

SUBWAY

CHARACTERS

Michelle

John

Both of them look disheveled and their clothes are a mixture of sleepwear and outside clothes. John is carrying a broom and wearing ballet slippers and Michelle is wearing a mask.

Subway. Midnight.

(The play opens with John and Michelle sitting on the same subway bench. John looks at Michelle and then shifts his body away from her. She responds by shifting her body away from him. They both look back at each other and then turn away. Silence. Michelle scoots all the way to the end of the bench.)

JOHN

You could take that mask off.

(Michelle looks at him and then turns away)

JOHN

I mean... really... You are just making it worse.

(MICHELLE stands and moves to another seat next to the seat she was just occupying<)

JOHN

I don't see why you have to make such a show about things... It is not like you have the broom and the ballet slippers on...

MICHELLE

DO I know you sir?

JOHN

MICHELLE... you are behaving like a child. Take off that mask and sit by your husband.

MICHELLE

My husband died at 10 pm tonight. He died a horrible death at the hands of his crazy mother. MY husband JOHN JONES died.

JOHN

I said I was sorry. I am SORRY... SORRY... Okay.... Now please come over here and sit with me before someone thinks that I have escaped from the off-Broadway version of WICKED.

MICHELLE

I told... I told you... I said... John... Don't fall for her lies again... I said John... Don't go rushing out of the house in the middle of the night because your mother said she was being attacked by some beast... AGAIN.

JOHN'

And I told you that you never know when it might be true... Some sweaty serial killer could have been waiting in that bathroom... Ready to rip her heart out and smear her blood all over the bedroom and then drag her lifeless carcass into the dining room and display her in some sadistic manner on the dining room table that took my father 20 years to pay for on a bus driver's salary. That is why I had to go... What if I didn't... huh...? What would we have found in the morning? Huh?

MICHELLE

But what did you find tonight?

JOHN

Huh...

MICHELLE

When we arrived at your mother's place in the middle of the night... WHAT DID YOU FIND?

JOHN

You're being kind of loud... Move over here and let's talk about it...

MICHELLE

(STANDING)

WHAT DID YOU FIND?

JOHN

I am feeling a little sick... Could you please sit down?

MICHELLE

NO... Your mother calls in the middle of the night to say that she has something horrible in her bathroom and it is about to attack her and you grabbed a broom, a pair of ballet shoes . And this mask... Pushed me into a cab... rush to your mother house... find out

we have no money to pay for the cab... You run into the house while the cab driver holds me hostage... Make me wait 20 minutes while you try to get the money to pay for the cab... paid my ransom and then run back into the house... into the bathroom with the nasty serial killer trying to kill your sedative-addicted mother and WHAT DID YOU FIND?

(JOHN turns ways trying to avoid her fury.)

MICHELLE

WHAT DID YOU FIND? And you better say something before I take that broom and break it across your head and leave you for dead.... What did you find in the bathroom that was going to attack and maim your precious mother?

JOHN
(Whispers)
A spider....

MICHELLE
I can't hear you...

JOHN
(Louder)
A spider...

MICHELLE
A WHAT?

JOHN
A spider... okay.... A spider...

MICHELLE
Not just a spider... what else... What was so special about this spider?

JOHN
It... It was dead. But it could have died while I was trying to get the money to pay for the cab...

MICHELLE
That spider was crunchy... It disintegrated when you touched it. You made a fool of me all for the sake of a crunchy spider.

JOHN

But... she is my mother. And she doesn't have anyone but me... So... I have to help her. You know what it is like to not do what she wants... She would make my life a living hell...

MICHELLE

IF you thought what she would do to you was bad... Watch what happens next.

JOHN

What does that mean? You can't punish me for loving my mother... She spent 45.3 hours in labor giving birth to me... I can't turn my back on her during her time of need...

MICHELLE

But I am your wife. When do you cut the apron strings and put me first. Why am I always after your mother? Why? Did you secretly kill your father and you are being punished for it... Did you make a secret pact in blood with her under a full moon? Do you have some sort of Oedipus/Drew Carrey complex?

John

NO... I am her pookie bear... I am the only pookie bear she has...

MICHELLE

Pookie bear has to die... Or I am leaving. I refuse to be second.

JOHN

You can't mean that... We are like two peas in a pod... We finish each others sentences... We are yin and yang...

MICHELLE

We are finished if I have to live in the shadow of your mother's apron. Tonight you make a decision... Me... Or your mother...

JOHN

That is not fair... I love you both.

MICHELLE

I am your wife. How can we make a live together if you are always being pulled by your mother's craziness? She does this just to get on my nerves... To get back at ME for marrying you.

JOHN

Yeah... That is true... But look... I am the baby... I was there with her after Dad died and she just depends on me... Why do I have to choose? Why can't I just give her the attention she needs and then be the sweet and wonderful guy you married? We can work this out...

MICHELLE

We can't. Your mother is a certified lunatic. She eats Kookoo Pebbles for breakfast.

JOHN

But she did give birth to the man that you love... Come on Michelle... You came into this relationship knowing that my mother was a little difficult... But we said that we would work it out... What happened to our vows... for better or worse... crazy mother-in-law or no crazy-mother-in-law?

