

## MAX AND MARGO

ACT I      SCENE 1: The waiting room of a county courthouse, outside a door marked REGISTRY OFFICE. A set of benches against the corner of the wall. Two women (MARGO and LAUREL) and three men (MAX, CHARLIE, KENT) are sitting, talking.

LAUREL:      So, now I'm not the only person I know who meets guys on the Internet and screens them for dating material. Solidarity Sister! (she and MARGO high-five each other)

KENT:        You're the only one who's marrying one.

LAUREL:      Who wouldn't marry Max? He's sweet, he's kind, he's... (looks at MARGO) Why am I being your maid of honor instead of killing you and marrying him myself?

MARGO:      Because you're a woman who believes in supporting other women, or because I'm you're weyrwoman on a virtual reality game where you really, really, *really* want a gold dragon someday... or because you've been secretly lusting after Charlie for a year and a half.

CHARLIE:     The third one! Pick the third one!

MAX:         I'm going to go see how much longer we have to wait. (wanders off to the window across the room.)

LAUREL:      So, what are my chances of a gold dragon, exactly?

MAX:         (returning) We're next. (softly, to MARGO) You ready for this?

MARGO:      (grinning, madly in love with MAX) I was born ready.

(All five walk into the registry office.)

SCENE 2: A Chinese Restaurant. MAX and MARGO are sitting next to each other with the others around them. The restaurant is otherwise empty, as it's the middle of the afternoon on a weekday.

CHARLIE:     Who's idea was it to come to a Chinese restaurant during Lent?

KENT:        On a Friday.

CHARLIE:     (amending) Who's idea was it to come to a Chinese restaurant on a Friday during Lent?

LAUREL:      Max and Margo love Chinese food. It's their wedding.

CHARLIE: But it's Lent.

LAUREL: (not getting it) And?

CHARLIE: And it's Friday.

LAUREL: (still not getting it) *And?*

CHARLIE: You don't eat meat on Fridays during.

LAUREL: Sure, I do.

MARGO: (gently amused) Laurel, honey, Charlie's trying to tell us that he's feeling limited by the lack of things he can choose from at a Chinese restaurant in the middle of South Dakota on a Friday in Lent. (to Charlie) I'm sorry, I didn't realize you were Catholic. My family is Italian. Mom said once when she was little, her mother forgot it was Lent and sent her to school with a baloney sandwich and the nuns took away her entire lunch.

CHARLIE: (nodding) I believe it. What happened?

MARGO: Oh, she left school and went down the block to my great-grandfather's pizzeria and had meatballs.

(Everyone laughs)

CHARLIE: You know, I'm pretty sure you're allowed to just pick a different day to avoid meat if circumstances warrant.

MAX: How about next Tuesday.

CHARLIE: I was thinking tomorrow.

MAX: Your mom's making pot roast tomorrow, isn't she.

CHARLIE: Well... she *claims* it's pot roast.

MAX: (to MARGO) Charlie's mom is the *worst* cook. Everything she makes tastes like cardboard. But her pot roast? Her pot roast tastes like regurgitated cardboard.

MARGO: Oh, gross! (to CHARLIE) You, know, I think it would be better for your health if you had Mongolian beef tonight and stuck to mac-n-cheese tomorrow.

KENT: And this is why we love Margo. She has much wisdom.

MAX: Yup. That's why I love Margo.

(Lights fade out as friends continue to chatter about the menu. )

ACT II SCENE 1: A curb outside Japanese restaurant. The neon sign above the door reads "Sushi Dragon." There is a bus stop with a bench at the edge of the curb. MAX and MARGO enter stage right, holding hands.

MARGO: Are we almost there? My feet hurt, and I'm hungry.

MAX: Just one more door. Okay. Here we are. Kevin Katsuo's parents opened this place last week, and he says if we tell them we know him... (off her look) Honey? What's wrong? You love Japanese food.

MARGO: I do.

MAX: We talked about having Japanese food for our third anniversary in honor of our three friends who couldn't eat meat at our wedding summer.

