

#1

John & Max

SCENE 3

EXT. MIDDLE RIVER (FROZEN)

Ice shanties dot the landscape.

There are four benches downstage. JOHN, MAX and CHUCK ice fish on three of them. CHUCK points off in the distance.

CHUCK

Hey, check it out! Light's on at the Clickner place.

MAX

Think they finally sold it?

JOHN

I keep telling you, it's not for sale.

MAX

Then why would it sit there empty?

JOHN

I ask the same thing of your skull.

CHUCK

Driveway's shoveled. There's a car in it!

MAX

That's nor a car. It's a snowmobile!

JOHN

A snowmobile? Your cornbread ain't cooked in the middle.

MAX

I'd insult you too but nature did a better job.

JOHN

(calling off)

Hey, Dad. Are you still peeing?

GRANDPA GUSTAFSON turns from behind a shanty, zipping his fly.

GRANDPA

Takes a long time to spell "Gustafson."

John + Max

GRANDPA sits on the remaining bench.

JOHN

Close your coat. You'll catch a cold.

GRANDPA

I'm 94 years old. What the hell do I care.

*As they bait their hooks and drop them
into ice holes:*

CHUCK

Think they'll ever sell that house across the street from you two?

JOHN

Old Clickner's place? I heard it's not even for sale.

MAX

Why else would it sit there empty?

JOHN

I ask the same thing of your skull.

CHUCK

Poor Clickner. That was a tough-luck stroke.

JOHN

That was no stroke. He had a heart attack trying to start his lawnmower.

MAX

Clickner had a push mower.

JOHN

I know. He had a heart attack trying to start it.

CHUCK

So who was it had the stroke?

3. WAY TO GO

MAX

WASN'T THAT THE WAY THAT EDDIE HICKS BOUGHT IT?

#2
Small town
people
part 5

KARLA

I heard she was a witch.

BO

Like a broomstick witch?

LO

No, the vampire kind from the middle ages.

STAN

That woman carried an --

FRAN

-- awful lot of artwork into that place.

UNIS

I just saw an Unsolved Mysteries rerun about art museum robberies!

BO

Can't be coincidence.

STAN

Did you see what she wore --

FRAN

Did you see what she wore to church the other day?

KARLA

I'll bet she's in some kind of cult.

UNIS

You mean, the kind with animal sacrifice?

LO

Maybe even human sacrifice.

UNIS

You never think it can happen in your own home town.

CHUCK

Everyone settle down. Ariel's a lovely woman.

BO

Ariel?

#2
Small Town
People
Party

ARIEL waves it off, exiting. STAN and
FRAN bury their noses in a tabloid
newspaper.

FRAN

I told you!

STAN

But I don't understand why -

FRAN

-- because that mayor is thinking with his fishing pole.

PUNKY enters.

STAN

(indicating the newspaper)

Punky! Did you hear? The guy who stabbed Harry --

FRAN

It was the mayor!

PUNKY

The mayor stabbed Harry?

STAN

Mayor Markley. He also had -

FRAN

He also had an affair with a married woman.

PUNKY

Who was it?

STAN

It was -

FRAN

Mary Mayberry.

PUNKY

Mayor Markley and Mary Mayberry?

STAN

Mainly Mary --

SCENE 7

#3
Jacob and
Melanie

EXT. WABASHA

JACOB emerges from MAX's house as
MELANIE emerges from JOHN's.

JACOB

Hi, Melanie.

MELANIE

Hi, Jacob.

JACOB

Something wrong?

MELANIE

Mike and I are splitting up.

JACOB

(excitedly)

Really!

(sympathetically)

I mean -- really?

(then)

King and Queen of the prom.

MELANIE

Yeah, well. The "king" spends all day on his throne
drinking beer and scratching the crowned jewels.

JACOB

Twenty years is a long time to celebrate homecoming. What
are you going to do?

MELANIE

Move. Start over. Someplace warm - like California.

JACOB

(blurting out)

Melanie, I've always been in love with-

(catching himself)

--California.

MELANIE

Right?

#3
Jacob and Melanie

JACOB

How'd your dad take the news?

MELANIE

Yeah. I haven't really told him yet. He kinda likes the way things are.

