

SCENE 11 - December 21, 1943 - Chanukah
From REMEMBERING MARGOT
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(ANNE, MARGOT and PETER are in ANNE'S room. They just celebrated the first night of Chanukah.)

PETER

That was so thoughtful of Miep and Jan to bring treats for Chanukah.

ANNE

Especially as it keeps Dr. Pfeiffer in the kitchen and away from our room.

MARGOT

I wonder if we will ever have a real Chanukah again. A menorah in the window... a week of lighting the way for others...

ANNE

Margot! Don't get all weepy today!

MARGOT

I'm just stating/

ANNE

/What you always state! That we are all miserable. I won't have it. Not tonight.

PETER

I did miss the brisket. My father does the most delicious brisket. Hot and cool spices. And just when you think the hot spice will get to you, you find dried apricots and prunes stuffed in the meat for sweetness.

(The THREE all sigh dreaming of the perfect holiday dinner. ANNE breaks the spell.)

ANNE

One hot and cold spiced brisket coming up!

(Anne puts a scarf or something over her arm. She becomes a "server extraordinaire" of a magical restaurant. She hands out two pieces of paper as menus. She'll use "something" – a book, a paper holder as a tray. All through this inter-change of a "make-believe" Chanukah, the three will use "found objects" in the room to use as dining props.)

ANNE

Come on, you two. Be seated. We have a special Chanukah menu. A delectable beef brisket. It's just coming out of the oven. It's delicately spiced and rubbed with rosemary.

PETER

Is there any thyme? I love a brisket surrounded by thyme.

ANNE

And – poof! I just added the thyme. Magical briskets can be anything. I can smell the thyme coming from the kitchen. Can you?

MARGOT

I am ready for a slice.

PETER

May I have extra prunes and apricots?

ANNE

But of course! And a few sauteed tulip bulbs.

MARGOT and PETER

Tulip bulbs?

ANNE

Yes. They're all the rage in Amsterdam now. All the restaurants that matter are serving them.

MARGOT

Is that true?

ANNE

Miep says there are a lot of food shortages and the lines for food grow longer every day. People are making soup from tulip bulbs.

MARGOT

We should be grateful that we have all that cabbage.

PETER

We should be grateful that Miep still finds us food.

MARGOT

She's our Chanukah miracle.

ANNE

We are moving away from our special Chanukah dinner. What would you like with the brisket and tulip bulbs?

MARGOT

Some latkes. Extra-crunchy please.

ANNE

Would you like your usual serving of twelve of them!

MARGOT

I only ate twelve that one year.

ANNE

You wolfed them down.

MARGOT

I was growing.

PETER

Can you really eat twelve latkes?

MARGOT

It was just that one time. Anne, Peter doesn't have to know all my secrets.

PETER

I love that you have "latke secrets." And I am relieved to hear you're not perfect.

ANNE

After dinner, we have a platter of sufganiyot (*pronounced "soof-gay-nee"*) stuffed with the berry jam my grandmother made. Margot, would you like twelve of those?

MARGOT

I may want twelve but I can only fit in one.

PETER

I'll eat twelve!

MARGOT

Eleven. I still get one.

ANNE

Ten. I also get one.

PETER

Since when does the staff get to eat the food?

ANNE

It's Chanukah. Everyone partakes.

PETER

This may be my last Chanukah.

MARGOT

Now who's getting all gloomy? I thought today was about miracles and surviving.

PETER

I intend to survive – out of spite if nothing else. But I don't know if I will practice Judaism when this is over. I've spent my entire life being bullied because of my religion. I don't know what being Jewish has done for me or for any of us.

MARGOT

It's a grounding. A belonging. Warmth when the chills come.

PETER

I do love Chanukah and a good brisket.

MARGOT

You're conflicted.

PETER

My brain makes me think too much. But my stomach says, "Feed me brisket and latkes."

ANNE

I think you can have brisket and latkes without being Jewish.

PETER

It feels like cheating. But who knows how any of us will feel when this is over.

MARGOT

Or if we will even be here.

ANNE

Margot!

MARGOT

Sorry! It slipped out.

ANNE

Shh. It's Chanukah, remember. The first day of the miracle.

MARGOT

We've been here eighteen months. That's – what – about five-hundred and forty days? Maybe today is the "Five Hundred and Forty-First" day of the miracle. The miracle that we're still here.

(ANNE, PETER and MARGOT hold hands in friendship as the lights fade to black.)