maris were meant for each other.

Roz: That's a loaded question.

Frasier: Yeah, you're telling me. In fact, I don't even know what my answer is.

Roz: Why don't you just play it safe and say yes? In my experience, when someone asks that question, they're not looking for honesty, they're looking for reassurance. Tell him what he wants to hear.

Frasier: I don't know, Roz.

Roz: Trust me, Frasier. It's like if I asked you, "Do I look fat

in these pants?"

Frasier: [*thinking - without innuendo*] Yeah, you're right. I guess there's only one way to answer that question.

Roz: What?! Do you think I look fat in these?

Frasier: No, I don't.

Roz: I work out every day...

Frasier: Roz!

Roz: It's the pleats, isn't it?

Frasier: Stop it, get a hold of yourself! I was thinking about what you had said. I'm going to tell Niles yes, I think he and Niles were meant to be together.

A woman waves at him from the corridor and he waves back.

Roz: Who are you waving to? Is that Elise Edmunds from Promotions?

Frasier: We have a little date tonight.

Roz: A date? And you didn't tell me?

Frasier: Well, it's no big deal, I don't even think she's interested in me.

Elise enters.

Elise: Hey, Frasier. Hey, Roz. [*they greet her*] Sorry to interrupt, I just wanted to make sure, am I still seeing you tonight?

Frasier: Yes, you are. But of course, I'll be seeing you as well.

Elise: [*laughs*] Bye, Frasier.

Elise flirtatiously pushes her hair back and exits.

Roz: Whoa-ho-ho! That woman is totally into you!

Frasier: You think so?

Roz: Yeah. [*breathy voice, pushing her hair back*] See you later, bye.

Roz pants as she walks across the booth swaying her body.

Frasier: Is that a good sign?

Roz: Hello? She might as well cat-roped you with her pantyhose!

Frasier: It probably should be a very interesting night. Though she is very attractive, slender...

Roz: [*stops laughing*] Gee, I wonder why your mind went there?

Frasier: Oh, not this again!

Roz: Of course it would. Standing next to me, I hate these pants!

Frasier: Oh, please.

Roz: I look like the Liberty Bell!

Frasier: The Liberty Bell has a crack in it!

FADE TO:

SO THE ANSWER IS "YES"

Scene Four - Frasier's Apartment.

Martin is sat in his chair when Daphne enters.

Daphne: Afternoon, Mr. Crane.

Martin: Hello.

Daphne: I've got the mail.

Martin: Oh, thanks, you want to just put it on that table there.

Daphne does and notices a gift basket.

Daphne: Is this for me?

Martin: Well, do you know anybody else around here who uses Eucalyptus bubble bath?!

Daphne: Well, your son occasionally likes...

Martin: Oh, never mind.

Daphne: This is lovely.

Martin: Well, I'm glad you like it, because I picked it all out myself. You know, I got you your fancy soaps and your moisturisers and this rock thing that scrapes all the dead skin off the bottom of your feet. [*off her glance*] Well, if you're going to nap on the couch, wear slippers.

Daphne: Still, Mr. Crane, you really overdid it.

Martin: No, I didn't.

Daphne: I don't know if I can accept this.

Martin: Why not?

Daphne: Because you've spent far too much.

Martin: All right, well, I'll take a couple of things back.

Martin takes some out of the basket.

Daphne: No, wait. [*puts one back*] Have that one. [*gives him another*]

Martin: Daphne, will you please just take the damn basket?

Daphne: Well, what are you getting so cross about?

Martin: Well, what? You can give me a gift but I'm not allowed to give you one back?

Daphne: Oh, so that's the only reason you gave me this?

Martin: Yeah, that's the way it works.

Daphne: Well, where I come from you don't just give someone a gift because you have to. [*hands over basket*] Here, take your silly basket.

Martin: All right, fine. Well then, you can take your crappy little cardigan back too. [*takes it off and gives it her*]

Daphne: Fine!

