

#1 Shirley • Mom • Grammy • Great-Grammy

The 12 Days of Christmas

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MOM. Hey, man! What's shakin'?

SHIRLEY. And before her, it was my grammy ...

(GRAMMY PARTRIDGE pops her head out of the pear tree.)

GRAMMY. Hello, Joe! Whattaya know?

SHIRLEY. And before her, it was my great-grammy ...

(GREAT-GRAMMY PARTRIDGE pops her head out of the pear tree.)

GREAT-GRAMMY. A great, good, top o' the mornin' to ya!

SHIRLEY. And it goes allll the way back to my great-great-great-great-great-great grammy. Back to the very beginning of time!

(SHIRLEY raps a little bit of a Christmas carol.)

GREAT-GRAMMY. Don't you be breaking with tradition now, young missy! 'Tis important!

GRAMMY. I'll say! Why Christmas ... Christmas is the most important time of the year!

MOM. Yeah, man. There's, like, all these rules that we really can't mess with.

SHIRLEY. But ... the song is so old and boring. Can't we change things even a little bit?

GREAT-GRAMMY. You must sing the song precisely, lass!

GRAMMY. You gotta get everyone to show up on time, by golly! Lickety-split!

SHIRLEY. Uh-oh.

GRAMMY. What's the matter?

SHIRLEY. Nothing. Never mind.

GREAT-GRAMMY. Oh for the love of Mike. Don't you be telling fibs now, Shirley. Out with it.

SHIRLEY. I can't get the Turtledoves to sit still. All they wanna do is run around and have fun.

GRAMMY. Well, gee whiz. You gotta fix that up, buttercup.

SHIRLEY. But what if I can't? What if—?

GREAT-GRAMMY. Now, now, now ... no what-ifs, please. Be firm, lass. Catch those Turtledoves and make them sit still. It's not an easy job, but you can do it.

GRAMMY. Gee whillikers, if you can't handle the Turtledoves, I can't imagine how you'll deal with the Christmas Hoarder.

(Maybe some scary music.)

SHIRLEY. The Christmas Hoarder? Who's that?

GREAT-GRAMMY. Listen closely, lass.

MOM. The Christmas Hoarder sneaks around and steals all kinds of Christmasy things.

GRAMMY. Ornaments.

GREAT-GRAMMY. Presents.

MOM. Tinsel.

GREAT-GRAMMY. Just takes it right off the tree.

SHIRLEY. That's terrible!

GRAMMY. But now, see, he doesn't just steal Christmas things. He also takes—

GREAT-GRAMMY. Hannukah candles.

MOM. Kwanzaa candles.

GRAMMY. Diwali candles.

MOM. And entire Thanksgiving dinners.

GREAT-GRAMMY. But the one thing—the one thing, lass, that he wants more than anything in the world—is the Five Golden Rings. *(Pops into the tree.)*

SHIRLEY. Has he ever stolen them?

MOM. Not once in the thousand-million years that we've been doing The Song.

GRAMMY. Which is why you've gotta keep an eye out for him, Shirley. Know what I mean, jellybean?

SHIRLEY. Uh huh.

(GREAT-GRAMMY pops out of the tree, holding the Five Golden Rings in her mouth. Each is about the size of a small dinner plate.)

GREAT-GRAMMY. Mmph. Mmph. Rmph-rmph-rmph.

(SHIRLEY takes the rings.)

GREAT-GRAMMY *(cont'd)*. Good gravy and a stack of pancakes, those are heavy. *(To SHIRLEY.)* You best guard these with all your strength and courage. And remember—

MOM. Keep an eye out for the Christmas Hoarder.

SHIRLEY. Eep. OK.

GRAMMY. And make sure you get those Turtledoves in line.

GREAT-GRAMMY. And don't be breaking with tradition.

SHIRLEY. OK. *(Tucks the rings into one of her pockets.)*

MOM. Chill out, little one. You're gonna be OK.

(MOM kisses SHIRLEY on the cheek. So do GRAMMY and GREAT-GRAMMY.)

GREAT-GRAMMY. We'll be leaving you now. We're already late.

SHIRLEY. Where are you going?

GRAMMY. We're off to visit your great-great grammy.

