

[9.15]The Proposal

The Proposal

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Production Code: 9.15
Episode Number In Production Order: 207
Filmed on: 8th January 2002
Original Airdate on NBC: 4th February 2002
Transcript written on 18 February 2002
Transcript revised on 29 April 2004

Mum

Gertrude Moon has appeared in the following episodes:

- [\[7.24\]](#) Something Borrowed, Someone Blue [2]
 - [\[9.12\]](#) Mother Load [1]
 - [\[9.13\]](#) Mother Load [2]
-

AWARDS & NOMINATIONS

Won

EMMY

- **Outstanding Multi-Camera Picture Editing for a Series:** Ron Volk
-

Transcript {David Langley}

Act 1

THE RING

Scene 1 - A Jewelry Store

Fade in. Niles, Frasier and Martin enter the store.

Frasier: Niles, are you sure you want to do this without Daphne? You know, when Lilith and I got engaged, she insisted on being involved with the ring selection process.

Niles: I appreciate your concern, Frasier, but I want to surprise her.

Martin: [*pointing*] How 'bout this one? It's nice and sparkly.

Niles: [*looking*] That's an earring, Dad.

Martin: Huh? Oh, I guess I better put on my glasses.

Frasier: Niles, prepare to relinquish your breath.

Niles: Which one?

Frasier: That one right there.

Niles: Next to the gaudy one?

Frasier looks guilty.

Niles: The GAUDY one?

Frasier: All right, all right, which one do you like?

Niles: I was thinking of something more along the lines of that one, with the feathered band. What do you think?

Frasier: I think it's a good thing I'm here to talk you out of it.

Niles: I'm think I'm starting to regret bringing you along at all.

Frasier: I think it's a...

A clerk comes up as they bicker.

Clerk: Gentlemen, gentlemen, I'm sure we can find something that will bring you both a lifetime of happiness.

Martin: [*laughing*] Oh, no! They're not a couple! My son Niles is here to pick out an engagement ring for his girlfriend Daphne. And Frasier, who's been married twice, just came along to help him.

Clerk: I'm very sorry, I'll come back when you've had more time to look around.

He walks away.

Niles: Where did that come from?

Frasier: I mean, REALLY! To just assume something like that, out of the blue...

Both: Latent!

Martin: Well you gotta admit, it wasn't such a big leap, given the situation.

Frasier: And just what is that supposed to...?

He stops and points at a case.

Frasier: What bejeweled seraph has escaped her provenance now?

Martin: I'm gonna go see if there's a line at the Orange Julius.

He leaves.

Frasier: Now, I have several candidates, Niles, but before you turn up your nose at this...

Niles: That's it, right there. That's Daphne's ring.

Frasier: The very one I was going to show you.

Niles: Stylish...

Frasier: Classic...

Niles: Stunning... Daphne. [*to the clerk*] Excuse me? I'd like to see that one, please.

Clerk: Excellent choice, sir.

Frasier: Do you know her ring size?

Niles: Oh, even better, her ring finger is exactly the same size as mine.

Clerk: Well, perhaps you should try this on, then.

The clerk pulls the ring out.

Niles: Oh, it's...

He drops the ring, Frasier bends down to pick it up.

Niles: Oh, I'm sorry, I'm a little nervous. I think it just hit me what this all means.

Frasier lets out a groan.

Niles: What happened?

Frasier: Nothing, it's just my back. It's been acting up a bit in the last week.

Niles: Well, here, do you want me to give you a hand up?

Frasier: No, no, here's the ring, I'll just stay down here for a moment.

He hands it over, and Niles clumsily tries to put it on as people stop and stare. Martin comes back in.

Frasier: Does it fit? Oh, here, let me help. No, come on. Oh, Niles.

Niles: Frasier, it's perfect! You know, I always dreamed this would happen!

Everyone in the store smiles and begin applauding.

Martin: No, wait! They're not a couple!

