

[5.2]The Gift Horse

The Gift Horse

Written by Ron Darian

Directed by Pamela Fryman

Production Code: 5.2.

Original Airdate on NBC: 30th September 1997

Transcript written on 28th July 2000

Transcript revised on 12th August 2000

Transcript revised 2nd on 28th November 2002

Sherry Dempsey Episodes

- [\[4.09\]](#) Dad Loves Sherry, the Boys Just Whine
 - [\[4.11\]](#) Three Days of The Condo
 - [\[4.19\]](#) Three Dates And A Breakup [1]
 - [\[4.20\]](#) Three Dates And A Breakup [2]
 - [\[4.21\]](#) Daphne Hates Sherry
-

Transcript {nick hartley}

[Act One]

[Scene One - Café Nervosa.

Frasier is standing in the café when Roz enters.]

Frasier: Oh, good morning, Roz.

Roz: Good morning.

[Roz starts to kiss Frasier passionately. He struggles free after a while.]

Frasier: What the hell was that?

Roz: [looks around] Oh, shoot! He's not even here!

Frasier: [wiping off kiss] Who?

Roz: Do you remember that guy who dumped me last month? I thought he was right behind me. I just wanted him to see me with another guy so he'd know how completely over him I am!

Frasier: Good idea, Roz. If that doesn't work, why don't we get married and have some children, that will really fix his wagon!

Roz: You might remember him, Stan?

Frasier: [thinks] Stan? The smug stockbroker who kept calling me "Frazer"?

Roz: Oh yeah, that's the one. One minute, we're hot an' heavy and then he stops calling. It's so humiliating when someone treats you like you don't even exist.

Frasier: [not listening to her] How can someone not hear the difference between "Frasier" and "Frazer"?

Roz: Yeah, that's what bugged me the most too! [to waiter] I'll have an espresso to go, please.

Frasier: Oh, oh, Roz, I almost forgot, here's the invitation to my dad's birthday party. Sherry's giving it, so please excuse

the elegant verse, but...

[Frasier hands it over.]

Roz: [reads] "Come one, Come all, To jump and jive, Marty Crane's turning sex-ty-five!"

[She notices Stan enter the Café.]

Roz: Oh my God, here he is. Please?

Frasier: Oh, all right.

[Frasier and Roz start kissing passionately which turns Stan away. They keep on kissing, not noticing Niles enter the Cafe.]

Niles: Hello.

[Startled, Frasier breaks away from Roz, who continues the charade by keeping her arms around him and nuzzling his neck.]

Frasier: Hello, Niles. You know, this isn't what it looks like. You see, her ex-boyfriend was just... [off her nuzzling] Oh, just stop that!

Niles: Please, no explanation necessary. I assume that at the next meeting of Seattle's "Haven't Kissed Roz Club," it will just be me and the archbishop!

Roz: I'll save you the club fees.

Niles: What-?

[Roz kisses Niles and exits, leaving him somewhat philosophical.]

Niles: Everyone kisses better than Maris!

[Frasier and Niles move to a table.]

Frasier: [to waiter] Can I get one of the same for Dr. Crane, please?
[sits with Niles]

Niles: I'm sorry I'm late, I was shopping for Dad's present.

Frasier: Oh, it's all right, Niles. I did a bit of that myself this morning. I found a lovely little calfskin wallet with a matching key case.

Niles: Oh. Well, bravo, Frasier.

Frasier: Yes, and it was a full twenty dollars below our agreed-upon spending limit.

Niles: Oh, I'm so glad we agreed to rein ourselves in this year.

Frasier: Oh God, me too. Finally to do away with our annual contest to see who could give dad the most lavish gift.

Niles: I think the competition had gotten a bit... er, what is the best word for it?

Frasier: Extreme.

Niles: No, childish.

Frasier: Gaudy.

Niles: Crass.

Frasier: Obscene.

Niles: Baroque.

Frasier: Stop it! So, what did you get him?

Niles: Oh, just some... beer.

Frasier: Well, we're not exactly bumping our heads on that spending ceiling, are we?

Niles: [laughs] It's a bit fancier than that. It's a membership in a beer club. They deliver a case from a different micro brewery every month.

Frasier: You know, I looked into those clubs, they're rather

expensive.