Aw, perk up, kid. Don't you worry.

MOM. We're so proud of you ... You're gonna be fine. It's all part of growing up and being a Partridge.

GREAT-GRAMMY. And remember, lass: if you get in trouble, use your voice. Be big and bold! Stand up for yourself!
SHIRLEY. OK.

(MOM, GRAMMY and GREAT-GRAMMY disappear into the tree. We hear chirping. SHIRLEY looks up into the sky as she watches the [unseen] MOM, GRAMMY and GREAT-GRAMMY fly away.)

MOM, GRAMMY & GREAT GRAMMY (V.O., fading). Goodbye! Goodbye!

(And they're gone.)

SHIRLEY (quietly). Bye.

I'm gonna be fine. I'm gonna be fine! Everything's under control.

(DOT chases RICKY through the audience and onto the stage. Manic cooing.)

#2

DOT & RICKY. Oo-Oooo-oo! Oo-Oooo-oo ...

END #1

Shirley. Ricky. Shirley

(They dance around each other, flapping their wings in a ridiculous courting ritual that has elements of ballet, Zumba and mixed martial arts. Or something else entirely. Maybe SHIRLEY tries to intervene and stop them. When DOT and RICKY are done, they cuddle very close to each other and look adorable.)

SHIRLEY (to DOT and RICKY). Are you guys done? Are you settled?

RICKY. We're good.

DOT. Yeah. Don't mind us.

SHIRLEY. Because I'm counting on you to do The Song. Don't go flying off or anything.

RICKY. Don't worry. We got it covered. It's same every year.

DOT. Yeah. We know our part. We don't need to practice.

DOT & RICKY (*singing*).

TWO TURTLEDOVES.

SHIRLEY. Good! That's good!

DOT & RICKY (*singing, tickling each other, laughing*).

TWO TURTLEDOVES!

TWO TURTLEDOVES!

TWO TURTLEDOVES!

RICKY. Stop it!

DOT. No, you stop it!

RICKY. oo-OOO-oo!

DOT. oo-OOO-oo!

RICKY. You can't catch me!

(RICKY takes off with DOT in pursuit.)

SHIRLEY. No! You guys! Come back!

(Suddenly—)

RICKY. Ow! My leg! *(He collapses to the ground.)*

DOT. Ow! My leg!

(DOT collapses to the ground. Then they both get up and stand on their uninjured legs.)

SHIRLEY. Oh my gosh! Are you OK?

DOT. Oh, yeah. Totally fine.

RICKY. This happens all the time.

SHIRLEY. But—

It does?

RICKY. Yeah. Couple times a year we overdo it. Then boom, our legs just kind of break like that. Can't walk on them for a little while, but then we're OK.

DOT. Don't worry about us.

RICKY. We'll be OK by Valentine's Day, no problem. Later.

(They begin to hop away.)

SHIRLEY. Wait!

RICKY. We're not gonna be able to do The Song this year, Shirl. Sorry.

DOT. But we'll try to get some replacements. If it's not too late.

SHIRLEY. Replacements?!

DOT. I've got a cousin about a thousand miles from here. She might be able to fly here in time.

RICKY. And I can see if my brother's available.

SHIRLEY. But—!

RICKY. Don't worry, Shirley. We'll figure something out.

DOT. We're sorry. It's the best we can do.

(They exit, hopping.)

SHIRLEY. Noooo!

Oh boy, I gotta be strong. There's still got a lot of work to do.

(To the audience.)

You're gonna help me, right?

(Maybe the audience agrees in some way.)

I'm sorry; I didn't hear you. You're gonna help me, right?

(The audience agrees loudly.)

Oh, good! Thank you! Because I know that there are some French Hens we need to find.

END #2

#3 Shirley.. Clothilde.. Solange.. Henri

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The 12 Days of Christmas

(Someone collects and shuffles the cards.)

SHIRLEY *(cont'd, to the audience)*. OK. I'm gonna count to three, and then you're gonna say with me, "*Bonjour, mes amis!*" Ready? One ... two ... three!

SHIRLEY & AUDIENCE. *Bonjour, mes amis!*

(The hens startle.)

CLOTHILDE. Ah!

SOLANGE. Ah!

HENRI. Ah!