The applause continues as Frasier and Niles, oblivious, excitedly show Martin the ring.

Martin: Oh, jeez.

He turns and walks back out. FADE OUT.

THE WORDS

Scene 2 - Cafe Nervosa

Fade in. Niles is sitting at a table, reading some papers and choking up. He gets control of himself and takes a sip of coffee. Roz comes in, and he breaks down again.

Roz: Hey, Niles.

Niles turns the papers over.

Roz: Is something wrong?

Niles: No, no, I uh...

Roz: Oh my God, is that Daphne's proposal?

Niles: What? No, I don't, what are you...

Roz: Frasier told me.

Niles: That gossiping ninny!

Roz: Don't worry, he swore me to secrecy.

Niles: I swore HIM to secrecy!

Roz: So how's it coming?

Niles: I'm afraid I poured so much emotion into this speech I don't know if I can say it all without crying.

Roz: Oh, that's okay. Women like a man who isn't afraid to shed a few tears.

Niles: Last time I got all the way through it, I got dehydrated.

Roz: Well, maybe if you cut it down a little bit, you could get through it before the waterworks start. Let me take a look?

She reaches for the papers and Niles reluctantly lets go of them.

Roz: Well, what about this paragraph here? I mean, aren't words like "hopeless" and "despairing" kind of a downer in a proposal?

Niles: Oh, well this is where I describe my life before I met her. See, and then comes the part where she comes along and the meter changes to a more sprightly iambic: "Now-my-life-has-meaning." Things that never made sense before suddenly are

clear. It's all because of this... wonderful woman.

He breaks down again.

Roz: It's all right. I'm sure there's other stuff we can cut.

The waiter brings Roz her coffee.

Roz: Thank you. Okay, like here: I mean, now do you really have to compare her to three different roses?

Niles: Well, which one would you have me eliminate? The one that represents her beauty or her passion or... [*breaking down again*] her sense of humor...

Roz: Niles, you're just making this too complicated. I mean, all we really want is for a guy to get down on one knee and say, "I love you. Will you be my... wife?"

Roz breaks down, Niles hands her his handkerchief. FADE OUT.

THE WINE

Scene 3 - Frasier's Apartment

Fade in. Frasier, Niles and Martin are sitting around the dining table, tasting several bottles of wine.

Frasier: Excellent. Nice bite, smooth oaky blend.

Niles: Mmm, lovely finish. I think this is definitely a contender. How about you, Dad?

Martin: Well, this one dislodged that piece of pot roast that's been buggin' me since lunch.

Frasier and Niles roll their eyes at each other.

Martin: I'm sorry, Niles, I'm just not the right guy to help you pick a wine for your proposal dinner.

Niles: Well, Dad, this is an important night for me, and, and I want you to play an important part.

Martin: I guess it is an honor to be included. Thanks. [*rising*] Well, time to cleanse my palate, I'm gonna get a beer.

Frasier and Niles chuckle. Martin heads to the kitchen.

Niles: [*leans forward*] Now?

Frasier: Not yet.

Niles: Well, exactly how drunk does he have to get?

Frasier: [*pouring more wine*] To agree to take Daphne's mother out while you propose to her? DRUNK, Niles.

Niles: You're right. Fill 'er up. Go ahead.

There is the sound of a can being dropped in the kitchen.

Martin: [*offstage*] Whoopsy.

Niles: You're sure he hasn't had enough?

Frasier: Dad, what was the name of that widow you dated several years ago?

CUT TO: the kitchen.

Martin: You mean Claire Wojadubakowski?

CUT TO: Frasier.

Frasier: Not yet.

Martin comes back in and sits down.

Martin: Well, my taste buds are all sudsy clean.

Niles: Let's dive right back in. Bottom's up.

Niles and Frasier take sips from their glasses. Martin drains his full glass in one breath.

Martin: Boy, I tell ya, I haven't had this much to drink since the night I proposed to your mother.

Niles: Really?

