

When Trumpets Sound

Cast

Mathew Psalm: Thirty years old, religious born-again hippie.

Maggie Haste: Twenty-three-year-old wife of Bran Haste, and Veterinary technician.

Bran Haste: Twenty-four-year-old husband of Maggie Haste, and an aspiring actor.

Martin Franswazi: Thirty-eight-year-old. A famous movie star no one has heard of.

Keri Evans: Forty-nine years old. The mildly insane sister of a Broadway producer.

Donald Bucks: Twenty-nine-year-old. The accountant of F.C. Evans.

Frank Crystal Evans: Fifty-nine years old. A billionaire Broadway producer.

This play is designed for three people, considering the third person is clever with a good costume plan.

Act and scene one (It's just a twenty-minute skit) January 31st 1999

Scene opens at the french doors to the balcony at a posh New York apartment, there is a murmuring of voices and laughter, with only two people on stage standing next to a chocolate fondu fountain. The woman is dressed elegantly in a white evening dress, the man has long hair and an unshaven look about him. She seems trapped as he rants to her)

Mathew: -The trupets will sound, that's it! It'll be all over from there! Jesus is coming to save his brothers and sisters as the oceans boil blood, the sky turns to ash and flame! Judgment day shall be upon us, and the wicked will burn to cinder. If we would've just followed the way, and respected mother earth, nuroished her-

(Another man, the woman's husband dressed in a Tuxedo and carrying two glasses of Champaign and puts a finger on the man's shoulder) the disrespectful way we have treated mother earth has brought the wrath of God upon our race.

Bran: Excuse me sir. Wow honey, did you see that woman walk in with the fur coat?

Mathew: Fur?

Bran: Full length, looked like Chinchilla, must've taken three or four colonies of the fuzzy little guys. Her shoes looked like baby seal skins.

Mathew: Have you no respect for life? Life is God's work! (He screams as he disappears into the party, offstage)

Maggie: Thank-you, I wouldn't have thought of that. He reminded me of you're sister-in-law.

Bran: She's your sister in-law too.

Maggie: I'd rather not see it that way.

Bran: I wasn't sure if he was lecturing you or asking for change.

Maggie: I think he was trying to save me from something, but I wasn't quite sure what. It was him I needed saved from, my charming, dashing hero.

Bran: Your action hero?

Maggie: I don't know about that.

Bran: How about a little action for your hero?

Maggie: Not here. That guy will come back and try to save me from your sins.

Bran: Never, I want you burning next to me for all eternity.

Maggie: How sweet. I listened to him for fifteen minutes, and I still have no clue what he said. He was part born again, part hippie.

Bran: Ah, born again hippie. Poor guy, he can't vote for either political party. I'm so sorry, we shouldn't have come.

Maggie: This is your first invite to a big Broadway party, you can't miss a chance like this. How many producers invite you into their homes for New Year's eve in New York city?

Bran: Yeah, my big chance to meet him, and I haven't even seen his picture. I'm not sure we're in the right condo.

Maggie: That guy over there looks sort-of like him.

Bran: They all look sort of like him, it's a sea of wanna-bees, next to a beach of has beens. All trying desperately to look like the other.

Maggie: It's still a nice view of the city. This is the first time I've ever been in New York for the ball dropping.

Bran: We're still going to watch it on television. It looks like a fire pit out on the balcony. You want to roast marshmallows? (He grabs a towel and drapes it over his arm) I can get into the kitchen, if you can grab our jackets.

Maggie: (Closes the drapes to the balcony) We meet back in five, if you beat me, start the fire.

(They exit separate directions, as the set turns around to show the balcony outside, Bran is huddled over by the fire pit looking around Maggie walks out to join him)

Maggie: You should'nt be out here without a jacket. I couldn't find ours, so I grabbed these.

Bran: This one looks nicer than mine anyway. I couldn't find marshmallows, they had circus peanuts and a jar of fluff.

Maggie: That's not going to work.

Bran: We can try it.

Maggie: We can, but I know it won't work.

Bran: Do you want to go back in?

Maggie: No, start the fire, it's cold out here. I think we'll have better luck with peanuts.

Bran: Did you grab matches?

Maggie: No, you were the one going to the kitchen.

Bran: Is that where matches come from? I guess we have to go back in.

Maggie: Wait! I'm wearing a smoker's jacket, I have a pack of Marlboro lights and yes, a lighter.

Bran: We're saved. (He goes to light the fire then stops) Maybe we should just leave, we're both so excited to escape this party. I know it's a little awkward, but we don't want to be here. At first, I thought they collected our keys at the door to stop drunk drivers, but now I'm thinking they just wanted us trapped.

