

Act 2: Dance with Me

by
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Scene 1

(In blackout, song, "Thunder Rolls," sung by Garth Brooks, begins. Lights rise on CRICKET and TOM sitting on the bed in TOM's room. Next to the bed is a table with a lamp, a boom box and a large, clear plastic jar of assorted jellybeans. CRICKET hands TOM a wrapped present.)

TOM *(Talking over the music.)*

What's this, Cricky?

(CRICKET turns down the music.)

CRICKET

First we have to sing, right?

TOM

Right! Sing. *(CRICKET sings "Happy Birthday," pausing for TOM to fill in.)*

CRICKET

Happy Birthday to --

TOM

Me!

CRICKET

Happy Birthday to --

TOM

Me!

CRICKET

Happy Birthday, dear --

TOM

Tom!

CRICKET

Happy Birthday to --

TOM

Me

CRICKET

Okay, now rip it open!

(TOM tears open his present.)

I hope you like your present, Tom.

(TOM holds up CRICKET's present, a pair of cowboy boots.)

TOM *(Hugging boots)*

I like my present, Cricky!

(Hugging CRICKET)

I like it!

CRICKET

Now you can dance like on TV.

TOM

Like on TV!

CRICKET

You'll be a country star!

TOM

A country star!

CRICKET

Like Garth Brooks on "Sesame Street."

TOM

Yeah, like Garth Brooks.

CRICKET

Do you have a present for me? Maybe some jellybeans?

(CRICKET smiles and points playfully at the jar of jellybeans. TOM grabs the jar and offers it to CRICKET.)

TOM

Here, jellybeans for you!

(CRICKET reaches in and picks out a jellybean.)

CRICKET

I like green jellybeans

TOM

You like green jellybeans, right, Cricky?

CRICKET

Uh huh. And you like red best, right? This jellybean makes me think of you.

Tom is my red jellybean.

TOM *(Taking the jellybean)*

I like red jellybeans best.

Scene 7

(Lights rise on TOM's room. TOM is in bed "asleep". GRAN enters quietly and carefully places his hat on the bedside table. SHE tucks TOM in, turns off the lamp on the bedside table and exits. A moment later, CRICKET enters with book and CD. As SHE puts CD in boom box, TOM stirs.)

CRICKET

Ssssh. It's just me, Tom. Are you sleeping?

TOM (Sleepily)

Yeah, I'm sleeping.

CRICKET

Did you brush your teeth?

TOM

I brush teeth - Crest toothpaste.

CRICKET

Good, Tom. Did you put the top back on?

TOM

Yep. I put top back on Crest toothpaste.

CRICKET

That's good. What did you do tonight, Tom? Did you watch Garth Brooks?

TOM

I watch Garth Brooks on "Sesame Street".

CRICKET

Is he a good singer?

TOM

He's a good singer.

CRICKET

That's right. Now, go back to sleep. I have something to play for you. It'll exercise your brain while you're asleep.

TOM

No, no. Sing. Sing.

CRICKET

This will be good for you, Tom - good for your brain. It's an ... experiment ... for school.

TOM
No school now, Crick.

CRICKET
You want me to sing to you?

TOM
Sing to me, Cricky. Okay?

CRICKET
Okay
(Singing like a lullaby)
Old MacDonald had a farm ...

TOM and CRICKET
E-I-E-I-O

CRICKET
And on that farm, he had a ...

TOM
Turkey.

CRICKET

E-I-E-I-O
With a ...

TOM
Moo, moo, here --

CRICKET
No. Gobble, gobble.

TOM *(Getting sleepier)*
Gobble, gobble, here
Gobble, gobble, there
Here gobble ... There gobble ...

(TOM falls asleep. CRICKET pushes button on boom box which plays "Ave verum corpus" [orchestral version] by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.)

TOM
What's that, Cricky?

CRICKET

It's good for you ... it's by Mozart. Sssh ...

*(CRICKET pats TOM and HE relaxes to sleep.
With music underscoring, CRICKET gently
begins rehearsing math facts, trying to "pour" them
into TOM's brain.)*

Two plus two is four ... four plus four is eight ... eight plus eight is sixteen ... sixteen plus sixteen is thirty-two ... This'll be good for you, Tom. Every night while you sleep, I'll play different stuff and it'll stimulate your brain activity. Like I'm pouring good stuff in your brain. We'll do math and the alphabet. I'll play you all the great books. Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, David Copperfield. It'll be good for me, too. When I go to college, I'll have already read so many books. Wouldn't it be great if we could go to the same college and help each other with our book reports? Hey, maybe we could share an apartment and a car and stuff --

(TOM stirs.)

TOM

"Had a duck ... with moo, moo, here ... and a moo, moo, there
*(Tape of Mozart continues softly as CRICKET
pats TOM. SHE opens book and begins to read)*

CRICKET

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Chapter I. You don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There were things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied ... one time or another ..."

*(Looking at TOM sleeping peacefully, SHE
gently lays her head on his shoulder, quietly
crying as lights fade. Blackout.)*