Martin: Yeah. That was quite a night, I was nervous as hell...

Frasier: I love this story.

Martin: And then she said "No."

Frasier: What? I've never heard this version.

Martin: Well, she wanted to get married, but she just wasn't ready.

Frasier: Well, what was it that finally convinced her to say "Yes"?

Martin: Oh, you don't want to know.

Frasier: Well, come on, Dad, what Marty Crane magic did you weave to get her to change her mind?

Martin: Actually, I didn't change her mind, Fras. You did.

Frasier looks shocked, Niles bites back a smile.

Frasier: Oh, dear God!

He pours himself more wine.

Martin: I'll never forget the look on that minister's face when your mother waddled down the aisle of Saint Barthalelamew. Did you hear what I said? I said "Barthalamar..."

Niles: Dad, there's a question I've been meaning to ask you...

Frasier: Niles, how can you change the subject after this bombshell?

Niles looks guilty.

Frasier: You knew?

Niles: Well, remember that time I had the chicken pox? Mom told me to cheer me up.

Frasier: Oh, go ahead.

Niles: Thank you. So, uh, listen, Dad. Daphne and I, of course, want to be alone on the big night.

Martin: [laughs and nudges him] Oh, yeah.

Niles: And I was wondering if perhaps you could take Daphne's mother out for the evening.

Martin: You want me to take out Daphne's mother?! Is that what this has all been about?

Niles: No! More wine?

Martin: I can't stand that woman! But if it'll help you out, sure I'll do it. I'll go out with her.

Niles: Oh, Dad, thank you! I will never forget this.

Martin: Forget what? Ha! Just kiddin' ya.

Daphne and Mrs. Moon come in the front.

Daphne: Hello, all.

Niles: [rising] Hello. How was the movie?

Gertrude: Not bad, considering my daughter's famous sense of direction made us forty-five minutes late. Then she got me popcorn without butter and kept shushing me, just because I can

predict what people will say next in a movie. [sweetly]
Hello, Marty.

Martin: Ah, excuse me.

Martin rushes into the kitchen.

CUT TO: the kitchen as he comes in. Frasier is waiting.

Martin: I need a beer! Now, now!

He gets a beer from the fridge as Frasier hovers.

Frasier: Dad, you know we were just talking about the fact that I was a, a guest at your wedding?

Martin: Yeah?

Frasier: Well, it's just the least bit startling and I have always respected you and Mother and the decisions that you made throughout your lifetime, but this information does beg one question. Dad, am I...?

Martin: A year older? No. Your birthday's the same, we just faked our anniversary all these years.

Frasier: [collapsing with relief] Oh, thank heavens!

Martin pats him on the shoulder as Frasier lifts his glass.

FADE OUT.

End of Act 1

Act 2

THE DIVERSION

Scene 1 - The Puget Sound Ferry

Fade in. Martin and Mrs. Moon are sitting in a booth near the window.

Gertrude: You know, Marty, I'm not surprised you asked me out.

Martin: Um, you're not?

Gertrude: Oh, don't be coy. A romantic boat ride to a remote island. I know when a man's trying to seduce me.

Martin: Uh, Mrs. Moon...

Gertrude: Oh, it was inevitable, really. I mean, here we are, two comfortable old shoes, looking for new mates.

Martin: Actually, I'm not that comfortable.

Gertrude: Oh, maybe you just need someone to break you in.

Peg from Martin's work walks in with a friend.

Suzy: Isn't that Marty Crane, from work?

Peg: Right.

Suzy: Didn't you two have a thing goin' on?

Peg: No, we just made out at the office party.

Suzy: Then what happened? Blew you off?

Peg: Actually, I think he was kind of interested. He slipped a Note in my lunch, he drove past my house, he called me a couple of times and hung up.

Suzy: And you didn't do anything. What were you thinking? He's cute.

Peg: He is cute, isn't he?

CUT TO: Martin and Mrs. Moon.