MICHELLE

How do you think it makes me feel to know that I am only second best in your life?

JOHN

You can never be second best. You are the best thing about me... Making the choice to love you was the best thing I ever did... And... you know... we both came with baggage...

MICHELLE

What do you mean?

JOHN

I mean... You have some parent issues also.... But I didn't let that stop me from loving you at all... I never bring it up...

MICHELLE

What do you mean parent issues?

JOHN

You know what I mean... Parent issues... Don't play coy with me now...

MICHELLE

So now you want to throw my father in my face? IS that what you are doing?

JOHN

No... I am not... And even if I was to would never hit you face... IT would splatter all over that silly mask you have on...

MICHELLE

(Taking off the mask)

It is off... So if you are going to throw something in my face you have a clear target.

JOHN

I don't throw things... I just remind people of the reality of the situation... You call my mother crazy but... Didn't your father try to run me over... on our wedding day? Was

that not me running across the parking lot in a lovely tuxedo with your father barreling behind me in that Chrysler 300?

MICHELLE

You should have never told him that the Chrysler was the poor man's Bentley. You started tat and you deserved to be chased. He worked hard for that car.

JOHN

Well... what about when he tried to stab me with the meat fork last Thanksgiving? Was that my fault?

MICHELLE

You told hem that his turkey was dry... People travel from all over the world to eat his turkey and you take one bite and pronounce like you are so kind of God... It's dry. You are lucky my mother tripped him or he would have stabbed you in the eyeball...

JOHN

That turkey was so awful even your dog would not eat it.

MICHELLE

You are the reason why we have to spend every Thanksgiving with your crazy mother and your crazy family... Let's talk about last Thanksgiving when your brother passed out drunk and landed on top of the turkey and the only thing open was McDonalds and we had double cheeseburgers with gravy for dinner.

JOHN

He was going through a divorce. And those burger were great.... You just don't want to admit that your father is just as crazy as my mother.

MICHELLE

No... He had reason for trying to kill you... Your mother has no reason for the stuff she does... She just hates me... And loves bossing you around...

JOHN

She is not the only one...

MICHELLE

What?

JOHN

Nothing...

(Silence)

JOHN

Are we actually going to get on one of these things and sit here all night fighting?

MICHELLE

I am not going anywhere with you?

JOHN

Well... My mother gave me the money so... IF you don't go with me... Then you will be here... just you and your mask...

MICHELLE

I hate you.

JOHN

Yeah... I hate you too.

(John takes off a ballet slipper and rubs his feet.)

MICHELLE

Serves you right for grabbing those shoes thinking they were your house shoes wrapped up in ribbon. Why would I wrap up your house shoes in ribbon?

JOHN

Why would you have a mask hanging on the coat rack to make me think it was one of your little bitty funny pocketbooks?

(Silence.)

MICHELLE

I want to go home.

JOHN

Me too. But I don't want to go home if you are just going to pack your stuff and leave. If you are going to give up on us then ... Then I am just going to leave you right here on the bench... You can be like that guy in Pursuit of Happiness and put your foot up against the door in the bathroom...

MICHELLE

You wish.

(Silence. JOHN looks at MICHELLE and she looks back.)

MICHELLE

What?

JOHN

You know... You are kind of cute when you are mad.

MICHELLE

Yeah.

JOHN

Yeah.

MICHELLE

Well... You are kind of cute in those ballet slippers. Pink is your color.

JOHN

Yeah.

MICHELLE

Yeah.

JOHN

I promise... I promise to be more considerate of you and your feelings when it comes to my mother.... Okay? I can't do anymore than that...

MICHELLE

Not good enough.

JOHN

(Looks at Her.)

Okay... I promise... I promise to ask you and talk to you before I make a decision to help my mother... But that doesn't mean I won't help her... I will just... Ask you first.

MICHELLE

So asking me is supposed to do what?

JOHN

You said you wanted to be first... SO I am going to ask you first... That is what you wanted right?

MICHELLE

Yeah...

(Looks at him)

Okay... We can start there....

JOHN

Good. Now... Let's talk about your father...

MICHELLE

My father is off limits.

JOHN

No... If I have to deal with your mother then you have to deal with your father... It is only fair...

MICHELE

Alright... What are the terms?

JOHN

He has to stop calling me the mistake his daughter married... HE can do it in private... Just not at any family gatherings.

MICHELLE

I will try to get him to do that. What else?

JOHN

I want him to take my picture off his world's worst husband website.

MICHELLE

Okay. Is that all?

JOHN

For now. Is that all for you?

MICHELLE

Yeah. For now.

(JOHN hobbles to her.)

JOHN

Let's seal this treaty with a kiss...

MICHELLE

No. I don't want people to think I am the kind of woman who likes men who wear pink ballet slippers and carries a broom on the subway.

JOHN

Really... Maybe you would like for people to think you are some homeless woman who missed Halloween?

MICHELLE

Okay... One kiss...

(They kiss)

JOHN

I love it when we fight...

MICHELLE

Why? Cause the making up is so good?

JOHN

No... Because it just proves my mother was right... You are just like her...

(JOHN walks off to get on the subway.)

MICHELLE

Your mother is hooked on Zoloft... I will take those shoes and rap them around your neck...

(MICHELLE walks off)