Maggie: Leave to go where? This is New York city on New Year's Eve, we're two blocks from Times Square, even if we got our keys, no car is getting in or out of the city until at least one in the morning.

Bran: True, here we'll have a fire. (He starts the fire)

Maggie: I think if you lean your head over to the side and tilt it just around that- yes, I see it.

Bran: What? What do you see?

Maggie: A corner of the reflection of the Ball they're gonna drop.

Bran: Are you sure that's not an office light someone left on?

Maggie: Sure I'm sure, look at the rounded edges at the top and bottom.

Bran: Wow, you know. I think you're right. I can hear the crowd of partiers.

Maggie: Where can't you hear a crowd of partiers in this city?

Bran: You know that thing is made out of Waterford crystal?

Maggie: You don't even know what that is.

Bran: I've heard its expensive, and it sounds impressive. We could walk over there and check it out.

Maggie: Then we'd get lost and never find our car. It was hard enough getting past that doorman once tonight. Come sit next to me, keep me warm. You know what?

Bran: I love you.

Maggie: I know that, I love you too, but I know something you don't know.

Bran: I know you know lots of things I don't know, you're a college graduate.

Maggie: I know something special.

Bran: What is it? (A man comes onto the balcony)

Maggie: It's a special secret. A surprise for you for a new year.

Martin: Either of you got any smokes?

Maggie: Marbolol lights.

Martin: My brand! Perfect! Can I bum one off you?

Maggie: Sure. Here's a lighter too.

Martin: Thanks, wow, that's just like my lighter. (He lights his cigarette) Thank-you. Nice jacket, I've got one just like it. Can't find it in that endless sea of a coat closet.

Maggie: I know it was-

Martin: So how do you two know Frank?

Bran: I was in his Christmas show, we closed last week.

Martin: Yeah, yeah, that one with the songs, and the lights that was great I loved it, I should get back to the stage again, I'd really like that.

Maggie: You're an act-

Martin: I mean movies are nice, they pay the bills and all, but nothing truly satisfies like the stage. Where you can see your audience, when you can hear them laugh, feel them cry, really reach out and touch them-

Bran: Spittle on them while talking. (wiping his eye)

Martin: Exactly, it's that human connection. That's more valuable than the millions in the movie biz, better than television. That soild satisfaction of connecting with your people. Then you probably don't have the media after you all the time, into your business, constantly dodging the photographers. Trust me the stage is better, you want to stay there.

Maggie: What movies-?

Martin: Can compare to a live show? None that I know of.

Maggie: So, you're going back to the stage?

Martin: God no, there's no money in it.

Bran: But you're at Frank Evan's condo, he's the biggest Broadway-

Martin: I know who Frank is, he's the man that saw my potential, he started my illustrious career, my fame and fortune. I come here every holiday. He's been there for me, not like my doubting useless parents, plus he always has an open bar. I don't know what Broadway is going to do without him.

Bran: Without him? When I was invited I was hoping that meant I had a shot at getting in the next Evans production.

Martin: The next? Oh boy were you off. There is no next show.

Bran: What do you mean?

Martin: That Christmas thing was his swan song, his fat lady singing. I'm sure you saw her, she had a solo.

Bran: That one actress was a little over weight but I wouldn't-

Maggie: He's retiring?

Martin: He hasn't planned any shows for next year. At this very moment he his picking out women at this party and taking them all down to the basement. He's got a bunker down there.

Maggie: A bunker?

Martin: Yeah, that nut is convinced the world is going to end tonight at midnight. He's taken all of his money out of the bank, cashed in all his investments, stock piled food out the wazzu and he's picking out the girls that he wants with him for the task of repopulating the world when it's all over.

Bran: Really?

Martin: Yeah, I'd say he was a genius if I didn't know he really does believe the world was coming to an end. Me, I've got five more movies lined up for next year. You two are great, thanks for the smoke, here's an autograph (he writes on a napkin) I gotta get back in there before they call out a search squad. (He goes back in)

Bran: Who was that?

Maggie: I was hoping you knew, I can't read the name.

Bran: Maybe he can't spell it. That looks like it says "Messy Flashlight"

Maggie: I'm sure I know that guy from somewhere.

Bran: Maybe you saw a movie he was in.

Maggie: I'm fairly certain he was our waiter at TGI Fridays last weekend.

Bran: It's very possible both are true. I'm so sorry, if I had known how pointless it was to drag you here-

Maggie: Don't apologize, it's kind of romantic, the fire, the city lights-

Bran: Watching a fraction of the reflection of an expensive ball drop in Times Square. You know it's a lot smaller than I thought it would be.