Gertrude: What a wonderful sunset. I bet you ordered it just for me, didn't you, Marty?

Martin: Actually, the sun goes down almost every night.

Gertrude: Oh, you! Stop making me fall in love with you.

Martin: Uh, you know, I think there's been a bit of a misunderstanding here. I didn't mean this to be a DATE date, more of a friendship thing. You know, I really enjoy your company...

Gertrude: No, no. I should have known. [*getting up*] What could you possibly want with a dried-up old prune like me?

Martin: [*following her*] You're not a dried-up old...

Gertrude: Please, I don't want your pity. I'll just stand at the bar and drink all night. Even though my doctor told me one more episode could cost me me liver.

Martin: Oh, now come on...

Gertrude: If you want to pretend not to know me, I'll understand completely.

Martin: Look, you've misunderstood what I said.

Gertrude: Oh, then you don't think I'm unattractive?

Martin: Unattractive? You said that, not me.

CUT TO: the ladies.

Suzy: It's not too late, go over there and say hello.

Peg: He's with somebody! It'd be weird.

Suzy: You don't have to make a play for him, just say hello. You can tell by his reaction whether or not he's still interested.

CUT TO: Martin and Mrs. Moon. He leads her to sit down.

Martin: Gertrude, this is wrong. Your husband just left you, you're vulnerable.

Gertrude: I'm not vulnerable. I'm ripe and receptive.

Martin: Okay, I'll tell you the truth. You know, I was shot, right?

Gertrude: Yes, in the hip.

Martin: Except that the damage wasn't confined to the hip. There were fragments that traveled... south.

Gertrude: Ohhh. You mean...?

Martin: Yep.

Gertrude: Yes, but you can still...

Martin: Nope.

Gertrude: But they have pills now...

Martin: Nope.

Gertrude: Acupuncture?

Martin: Ooh! Don't remind me!

He crosses his legs.

Martin: No, the sad fact is, it just doesn't work.

Peg comes walking up behind him.

Martin: I have absolutely no sexual feeling in my groin area, period.

Gertrude: Oh, Marty, that's terrible. Oh, I am sorry I brought it up.

Martin: Oh, that's all right, no harm done.

Peg absorbs this, turns around and walks away. FADE OUT.

[N.B. This is the first time we learn Mrs. Moon's Christian name.]

THE PROPOSAL

Scene 2 - Niles' Apartment at the Montana

Fade in. Frasier is in the kitchen, hovering over the shoulder of Wolfgang Puck, who is cooking the proposal dinner.

[N.B. Puck was also a guest voice in [\[8.08\]](#) "Mary Christmas."]

Frasier: Excuse me, Mr. Puck?

Wolfgang turns with a frustrated look and slams his spatula down. Obviously this is not the first such interruption Frasier has made.

Wolfgang: Yes, Dr. Crane?

Frasier: I, I couldn't help noticing, the crab cakes are getting just a bit... brown.

Wolfgang: They're getting beautifully crunchy.

Frasier: I see. Because when I said "brown" I actually meant more like "black"... like "burned."

Wolfgang: They're Cajun.

Niles comes in.

Niles: Is everything all right in here?

Wolfgang: With the food, no problem. [*motions at Frasier*]

Niles smacks Frasier on the shoulder.

Frasier: Everything's under control, Niles, we're all set. You just relax, okay?

Niles: I can't believe it, I've worked so hard to make everything perfect for Daphne and now the moment is... almost... [*sniffing*] do I smell burning crab?

Wolfgang: It's Cajun!

The doorbell rings.

Niles: It's her!

Frasier: Go! God speed!

Niles hurries out.

CUT TO: the living room as he crosses to the front door. There are a number of people waiting on the stairs.

Niles: Everyone, everyone, places, places!

They hurry up the stairs as he continues to the door.

Niles: Coming, my sweet!

