

Cast of Characters

In order of appearance:

SHE, 25-35, a sweet slacker

HE, 25-35, a sweet slacker

Setting

A couch, a lamp and a Christmas tree.

Acknowledgements

Happy No-lidays was originally presented at The Actors' Gang with the following cast:

HE VJ Voster
SHE Lindsley Allen

HAPPY NO-LIDAYS by Keythe Farley

(At rise: SHE is watching television. HE enters with a bowl of popcorn.)

SHE. Oooh! Popping corn. Thank you.

(SHE kisses him. HE sits next to her.)

HE. What are we watching?

SHE. *Charlie Brown Christmas.*

HE. Cool.

SHE. I love the dance sequence.

HE. Yep. Who's your favorite?

SHE. Violet.

HE. Yeah. Violet's a cool dancer.

SHE. Who's yours?

HE. Schroeder.

SHE. Shut up!

HE. What?

SHE. Schroeder doesn't dance.

HE. You don't know that.

SHE. True.

HE. I bet he's a great dancer.

SHE. Show me how Schroeder would dance.

HE. Okay. Like this.

(HE gets up and "Raises the Roof." SHE laughs at him.)

SHE. You are so weird.

HE. What?

SHE. Schroeder wouldn't Raise the Roof.

HE. Why not?

SHE. It's 1964. Nobody Raised the Roof for, like, 35 years.

HE. Schroeder's ahead of his time.

SHE. You are so weird.

HE. Come on. An eight-year-old kid who plays piano like that would totally be ahead of his time. Like Bowie.

SHE. Whatever.

(HE sits. Pause. They watch TV for a moment.)

HE. So, what did you get me for Christmas?

SHE. I'm not telling.

HE. Why not?

SHE. It's a surprise.

HE. I'd tell you.

SHE. Okay. What did you get me?

HE. I didn't get you anything, yet.

SHE. What?

HE. Which doesn't mean I won't.

SHE. Okay.

(They watch and eat.)

HE. Your turn.

SHE. What?

HE. Your turn to tell.

SHE. No.

HE. I told you.

SHE. So?

HE. Quid pro quo.

SHE. No.

HE. No what?

SHE. No both.

HE. No quid pro quo?

SHE. Yes.

HE. And no, you didn't get me a present.

SHE. Not exactly, no.

(They watch and eat.)

HE. Doggone holidays.

SHE. Yeah.

HE. The whole marketing machine tells you that the only way to show you love someone is to spend money on them. The more you spend, the more you love.

SHE. And if you don't have money, you can't have love.

HE. And that's just plain wrong.

(They watch and eat.)

HE. What if we start our own holiday movement?

SHE. What?

HE. An anti-holiday.

SHE. With no presents?

HE. No debt.

SHE. No shopping frenzy.

HE. All the love with none of the hassle.

SHE. Totally!

HE. We could run a commercial on TV during the shopping season. Check this out. Fade in on Santa's Village—only it's not the cute little town we're used to seeing—it's like a huge Ikea-sized factory. We fly in through the front loading bay and we're at The Nexus of the Santa Operation. There's all these elves as far as the eye can see, and they're busting their humps to try to make the Christmas deadline.

SHE. And they're miserable.

HE. Yeah. Some are trying to figure how to put a PS3 together.

SHE. You gotta have a couple of them trying to tie a big bow on top of a Lexus.

HE. Right. That's funny.

SHE. Like they can't figure out how to tie a bow that's as big as they are.

HE. Right. Anyway, it's basically a sweatshop.

SHE. Right.

HE. It's horrible. Everyone's scrambling to make the deadline.

SHE. I get it. Where's Santa?

HE. He's smoking a pipe and slugging down one last hot chocolate for the road in his executive suite.

SHE. Right.

HE. He's The Big Boss. The Beneficiary of the Labor of the Elfin Hordes.

SHE. Wow.

HE. So we track him through the factory and he's slinging all these bogus Christmas phrases at the elves.

SHE. It's better to give than to receive.

HE. Right. And he's all, "Ho! Ho! HO!" and stuff. And he gets into the sleigh and flies off into the night. Couple of cool shots of the sleigh going across the moon, and he lands the thing on someone's roof. He's all, "Ho! Ho! Ho!" and he pops down the chimney, and sees...us. We're waiting for him, and we're not happy.

SHE. We're not mad, though.

HE. No. But we're not happy, either. We're assured of ourselves.

SHE. I don't think being mad at Santa is going to get us anywhere.

HE. I got ya. Anyway, Santa sees us and goes, "Ho! Ho! Ho?" And we go, "No! No! No!"

SHE. Oh my God, I love it! "No. No. No." Not mad, though.

HE. No, no, no. Just firm and resolute, "No. No. No." And we point him back up the chimney and send him on his way.

SHE. This is so cool. We tell materialism to go away.

HE. Right. And it could be a series of ads with all these different people all telling Santa No. No. No.

SHE. You could show people in stores shopping like mad, and then a person could walk up to them and say "No, no, no" really gently.

HE. Or just a bunch of credit cards swiping until they finally come up declined. Then, "No. No. No."

SHE. Right. People stranded at airports.