Niles: Oh, not really. I'm right at our limit. Maybe with taxes and handling I'm a drop or two over.

Frasier: How big a drop?

Niles: Just, er... a hundred dollars over.

Frasier: That's not a drop, it's a downpour!

Niles: It's a dribble.

Frasier: It's a deluge!

Niles: It's a...

Frasier: Stop it!

Niles: Oh, why don't you just stick a hundred dollars in that wallet of yours and we'll call it even.

Frasier: Well, frankly, I don't need to buy dad's love. You've opted to violate our agreement, so be it. I have a gift, you have a gift.

Niles: Fine.

Frasier: Big baby!

[Frasier and Niles look away from each other.]

[Scene Two - Frasier's Apartment.

Frasier is seated reading the newspaper as Eddie stares up at him.]

Frasier: Stare all you like. You will not distract me from my paper. You see, your efforts are futile, I can't even see you.

[Frasier holds the paper up in front of him. Eddie, however, just keeps jumping into view over the paper. Frasier, in agitation, folds the paper up and exits with Eddie to the kitchen. Daphne and Niles then enter carrying shopping bags.]

Niles: It seems so unhealthy. Is she going to serve anything at Dad's party but meat?

Daphne: Sherry says that's what he and his old cronies like best. With drinks, she's serving cocktail franks. For appetisers, we're having a sausage medley. And for the main course there's a choice of meat loaf or meat balls.

Niles: I assume these colourful balloons are for the between course angioplasty!

[Sherry enters and notices them as Frasier re-enters.]

Sherry: Did you get everything, Daphne?

Daphne: Oh, yes, I think so.

Sherry: Good news, I found a guy who can sculpt an exact replica of Marty's old police badge out of six pounds of liverwurst.

Frasier: Oh, how reminiscent of the cream cheese gavel they gave Thurgood Marshall on his eightieth!

[Martin enters holding a photo as Daphne exits to her room.]

Martin: Oh, we can't use this photograph, it's too embarrassing.

Sherry: *[laughs]* That's exactly why we're using it. I'm decorating the whole party with old pictures of Marty from the force.

Martin: Well, we can't use this one of me at the morgue; it's too disturbing.

[Niles takes a look.]

Niles: You're right, I totally forgot you even had a perm!

Martin: Oh, God, I can't wait to see this guy again. Mickey Doogan. We rode mounted patrol together.

Sherry: Oh, look at you. You look so big and handsome on your horse.

[looks at another] Oh my God, when was this taken?

Martin: April Fools' Day.

Frasier: [looks] Oh, yes, yes, that would explain why your horses are wearing brassieres.

Martin: Oh God, I loved that horse. Old Agides and I were together for eight years. Best partner I ever had.

Sherry: Oh, we should get going.

Martin: Okay.

Sherry: Marty, where ever did you find a bra that could fit a horse?

Martin: Oh, Mickey brought it in from home. Mae Doogan was a lot of things, but petite she wasn't! I'll point her out to you at the party.

Sherry: Honey, if that's her bra, I can spot her myself.

[Martin and Sherry exit.]

Frasier: Well, er, sherry, Niles?

Niles: Oooh... [looks at watch] ...no, thanks, I've got a session.

Frasier: Ah. [pours himself one]

[Daphne enters with a box and wrapping paper]

Daphne: Dr. Crane, is your father gone?

Frasier: Yes, he has.

Daphne: Good, then I'll wrap his present. They fit fine in this box.

Frasier: Great, Daphne, off you go.

Niles: Wait a minute. That box is awfully big for what you got him.

Daphne: No, it isn't.

Frasier: Ah, Daphne...

Daphne: Your binoculars fit just perfectly in here!

Niles: You told me you got him a wallet and a key case!

Daphne: Oh, no, not this again! It's the same nonsense every year.

Frasier: Well, not this year. We'd actually agreed to a spending limit until someone else exceeded it.

Niles: All right, all right. Guilty as charged. We've each violated the pact once. Now let's stop before this madness gets out of hand.

Frasier: Well, if you ask me, your gifts compliment each other perfectly.

Niles: Em, Daphne... [puts a finger to his lips]

Daphne: Your binoculars and your football tickets.

Frasier: Tickets?

Daphne: ["Uh-oh..."] Season tickets to the Seahawks.