Martin: I don't know why you gave it to me in the first place.

Daphne: Because I like you.

Martin: Well, I like you.

Frasier enters.

Daphne: Then why can't you just accept my gift and be happy?

Martin: I am happy, I love that cardigan.

Daphne: And I love my damn basket.

Frasier: What is all this?

Daphne: Oh, we're just exchanging our damn gifts.

Martin: Here. [*gives her basket*]

Daphne: Here. [*gives him cardigan*]

Martin: [*angry, yelling*] Thanks!

Daphne: [*angry, yelling*] Thank you!

Daphne leaves to her room.

Frasier: Good Lord, it's like Christmas morning in the Gambino household!

Martin: By the way, Niles called while you were in the shower to remind you about the squash tomorrow.

Frasier: That's strange. I just made that date this morning, he must be really champing at the bit to get an answer to that question.

Martin: What question?

Frasier: Oh, he asked me if I thought he and Maris were meant to be together.

Martin: Well, if you ask me, you should keep your bazoo shut! You're always getting into trouble opening that big bazoo of yours!

Frasier: Oh wonderful, dad, we've found a new word to strike from your vocabulary. Along with patootie and bupkis!

Martin: You're going to answer him, aren't ya?

Frasier: Well, I think I have to. But listen, I'm just going to play it safe. Tell him yes. He's gonna do what he wants to anyway.

Martin: Hey, I don't know, he takes your opinion pretty damn seriously.

Frasier: Well, when we were younger, there was a certain sway I had over him. Oh God, do you remember that time back in prep school when he was going to try out for the track team and I convinced him all the really cool kids were going to join the Madrigal society.

Martin: I'm not just talking about school, I mean he's always come to you for career decisions, too - where to do his residency, where to set up his practice.

Frasier: Hmm, perhaps I have underestimated my influence. You know, frankly, my opinion could be the single most important factor in his making this decision.

Martin: Well, I don't know if I'd go as far as that.

Frasier: Oh, please, dad. You don't know what it's like to have your opinion matter! Niles depends on me, he deserves my true and honest answer.

Martin: And what is that?

Frasier: Well, Maris has always been spoilt and selfish and led him around by the nose, I'd have to say my answer would be no. Thank you, dad. I've changed my answer from a yes to a no.

Martin: There you go.

Frasier sits in his leather chair and looks out the window. Martin stands up.

Frasier: On the other hand... I knew it. You know, there are a lot of other factors here, dad. Niles does love Maris.

Martin meanwhile has left the apartment, Frasier doesn't notice.

Frasier: She has agreed to go into therapy; Niles swears that she's a changed person. I don't know, I guess if I really want to know what's going on in Maris's mind, I've got to ask her myself.

Meanwhile, Martin has entered with the newspaper.

Frasier: You agree with that, don't you dad?

Martin: Oh, yeah, sure. [*sits*]

Frasier: Well, I've got a couple of hours before my date. So what I'm going to do, if I really want to know what Maris is thinking, I will go directly to the source.

FADE TO:

Scene Five - Café Nervosa.

Frasier is sat at the table as the waitress approaches.

Waitress: Are you ready to order?

Frasier: Ah, well, not quite yet, I'm still waiting on someone. [*stands*] Oh, there she is now.

Frasier waves to someone entering. We see a small, thin, pale woman wearing huge dark glasses with her head wrapped in a scarf enter the café, waving in his direction. Could this be...?!

However, in the next split second, she turns to the person she was really waving at, and is immediately followed by Marta, Maris's 78 year-old Guatemalan maid, who returns Frasier's wave.

Frasier: Marta!

Marta sits with Frasier.

End of Act One

Act Two

Scene One - Café Nervosa.

Continuing from act one. Marta and Frasier are chatting.

Frasier: Marta, I can't tell you how nice it is to see you again.

Marta: My pleasure, and this coffee is too, too divine!

