

“Give Them Something To Eat” adapted from Michael Moynahan’s “Once Upon A Miracle”

Scene One

Contestant 3: *(stepping forward)* Give them something to eat. *(Contestant 3 steps back in place. Scene takes place in a bar with 2 bar stools up front. Bartender wears apron with dishtowel over shoulder as first person, Customer 1, comes in and sits on stool.)*

Bartender: Now what brings a nice girl like you into a dump like this?

Customer 1: I can always count on you, Robert, to pick me up!

Bartender: The usual?

Customer 1: I can't take it anymore!

Bartender: Then try a different drink.

Customer 1: I'm not talking about drinks, Robert, I'm talking about life.

Bartender: What's got you down?

Customer 1: This has been the worst year of my life. First my mother dies. Then my husband's killed in a car accident. Then my best friend's house burned down and now my sister has cancer. It's just not fair!

Bartender: Who said life is fair, kiddo?

Customer 1: I just feel so alone right now. And the very people who would help me out of these funks are gone. My mother was a laugher – she could find humor in anything: stock market crashes, young, black Republicans or old, cowboy Democrats, government shutdowns – you name it, she could make you look at it with a humorous slant. And my husband was constantly happy. He could always find good in people and events. He would always stress the positive.

Bartender: Well, death can't take away your memories, kiddo. Somehow I believe that those we love leave us part of their spirit when they die. Maybe, at some point, you'll discover a part of your Mom's humor and your husband's positive outlook. *(Customer 2 comes in and demands a drink.)*

Customer 2: Bartender! Bartender!

Bartender: Excuse me for just a sec, kiddo. Meantime, you just chew on what I said. *(to Customer 2)* What'll it be, partner?

Customer 2: Give me a gun.

Bartender: I've got Rusty Nails, Tequila Sunrises, Russian Mules and Ultimate Margaritas, but I don't have a gun. Why don't you start off with this? *(Bartender gives him/her a beer. Customer 2 drinks.)*

Customer 2: You want to kill me?

Bartender: Was the drink that bad? *(Customer 1 exits bar stool deep in thought)*

Customer 2: No, but my life is. My second wife/husband left me and took the children.

Bartender: Maybe you didn't appreciate them when you had them?

Customer 2: So, Dr. Phil, what's that supposed to mean?

Bartender: Maybe you have some mending to do. Maybe you need to make some changes.

Customer 2: Like what?

Bartender: I've always tried to learn from my mistakes and move on. It's the little things I've discovered were important in relationships: taking time out of the day to have lunch together, the occasional card, finding a way, no matter how difficult it was, to say 'I love you.' *(Customer 3 comes in and sits down on stool; Bartender*

sees new customer and turns to #2 saying) Excuse me (to Customer 3) So, what's your story, ma'am/mac?

Customer 3: Story?

Bartender: Yeah. Everybody who comes in here has a story. As the song says: "Some drink to remember. Some drink to forget." Either way, they've all got a story.

Customer 3: I'm a graduate of Chico State. I was an Engineering major and valedictorian of my class. I got a great job with Hewlett-Packard. During my first 4 years with them, I receive six promotions.

Bartender: Well, it doesn't sound like you need to be here. So why are you?

Customer 3: Because I hate it.

Bartender: Then why are you there?

Customer 3: Because I make good money.

Bartender: Are you happy?

Customer 3: No...but with what I make, I can go where I want, do what I want, and get what I want.

Bartender: Then I ask you again, why are you in here? Figure that one out. *(Customer 3 is somewhat stunned at the question; pauses and looks around at the room)*

Customer 3: It's kinda deserted in here tonight.

Bartender: It's always that way. *(Everyone freezes)*

Contestant 3: *(steps forward)* And when they gathered up the fragments, they filled 12 baskets.

Scene Two

Characters from Scene One now join Scene Two to do the lines at beginning and ending of Scene Two)

All: Give them something to eat.

Host 1: Good morning and welcome to the newest game show in town, “You Give Them Something to Eat.” I’m Dallas Rebek and we are here each week to challenge three educated contestants on how to deal with contemporary human dilemmas.

Host 2: Good to see you today and I, of course, am Eve Harvey here on “You Give Them Something to Eat.” A reminder that on today’s show, you the studio audience will judge which of our contestants has learned something at school that can help them respond to our guests in need.