Frasier: I don't believe you! You already had a better gift than mine, you still saw the need to take it to a higher level.

Niles: Only because I knew you were going to upgrade that wallet, which you did!

Frasier: All right, enough is enough. I quit, I'm throwing in the towel.

Niles: Oh, and why should I believe you?

Frasier: Because this is a receipt for the binoculars, this should prove to you that I have no intention of returning them in order to get a better gift. [tears it up] There.

Niles: Well, that's very big of you. I'm late for my session. If it's any consolation, I'm not really sure how good those tickets are. I was hoping to get something on the first two yard lines but I could only get ones way back on the fiftieth!

[Niles shrugs innocently and exits.]

[N.B. Being on the fiftieth yard line means you are seated right next to the center of the field, at the bottom of the stands next to the

green - the best seats in the stadium. However, Niles is no doubt ignorant of this, so his innocence must be genuine.]

Daphne: Well, I'm very proud of you, Dr. Crane. I...

Frasier: Oh, stop babbling, Daphne, and bring me some tape!

[Daphne rolls her eyes.]

**COME AGAIN WHEN YOU
CAN'T STAY SO LONG**

[Scene Three - Café Nervosa.

Sherry and Daphne are sat running through Martin's upcoming party.]

Daphne: Okay, the keg of beer will be there by six. I also confirmed the band, ordered the cake, filled out the place cards, picked up the humorous cocktail napkins and I'm almost done making the centerpieces.

Sherry: *[sighs]* Oh, this party is just going to wear me out!

[Niles enters.]

Niles: Hello, Daphne, Sherry. *[to waitress]* Double Latte, please.

[sits] Is Frasier with you?

Sherry: No, he's out shopping for your dad.

Niles: That jackal!

[Niles jumps to his feet and dashes out of the Café.]

Sherry: What was that all about?

Daphne: Brother snit. Don't ask.

Sherry: I forgot to tell you. I found this fabulous photograph of Marty arresting some guy. I had it blown up to life size, then I cut out the crook's face so people could stick their heads through and have a snap shot of Marty reading them their rights. Don't you just love it?

Daphne: It depends. Do I have to pick it up?

Sherry: By five, you're a doll!

[Frasier enters with a shopping bag and greets them.]

Daphne: Dr. Crane, did you find something?

Frasier: Yes, I did. It took me most of the afternoon but I finally came up with something I think is just about perfect!

[The waitress brings Niles's coffee as Frasier sits.]

Sherry: Oh, Niles forgot his coffee.

Frasier: Niles was here?

Sherry: Yes, but you know, when I mentioned that you were out shopping for your dad he just shot out of here like a bullet!

Frasier: That little worm!

[Frasier grabs his shopping bag and exits.]

[Scene Four - Frasier's Apartment.

Daphne is seated on the couch reading, her feet on the table.

Frasier enters as she quickly lowers them. His jacket is slung over his shoulder and he looks exhausted.]

Daphne: Dr. Crane, are you all right?

Frasier: No, I am not. I've combed the entire city trying to find a gift - but nothing is better than what Niles got him.

Daphne: What did your brother get him?

Frasier: I don't know. I'm sure it's something any father would just love.

[*Martin enters from his room.*]

Martin: Why, you know the best thing about turning sixty-five? Everybody wants to buy you dinner! [*laughs*]

Daphne: Mr. Crane, you've left your top button unbuttoned.

Martin: Oh, yeah, that's because Duke's taking me to Hoppy's Old Heidelberg. You know, if I don't unbutton it now, it might fly off and hurt somebody!

Frasier: Enjoy, Dad.

Martin: Oh, yeah, I will. I gotta tell 'ya, I'm loving this birthday. All of a sudden my money's no good. Last night, Ed Flannagan bought the whole bar a round in my honour.

Frasier: Who's Ed Flannagan?

Martin: That's what I asked! Anyway, what are you doing tonight, Frasier'?

Frasier: Er, nothing much. I've got some shopping to do.

Martin: Oh, for anybody we know? [*laughs*] You know, Frasier, every year, you and Niles, you go overboard trying to find these great presents for me and I've got to be honest, it's always made me kind of uncomfortable.

Frasier: [*relieved*] Really?

