SIDE 3 — Ensemble (Gift-Giving)

THE CURIOUS SAVAGE by John Patrick

All Guests + Mrs. Savage (Fairy • Hannibal • Florence • Jeffrey • Mrs. Paddy)

Focus: Listening • Genuine reaction • Comedic timing • Pure chosen-family feeling

(After the children have left and Dr. Emmett has said Mrs. Savage is free to go. The Guests gather around her.)

FAIRY
You hate us.

MRS. SAVAGE
Why do you say that, Fairy?

FAIRY
You want to leave us.

MRS. SAVAGE
Oh, Fairy—I must.

JEFF
Is someone waiting for you?

MRS. SAVAGE
No.

FLORENCE
Does someone need you?

MRS. SAVAGE
No.

FAIRY
But you can't leave! I haven't had time to get you a going-away present. Maybe I could find a suitable present anyhow—if you won't be fussy. I'll go look.

FLORENCE
I'd like to see what I can find for you, too, Mrs. Savage. Will you wait?

FAIRY
Oh, fun!—Come on, everybody—let's see what we can find.

JEFF
I have something. I just remembered.

(They exit. Hannibal stays.)

HANNIBAL
There's nothing in my room you'd want, Mrs. Savage. But I have something on me that I prize. My class ring. Inside it says, “Let there be Light.” Something Mrs. Paddy would hate.

MRS. SAVAGE
No—Hannibal, I couldn't take the ring off your finger.

HANNIBAL

But I insist. It has no value as gold goes, but as blood goes, it's a statistical treasure. My heart has pumped my blood through this ring every two minutes for ten years. That adds up roughly to about a hundred thousand gallons of blood.

MRS. SAVAGE

It's too much, Hannibal.

HANNIBAL

(Struggling with the ring)

Not at all. But I don't seem able to get it off.

MRS. SAVAGE

Keep it, Hannibal. I deeply appreciate the offer, the sentiment and the statistics.

FAIRY

(Re-enters, breathless)

Oh! I'm all out of breath! Feel my heart!

(Puts Mrs. Savage's hand over her heart.)

I found something.

(Hands her a package wrapped in Kleenex.)

I hope you didn't expect much because then you won't be disappointed.

MRS. SAVAGE

I won't be disappointed.

FAIRY

It's a napkin. So many places serve paper napkins. But they blot or smear. It says “The Cloisters” on it. Wasn't that lucky?

FLORENCE

(Enters with Jeff)

Oh, Fairy found something first. What did she give you?

MRS. SAVAGE

A hand-picked napkin.

FLORENCE

Then it fits in perfectly with my present.

(Hands over a salt shaker.)

It's practical, after all. I hope you don't mind. It's engraved. It says “The Cloisters” on it.

MRS. SAVAGE

You've gone to too much trouble.

FLORENCE

Oh—it was nothing.

FAIRY

Is it sterling?

FLORENCE

Fairy, dear—I wouldn't dream of giving Mrs. Savage anything that wasn't sterling.

FAIRY

Oh—it's dented.

FLORENCE

Really, Fairy! Dents give an antique character.

MRS. SAVAGE

Indeed they do!

JEFF

Just a book. But I hope you enjoy it.

MRS. SAVAGE

(Reads title)

"The Life Span of the Ape." Do you know I've never read it!

(Mrs. Paddy runs in and thrusts something into Mrs. Savage's hand.)

MRS. SAVAGE

A genuine mother-of-pearl button. I'll sew it on at once.

(Mrs. Paddy indicates the teddy bear's missing eye.)

JEFF

I think it's intended to make an eye for the bear.

MRS. SAVAGE

Well, bless your angry heart—why, of course.

(Hugs Mrs. Paddy.)

We both thank you. He's hated having only one eye.

MRS. PADDY

I hate everything in the world… but… I hate everything in the world but you, and I love you and I wish you wouldn't leave us.

(She flees.)

MRS. SAVAGE

Why—she said she loved me!

HANNIBAL

Well?

MRS. SAVAGE

Aren't you amazed?

JEFF

Why? We knew it all along.

MRS. SAVAGE

Yes, but she spoke!

JEFF

She had to—to say it.

End of Side