CLOTHILDE *(to the audience)*. We did not see you there! *Bonjour, everyone! I am Clothilde.*

SOLANGE. I am Solange.

HENRI. I am Henri.

CLOTHILDE. We are Three French Hens.

HENRI. That is not true. We are two French hens and a rooster. I am Henri. I am a male. I am a rooster.

(HENRI swaggers around, doing French roostery stuff.)

SOLANGE. You are a hen.

HENRI. I am a rooster.

CLOTHILDE. No. No. No. *(Singing.)*

THREE FRENCH HENS!

You are, for the purposes of The Song, a hen.

HENRI. I am not a hen! A hen lays eggs! I cannot lay eggs! Watch! *(He tries, with ridiculous and hilarious effort, to lay an egg.)*

SOLANGE. That would be disgusting if it were not so funny.

HENRI. I am a rooster! *(To SHIRLEY.)* Who are you?

SHIRLEY. I'm Shirley. The new Christmas Partridge.

CLOTHILDE. Shirley! We have heard of you! Thank goodness you are here because Henri is being difficult.

HENRI. I am not difficult.

SOLANGE. But it cannot be helped. We are in the middle of the Great Hen Shortage. Terrible. Too many roosters. Not enough hens.

SHIRLEY. That is terrible.

CLOTHILDE. It is not perfect, but we are told that more hens are on the way. Until then, you, Henri, are a hen.

(SOLANGE deals the cards. CLOTHILDE clucks.)

CLOTHILDE *(cont'd)*. I call for a pause in the game!

SOLANGE. Pause!

(CLOTHILDE pants and breathes.)

HENRI. The pause, the pause. Always with the pause.

CLOTHILDE. Bawk.

(CLOTHILDE reaches under her butt, produces an egg and places it on the card table.)

CLOTHILDE *(cont'd)*. I bet one egg. Automatic win.

HENRI. I can never win this game! Shirley, please understand: I am not a hen, I cannot be a hen, and therefore I must do what I feel is right. I cannot do The Song this year. I am so sorry.

SHIRLEY. But you must! We need you! It's a tradition.

HENRI. I cannot.

SOLANGE. Henri, please. Think of The Song. Think of Shirley.

HENRI. I am sorry, but I cannot do this.

(Much pecking and squawking. The beginnings of a chicken fight.)

END #3

#4 Hoarder • Shirley

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The 12 Days of Christmas

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. Exquisite!

SHIRLEY. Aaahhhh!

I don't know who you are, but please go away.

CHRISTMAS HOARDER (*lying his face off*). Why ... I'm a birdwatcher. Just your average, everyday birdwatcher.

SHIRLEY. Well, I've never seen you before. We don't get many birdwatchers around here.

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. That's surprising! Very surprising indeed! Because you look familiar to me.

Ah! I know who you are! You are the elusive Christmas Partridge!

SHIRLEY. I don't know what "elusive" means.

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. Oh, it means mysterious. Indescribable. Rare and lovely!

SHIRLEY. Um ... Thank you.

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. You're welcome.

Ah! Is this your—dare I say it?—is this your pear tree?

SHIRLEY. Maybe.

(CHRISTMAS HOARDER closely observes SHIRLEY.)

SHIRLEY (*cont'd*). Can I help you with something?

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. No, no. I'm just admiring your lovely feathers.

SHIRLEY. Thank you.

(A moment.)

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. Oh my dear-great-goodness-heavens-to-Betsy!

(CHRISTMAS HOARDER picks up the Five Golden Rings.)

SHIRLEY. Stop! What are you doing?!

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. Are these ... ? Could these really be ... ?

SHIRLEY (*tries to play it cool*). I, uh, I don't know what you're talking about.

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. Oh, I think you do, Ms. Partridge, I think you do! These are the Five Golden Rings, are they not?

SHIRLEY. Yyye—

No! No, they're not. That's just some cheap costume jewelry.

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. Really. Well, then. I guess you won't mind if I take them as a souvenir.

SHIRLEY. No!

I mean: Even though they're not that valuable, I reeeeeeally like them. So if you'll please just put them down and go—

(CHRISTMAS HOARDER quickly scoops up the rings and runs off.)