JACOB

Remember how you'd avoid confronting him when you were a kid -- making up all those elaborate lies?

MELANIE

Painted myself into some pretty tight corners back then. Not anymore. These days, I stand my ground.

JOHN pops his head out.

JOHN

Hey, Mel. You and Mike coming for Thanksgiving, right?

MELANIE

With bells on! Mike will make the turkey and maybe I'll be pregnant!

JOHN

(with delight)

THUNKA. THUNKA. THUNKA. Hi, Jacob!

JACOB

Hi, John. My Dad -- says hello.

JOHN

Send him my worst.

MAX appears at his door.

MAX

Jacob, pour some hot water on that drain pipe, will ya.

JOHN

Speak of the dickhead.

MAX

Putz.

JOHN

Moron.

#4 Ariel

SCENE 9

INT. JOHN'S HOME

A few hours later. ARIEL and JOHN share
a bottle of wine while playing chess.

ARIEL

Dinner was delicious. You're a wonderful cook, John.

JOHN

I seem to be developing a tolerance for spicy.

ARIEL

And your coffee smells heavenly.

JOHN

It's not coffee.

(with pride)

It's a latte.

ARIEL

(playfully)

Oh, my goodness!

JOHN

That's just the way I roll.

ARIEL

Such a beautiful smile. You should wear it more often.

JOHN

I save it for special occasions.

(moving chess pieces)

Ha! Captured your bishop! Three more moves and I'll have
you mated.

ARIEL

Shouldn't we get to know each other better first?

JOHN gets it; chuckles shyly. She
counters his move.

ARIEL (CONT'D)

Checkmate.

#4
Ariel

JOHN

(dawning on him)
You wanted me to capture your bishop!

ARIEL

Sometimes you sacrifice in order to gain.

JOHN

Nobody's beaten me since Peter Guderian, 1996 Lions Club regionals. This is indeed a special occasion.

They toast. ARIEL examines a sea of framed photographs.

ARIEL

Is this your wife?

JOHN

Yeah, that's May.

ARIEL

And these people?

JOHN

Wabasha High Football Team.

ARIEL

Is that you in the center?

JOHN

Quarterback from '63 to '66.

ARIEL

So handsome.

JOHN

The tall man on the left. Our coach --

ARIEL

-- my father. I've never seen a picture.

JOHN

Why don't you keep that.

ARIEL

#5 Snyder

JACOB

(painfully)

Yeah. That's what I was thinking.

*She waits for him to say something
else. He doesn't.*

MELANIE

(sadly)

Okay, then.

JACOB exits.

MELANIE

WOULDN'T IT BE NICE

*MELANIE exits as SNYDER appears,
knocking at JOHN's door.*

SNYDER

Mr. Gustafson! Mr. Gustafson!

*MAX bursts from his front door,
binoculars in hand.*

MAX

Ms. Snyder! Ms. Snyder! Max Goldman. We met a while back.

SNYDER

What is it, Mister Goldman?

MAX

(playfully salesman-like)

Call me Max. You know, Mister Gustafson and I are very close. I thought maybe I could help him with whatever's wrong.

SNYDER

He owes ninety-six thousand dollars in back taxes.

MAX

Oh, really -- !

SNYDER

Could be more if you know something we don't.

#5
Snyder

MAX

What does that mean?

SNYDER

Additional income? Hidden assets?

MAX

Like a lockbox full of cash left to him in a will?

SNYDER breathes into a paper bag.

SNYDER

Section CFR 301 of the Internal Revenue Tax Code issues rewards to individuals who provide information leading to the detection of taxpayer underpayments.

MAX

You mean I could get paid to make Gustafson miserable?

SNYDER

It's your civic duty to make Gustafson miserable.

MAX

God Bless America.

18. SNYDER COMES ALONG (REPRISE)

THAT'S WHEN MAX GOLDMAN COMES ALONG

SNYDER

IT'S TIME TO SING YOUR PATRIOTIC SONG

MAX

I'LL ADDRESS THE MESS OF MY TWO-FACED NEIGHBOR

SNYDER

AND TRUST THE IRS WILL REWARD ALL YOUR LABOR --

MAX

So what happens to the putz? Dock his pension? Mug shot in the local paper?

