

[6.4]Hot Tickets

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Transcript {david langley}

Act 1

A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE

Scene 1 - Frasier's Apartment

Fade in. Martin is sitting in his chair, Frasier comes in from the bedrooms.

Frasier: Well, I better be heading out. Niles and I are meeting for dinner, and then we have tickets to the theatrical event of the season.

Martin: Oh, really?

Frasier: Yes, Sir Trevor Aimsley in "Tears of the Mariner."

Martin: Oh.

Frasier: It promises to be a very exciting evening. You see, Seattle is Sir Trevor's last stop on his farewell tour. After this, he's retiring from the stage forever.

Martin: "Tears of the Mariner." You know, I think I read a review of that. Thought it was one of those baseball stories like "Pride of the Yankees", you know? But it's just about some crabby old sailor, stuck in this little town...

Frasier: No, no, Dad, please. I have carefully avoided all the reviews of this play. I do not want to hear about it before I see it.

Martin: Well, I don't want to hear about it after you see it.

Frasier opens the door, Daphne is there with her keys out.

Frasier: Oh, hello Daphne.

Martin: Hey, Daph.

Daphne: That's it? "Hello Daphne"? Haven't you seen the paper?

Martin: Well, I glanced at it. Why, did I miss something?

Opens the paper to the back page and gives it to him.

Daphne: Look!

Martin: [*laughing*] Oh, my gosh! Is that you?

Daphne: Yes!

Frasier: Well, good heavens, it's kind of hard to tell. You've got your back turned to the camera, your skirts blown up around your... Oh, well, it must've been rather blustery out.

Daphne: I was in the park yesterday, and this photographer snapped

my picture for the "It's Your Seattle" column - the one where they show some average person out and about, then use their name on the column. For instance, if they used a picture of Mr. Crane, the caption would read "Martin Crane's Seattle." Or if they took one of you it would say "Frasier Crane's Se-"

Frasier: Yes, we get it.

Daphne: Well, don't crinkle it, I want to send it home to my family.

Martin: You sure about that?

Daphne: Oh, don't be such an old fogey. So I'm bending down and me knickers are showing a bit, but my family'll still be proud as peacocks when they see that: "Daphne Moon's Seattle".

Martin and Frasier share a smile.

Frasier: She certainly does.

He heads for the door. Fade out.

Scene 2 - In Front of the Theater

Fade in. Frasier and Niles approach the entrance, sipping coffee.

Frasier: Niles, will you just stop it? The dinner was just fine.

Niles: It was not fine. I made those reservations weeks ago. They seated us so close to the kitchen I'm surprised they didn't make us wear hair nets.

Frasier: I'm sure it was just a mix-up.

Niles: It's not a mix-up. It's part of an alarming trend I've noticed ever since Maris and I parted company.

Frasier: Oh, Niles.

Niles: Last week, Roberta Phipps snubbed me at the opera. I wasn't even invited to that gala fundrasier for St. Andrew's Orphanage.

Frasier: You can still send money to the children.

Niles: As usual, you've missed the point. I'm being shut out. It's as if someone snuck into my world and changed all the locks.

They throw their cups away.

Frasier: Oh, Niles. [*pulling out the tickets*] Well, at least you don't have to worry about that tonight. After you.

Niles: Evening.

Usher: Tickets, please.

They give them over.

Usher: Oh, I'm sorry sir, these aren't for this performance.

Niles: What?

Frasier: What? But they say for the sixteenth, that's the sixteenth right there, that's today.

Usher: Yes sir, they were for the matinee.

Niles: Oh, no, no there has to be some mistake, let me just...
Oh, dear God.

Frasier: I'm so sorry, Niles.

Niles: Well, surely you must hold some tickets aside for emergencies. We'll take anything, anything at all.

Frasier: Yes, even mezzanine.

Usher: If you like, you can try your luck in the cancellation line.

Niles: How could this happen? I have to see this play. I have to have people see me see this play. If I'm not seen seeing this play, you see...