CHRISTMAS HOARDER. The Christmas Hoarder strikes again! To the escape car! Invisible Co-Conspirator, start the engine!

(We hear a car starting, a car door slamming, a car speeding off, maniacal laughter...)

SHIRLEY. HEY!!!! Get back here!

(Enormous sadness. SHIRLEY sits and cries. It sounds a little bit like a bird call.

A moment, then we hear a swan call in response.

SHIRLEY cries more.

Another, louder swan call.

A moment, and then ALYSSA half-flies/half-runs in. She wears a swim cap and swim goggles. Maybe she wears a top hat on top of her swim cap. Maybe she wears a circular pool float around her waist. Regardless, she's pretty steampunk.)

END #4

#5 Shirley • Alyssa

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The 12 Days of Christmas

ALYSSA. Everybody into the poooooooooool!!! *(She jumps and lands on the ground ... definitely not anywhere near a pool.)*

Ow. Ow. Ow. *(She takes off the swim goggles.)*

No pool! Not again! These goggles are the worst. Everything looks wrong when I wear them.

You're not a swan.

SHIRLEY. No, I'm a partridge.

ALYSSA. I heard a swan call.

SHIRLEY. I don't know from where. There's only me.

(SHIRLEY calls her partridge call.

ALYSSA lifts up one side of her swim cap to expose her ear.)

ALYSSA. Say again, please?

(SHIRLEY calls her partridge call again.)

ALYSSA *(cont'd)*. Oh, this swim cap is the worst! Everything sounds wrong when I wear it.

SHIRLEY. Well ... maybe you should get a new one. And new goggles, too. Or just go without them. Most other swans do.

ALYSSA. Yeah well, I'm not most other swans. I'm me! I'm Alyssa the Swan, and I like my swimming outfit!

(SHIRLEY tries valiantly not to cry. She fails.)

ALYSSA *(cont'd)*. Oh you poor thing! What's the matter?

SHIRLEY. I'm sorry, it's just—

This is the worst day of my entire life!

The one thing—the one thing I was supposed to do—don't lose the Five Golden Rings—and I messed up. Big time!

ALYSSA. Wai-wai-wait.

Oh my goodness! You're the new Christmas Partridge!

SHIRLEY. Uh huh.

ALYSSA (*bows grandly*). Royalty! I'm in the presence of royalty!

SHIRLEY. You don't need to—

ALYSSA. Your highness! Your magnificence!

SHIRLEY. Please just call me Shirley.

ALYSSA. Shirley, your highness!

SHIRLEY. Please don't—

Please get up.

(*ALYSSA does.*)

SHIRLEY (*cont'd*). Royalty? Are you kidding? I can't do anything right. The Turtledoves don't want to rehearse and there's really only two French Hens, and the Calling Birds want to postpone Christmas and—and—somebody stole the Five Golden Rings! I don't know what I'm gonna do!

ALYSSA. Oh my.

SHIRLEY. And ... and ... I'm supposed to make sure that we follow all of the Christmas traditions perfectly ... and I can't! Nothing's the way it's supposed to be! (*She starts to cry again.*)

ALYSSA. No! No! Please don't cry! We'll—

We'll figure something out. I'll help you, Shirley, your highness.

SHIRLEY. You will?

ALYSSA. Of course! You think things are pretty bad, but you know what? You don't have to do things the way they've always been done. Who says you have to do the same old song the same old boring way every single boring year? Life is big and full of unexpected surprises. You can do anything you want. You can be anything you want!

For example: Look at me. What do you see?

SHIRLEY. Um ... A swan. A pretty cool-looking swan, actually.

ALYSSA. Right! And do you happen to see any other swans here with me?

SHIRLEY. No.

ALYSSA. That's right. I'm supposed to be out there with six other swans, being all pretty and graceful and gliding along on a beautiful pond. Boring! And the other swans? They don't want to have anything to do with me because I don't—I don't exactly fit in. They've never even let me do The Song. They always bring in a replacement. But you know what? I don't care. I don't need them! Because I gotta be me!

SHIRLEY. Wait a minute. You're one of the Seven Swans a-Swimming, aren't you.

ALYSSA. Ummm ... Technically, yes.

SHIRLEY. Where's everyone else?