Maggie: I'm with you, so I'm happy.

Bran: Now, you were going to tell me a secret before we were so rudely interrupted.

Maggie: Oh yes, my secret- (out walks a French maid, or a girl in a costume in a coat, chugging a bottle of Champaign)

Keri: Don't mind me, I won't watch ya necking, I just need a break from that crowd.

Maggie: We weren't necking.

Bran: We're married, we don't do that anymore.

Keri: Oh, I'd neck him. Married or not you're kind of cute, at least with this lighting. You want my number?

Bran: Uh-Thanks, but no- I'm good.

Maggie: I'm his wife, and I'm sitting right here.

Keri: So, you two friends of Franky's?

Bran: I was in a show of his, I got the invite to come tonight, but I haven't seen him yet. We heard-

Keri: Yeah, I ain't seen him either. He's a little crazy you know? Always thinkin' somebody's out to get him. Maybe he's not even here. He was here a few hours ago, grabbing girls, now I ain't seen him for a while.

Bran: My name's-

Keri: Like it matters. I can't get you in a show, I was trying to get in one myself. Then I wind up dustin vases or vases all damn day. Now he ain't doing no more shows, and he never gave me my shot. Damn bastard.

Maggie: I'm sorry to hear that.

Keri: Damn idiot stopped everything he was doing to wait for the world to come to an end. Bring it on, can't get it over with fast enough for me, bunch of greedy whiny sacks of meat crawling all over this mud ball we call a planet. All right, time to face the jackasses. If either of you see Franky, tell 'em I was lookin' for 'em.

Bran: Okay.

Keri: Nice talking to you. (She exits.)

Bran: I'm never going to a cast party again.

Maggie: Don't worry, the world will be over tonight and you won't be invited anymore.

Bran: That's a bright side.

Maggie: Do you think there's any truth to this whole Armageddon thing?

Bran: No.

Maggie: Some people are really buying it. Obviously, Mr. Evans believes it.

Bran: We have satellite images of earth, if God put an expiration date on this planet, it would be visible over the content of Antarctica, best if used by one of one two thousand.

Maggie: What makes you think the creator of the universe thinks like a dairy farmer?

Bran: Who made the cows?

Maggie: I didn't realize you were such a philosopher.

Bran: Plus, if the world does end, at least we won't have to hear Prince singing party like it's nineteen ninety-nine again.

Maggie: Still another bonus.

Bran: Now what was it you've been trying to tell me?

Maggie: Here comes somebody else.

Bran: That's the secret? You're kidding.

(A man walks out with no coat, pays no attention to the couple and climbs up on to the railing of the balcony looking down at the traffic below)

Maggie: Say something.

Bran: Hey there! Happy New year.

Donald: Sure, real happy.

Maggie: Something else.

Bran: It's pretty cold out here, would you like a coat?

Donald: No, I'm about to plummet to my death, I don't think I need a coat.

Bran: I've got a trench, it would do cool batman flappy things all the way down.

Donald: Would it slow my fall?

Bran: Oh, no you'll still die.

Donald: Then what's the point?

Bran: You'd have something neat to watch on the way down.

Donald: No, thank you.

Maggie: You're really bad at this. Can I ask you why you're up there?

Donald: You're just as bright as he is, I'm going to jump off.

Maggie: I know that-well, I don't really know but I assumed. My question is why would you want to jump? Can I ask you that?

Donald: Sure.

Maggie: Okay. (Pause)

Bran: Why do you want to jump?

Donald: Because I was the accountant of the billionaire producer F. C. Evans. And now everything I have is gone.

Maggie: Because he cashed everything to get ready for the end of the world?

Donald: Exactly, how'd you know? Everyone at this fricken party knows. What'd he do? Take out an ad?

Maggie: We've learned a lot out on this balcony.

Bran: Do you think the world ends at midnight?

Donald: No, that's stupid. But my world has already ended. He was my big ticket client. All of those stocks, the bonds, the intrest...gone.

Maggie: He couldn't have been that important -

Donald: Billionaire! Bill-ion-are.

Bran: Then tomorrow when the world doesn't end won't he still need an accountant again?

Donald: He's cashed all his stocks, he's liquidated the real estate he's made a mess out of everything.

Maggie: I'm no accountant but isn't that a good thing? Won't you be able to charge him more to fix the mess he made? Won't he need you to put his life back together?

Donald: You've got a point, I could charge him overtime, triple overtime for my inconvenience and then I do get to say I told you so. Then again, what if I'm wrong and he's right? What if the world does come to an end?

Bran: Then we're all goners and you don't have to bother jumping.