Frasier: Niles, Niles, Niles! I will make a simple phone call and

we'll get house seats for tomorrow night, all right?

The two walk past the cancellation line.

Niles: I suppose so. Come on, let's go. The last thing I need is for someone to see us loitering out here like gutter riff-raff pathetically scrounging for last minute tickets.

The people in the cancellation line are not really happy with this description and Frasier notices them.

Frasier: Good luck!

FADE TO:

ANOTHER NIGHT AT THE THEATRE

*Scene 3 - Frasier's Apartment
The doorbell rings.*

Fade in. Frasier answers the door to reveal Niles.

Frasier: Oh, Niles.

Niles: Hello, I know I'm a bit early, I was hoping we could get a bite to eat before the theater.

Frasier: Actually, Niles...

Niles: Yeah, yeah, it'll be on me of course, as a thank you for getting those replacement tickets.

Frasier: Yes, about the tickets...

Niles: I know, I owe you money. And my gratitude. And if I keep talking, you won't be able to tell me you weren't able to get the tickets.

Frasier: Just haven't been able to get them yet...

Niles: Oh, I KNEW you wouldn't get them!

Frasier: Niles, please.

Niles: Oh, and now it's too late. It's six o'clock.

Frasier: Please, just calm down. I've made a few well placed calls, I haven't heard back from a couple of people. Someone will call.

Niles: Well, someone better call. Because everyone who's anyone is seeing this play. And you know who you are if you're not anyone? You're NO ONE. And I've been someone much too long to start being no one now.

Martin comes in from the bedrooms.

Martin: Oh, hey, I thought no one was here. [*Niles begins to throw another fit*]

Frasier: Niles, please, just relax. One way or another, we are going to get tickets to this play.

Martin: You two still going on about those tickets? If this play is any good at all, in a coupla years they'll do it down at the dinner theater and you can get a nice prime rib with it.

Niles and Frasier are shocked and stand with their mouths agape in their classic "Did he actually SAY that?" look.

Frasier: Dad, you don't understand. You see, this isn't just about the play. This is literally our last opportunity to see one of the finest actors of our time.

Martin: You just want to go 'cause all your snobby friends are goin' and you don't want to feel left out.

Niles: What we want is to sit at a theater and share a transcendent experience.

Martin: That nobody else could get tickets to.

Frasier: Of course. That's the transcendent part.

Frasier and Martin share a smile at this. The phone rings, Niles eagerly picks it up and hands it to Frasier.

Frasier: Hello? ... Yes, I'll hold. [to Niles] It's Cleo Fenwick.

Niles: Cleo Fenwick?

Frasier: Yes, you remember her, she's on the board of the theater. You've seen her: bad eye-job, dowager's hump you could cross the Sahara on. [into phone] Hello, Cleo, you lovely thing. Uh-huh. Oh, well, you're a dear for trying. Thanks. Oh, don't despair Niles, I'm getting another call. Hello? Yes, Dora! Yes, uh-huh. Too bad. Well, thank you. Yeah, oh, that is a wonderful idea, yes I will! Thank you, bye-bye. [He disconnects.]

Niles: She has a lead for us?

Frasier: Yes, she said I should call Cleo Fenwick.

Niles: This is hopeless.

Frasier: Niles, there is another way.

Niles: You don't mean...

Frasier: Yes. I know it's a calculated risk. It is a little uncertain.

Martin gets up and heads for the kitchen.

Niles: You can't be serious. It's unthinkable.

Frasier: Niles, what other choice do we have?

Niles: But the indignity, it reeks of desperation.

Martin: Now, now, before you do anything desperate, at least go stand in the cancellation line. [exits to kitchen]

Frasier and Niles look at each other dumbfounded.

Niles: What did he think we were talking about?

Frasier shrugs, just as confused. Fade out.

Scene 4 - In Front of the Theater

Fade in. Niles and Frasier are at the head of the cancellation line.

Niles: Oh no it's Stephen and Susan Kendall. Quick, turn around. If they see us here, we'll be ruined. They know everybody.