(ALYSSA goes all still and silent.)

SHIRLEY *(cont'd)*. Alyssa! Tell me! Where's everyone else?

ALYSSA. Ummm ... Florida?

SHIRLEY. Florida?!

ALYSSA. Yeah, they um ... they flew south for the winter. They're on vacation with the geese.

SHIRLEY. The Six Geese a-Laying? They're in Florida, too?

ALYSSA. If you ask me, we're better off without them. Those geese are kinda loud and annoying. And so angry.

SHIRLEY. No! They're all ... they're all supposed to be here to do The Song!

(Singing, frantically.)

SEVEN SWANS A-SWIMMING

SIX GEESE A-LAYING

FIVE GOLDEN RINGS ... !

Oh, this is the worst.

END #5

ALYSSA. OK, Shirley, your highness. Enough with the pity party. I'm gonna help you fix this once and for all. First of all, you need some cheering up!

SHIRLEY. I don't want to be cheered up! I'm not in the mood for cheering up! I need to do my job! And I need to find the Five Golden Rings!

ALYSSA. Suit yourself. But if you want me to help you, I'm not gonna do it unless you are considerably happier.

(ALYSSA is gone.)

SHIRLEY. Alyssa!

ALYSSA *(off)*. I can't hear you, Miss Grumpy Pants.

SHIRLEY. Come back! Please! I need your help!

(ALYSSA is back.)

ALYSSA. Excellent!

Don't worry, little one. We're gonna find those rings.

But first, we are gonna cheer you up! And I know just the place to take you ...

(Music. Lights shift.)

SHIRLEY and ALYSSA arrive at The COWmedy Club. The HOST is onstage. TYLER, a Drummer, is nearby with a drum. SHIRLEY and ALYSSA settle in at a little club table.)

HOST. Ladies and gentlemen! Pets and livestock! Welcome to The COWmedy Club! Where we know how to really milk the jokes!

(Rimshot. Canned laughter.)

Maybe the audience boos the awful pun.)

~~Shirley~~ Shirley • Alyssa • Host • Tyler
Frances

HOST (*cont'd*). Oh, I got a million of 'em.

Are you ready to hear some really great cow jokes?

ALYSSA. Yeah!

HOST. I said: are you ready to hear some really great cow jokes?

ALYSSA & AUDIENCE. Yeah!

HOST. OK, OK. Don't have a cow. I herd ya.

Our first cowmedian is a rising young star ... and she comes to us all the way from Moo Jersey! Let's give it up for Frances the Milkmaid!

(Music. Applause. FRANCES enters.)

FRANCES. Knock, knock.

ALL. Who's there?

FRANCES. Cows go

ALL. Cows go who.

FRANCES. Cows don't go who; they go moo!

(Rimshot. Canned laughter.

ALYSSA laughs like crazy.)

FRANCES (*cont'd*). Why do cows wear bells?

Because their horns don't work!

(Rimshot. Canned laughter.

ALYSSA laughs. SHIRLEY doesn't.)

FRANCES (*cont'd*). Hey, have you heard about the cow astronaut? It's a pretty big deal. She landed on the moooon.

(Rimshot. Canned laughter.

ALYSSA laughs even more. SHIRLEY still doesn't.)

ALYSSA (*to SHIRLEY*). What's the matter with you? This is funny stuff.

SHIRLEY. Yeah, maybe in your world.

ALYSSA. OK, Miss Grumpy Pants.

FRANCES (*to SHIRLEY and ALYSSA*). Hey! I'm tryin' to do my act, here. Cud you keep it down?

(Rimshot.

ALYSSA laughs even harder.)

FRANCES (*cont'd*). I know that laugh! Alyssa?

ALYSSA. Hey, Frances! Keep going. I'm loving this.

FRANCES. Who's the sad little bird you got with ya? She looks like she's in a fowl mood. You should get her into tweetment!

(Rimshot.

ALYSSA laughs. SHIRLEY doesn't.)

FRANCES (*cont'd, to SHIRLEY*). OK, sad little bird. I've got a riddle just for you: Why do seagulls like to live by the sea?

SHIRLEY. I dunno. Why do seagulls like to live by the sea?