Martin: Yeah. So this year, I just wanted you to know... I'm over it! So, go crazy, you only turn sixty-five once!

[*Martin exits. Frasier stands up, puts his head in his arms and collapses onto his father's chair.*]

Daphne: You know, Dr. Crane, the last thing I want to do is encourage more competition between you and your brother. [*goes to him*] But if you really want to make your father happy, maybe the time has come...

Frasier: Oh, don't even say it!

Daphne: But it's the only thing he's ever asked for!

Frasier: No! God, it'll ruin my apartment, my life! I can't, I won't, I mustn't!

Daphne: It's over, Dr. Crane.

[*Frasier cries into her arms.*]

[*Scene Five - Frasier's Apartment.*]

We see the back of a huge monstrosity of some kind. The camera raises to its peak (which is basically at the roof of the apartment) and shows Frasier and Daphne sitting on Martin's chair, looking up, awestruck, at the mother of all-]

Daphne: That is one big-screen TV. He's going to love it!

Frasier: [*in tears*] I know!

[*Daphne nurses Frasier.*]

[*End of Act One*]

[*Act Two*]

[*Scene One - Frasier's Apartment.*]

We resume the scene. Daphne is cleaning the big-screen television as Frasier looks on.]

Frasier: Perhaps I'm panicking needlessly. It just needs a little dressing-up, really. You know, I'll just arrange these plants here at the base. [*he does*]

Daphne: Yes, you always said you needed more greenery in here.

Frasier: Yes, maybe an *objet* or two on top. Yes, yes, this little bud vase, here.

[*Frasier puts a rose vase on the top and admires it, giving a little Bette Davis shrug.*]

Frasier: [*denial*] That makes a world of difference, doesn't it?

Daphne: [*acting*] Oh, sure it does, Dr. Crane. All the difference in the world!

Frasier: [*falling to bits*] Oh, it's ghastly! [*doorbell sounds*] Oh God, you just don't put a smear of lipstick on the Bride of Frankenstein and turn her into a trophy wife, do you?!

[*Frasier opens the door to Niles.*]

Frasier: Niles.

Niles: Frasier, are you ready? We told dad we'd pick him up at...

[*Niles notices the eyesore. He is speechless as Frasier watches him in some sort of jealous pride.*]

Niles: Oh my God, you didn't?!

Frasier: Didn't what? You mean buy dad this television set? Of course I did! Ah, it's impressive, isn't it?

Niles: I knew how jealous you were, but to go to such insane lengths to top me... Frasier, you have lain waste to your apartment with this eyesore!

Frasier: I disagree! Where you see an eyesore, I see a picture window to a world of art and culture. Just think how a screen this size will enhance the majesty of the Metropolitan Opera. Or the thrilling artists of the Bolshoi!

Niles: You're quite a Bolshoi artist yourself!

Frasier: Oh, you're right, it's dreadful, isn't it! But you know, it's worth it, just to imagine the smile it'll put on dad's face, not to mention the pleasure of watching you twist and writhe in envy. [*pause*] You're not twisting and writhing!

Niles: I'm sorry, my mind wandered. I was remembering Dad waxing nostalgic the other day about his beloved old horse, Agides.

Frasier: Oh, don't try to change the subject, Niles, you've lost, admit it!

Niles: He certainly did love that horse.

Frasier: You can only live in denial for so long before you...

[*Frasier gasps in sudden realisation.*]

Frasier: You didn't?!

Niles: Didn't what? Buy the horse? Sorry, did!

Frasier: Oh! ... Oh... how could you?!

Niles: I've already set him up in a handsome stable. Dad can visit him anytime he wants, which reminds me, I'd like to swing by the stable on the way to the party so dad can- [*laughs*] look his gift horse in the mouth!

Frasier: Ah, all right, Niles. What else can I do? I give up! You win. You have found the one gift that can't be trumped.

[*The doorbell sounds as Daphne goes to get it.*]

Niles: Thank you, Frasier. You're a gracious loser.

Frasier: Still, on the bright side, I know dad will love this set. He really will. And already it doesn't seem quite as intrusive as it did when it first got here.

[Daphne opens the door to some workers wielding enormous dynamo speakers.]

Daphne: Right this way.

Frasier: [in horror] What are those?

Daphne: Your speakers.