Frasier: Yes, I know. Their Sunday brunches are a Who's Who of Seattle's elite.

Niles: [glancing over his shoulder] I think it's safe. No one saw us.

Roz: [calling out and hurrying over] Hey, Frasier! Niles!

Frasier: Roz. What are you doing here?

Niles: And how did you get tickets?

Roz: Oh, a friend of mine couldn't use hers, so she gave them to me. I asked my cute new dentist, he's a big fan of Sir What's-his-face.

Frasier: You refer to the world's greatest living actor as...

Niles: Now, now, Frasier. Roz may not be familiar with Sir Trevor, but I'm sure she'll enjoy the play. I trust you got good seats?

Roz: [taking the tickets out to check] Ooh. I think so. Row C?

Niles: Row C. Excellent. [then] Look, a whole bunch of naked men.

Roz turns around and Niles grabs the tickets in her hand but she doesn't let go.

Roz: What are you doing?

Niles: Give me those, you philistine! You don't even know his name!

Roz: Are you crazy?!

She kicks him in the shin, causing him to yelp "Ouch!" and let go of the tickets. Roz's date walks up.

Rob: Ready to go, Roz?

Roz: Yes.

Niles: Dr. Mandell?

Rob: Oh, hi, Niles.

Roz: You two know each other?

Rob: Sure. How's the teeth bleaching going?

Both Roz and Frasier look very smugly at Niles upon hearing this.

Niles: [*folding his lips over his teeth*] Fine, thanks.

Roz: Let's go, Rob. It's a long way to row C from the cancellation line. [*She heads for the entrance.*]

Rob: Hang in there, guys. I wouldn't be surprised if you get lucky.

Niles: I'd be stupefied if you didn't.

Rob looks confused for a moment, then follows Roz.

Frasier: I knew you were bleaching them.

Niles: Oh...

Frasier: "No, really, I just changed toothpastes."

Susan: Is that Niles Crane? And Frasier.

The Kendalls come over.

Frasier: Oh, Susan.

Niles: Stephen.

Susan: We're seeing everybody tonight. It simply... oh, dear. You're not waiting for a cancellation, are you?

Niles: Is that what this is?

Frasier: I feel just... Look at us. Blocking these poor unfortunates who couldn't get tickets.

Seller: I got one pair left. Who's next?

Usher: Curtain going up.

Frasier: [*ushering the Kendalls along*] Curtain going up, shall we?

Seller: Next in line, please.

Susan: Niles, you coming?

Niles: I, uh...

Frasier: You'll have to forgive my brother. You see, he's too ashamed to admit he's just waiting for one last cigarette. It's all right, Niles, you go right ahead, I'll just see the Kendalls in.

Niles: OK.

Stephen: Thank God, another smoker. Darling, maybe I'll just stay and have a cigarette with Niles.

Seller: Do you want these tickets, sir?

Niles: Me? Oh, oh, no, no! [*He steps aside for the next people in line.*]

Susan: Stephen, please. I'd really like to sit down.

Stephen: All right. Niles, we'll make a date. I'll meet you right here at intermission and we'll have a smoke.

Niles: Oh, right here is where I'll be.

Frasier: Enjoy.

Susan: See you later.

The Kendalls go into the theater.

Frasier: Well, this is just perfect. Not only are we missing the play, but now we have to hang around here until intermission, so they don't catch on to us.

Niles: Oh, what are you complaining about? I'm the one who has an hour to learn how to smoke.

End of Act 1

Act 2

Scene 1 - In Front of the Theater

Frasier is sitting on a light post base. Niles has a cigarette out. The theater starts emptying for intermission.

Frasier: Niles! They're coming out. Come on, let's blend in.

He notices Niles trying a variety of ways to hold the cigarette.

Frasier: Niles, what are you doing?

Niles: I'm practicing. I haven't held a cigarette since I played Duke Mantee in our junior high production of "The Petrified Forest."

Frasier: Yes, I remember watching you from the petrified audience. Come on. Oh, there they are, let's go.