He gets to the door, but continues to stamp his feet until the others are out of sight. Then he opens the door to reveal Daphne, looking quite haggard.

Niles: Are you all right?

Daphne: Don't touch me, I have the flu.

Niles: Oh, you poor dear. Here, here, here, come here. Sit right down here until we're ready to eat.

He leads her over to the couch.

Daphne: I can't eat. I need me mouth to breathe. I hope you didn't go to too much trouble with dinner.

Niles glances at the kitchen door.

Niles: Oh, no, no. I uh... Hey, you know what? A good cup of tea and you'll be rallying in no time. *[rising]* You'll never guess what I have planned for tonight.

Daphne: All I want to do is stuff Kleenex up me nose, collapse on the couch and pray for death.

She lays back.

Niles: Keep guessing.

Daphne: I'm sorry, Niles.

Niles: Oh, that's all right. You lie here. I'll go heat up some soup in the kitchen.

He heads for the kitchen.

CUT TO: the kitchen.

Niles: Dinner's off.

Wolfgang: *[turning]* What did you say?

Frasier: Look, Niles, even if the crab cakes are a total write-off, we can still salvage a meal...

Niles: No, no. Daphne's sick. Oh, oh, Wolfgang. Could you open up a can of plain chicken broth and heat it up for me?

Wolfgang looks at him in disbelief, then turns back to the stove, shaking his head.

Frasier: You're just canceling everything? The choir, the string quartet, the dry ice?

Niles: Yes, all of it. I want this proposal to be the greatest night of Daphne's life. What's the point of doing it if she's too sick to enjoy it?

Frasier: Yes, but we spent weeks pulling all of this together.

Niles: Well, we'll just get everybody back sometime when she's feeling better.

Wolfgang: *[muttering]* Not everybody.

Niles: All right, all right, listen. I'll take Daphne into the guest room to lie down so you can get everyone out of here. Just be quiet, I don't want to spoil the surprise for next time.

Frasier: Rest assured, she won't suspect a thing.

Daphne: *[from the other room]* Niles? I think there's a bird loose in here.

Niles pauses in confusion, then stares at Frasier.

Frasier: *[guiltily]* I thought doves might be a nice addition.

Niles rushes out.

CUT TO: the living room as he comes in.

Daphne: It looked like a dove.

Niles: Oh, I think your fever is causing you to hallucinate.

He covers her eyes with his hand and grabs at a feather wafting down.

Niles: [*loudly*] Come along, let's take you to the guest room for a good lie down.

Daphne: [*rising*] Why are you yelling?

Niles: Because your ears are all stuffed up.

Daphne: No, they're not.

Niles: They're not? Oh, maybe mine are. Gee, I hope I'm not getting what you have.

After they exit, Frasier comes in from the kitchen. He puts on his jacket, goes to the middle of the room and quietly claps his hands. People appear at the book landing, on the staircase, in the dining nook and two short people dressed as angels come from under the table.

Frasier: Shh, shh, everyone! Very quietly, I have an announcement to make. I'm terribly sorry, but tonight's festivities have been indefinitely postponed, due to illness.

All the people groan. One of the angels speaks up.

Angel: But we still get paid, right?

Frasier: Yes, you still get paid. Now, I need all of you to file, quickly and quietly, out the front door. It is imperative that the young lady not know any of you were ever here.

Daphne: [*from off stage*] I'm telling you, that room has a draft.

Frasier: Hit the dirt!

Everyone hides behind things as Daphne and Niles come back.

Daphne: [o.s.] Why can't we sit in the living room and build a nice fire?

Niles: [*as they come in*] No, no, no, we can't go in the living room, it... has... that... [*looking around*] of course we can go in the living room and have a nice fire! Come here and sit down. Do you want to borrow my pajamas?

She sits on the couch in front of the fireplace.

Throughout the following conversation, Frasier, who is crouched by the front door, directs the hidden people out with commando-style hand signals.