FRANCES. Because if they lived by the bay, they'd be bagels!

(Rimshot.

SHIRLEY laughs. Everyone laughs)

SHIRLEY (*to FRANCES*). OK, I've got one for you:

Did you hear the joke about the broken egg?

FRANCES. No.

SHIRLEY. That's too bad, because it cracked me up!

(EVERYONE's laughing now.

HOST enters.)

HOST. Whoa-whoa-whoa-whoa. Are you telling bird jokes?

(EVERYONE goes still and silent.)

HOST *(cont'd)*. You know we do only cow jokes here. No bird jokes. Bird jokes make me very, very upset.

FRANCES. Hey; I'm just wingin' it here.

HOST. That's not funny!

ALYSSA. Sure it is! We're owling with laughter!

SHIRLEY. It's a hoot!

HOST. Get out! Get out now, you birds! Shoo! *(To FRANCES.)* And you! You're fired!

(Everything stops.)

SHIRLEY. You can't fire her.

HOST. Oh, I think I just did.

FRANCES. You know what? I was gonna quit, anyway. Besides, I need to get back to my winter job.

HOST. And what would that be?

FRANCES. Here's a clue: *(Singing.)*

EIGHT MAIDS A-MILKING!

(The HOST exits.)

SHIRLEY. Wait, what?!

FRANCES. I'm a pretty famous milkmaid.

SHIRLEY. You—

You're one of the Eight Maids a-Milking ? Where's everyone else?

FRANCES. I dunno. Probably at work. Why?

ALYSSA. She's the Partidge. In a Pear Tree. First year.

FRANCES. Oh—

Ohhhhhh. Oh, wow. Big job.

SHIRLEY. Yes it's a big job! It's a huge job and you're not making this any easier!

TYLER. Dude. I soooo wouldn't wanna be you right now.

(Everyone looks at TYLER.)

SHIRLEY. Uh. I'm sorry, I don't think we've met ... ?

FRANCES. This is Tyler. Our drummer.

(SHIRLEY takes this in.)

SHIRLEY. Please tell me there are 11 more of you somewhere.

TYLER. OK. There are 11 more of us somewhere.

(Rimshot.)

TYLER *(cont'd)*. But I don't know where they are. Sorry, Dude. Twelve Drummers Drumming broke up last year. I went solo.

SHIRLEY. That's it. I'm ruined. I'm a complete and total failure.

ALYSSA. Shirley. We're gonna fix this, remember? Don't worry.

SHIRLEY. OK. OK. It's gonna be fine.

So. We've got only one Drummer.

TYLER. Yep.

SHIRLEY. The other Milkmaids are at work.

FRANCES. Uh huh.

SHIRLEY. Which means that—unlike you—they're out there somewhere milking cows.

FRANCES. Ahhh, not really. After last Christmas, they all quit milking. Too much work. Not enough pay. You think anyone can make a living these days milking cows? Hoo, that's a good one!

END #6

ALYSSA. Yeah! Who says?!

SHIRLEY. It's like you said: life is big and full of unexpected surprises! I don't care what my great-grandma says. It's time to break with tradition! Mix things up a little! If we can't find everyone we need, we'll come up with a new song!

ALYSSA. Now you're talkin'!

SHIRLEY. But I really do need to get those rings back.

ALYSSA. You mean: we need to get the rings back.

SHIRLEY. No, Alyssa. This is something I have to do by myself. I got myself into this mess and I have to get myself out of it. Do you understand?

ALYSSA. Yeah. But remember: you can always call on me.
Be careful, OK?

SHIRLEY. I will. Don't you worry.

(They hug.)

ALYSSA. Goodbye, friend.

SHIRLEY. Goodbye, friend. Take care of yourself.

ALYSSA *(puts on her goggles)*. Everybody into the pool! *(Exits.)*

SHIRLEY. OK. I can do this. I can be brave ... and strong ...
Now, I just need to figure out where the Christmas Hoarder is ...

(SHIRLEY gets her bearings. We hear a loud whoop. NICK enters in one giant leap.)

NICK. A-ha!

SHIRLEY. Aaaah!

NICK. Oh! My great good pardon, m'lady. I mean, m'bird. I mean, m'lady ... bird.