Host 1: So without further ado, let’s meet our contestants: Contestant number one is Susan Smith. I see you are from Ft. Worth. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Contestant 1: I’m a graduate of UC Davis. I was a philanthropy chairperson for my sorority. I majored in Finance and took a minor in religious studies. The person I most admire is Michelle Obama... or Mother Teresa... or Oprah...er, I guess, how about all of them.

Host 2: Contestant number 2 is Chris Adams from Eagle Rock, CA. Tell us about yourself, Chris.

Contestant #2: I just graduated from Stanford in Political Science. I played on the football, tennis, and water polo teams. The people I most admire are Tom Brady, Kellyanne Conway, and John McCain.

Host 1: Contestant number 3, I don’t seem to have any information on you. Your name is?

Contestant #3 Gayle Allbee.

Host 2: Where do you call home, Gayle?

Contestant #3 The Rescue Mission when they've got room, otherwise wherever I can find a little shelter and a place to lay my head.

Host 1: But what university campus have you recently been on?

Contestant #3: Well, I was recently asked to leave Shasta College because they thought I was a vagrant.

Host 2: I see. Well, that's not exactly the campus contact we were looking for, but welcome all the same. Contestants, you know the rules. Here is our first dilemma.

Dilemma 1 Spokesperson: I'm a senior in college. I graduate this June. I think I would like to spend a year getting beyond California. I was thinking about spending a year working for others in the Peace Corps. Some of my friends advised me to head to Graduate School. My family thinks I should take one of the lucrative jobs I am being offered. I'm not sure what to do.

Host 1: Ok, panelists, what advice can you offer this person?

Contestant #1: I wouldn't run the risk of losing one of those jobs. Think of all the good you could do with the money you'd make.

Contestant #2: Don't throw all that education away. If you get into grad school now, you can make twice as much in 2 years with that graduate degree. Besides, they might stick you in some God-awful place in the Peace Corps. And then what would you do?

Contestant #3: Well, I'd say trust your instincts. I haven't had the chance to go to college, but I think I've learned a thing or two in my life. A lot of what you need to know in life comes from people and experiences as well as textbooks.

Host 2: And now let's move on to our second dilemma.

Dilemma #2 Spokesperson: At the beginning of this year, I moved into an apartment with four of my friends from work. Although I've tried to deny it and avoid it in a lot of ways, it's clear that one of my roommates has a serious drug problem. I don't know what to do.

Host 1: OK panelists, what can you offer this person in need?

Contestant 1: I think it's irresponsible of your roommate. The combination of keeping a job, paying the rent, and drugs are incompatible. My hunch is he will only drag you down with him. Get a new roommate.

Contestant 2: What's wrong with having a good time now and then? You've got to blow off steam some way. Just cover the floor with newspaper in case he gets sick and don't let him drive.

Contestant 3: I know what drugs can do to you and those you love. Drug addiction is a disease. If you really care about your friend, you need to confront the problem with him compassionately and offer to go with him to Narcotics Anonymous.

Host 2: Thank you contestants, for your replies. Now let's move to our final dilemma.

Dilemma 3 Spokesperson: I retired from university teaching 15 years ago. I now live in a retirement complex and my friend next door lost her son to cancer this past summer. I was afraid to ask how she was doing – I just didn't know what to say or do, so sometimes I would just avoid running into her. I know this has hurt my friend very much. I feel this distance between us now. Is there anything I can do now or is it just too late?

Contestant 1: Ewewew! Death just sends chills up and down my back. It was a morbid subject then and it is a morbid subject now. Don't dwell on the dismal. If your friend wants to be depressed, that's her business.

Contestant 2: Well, I've always found that when I was anxious or depressed that exercise helped. I would encourage you to get her out to pickleball or aquacise. Don't dwell on the past, however. Focus on the future.

Contestant 3: Everybody's got a story, no matter how young or old, rich or poor, educated or uneducated they are. Many of us can't listen to and be present to the hard parts of other people's stories – like death – because they remind us of some of the painful parts of our story. I don't ever think it's too late to say I made a mistake or I'm sorry. Perhaps if you can listen to your friend's pain and disappointment, she can understand the fear that silenced you and kept you away.

Host 1: Well contestants, our time is up. Now it is time for you, our audience, to vote.

Host 2: Which of our contestants gave these people in need something to eat? Was it Contestant number 1, Contestant number 2, or Contestant number 3?
(they all freeze)

All: And when they gathered the fragments, they filled 12 baskets full. You! Give them something to eat!