Donald: That's a valid point. (He hops down) you two are right, it's a win win for me, thanks (He goes back in)

Maggie: No one introduces themselves here, not even when we save their life.

Bran: I don't think he was really going to jump.

Maggie: What makes you say that?

Bran: He would've taken me up on the trench. This would look cool flapping in the wind all the way down.

Maggie: Not everyone would worry about how cool their death looked.

Bran: This is a Broadway cast party, I'd bet half these people have their last words scripted.

Maggie: You may be right, here comes our next guest.

Evans: Good evening, thank-you for coming.

Bran: Mister Evans? it's so nice to finally meet you. I had a wonderful time in your last show. I'm-

Evans: I'm sure you did. You two do realize we've got ten minutes left?

Maggie: Oh, till the ball drops?

Evans: The ball? That's of no concern of mine, I'm talking about the sword of Damocles that's hanging over the head of all humanity. You two seem like a nice fertile young couple, do you care to have a spot in my bunker to assist me in re-populating the world?

Maggie: If you believe this is judgment day, I have a hard time thinking a bunker will help you.

Evans: No, no, no. I'm no religious nut. I picture the computer systems crashing. I'm sure you know about y two k. All those systems that activate our nuclear defenses going haywire, and world war three igniting.

Maggie: Isn't it already midnight in Russia, and China? I haven't heard of any imminent attacks.

Evans: My poor naïve child. You don't think they would actually take the time to report that to us do you? Pandemonium would break out all over the country. Trust me our government wants its people content and bliss-fully un-aware for as long as we can be.

Maggie: Hasn't it already been midnight for six hours in Japan? Wouldn't missiles actually be hitting us?

Bran: Maybe they're slower than you'd think.

Evans: No, no, no. The governments are probably still talking to each other right now. Trying to manually override to process and come to diplomatic arrangements. It won't be until our fully automated system fails that all hell brakes lose.

Bran: We're the only country that's fully automated?

Evans: It's an established fact that Americans are the laziest of the world.

Bran: You can't blame us. All our automation comes from Japan.

Evans: True! There will be conspiracy theories flying in the last few hours. Its possible China has already taken out Japan. You know it's going to be all Mad Max-like after that, we'll have to fight off Tina-turner and her pigs for our freedom.

Bran: Uhm-sir, your maid was looking for you.

Evans: What maid?

Bran: The one complaining about dusting the vases.

Maggie: She came out here on a smoke break.

Evans: I don't have a maid here tonight- wait a moment! Was she wearing a french maid outfit?

Bran: Yes, but she didn't seem French.

Evans: She was out here smoking?

Maggie: And drinking champagne.

Evans: That's my sister! Mother's going to be so mad to find out she's smoking again!

Bran: Does your sister always dress like a maid?

Evans: Of course, she thinks it's sexy, look I really have to go. Did you want to join us? I've got to grab two more sets of overies and get down there.

Maggie: Ah, well...

Bran: I think we're good.

Maggie: But we do appreciate the offer.

Evans: Suit yourselves, nice knowing you. Happy New Year! (He exits quickly.)

Bran: Happy New Year to you too. I have to say this is different.

Maggie: Dick Clark always recomends New Years in New York at least once in your life.

Bran: Yeah, I think once will do just fine. (We begin hearing the crowd in the distance in unified countdown. Ten...and so on.)

Maggie: Listen!

Bran: That is a corner of a reflection of the ball. Six!...(he continues)

Maggie: Five...(she continues)

(They get to one, and we hear the crowds in the distance and inside the condo screaming Happy New Year! The couple simply kiss passionately.)

Bran: So far, it's a pretty good year.

Maggie: But I didn't get to tell you.

Bran: Yeah, that secret of yours. You've been trying to tell me since last year. Hurry, before the nukes hit.

Maggie: I'm pregnant.

Bran: Yeah?

Maggie: Yeah.

Bran: No kidding?

Maggie: Not at all. Doctor told me Tuesday. I'm about six weeks along.

Bran: Six weeks? Let's see that's...So it's mine?

Maggie: (Playfully punching him.) Couldn't be anyone elses. (he kisses her.)

Bran: You're going to be a mommy? Wow, this is going to be a good year.

Maggie: And you're going to be a daddy.

Bran: What do you know. Evans was right, it is the end of the world as we know it. (He kisses her again.)

Maggie: I wouldn't say it's the end.

Bran: When the new one begins, the old one ends.

Maggie: Are you okay with this?

Bran: I've got you by my side. It can be the end of the world as I know it. I feel fine.

(Curtain.) (I was dreaming when I wrote this; forgive me if it went astray.)