HE. Families fighting over Christmas dinner. All that stuff. And more.

SHE. No. No. No.

HE. No. No. No. And at the end of every ad the screen would fade to black, and a card that says "Happy Holidays" would pop up, but then the "H" in Holidays would get exed-out and be replaced by an "N." So it says Happy No-lidays.

SHE. Happy No-lidays. I love it. Happy No-lidays, sweetie.

HE. Happy No-lidays, love.

(They kiss. They cuddle. Then...)

SHE. We need an icon.

HE. *(Chuckling:)* "No. No. No."

SHE. Why not?

HE. No, no, no. I was just saying the slogan again. Yes! We need an icon.

SHE. A No-liday icon. Like Santa.

HE. Right. Anti-Claus!

SHE. How 'bout Madonna?

HE. What?

SHE. Madonna. She'd be perfect.

HE. How do you figure?

SHE. Well, her name, first of all.

HE. Madonna.

SHE. Yeah. Like the Virgin Mary? Madonna? You get the Christians right there.

HE. You think?

SHE. Plus, she's all into the kabala now, so you get the Jews, too.

HE. You're funny.

SHE. Okay, so she may not have actual religious significance, but she's still a big name.

HE. True.

SHE. And she's got that song "Holiday."

HE. Would she change it to No-liday?

SHE. She'd have to. *(She sings:)* "No-li-dah-ee. Ce-le-bra-eet. It could be so nice. If I took a No-liday." Can't you see it?

HE. Yeah, I guess. Oh! You know what the problem with Madonna is?

SHE. Careful.

HE. As a No-liday icon, only.

SHE. Okay.

HE. If Madonna was the spokesperson for the No-lidays, you couldn't have a tradition, because every year she'd want to change the holiday into something else.

SHE. Ooo. You're right. I know! What about Ellen DeGeneres?

HE. She's cool. k.d. Lang?

SHE. She'd write some good No-liday songs, I bet. Ooo! I got it.

HE. Go ahead.

SHE. No. This one's perfect.

HE. Tell me.

SHE. No. You have to get all of the lesser candidates out of your system. Go.

HE. Um...Charles Durning...Ed Asner...Mickey Rooney...Eminem... Jon Stewart...

SHE. William Shatner.

HE. Oh. My. God. William Shatner.

SHE. Consistent.

HE. Hungry for work.

SHE. Funny and serious at the same time.

HE. Great hair.

SHE. Same hair.

HE. William Shatner

SHE. William Shatner.

HE. You're a genius.

SHE. Thanks.

(They kiss. They eat popcorn and watch TV.)

SHE. What about the tree?

HE. Huh?

SHE. Can we keep the tree?

HE. Good question.

SHE. I love the tree.

HE. Yeah.

SHE. It's so pretty. And it smells so nice.

HE. Yeah. *(HE regards the tree for a moment.)* How would you feel about a fern?

SHE. What?

HE. A No-liday fern. You could still decorate it. And it would live on from season to season.

SHE. But ferns are so hard to keep alive.

HE. That's part of it. You spend all your No-liday energy trying to keep the fern alive. The fern becomes the focus.

SHE. But what if it dies? No No-lidays? You're a No-liday failure?

HE. You're right.

SHE. I say we keep the tree. "Take Back the Tree."

HE. Okay. But no decorations. Just the smell.

SHE. And some pretty lights.

HE. Lights, too, huh?

SHE. Yeah. They're too pretty to lose.

HE. They are pretty.

SHE. Turn off the TV.

(HE turns off the TV.)

SHE. And the lamp.

(HE turns off the lamp. The twinkle lights from the tree illuminate the scene. HE sits next to her.)

HE. Wow.

SHE. You don't really want to give this up, do you?

HE. Not really.

SHE. I know what the Holidays are for, even if the world has forgotten.

HE. *(A statement:)* You do.

SHE. I don't need to start a movement.

HE. Who needs the hassle?

SHE. Right. The Real Holidays are about new beginnings.

HE. True.

SHE. The Real Holidays are about hope. Hoping that the sun will come back.

HE. Cause it sure is cold now.

SHE. They're about love with a big L.

HE. And peace with a big P.

SHE. And family.

HE. Family.

(HE produces a small black box from the popcorn bowl.)

HE. Will you be my family?

SHE. What? You said...

HE. I said I didn't get you a Christmas present. This is a family present. It's for this Christmas and forever.

SHE. It's beautiful. Wow.

HE. Will you be my family?

SHE. Yeah.

(They kiss.)

SHE. I'm glad you did this.

HE. Me too.

SHE. I'm gladder.

HE. Why?

SHE. I'm going to have a baby.

(Long pause. They just stare into each other's eyes.)

HE. I really didn't think you could top the ring.

SHE. What can I say?

HE. I love you.

SHE. I love you.

(They kiss and cuddle in the glow of twinkle lights.)

HE. Have you thought about names?

SHE. If it's a girl—Madonna. If it's a boy...

HE. William Shatner.

SHE. Yeah.

HE. Or Schroeder.

(Lights fade.)

End of Play

LUPE AND THE F-TRAIN MONSTER

by Marco Ramirez