SNYDER

Even better! We're taking his house!

MAX

Holy Moly. His house?

#5
Snyder

MAX (CONT'D)

*(momentarily introspective; then
resolved)*

So what do I do?

SNYDER

Fill out Information Referral Form 3949A.

MAX

(back on board)

Yeah. Okay. Where do I get the form?

SNYDER

Download it from IRS.gov.

MAX

-- download -- ?

SNYDER

From the web.

MAX

What web?

SNYDER

The world wide web.

MAX

Where's the world wide web?

SNYDER

Worldwide.

MAX

Is the world wide web in Wabasha?

SNYDER

Do you have a telephone or is that too technological?

MAX

I have two telephones.

SNYDER

Terrific.

MAX

THAT'S WHEN GOLDMAN AND SNYDER

46
Chuck and Punky

SCENE 9

INT. CHUCK'S BAIT AND APOTHECARY

TIM and UNIS browse. CHUCK and ARIEL huddle over a photo album. PUNKY enters.

PUNKY

Got the penny rolls.

CHUCK

Perfect. Change gets donated to the V.F.W. Large bills go to the retirement.

CHUCK produces his padlocked lockbox.

PUNKY

That's smart. I just rolled my 401(k) to a more conservative fund, using a SEP-IRA for long-term security and an HSA for short-term flexibility with growth. But I like your lockbox.

CHUCK

Uh, huh. Then you seem like the perfect person to safeguard this key.

He places a necklace with a key over PUNKY'S head.

PUNKY

I'm honored.

CHUCK

Don't want to spend that stash any sooner than I should.

PUNKY

(to ARIEL)
What'cha looking at?

ARIEL

Chuck's photo album.

CHUCK

(indicating)
This one's taken the day I bought this shop. That's me
moving in upstairs.

ARIEL

Andy Warhol said the best thing about pictures is they
never change, even when the people in them do.

CHUCK

Check this out.

(to PUNKY)

That's me in short pants. And there you are wading in the
river. Must be eight years old.

PUNKY

Remember Nanna's snacks? I can still taste the root beer
and apple pie.

CHUCK

Nanna never gave us root beer and apple pie.

PUNKY

I know. I just had some for lunch.

ARIEL

Did you grow up in Wabasha, Punky?

PUNKY

My parents were in the military, so I grew up all over. I
thought I'd set roots in Maiden Rock, but they bulldozed my
building for a spinal fusion theme park.

*****FOLLOWING DIALOGUE AND SONG ARE OPTIONAL*****

ARIEL

Moving around can be very exciting. But I'm happy to have
settled in Wabasha.

PUNKY

That reminds me of a song I wrote during those lonely
nights on the air craft carrier.

*PUNKY picks up an invisible instrument
and plays "air ukulele."*

7. YOUR OWN HOME

#7
Grandpa
G.

GRANDPA

You mount her? Dad!

JOHN

What's the matter?

GRANDPA

Iffy stiffy?

JOHN

No!

GRANDPA

Then what's the problem? I was a young fella like you, I'd be mountin' every woman in Wabasha.

JOHN

I'm avoiding temptation.

MAX

Temptation's avoiding you.

CHUCK

Truth is you're both petrified. Beautiful woman twenty feet from your front yard and you'd rather park your butts on a lump of ice than stop and say hello. "The way to go" don't matter if you don't know the way to live.

MAX

He's the gutless wonder. She called me handsome!

JOHN

Handsome? Your face makes onions cry.

MAX exits in disgust.

GRANDPA

You were always a smart one, Johnny.

JOHN

Thanks, Dad.

GRANDPA

So don't be stupid. You got a big future ahead of you. Enjoy yourself! Because I'm warning you: those first 90 years or so -- they go by pretty fast.

#7
Grandpa

JOHN

Yeah?

GRANDPA

What?

JOHN

The first 90 years go by fast.

GRANDPA

How would you know? You're just a damned kid.

JOHN

You just said it.

GRANDPA

You're right. They do. They go by fast. And before long, you find yourself counting the minutes rather than the days.