[Frasier buries his head. Niles comforts him.]

**SURE, BUT CAN HE
DO LONG DIVISION?**

[Scene Two - Horse Stables.

Frasier and Niles lead a blindfolded Martin into the stables.]

Niles: So, dad, any idea where you are?

Martin: Oh, it's so mysterious. Hay under foot, stable smells, that saddle we just tripped over... I mean, we could be anywhere!

Niles: All right, all right.

[Niles takes his blindfold off.]

Martin: What?

Niles: Voila! [motioning to horse] Happy birthday.

[Martin is shown to a horse in a pen. "AGIDES" entitles it. Martin and Niles react as Frasier stays at the back of the stable in jealous anger.]

Martin: Agides! Hey, buddy, how are you doing? Oh, long-time-no-see. [to Niles] What's going on?

Niles: He's yours, dad.

Martin: What?

Niles: I bought him for you.

Martin: You're kidding me, I can't believe it!

Niles: You can visit him anytime you want.

Martin: This is amazing. [to Agides] How've you been, buddy, huh? Hey, one plus one equals?

[Agides kicks the stable door twice.]

Martin: He remembers!

Niles: I figured it was a long shot when I called but they were a week away from putting him out to pasture, so I set him up here at Brier Wood, it's the most exclusive stable in town. Don't be surprised if you spy a certain resident trotting by wearing his triple crown.

Frasier: They don't give them actual crowns, you twit! [pause] Well, come on, Dad, you don't want to be late for the party, I'm sure Sherry's getting warm in that cake!

[Martin seems entranced by the horse.]

Frasier: Dad?

Martin: Huh?

Frasier: Don't want to be late.

Niles: Are you all right, dad?

Martin: Yeah, I'm fine.

Frasier: Are you sure?

Martin: Yeah, I said I was fine. Now, come on, let's go to my party.

[*They start to exit.*]

Frasier: Is there something you'd like to talk about?

Martin: Oh, now, come on, guys. You don't have to pull everything apart. I said I'm fine, all right? Let's go.

[*Martin exits.*]

Niles: All that effort, all that expense... How many minutes of joy did it buy?

[*Frasier raises his foot, horse-style, and stamps the ground once, twice, three times. They exit.*]

[*Scene Three - Frasier's Apartment.*

The lights are off as the brothers enter later that night. As they switch on the lights, the television and speakers are revealed. The speakers are arranged, circumferencing Martin's chair.]

Frasier: Oh dear God! It's Stonehenge!

Niles: Well, I hope it'll at least cheer dad up. The party certainly didn't.

Frasier: God, I know. Not even when Sherry sang that little ditty she'd composed; "You Can Cop A Feel If I Can Feel A Cop"! Brandy, Niles?

Niles: Please.

[*Frasier pours.*]

Niles: I tried to draw Dad out of the party, he just shot me right down.

Frasier: Well, you know how he is. Gets himself into these moods, he just retreats.

Niles: It's just so damn frustrating. How many wonders if that isn't why we go so insane every year, trying to find the perfect gift, as if somehow finding the right present will magically change everything.

Frasier: The thought occurred to me too.

Niles: You didn't mention it.

Frasier: It occurred to me.

Niles: So you say.

Frasier: Well, it... stop it!

[*Sherry enters.*]

Sherry: Hiya, boys. [*notices television and gasps*] Wow! She's a beaut! Oh, Marty and I are going to be spending a lot more time over here! [*hangs up coat*]

Frasier: [*to Niles*] It's the gift that keeps on giving!

Sherry: Well, where's your dad?

Frasier: He said he was coming home with you.

Sherry: Well, he told me that he was coming home with you.

Niles: Why would he do that?

Sherry: He was a little down at the party. Maybe he just wanted to go for a walk.

Frasier: I'm sure he's all right. He'll be back soon.

Niles: Still, it is rather late. I'll just go and look for him. [*heads to door*]

Frasier: Oh, suit yourself, Niles. I think you're fretting needlessly.

Sherry: *[takes remote]* Come on, let's fire this baby up. Do you like the Nashville Network?

Frasier: Oh, who am I kidding?! I'm worried sick!

[Frasier and Niles exit as Sherry sits down with the remote.]

[Scene Four - Horse Stables.]