SHIRLEY. Partridge.

NICK. Pardon?

#7 Shirley. Nick-
Samantha

SHIRLEY. Partridge. I'm a partridge.

NICK. Well, yes, a partridge is a bird, is it not?

SHIRLEY. Of course, but—

NICK. Of course! You are a partridge, therefore you are also a bird. A-ha! (*He leaps.*)

Pardon me. Rude, rude, rude of me to just burst in on you like that. My name's Nick. Lord Nicholas, to be precise, but most people call me Nick. Pleased to make your acquaintance, Miss ... ?

SHIRLEY. I'm Shirley. I'm the new Christmas Partridge.

NICK. A-ha! I've found you! At last! (*A flourish.*) Lord Nicholas reporting for Song Duty, m'lady Christmas Partridge Shirley! (*To SAMANTHA offstage.*) Lady Samantha! I found her! I found Shirley the Christmas Partridge!

(*SAMANTHA enters with one dancing leap.*)

SAMANTHA. A-ha!

Excellent! Most excellent! (*She curtsies deeply.*)

I am Lady Samantha. Dancer. So very, very pleased to make your acquaintance.

SHIRLEY. Very nice to meet you, too.

NICK. We are at your disposal, Shirley the Christmas Partridge.

SHIRLEY. Really?! OK, this is good. So now we have one Lord a-Leaping and one Lady Dancing.

NICK & SAMANTHA (*in unison*). Oh, ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

NICK. Silly Shirley!

SAMANTHA. Such a dear. She has no idea.

NICK. None whatsoever.

SHIRLEY. What aren't you telling me?

(*NICK and SAMANTHA clap their hands twice. Music plays.*)

SAMANTHA. I'm not simply one dancing lady. I'm all of them. All nine!

NICK. And I'm not simply one leaping lord. I'm all of them. All 10!

SAMANTHA. So I'm not just Samantha ...

NICK. And I'm not just Nick ...

(Over the following exchange, SAMANTHA and NICK take on a distinct personality for each Lady or Lord they portray. Each Lady and Lord also has a signature dance move. Together, the two actors introduce themselves as they do each couple's signature dance.)

SAMANTHA. I'm also Marcella.

NICK. I'm also Vittorio.

SAMANTHA. Anastasia

NICK. Dmitri

SAMANTHA. Annabelle

NICK. Papa Joe

SAMANTHA. Morticia

NICK. Edgar

SAMANTHA. Mrs. Elliot VanDenHoover

NICK. Mr. Elliot VanDenHoover

SAMANTHA. Isis

NICK. Prometheus

SAMANTHA. Golda

NICK. Tevya

SAMANTHA. Cheryl

NICK. Kevin

NICK & SAMANTHA. Aaaaand ... !

NICK. Michael, lord of the dance!

(A big, ridiculous, Lord of the Dance-ish flourish. The music ends. NICK and SAMANTHA resume their personalities.)

NICK. So. We are all here.

SAMANTHA. Right, then.

SHIRLEY. That was fantastic. A little bit crazy, but fantastic.

NICK. It is who we are. It is what we do.

(NICK and SAMANTHA look around.)

NICK *(cont'd)*. I say, I don't see any of the other song participants.

SAMANTHA. Quite right. No Turtledoves.

NICK. No French Hens.

SAMANTHA. No Calling Birds.

NICK. Oh, that's terrible. I do so love those Calling Birds.

SAMANTHA. They're rather rude, don't you think?

NICK. No Swans. No Geese. Good heavens, there are a lot of birds in The Song. I guess I never noticed that before.

SAMANTHA *(to SHIRLEY)*. There's nobody else? Are we it, dear?

SHIRLEY. Well, no ... there's also Alyssa ...

SAMANTHA. Oh, that lovely Swan! She's delightful.

SHIRLEY. But for the most part, yes. You're pretty much it.

NICK. Well, we shall just have to make the best of it. Stiff upper lip and all that.

SHIRLEY. I'm really glad you're here but I still need to—
The Christmas Hoarder stole the Five Golden Rings. And I need to get them back.

SAMANTHA. That sounds rather dangerous. We'll help you!

SHIRLEY. I appreciate that, but it's really something I have to do myself.

END#7