They walk over to the Kendall's.

Stephen: Oh, well, you got out here quickly. I guess you needed one of these more than I did, huh?

Niles: Yes, well, when you enjoy smoking as much as I do, noth...
[Having taken a puff, he breaks down coughing.]

Susan: Oh, bye-bye. Feel better, I'll call you.

Stephen: The Gornleys. Kendra isn't feeling well, Richard is taking her home. Oh, there's Mikki and Lyle.

Susan: Poor old dears, they could only get balcony.

Stephen: Still, we should say hello. They are your parents. Excuse us.

They walk off.

Niles: [crushing out his cigarette] My God, these things are turning me green!

Frasier: Never mind that, Niles. The Gornleys are not coming back. Let's go sneak into their seats and watch the second act.

Niles: Let's go!

They rush to the entrance, but are stopped by the usher.

Usher: Your ticket stubs, please.

Frasier: Oh, I beg your pardon?

Usher: Well, I'm sorry, we've had some people try to sneak in after intermission.

Frasier: Well, you know, I think we, I left our coats in our seats and our stubs are in the coats.

Usher: Oh, don't worry about it. [They turn to head in, but are stopped again.] We'll just have someone bring your coats to you. Where are your seats?

Frasier: I'll...have to check the seating chart.

Heading back out, they run into the Kendalls.

Stephen: Aren't you going in?

Frasier: Well, yes, yes, my brother just needed to have one last cigarette.

Susan: Oh, you're worse than Stephen.

Frasier: Yes, really, Niles, I do wish you'd quit. I'm begging you.

Niles: I just wish I didn't love the damn things so much. [*He lights up.*]

Frasier: Yes, well, if we don't see you after, have a lovely evening.

Susan: Actually, we're having a small supper at Le Chanteuse afterwards for Sir Trevor. So if you're not busy, say around eleven?

Niles, choking on his cigarette, desperately nods.

Susan: Good, we'll see you then.

Niles: [*stamping out the cigarette*] Frasier! Dinner with Sir Trevor, that's better than seeing the play!

Frasier: Niles, are you insane? We know absolutely nothing about the damn play! How can we possibly talk with this man? For God's sake, I just wish I'd read that review in yesterday's paper.

Niles: Do you still have it?

Frasier: I might. Dad lets the papers pile up for days sometimes. You know what? We've got just enough time to go there and get back. Let's go!

They start to walk away, but Stephen calls out.

Stephen: Where are you going?

Frasier: See, I told you it was the other way.

They come up behind the Kendalls, then rush away as soon as their backs are turned.

Frasier: [*muttering*] God!

FADE TO:

Scene 2 - Frasier's Apartment

Frasier and Niles are in the kitchen, rummaging through the papers. Martin comes in.

Martin: What's goin' on?

Frasier: Dad, we're looking for yesterday's paper.

Martin: Oh, well, it should be there.

Frasier: Oh Dad! That review you were reading yesterday, "Tears of the Mariner." Do you remember it?

Martin: [*unsure*] Kinda.

Frasier: Just concentrate: What was the play about?

Martin: Well, let me see, uh, it started out with this old guy who was guttin' a fish. And then he gives this fish to his son, but his son rejects it.

Frasier: Good! Good, then what?

Martin: Uh...oh, yeah! Well, then it turns out he's got this fatal disease, and the next thing you know, he's in this big stadium. And he's telling everyone that even though he's dying, that today, he considers himself the luckiest...

Frasier: Dad! That is "Pride of the Yankees"!

Martin: Oh, yeah, that's right. I'm sorry, I'm sorry about that. But I'm pretty sure that fish part was right.

Niles: Yes, yes! Here it is!

Frasier: Let me see: "Trevor Aimsley's bravura performance in 'Tears of the Mariner' qualifies him as an..." Yes, blah blah blah,

blah blah blah, continued on page A-sixteen.

He flips to the back of the section and opens it up, only to find that there is a huge hole cut in the page.

Niles: Where is it?