8. LIFE IS ALL ABOUT LIVIN'

ONE DAY YOU WAKE UP AND CLIMB OUT OF BED
YOUR BONES SAY "YOU'RE NOT EIGHTY-ONE ANYMORE!"
BUT IF ONE LITTLE MUSCLE --
THAT HEAT-SEEKING MISSILE
LETS YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT DEAD
THEN THE BALLS OF YOUR FEET HIT THE FLOOR
THE WOOD THAT YOU FEEL'S NOT THE DOOR
START YOUR DAY AND FIND A WAY TO SCORE!

LIFE IS ALL ABOUT LIVIN'
BUT IT'S TICKING AWAY SO DAMN FAST
DON'T LIVE THROUGH YOUR MEM'RIES
THROW AWAY YOUR WATCH -- LISTEN TO YOUR CROTCH

LOVE'S A SERIOUS MATTER
SEX IS A GAME WE PLAY
IT'S TIME FOR WHOOPIE NOT DEBATE
DON'T TALK YOUR LIFE AWAY

DON'T THINK ABOUT SEX AND LOVIN'
AS IF THEY SOMEHOW RELATE
WHEN YOU BUY THAT BULL, THEN THE TROUBLE STARTS
WHAT GOES IN THE HEAD SCREWS UP YOUR BODY PARTS

SCENE 10

#7
grandpa

EXT. WABASHA

The next day. TOWNSPEOPLE mingle,
whisper and gossip.

19A. WABASHA CROSSOVER #3

GRANDPA

DIPPED THE LADLE IN THE CHOWDER
THAT'S MY BOY -- COULD NOT BE PROUDER!

TOWNSPEOPLE

HOT NEWS TO SHARE 'BOUT WHO SLEPT WHERE

TIM AND STAN

NOT MINNEAP --

FRAN AND UNIS

-- AND NOT SAINT PAUL

GRANDPA

THE PLACE TO BALL --

ALL

IS WABASHA

*MAX and JOHN's shanties are both empty,
their doors open. JACOB enters wearing
a spanking-new, and largely
inappropriate, fishing outfit. HARRY
crosses opposite.*

HARRY

Mornin', folks.

JACOB

Harry! Heard you were stabbed by Mayor Markley.

HARRY

I'd forgotten already.

JACOB

I'm an attorney if you want to --

HARRY

#8
Harry

SCENE 10

EXT. WABASHA

Thanksgiving Day. JACOB pulls the cord
on his new snow blower; it won't start.

HARRY crosses with a letter. His mail
jacket is a charred rag, his face
blanketed in ash.

HARRY

Mail for you, Jake. Looks fancy!

JACOB

Thanks, Harry.

JACOB stares intently at the envelope.
Before he can open --

HARRY

Got that tuxedo dry cleaned for ya.

JACOB

What? Oh, actually --

HARRY

Put your wallet away. Cleaner owed me a favor. Saw his kids
playing with matches down by Middle River. Taught them a
lesson, though.

JACOB

Your jacket's all burnt.

HARRY

All in the name of fire safety. Lucky for me, ice cracked
under my feet. Put those flames out real quick. I guess I'm
just blessed.

JACOB

You fell in a frozen lake?

HARRY

Can't feel my legs. But hypothermia slows your metabolism
so I should live a nice long time.

JACOB raises an eyebrow.

HARRY enters carrying a "Jacob Goldman
for Mayor" campaign sign.

#8
Harry

JACOB

Hey, it's my campaign manager!

HARRY

Jacob Goldman for Mayor! Finally. Leadership we can trust!

HARRY plants the sign in his own foot.
He CRIES OUT in pain.

HARRY (CONT'D)

ARRWW!! IT HURTS!!

(then, excitedly)

Hey, IT HURTS!! I HAVE FEELING AGAIN!! YEAH!! OUCH!! YEAH!!

The TOWNSPEOPLE cheer and pat him on
the back!

MAX hands JOHN an envelope.

MAX

Here you go.

JOHN

What's this?

MAX

Wedding present, Peabrain. Deed to your house.

JOHN

(flabbergasted)

-- how -- ?

MAX

Jacob got a cease and desist order from the district court.
I took care of the eighteen thou myself.

JOHN

But the penalties and interest --

JACOB

I don't know how he did it, but somehow your father got
them dismissed.