Frasier: I see your English lessons with Maris are progressing, yes?

Marta: Yes, she teaching me many words. [*points to a woman*] That coat is so *declass *.

Frasier: Listen Marta, I'm going to come right to my point. Dr. Crane and Maris - Missy Crane - have both been seeing a couples' therapist lately and I understand it's going very well.

Marta: Therapy helping Missy Crane a lot.

Frasier: Really? So you would say that she is a changed person?

Marta: *Si, si*, Missy Crane very different: nicer to everyone, and this time no happy pills! For my birthday she give me beautiful Chanel makeup bag. It's a knock-off, but it's big!

Frasier: Oh, all right then, this is my question: if Dr. Crane and Mrs. Crane were to get back together, do you... do you think Mrs. Crane would treat Dr. Crane better?

Marta: Oh, *jess*, please ask Dr. Crane to come home.

Frasier: Marta, you've been most helpful. You know, lately I've been wondering if Niles and Maris ought to be together. Now, thanks to you, I know that the answer to that question is yes.

Marta smothers a giggle with her hand.

Frasier: What? Did I say something funny?

Marta: No, my beeper's on vibrate, it tickled me. [*takes it out*] Sorry, I have to go, Missy Crane needs me.

Frasier: Oh, that's all right, I understand.

Marta: Thanks for coffee. [*blows him two kisses*] Call me!

Marta exits.

Frasier: Well, there is a limit!

Daphne: [*enters*] Hey.

Frasier: Oh, Daphne.

Daphne: Was that Mrs. Crane's Marta who was just leaving?

Frasier: Yes it was, we were just sharing a coffee. You know, I wanted to help allay some of my fears about Niles and Maris getting back together.

Daphne: Yes, I expect she'll be glad to see Dr. Crane back in that household. Well, I should get my beans.

Frasier: Wait, wait, Daphne, what do you mean?

Daphne: Well, I'm sure Dr. Crane acts as a good buffer between Mrs. Crane and the help.

Frasier: Gee, it never occurred to me that Marta might have an ulterior motive.

Daphne: Who can blame her? Mrs. Crane can be a bit demanding.

Daphne goes to the back of the café where she meets a friend and chats with her before going to the counter. Whilst she is doing all this, Frasier sits on his seat talking to himself, thinking Daphne is still there.

Frasier: Well, this taints Marta's entire testimony. Is it possible she could have lied to me? Now then, with my training there aren't many things that can escape my notice, as I'm sure you've observed, Daphne. Gee, how could she lie to me? Now you see the predicament I am in. Every time somebody gives me a valid argument, somebody else comes along and gives me a perfectly valid counter-argument. One minute I think the answer is yes, the next minute I think it's no! God, this is driving me crazy. Well, I've got to stick with it, Niles asked me what I think... that's it... what I think! Of course I don't know what I think right now, well. But it's hard to be focused...

Daphne arrives back by his side.

Frasier: Don't you agree, Daphne?

Daphne: Oh, yes, absolutely!

FADE TO:

**SO THE ANSWER IS
"YES", "NO", "YES", "NO"?**

Scene Two - Streets Of Seattle.

Frasier and his date, Elise, are getting into Frasier's car.

Elise: I'm so glad we're finally doing this.

Frasier: Hmmm? [*distant*] Me too.

Elise: Is everything all right, Frasier?

Frasier: Oh, yes, yes, I'm just a little preoccupied.

Frasier lets Elise into the car and goes round to the driver's side.

Frasier: [*to himself*] Stop obsessing! Enjoy the date!

Frasier gets into the car.

Frasier: Here we are.

Elise: So, where are we going?

Frasier: Well, I've chosen a little Italian place I know, if that's all right?

Elise: I trust your judgment, but then who doesn't?

Frasier looks thoughtful.

Elise: Are you okay?