Frasier: Daphne! Her picture must have been on the other side. It may still be here, she was going to mail it to her mother.
[*He heads to the living room.*]

Niles: [*following*] Daphne's picture was in the paper?

Frasier: Yes, well someone snapped a candid photo of her in the park. If you ask me, it was not her most flattering angle, but I'm sure you would disagree. [*He grabs Daphne's letter.*]

Niles: Well, open it.

Frasier: Carefully... Oh, what the hell, I'll buy her flowers.

He rips it open and starts to pull out the piece of newspaper. Daphne comes in the front door and Frasier freezes.

Daphne: Hey, Dr. Crane, I thought you went... Is that my letter?

Frasier: Daphne, let me explain...

Daphne: [*grabbing the letter*] No, no, I should have known I'd never get any privacy in this house.

Frasier: You don't understand. I just wanted to...

Daphne: You just wanted to find out if I was gossiping about you to my mum. Well, fine! I was. A seventy-three year old woman in Manchester is about to find out that you dye the grey out of your temples. There! You happy?

Frasier: No, I am not happy, I am mortified! [*he pauses*] How did you know that? I keep my hair dye in the false bottom of my cufflink box.

Daphne: Yeah, well... I'll let it go this time.

She nervously heads for her room.

Frasier: Oh, we haven't got time for this! We've to get down to that party!

They head for the door.

Niles: I knew you were dyeing your hair.

Frasier: Shut up.

Niles: "No, no, really, it's just my new conditioner."

Frasier: Shut up!

They exit. Fade out.

Scene 3 - The Restaurant

Fade in. Frasier and Niles are sitting at the bar.

Frasier: Whatever you do, don't get specific about the play. That's the mistake you made last year when you lied about having seen "The Silent Echo." All that yammering on about how the play had third act problems. It fooled no one.

Niles: What makes you so sure?

Frasier: Well, for starters, "The Silent Echo" doesn't have a third act.

Sir Trevor Aimsley enters to applause and cries of "Bravo!" He bows and heads towards the bar.

Trevor: Thank you. [*then*] God, I need a drink. [*to bartender*]
Double scotch, no ice.

Bartender: Yes, sir.

Susan walks up beside Sir Trevor.

Susan: Frasier, Niles, how nice. Sir Trevor, this is Dr. Frasier Crane and his brother Dr. Niles Crane.

Frasier: [*shaking his hand*] It's an honor.

Susan: Two of our city's preeminent psychiatrists.

Niles: [*shaking his hand*] Huge fans.

Frasier: Huge, yes.

Susan: They've set up a table for us in the private room, shall we?

Trevor: No, I'll just finish this and be right along. Perhaps the two doctors will keep me company. I'd love to hear a psychological interpretation of the play.

Susan: All right, but don't be too long. [*She leaves.*]

Trevor: So, tell me, as students of the human psyche, did my character ring true?

Frasier: Oh, oh yes. So true.

Niles: I can honestly say I never saw a false moment.

Trevor: Well, what about the third act? The play clearly has a third act problem.

Niles: Well, at least it has a third act, unlike "The Silent Echo" which really could have used one. [*Frasier gives him a dark look.*]

Trevor: I quite agree. I did "The Silent Echo" in London, last year. What did you think of the hat scene? [*Frasier now gives Niles a cheery "What now?" look.*]

Niles: The hat scene? Well, you know, the most important thing about the hat scene, and I have to stress this... oh dear God, is that clock right? I have to call the sitter and tell her I'm going to be late. The children worry so. [*He rushes off.*]

Trevor: Well, back to the play.

Frasier: Right. Well, you, of course, were brilliant.

Trevor: Oh, please! Dr. Crane, I just want your professional analysis of what you saw tonight.

Frasier: Well, it, uh... of course I could discuss subtext, metaphor and imagery with you, but you see, I, I come to the theater to feel. To be moved, and that is exactly what happened to me tonight.

Trevor: Really? When?