Martin is feeding Agides as the boys enter quietly.]

Martin: Here you go. Hey, no offense, but your teeth look like hell! I gotta tell you, the rest of you's not looking that much better either. Do you want me to give you a little rubdown, huh? *[he uses the brush]* Ah, that takes me back. Of course, your coat was a lot shinier in those days. Hell, so was mine. *[laughs]* We were something, weren't we Agides, huh? Riding crowd control. People'd just step aside to let us pass. Now, they're putting you out to pasture and I'm riding the buses. It's fun getting old, isn't it?! Hey, this is a nice place here, you know. I bet you're really going to like it here.

[A horse near the entrance begins to lick Niles's face. He makes some noise whilst trying to stop him, however Frasier quiets him.]

Martin: And you know, if you don't like it here, then we'll do what we said we would. We'll just go to Montana, start a ranch. *[the boys are shocked]* You know, we still got all that money we took from those drug dealers buried in the old box canyon.

Frasier: *[realises]* All right, dad, we know you know we're here.

Martin: Well, why don't you get the hell out of here?

Niles: Dad...

Martin: Look, I just want to be alone with him, is that all right with you?

Frasier: All right, fine, we'll see you later. *[starts to exit, then]* You know, it is a little troubling that you feel more comfortable talking to your horse than you do to your sons.

Niles: Actually, we might be able to help you with what you're going through; the ageing process...

Martin: Now, come on, now, stop it. You see, this is the problem. I know everything you're going to say. First of all, you'll start talking about sixty-five as being some sort of passage. And then you'll start spouting these theories and quoting Freud and who knows what else until by the time you get through analysing me, I'm going to be sixty-six! Look, when I tell Agides something, you know what he does? Nothing. He just listens to me.

Niles: We listen.

Frasier: That's my slogan; "I'm Listening." You know, dad, listening is the foundation...

[Niles and Frasier start rabbiting on about the usefulness of listening without putting their theory into practice. Martin glances at them.]

Frasier: Right.

Niles: Shush.

Frasier: Shush!

Martin: When I saw Agides today, it was kinda of a shock to see how old he's gotten and I just... It made me realise how old I've gotten.

Frasier: Dad, you still have a lot of...

Martin: Now, come on...

Frasier: Sorry, sorry.

Martin: Look, it's not a problem you can solve, Frasier. It's just

a fact of life. People get old.

Niles: Well, I guess this horse wasn't quite the banner gift I thought it would be.

Martin: Oh, yes, it was, Niles. I'm feeling a little bit sorry for myself right now, but I'll get over that. But I love this horse, it's the greatest present I've ever gotten.

[Niles notices Frasier beginning to writhe in envy again.]

Niles: Well, I'm glad, dad, but, you know, I think I may have misled you. The horse is from me *and* from Frasier.

[Frasier is moved by this.]

Martin: Oh, Jeez, I'm sorry. Thanks a lot, Frasier.

Frasier: Well, actually, it was mostly Niles's idea.

Martin: Well, then, thanks to both of you.

[The three Crane man are happy.]

Martin: It's just great. Well, come on, we ought to get going. Let's get a move on. [to Agides] See ya, buddy. [exits]

Frasier: Niles, what a generous gesture. How can I ever thank you?

Niles: Well... [takes out his mobile] by calling your super and getting rid of that monstrosity in your apartment! I do visit from time to time, you know.

[Niles dials a number on his mobile and hands it to Frasier.]

[End of Act Two]

Credits:

That evening, the corridor outside Frasier's apartment contains all the speakers and the big screen TV. The elevator doors open as Frasier and Niles drag Martin off whilst he wears the blindfold. They guide him past the eyesores and into the apartment where a worker is removing the final speakers. They get Martin to the table, take off his blindfold and show him his cake. Daphne and Sherry divert his attention whilst Frasier throws the remote to a worker as he closes the door on the present.

Guest Appearances

Special Guest Star

MARSHA MASON as Sherry

Thanks To...

Transcript written by NICHOLAS HARTLEY

Transcript revised by MIKE LEE

Edited by NICHOLAS HARTLEY

Legal Stuff

This episode capsule is copyright 2000 by "The Frasier Files".
This episode summary remains property of Frasier, Copyright
of Paramount Productions and NBC. Printed without permission.