At each moment it looks like one of them might turn, Frasier gestures for everyone to freeze and swings the door shut, then opens it again and shoos them out.

Daphne: No, I feel silly in those, they're so big and baggy.

Niles: I'm the only one here who's gonna see you.

As Niles bends over and tries to ignite the fire, Frasier uses the clicking of the flint as cover, as he frantically gestures for the first group of people to crawl out the door.

As they do, another small group crawls from the dining area and hides behind the living room furniture.

Niles: Oh, how about some tea?

Daphne: Not now.

He tries to ignite the fire again, and Frasier motions the next group out, while signaling to the group further back and pointing to the living room floor.

As the clicking stops, Frasier clenches his fist, meaning "stop."

Niles: Oh, I have some of those raspberry candies you like.

Daphne: [*pats the arm of the couch*] No, you stay right here next to me, Niles Crane.

As he sits, she lets out a big sneeze and Niles edges away from her.

Frasier motions the next group out, and the last group forward, pointing to his eyes to tell them to stay alert.

Niles: Get you a blanket, you'll catch a chill, darling. Get you all comfy.

Daphne: Oh, I'm sorry I ruined our evening.

Niles: Oh, you did nothing of the sort.

He kneels in front of her.

Daphne: I don't know what I did to deserve you.

Niles: You kidding? I got the better end of this deal.

Daphne: Oh, yeah, look at me: nose running, hair a mess, I must look a real fright.

She has another sneezing fit and Frasier hurries the last people out and closes the door.

He starts to crawl back towards the kitchen, then notices a server back in the dining nook. He starts, then gestures for the man to come out.

The server shakes his head, wide-eyed. Frasier gestures firmly, anger in his eyes, but the server shakes his head again. Frasier gets down on his knees and elbows and crawls commando-style across the floor, like it's a fire zone.

Niles: You are simply the most adorable creature I have ever seen on this Earth.

Daphne: Oh, I'm sure.

Niles: No, I mean it. From your beautiful toes all the way up to your crusty nose, there's not an inch of you that I don't adore.

Frasier stops at the staircase and points to the server, directing him out. The server hunches over and rushes to the door.

Niles: You know, it's funny. You could take a million years to plan the perfect evening, and you'd never come up with this. Daphne, I have to ask you a question.

Frasier looks up at this.

Daphne: Hold on.

She takes a tissue and blows her nose, long and loud. Frasier takes the opportunity to hide behind the staircase. Daphne stops, takes a breath and blows some more.

Daphne: You were saying?

Niles reaches in his pocket and takes out the ring.

Niles: Daphne Moon, will you, and your beautiful toes and your exquisite ankles and your precious knees, elbows and arms and fingers, shoulders... [*holds up the ring*] Will you marry me?

Daphne: ...Oh, Niles! Of course I will.

She throws her arms around him. Frasier holds his hand to his mouth as he chokes up. At the landing at the top of the stairs, a "royal trumpeter" comes out, mistaking Daphne's acceptance for his cue.

As he lifts his horn to his lips, Frasier rushes up the stairs and takes him down with a flying tackle, preserving the silence.

Niles slips the ring on Daphne's finger. FADE OUT.

Credits:

As Niles and Daphne cuddle on the couch, Frasier comes from the kitchen. Wolfgang Puck, gagged and still holding one of his pans, is slung over his shoulder. Frasier takes him to the front, deposits him outside the door and checks to make sure he wasn't seen, closing the door behind him. Daphne looks up, apparently hearing the bird again. Niles looks, then shrugs. They kiss and she lays back down against his shoulder.

Guest Appearances

Special Appearance by

WOLFGANG PUCK

Special Guest Stars

MILLICENT MARTIN as Gertrude Moon

LINDSAY CROUSE as Peg

Guest Starring

DAN BUCATINSKY as Jewelry Clerk

JUANITA JENNINGS as Suzy

TONY COX as Angel #1

MARK POVINELLI as Angel #2

Legal Stuff

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