Frasier: Oh, I'm sorry. Well, I told myself I wasn't going to bring this up to you, and I don't really think it's appropriate for a first date, but I haven't been able to think about anything else all day, so here goes: Do you think it's possible for two people to be meant for each other?

Elise: [*thinking he's talking about her and him*] You've thought about that all day?

Frasier: [*missing the signals*] Yes.

Elise: [*excited*] Why, yes I do!

Frasier: You do. But how do you know that they're meant for each other? Of course it's essential they have similar interests, goals in common...

Elise: Don't forget physical attraction.

Frasier: Oh, well, that's a given. But you know, my ex-wife had all those things, our marriage was an unmitigated disaster.

Elise: She probably just didn't appreciate you.

Frasier: No, not entirely.

Elise: Did she listen to your show everyday, sometimes even tape them so she could listen to it in bed at night?

Frasier: *[still missing signals]* I didn't have a show then. I just- what it comes down to is, what is that special something that makes us cry out, "Yes, you're meant to be together!"

Elise: Who knows, all that matters is that we both feel it! *[a look of horrified realisation flashes across Frasier's face]* I should have told you months ago how I felt, but I was too insecure. I never dreamed you felt the same way I did. *[Frasier turns away]* Frasier, don't turn shy on me now. What'cha thinking?

Frasier: *[looks at her and laughs]* Elise, I'm thinking you are quite the practical joker! *[laughs]* Pretending not to know that I was really talking about my brother, Niles, and his wife. Surely Roz must have told you?

Elise: Oh, yes. *[fakes an embarrassed laugh]*

Frasier: Sense of humour, that's another thing for two to have in common.

Elise: Frasier, I have a headache, I think I'm gonna just take a rain-check on tonight, okay?

Frasier: *[realizing]* Elise, we can still go out, just pretend that none of this ever happened!

Elise: Perfect!

Elise gets out of the car and runs in embarrassment. Mentally, Frasier kicks himself.

FADE TO:

*Scene Three - Frasier's Apartment.
Frasier is lying on the couch nursing a cognac.*

Frasier: I can't for the life of me figure out why this decision is causing me so much anxiety. There's just so many things to be considered, you know.

The camera pulls back to reveal he's talking to Eddie.

Frasier: On the one hand, you know, perhaps I'm afraid if Niles and Maris reconcile, well then we may lose the friendship he and I developed during their separation. On the other hand, if Maris does take him back, well then I won't have to feel so responsible for him. There's just so much at stake!

Eddie barks.

Frasier: Oh, not that kind of steak! Listen, you're driving me crazy, I can't hear myself think here, I'm going to take a walk.

Frasier stands with his coat, Eddie follows.

Frasier: Oh, not with you. Go away. *[then:]* Time for your bath!

Eddie runs off.

Frasier: So gullible!

Frasier exits.

FADE TO:

Scene Four - Streets Of Seattle.

Frasier is walking the streets, looking miserable and confused. We hear Jazz music as he walks through the alleys, likening the scene to a black-and-white film noir.

Frasier notices a poster advertising a symphony which includes a piece, among others, by Charles Ives entitled "The Unanswered Question." Frasier is wracked by this.

He carries on walking and passes a wall which is covered with petitions for the passing of Proposition Eleven. There are some which say "Yes" and some which state "No." Frasier notices this and is shocked by how it relates to his problem.

Frasier then comes to the end of the sidewalk and looks up at the crossing sign. It seems to be on the blink and keeps flashing between "Walk" and "Don't Walk" without giving time to think. Frasier steps forward, stops, steps forward, stops and continues this perpetual cycle.

He then passes a cinema. According to the sign it says it is time for a "Jack Benny Festival" and "To Be Or Not To Be" is playing.

[N.B. Jack Benny is Kelsey Grammer's strongest comedic inspiration.]

Frasier looks down at his feet and kicks a can along the streets whilst hearing tidbits of advice that were heard earlier in the episode:

Roz: [v.o] Tell him what he wants to hear.

