

*(But WINIFRED interrupts, a miraculous, perfect Groucho.)*

**WINIFRED AS GROUCHO.** What, will you make a younker of me? Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn but I shall have my pocket picked? I have lost a seal ring of my grandfather's worth forty mark.

*(ALL are stunned.)*

**MAGGIE.** ...Stuart?

**STUART.** Right!

**STUART AS QUICKLY.** O Jesu, I have heard the Prince tell him, I know not how oft, that that ring was copper!

**WINIFRED AS FALSTAFF.** How? The Prince is a Jack, a sneak-up. 'Sblood, an he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog if he would say so.

**WINIFRED.** Was that -?

*(Amazement. Then cheers, gushing hugs all around.)*

**MAGGIE.** Ida, if this woman was that good with a mustache, who knows how funny she'll be with a beard!

**IDA.** Noted!

**MAGGIE.** In fact, no more half-measures! Costumes for us all!

*(IDA breaks into a sly grin.)*

**IDA.** On their way.

*(She exits with the rest of the CAST.)*

**MAGGIE.** Hurry, Ida! Our world, our little world beckons!

*(She notices GRACE is hanging back.)*

START

Grace? Lickety-split, dear. I'll bet your outfit is the best of all. Grace?

**GRACE.** Can I - can I make a confession?

**MAGGIE.** Dear, of course, what is it?

**GRACE.** You ask every day about Paul -

**MAGGIE.** I can stop if it's -

**GRACE.** No, I just need to come clean. It's not that I haven't heard from him, exactly. I got a letter last week.

**MAGGIE.** But I thought Paul hadn't –

**GRACE.** It was my own.

**MAGGIE.** Yours?

**GRACE.** Stamped Returned to Sender: Paul's Missing in Action.

**MAGGIE.** Oh God, no, Grace, I –

**GRACE.** Then it came back to me – I read in the paper two weeks ago, the Allies made a big air raid over France: we sent fifty planes and lost only three. Only three. Paul must have been one of the “only.”

**MAGGIE.** You don't know that.

**GRACE.** No. But I do know he's missing. Which means one of two things, so...so I have to hope, pray that he's been captured. A funny thing to pray for, huh? That he's being tortured by some Nazi son of a bitch, or –!

**MAGGIE.** Grace, I'm sure he's safe somewhere –

**GRACE.** I've written to the War Department, the Red Cross, families of his crew members, even the French Resistance. Nothing. No one knows where he is.

**MAGGIE.** Grace, that doesn't –

**GRACE.** Postman won't look me in the eye anymore, walks up to our box like he's marching to a grave. Every day I don't know if he's going to deliver good news or a gold star for me to hang in the window like all the other war widows on the block.

**MAGGIE.** Honey, this talk isn't going to –

**GRACE.** I'm being punished.

**MAGGIE.** Sweetheart –

**GRACE.** No, listen. I've...I've been really enjoying myself this past month with you all and one day it crossed my mind that none of this happiness would've happened without Paul gone. And then this, it's like someone read my mind, the betrayal there, and I'm punished with this.

**MAGGIE.** That's not how it works, dear.

**GRACE.** I didn't think so. Now I'm not so sure.

**MAGGIE.** Do you want to go home? Take the afternoon off?  
Or even – take the whole play off?

**GRACE.** No. It's horrible, but, even if I am being punished,  
I feel alive for the first time and I – I can't walk away.

**MAGGIE.** And we're so very lucky to have you. Now hurry  
up and get dressed, my Henry. We have a war to win

**END**

*(GRACE nods and exits. MAGGIE is alone.)*

~~AMAPOLA, THE PRETTY LITTLE POPPY  
MUST COPY ITS ENDEARING CHARMS FROM YOU.  
AMAPOLA, AMAPOLA,  
HOW I LONG TO HEAR YOU SAY "I LOVE YOU"  
Stay safe, Andrew.~~

~~*(The door to the costume shop opens a crack,  
and STUART pokes his head in.)*~~

~~**STUART.** Are you ready?~~

~~**MAGGIE.** Are you kidding? I can't wait!~~

~~**STUART.** Well, promise me you'll keep breathing.~~

~~**MAGGIE.** Really? Are they that –?~~

~~**STUART.** They sure are. Ready, Ida?~~

~~**IDA.** *(Offstage.)* Ready!~~

~~*(STUART flips the radio on to a patriotic tune.\*  
IDA and WINIFRED enter from the dressing  
room, in modern forties military attire, with  
"V for Victory" patches. They look fabulous.  
STUART's drag outfit has become more modern  
as well, and JUNE is in a chic French princess  
dress.)*~~

~~**MAGGIE.** Oh, my. But Ida, these aren't – these aren't from  
our stock.~~

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