

MAX-3

A COMEDY OF TENORS

47

Start

MAX. Hi, I'm sorry, but we're busy at the m – ...Maggie? Oh Maggie, sweetheart, how *are* you?! How are you *feeling*?! Oh, I've felt so terrible being away this week and –...

What? Contractions? You're having contractions? Oh my God, are you sure?!

Maggie, where are you?! Are you in the hospital?! But the doctor said it would be ten more days before the baby came, he *told* me that! You *heard* him say it! Can't you just cross your legs or something?!

Oh, Maggie, God, I wish I were there – ...Maggie?

(He clicks the phone like mad; he's lost the line.)

Maggie, can you hear me? ...MAGGIE!

(BEPPO hurries in from the bedroom soaking wet, wearing a towel.)

BEPPO. *Max! Come quick! The stopper don't work and the bathroom is a-flood!*

MAX. I-I-I-I can't right now. *She's having contractions!*

BEPPO. What's a contractions?

MAX. My wife.

BEPPO. Your wife?

MAX. Maggie. She's pregnant. And she's almost there! Just do your best. I've got to call her. And tell Mr. Saunders. *I'll be back in a minute!*

(MAX runs out. BEPPO squares his shoulders and marches back to the bedroom. The moment he's gone, MIMI enters through the front door holding a script. She wears the costume of a street urchin from the 18th Century. She rushes down front and poses dramatically.)

Stop

MIMI. *(with great drama and tears)* "Your Majesty, please! You are the Queen and I but a peasant, but oh, dear God, my family is starving! 'LET THEM EAT CAKE?!' WE CAN HARDLY AFFORD A BOWL OF GRUEL!"

CARLO. *(offstage)* Mimi!?