MARGO: Only one of our friends couldn't eat meat, but...

MAX: Honey?

MARGO: (walks over to bus stop bench and sits) Sit with me.

MAX: (confused) We drove here.

MARGO: (annoyed) I know, but... Look, just... sit with me.  
(MAX joins her on the bench.)  
You know how I had that stomach flu last month, and I haven't been able to shake it at all?

MAX: Yeah. It's weird, though. I'm not sick at all, and usually we pass stuff back and forth.

MARGO: (softly) I haven't been throwing up because I'm sick, Max. I've been throwing up, because I'm pregnant.

MAX: What?

MARGO: I'm pregnant, Max.

MAX: With a baby?

MARGO: No, with a jade dragon. Yes, with a baby. Our baby. We're going to be parents.

MAX: I've gotta sit down.

MARGO: You are sitting.

MAX: I've gotta stand up so I can sit back down. Oh, crap! Dinner. You can't eat sushi. You're pregnant.

MARGO: I know.

MAX: I'm guessing the champagne and brie at home is out, too.

MARGO: 'Fraid so.

MAX: Well, this is a lame anniversary.

MARGO: No, it isn't.

MAX: No. It isn't.

MARGO: We could get pizza and a movie and you could rub my feet.

MAX: I could do that. Ice cream?

MARGO: Play your cards right, and I'll even let you pick the flavor.  
(They leave the bench and exit stage right.)

ACT III SCENE 1: MAX and MARGO's bedroom, night. MARGO sits straight up in bed.

MARGO: What the...? Oh... gross. Oh! Shit. Max! (nudges him) Max!

MAX: (groggy) What's wrong? Do you need ice cream again?

MARGO: Wake up!

MAX: I'm not going to the QuickieMart for pickles at – what time is it?

MARGO: Time to go to the hospital.

MAX: They don't have pickles at the hospital.

MARGO: MAX! Wake! Up! My water broke! It's time! We have to go to the hospital.

MAX: (leaping out of bed, all crazy-like) MARGO, why are you still in bed. You're in labor, we have to get you to the hospital!

(Blackout)

SCENE 2: A hospital room, early morning. MARGO is lying in a hospital bed, clearly exhausted. The baby is in a bassinet beyond her bed. MAX enters through the door, stage left.

MAX: (softly) Hey... Honey, are you awake?

MARGO: (quiet) Mostly. I don't remember ever being this tired. Glad she's sleeping though.

MAX: She's officially my second-favorite person in the world.

MARGO: Who's first?

MAX: You are, hon. Always.

MARGO: (weak) Bing! Right in one!

MAX: Can I get you anything? Ice chips? Another pillow?

MARGO: Bring her here.

MAX: Are we allowed?

MARGO: We made her, sweetie. She's ours. We're allowed.

MAX: Oh. Um. Okay. (He goes to the bassinet and retrieves the swaddled, sleeping baby, handing her to MARGO, who instinctively cradles her against her bosom. The infant doesn't wake.) Oh, wow. Mother and child.

MARGO: Sit with us.

MAX: (climbing into the hospital bed so he's half-sitting, half-lying down with one arm behind MARGO's head) This is cozy.

MARGO: Isn't it? (she pulls some of the cloth away from the baby's face) You two haven't really been introduced. Max, this is your daughter.

MAX: I know this.

MARGO: And Jade... this man with his big, hairy arm around your Mama is your father.

MAX: My arms are *not* that hairy.

MARGO: Shut up, you're practically a gorilla.

MAX: Alright... maybe, but... wait? Jade?

MARGO: Well, I know we liked Jacob for a boy, and we both like Asian food.... So, I thought.... (worried) It's not official.

MAX: No... no, it's good. Jade. Jade Rabinski. Welcome to the family, young miss.

(MAX places a tiny kiss on his daughter's forehead and then a chaste one on his wife's lips. The newly-expanded family fades in tableau as the lights fade to black.)

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