Frasier: When? Well, let me see...uh, um, well, there was that, uh, the gutting the fish scene. You make the most heart-breaking gesture... It was, uh, you know, the one with, with your hands... [*He motions vaguely.*]

Trevor: Oh, you mean when I offer the fish to my son and he turns his back to me and I reach out to him like this? [*does so*]

Frasier: Yes, it's even more moving the second time. Well, who knows why a, a moment like that touches us so. You see, that is your gift, Sir Trevor. You've given us hundreds of moments. Moments so real, so compelling that we are revealed in their truth.

Trevor: You don't know how refreshing this is. To meet someone who doesn't just come to the theater, but who gives himself over to it. That crowd in there, they only come because it's fashionable. They don't care about art. I can spot them at a glance: the poseur, the fraud. Oh, here comes your brother.

Niles: [*sitting down again*] Kids are fine.

Trevor: Oh.

Frasier glares at his brother.

Waitress: Excuse me Sir Trevor, they're waiting for you in the dining room.

Trevor: Ah, very well. [*stands up and takes Frasier by the shoulders*]
And thank you, Dr. Crane, for your integrity and your passion.
You are the reason that actors act.

He exits, not noticing Frasier nearly weeping as the full realization of what he passed up hits him.

Niles: Well, I'm sorry I deserted you but obviously you carried the day. Bravo!

Frasier: [*disgusted with himself*] Oh, yes, bravo for us!

Catching Frasier's tone, Niles loses his cheer and sinks onto the stool next to Frasier's.

Niles: [*half-expecting the answer*] What do you mean?

Frasier: Do you realize what we missed tonight? A potentially life-changing experience in the theater. And why? Because we were too embarrassed to be seen in a cancellation line.

Niles: You're right. What were we thinking? Kowtowing to a group of snobs like that.

Frasier: We weren't thinking. Come on, let's get out of here.

They start to exit, Susan comes in behind them.

Susan: Frasier, Niles.

Frasier: Oh, Susan, I'm so sorry, but we can't stay.

Susan: Oh, no. Sir Trevor will be so disappointed. He was quite taken with you.

Frasier: Well, send him our apologies. It really was wonderful to meet him.

Susan: I know this is short notice, but if you're free this weekend, we're having one of our Sunday brunches. Senator Logan is coming and Maria DeFalco and the Whitneys...

Frasier: Yes, but I'm afraid that we...

Susan: Oh, please try. I'll hold it open for you. Check your books and let me know. [*She goes back to the dining room.*]

Frasier: Well, how's that for irony?

Niles: Sunday brunch at the Kendalls'. An hour ago we would have leapt at that invitation.

Frasier: Not anymore. We've got a damn sight too much integrity. [*They start to leave.*] Although... Are we being selfish?

Niles: Possibly. How?

Frasier: Here's my thinking. Why do shallow people remain that way? The lack of positive influence.

Niles: Perhaps our brand of integrity is just what that group needs.

Frasier: Yes! We can be like those politicians who try to change the system from within.

Niles: Exactly. And who knows? Maybe it'll rub off on Senator Logan, he'll bring it back with him to Washington.

Frasier: Well now we HAVE to go.

They head out.

Niles: What are you wearing?

Frasier: I'm going to wear my new Prada suit.

Niles: Oh, you're a fashion plate and a patriot.

Fade out.

Credits:

Niles comes into the kitchen, finds the paper with Daphne's photo cut out and checks the page number. He then pulls out another copy of the paper and checks the back page, scanning for the photo. Finding it, he is stunned. He carefully folds the paper, tucks it under his arm and, after a moment to compose himself, walks out of the kitchen.

Guest Appearances

Guest Starring

SIMON BROOKE as Bartender
SALLY CHAMPLIN as Usher
JAMES CUNNINGHAM as Dr. Rob Mandel
JOE HOWARD as Ticket Seller
FRANCIS X. MCCARTHY as Steve Kendall
NATALIJA NOGULICH as Susan Kendall
LYNN TUFELD as Waitress
FRITZ WEAVER as Sir Trevor Aimsley

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