Martin: [v.o] He takes your opinion pretty damn seriously!

Marta: [v.o] Missy Crane very different, nicer to everyone.

Martin: [v.o] Bazoo! Bazoo! Shut your bazoo!

Roz: [v.o] Fat! Fat! Fat! Fat!

Eddie: [v.o: barks]

Frasier tries to make sense of it all.

Scene Five - Niles's Apartment.

The apartment is in darkness as the doorbell rings. Niles runs down the stairs in his dressing gown, turns on the lights and slowly goes to the door. He picks up a small ornament of a violin and holds it above his head as protection.

Niles: Who's there?

Frasier: [o.s] It's Frasier, let me in.

Niles puts the ornament down and opens the door.

Niles: How did you get up here?

Frasier: Well, the doorman was asleep.

Niles: Well, what a coincidence, so was I.

Frasier: I'm sorry, Niles, I apologise for the late hour.

Niles: What's wrong? You smell of the streets!

Frasier: Well, I was wandering Seattle in desperate search for an answer to your question. I know how crucial my opinion is

to you and I didn't want to take your question lightly.

Niles: ...What question?

Frasier: You asked me if I thought you and Maris were meant for each other.

Niles: Oh, right.

Frasier: I can't believe it! I've been to hell and back agonizing over this question and you forgot!

Niles: No, no, no, I didn't forget. I'm sorry, Frasier, I'm groggy. Come in, come in.

Frasier and Niles sit on the fainting couch.

Niles: I'm touched that you've given this so much thought. You're a good brother.

Frasier: Thank you.

Niles: So, please.

Frasier: Well, this is hard for me to say but... no.

Niles: What?

Frasier: I don't think you and Maris are meant to be together. I believe that a marriage should be built on a foundation of friendship and mutual respect. With Maris I fear that you never experienced those things fully. And I question whether you'll ever be truly happy.

Niles: [takes it in] I see. Well, thank you. [stands]

Frasier: [stands] You're hurt, aren't you?

Niles: No, I-I just need some time to process this. I appreciate you stopping by, it's just that it's one of those times I need to be alone.

A bell is heard from upstairs, they both hear it.

Frasier: Did you just hear a bell?

Niles: No. Glad you came, go home, get some rest...

The bell is heard again.

Frasier: There it is again.

Niles: No, I don't think so.

Frasier: Wait a minute... Oh, Niles! Maris is here, isn't she? How could you?!

Niles: Well, she offered and I said yes.

Frasier: How could you do something like this without waiting for my opinion?

Niles: Well, someone certainly has a high opinion of his opinion!

Frasier: Oh, why don't you just go run back to her before she sprains her wrist!

Niles: Frasier, Frasier, I know what you're thinking, but you're wrong. Maris has changed. She now understands that she cannot control me. I am my own man.

The bell rings.

Niles: I don't actually respond to that. [The bell rings] It's a little joke we have between us. [A whistle is blown] Okay, that means business!

Niles closes the door on Frasier and bounds up the stairs. Outside, Frasier leaves in disgust.

End of Act Two

Credits:

The next morning, Niles is bringing a breakfast tray out of his kitchen. He takes it to a woman who is sat at the table but we cannot see her face for she is holding a newspaper, shielding herself. However, she is obviously a small woman. Niles lays the tray down in front of her.

She lowers the paper to reveal... Marta. Marta takes the tray upstairs to Maris as Niles watches her.

Guest Appearances

Guest Starring

CINDY KATZ as Elise

IRENE OLGA LOPEZ as Marta

LUCK HARI as Waitress

Thanks To...

Transcript written by NICHOLAS HARTLEY

Revised by MICHAEL LEE

Legal Stuff

This episode capsule is copyright 2000 by Nick Hartley.

This episode summary remains property of Frasier, Copyright of Paramount Productions and NBC. Printed without permission.