

A Mighty Wind

(Comedy) (2003)
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Major Characters

Jonathon Steinbloom.....Bob Balaban

The very nervous and neurotic son of the folk music promoter Irving Steinbloom, who has just died, who decided to organize a folk music concert in his dad's honor. The concert will star the semi-famous acts of the 1960s that his dad had promoted, including the following:

The Folksmen:

Mark Shubb.....Christopher Guest

The founder of the group in the early 1960s.

Alan Burrows.....Harry Shearer

The group's bass player, who discovers a deep secret about himself.

Jerry Palter.....Michael McKean

The group's lead singer, who joined after Mark and Alan met each other.

Mitch and Mickey:

Mitch.....Eugene Levy

A very shy and socially awkward singer who met Mickey in the early 1960s at a concert in which he was seriously injured trying to protect her from an aggressive and disrespectful member of the audience.

Mickey.....Catherine O'Hara

Mitch's singing partner, who broke up with him in the 1970's, but who told Steinbloom she would agree to do the reunion concert with Mitch, even though she hadn't asked him, and had not seen him in over 20 years.

The New Main Street Singers:

Terry Boehrner.....John Michael Higgins

The lead singer of both the old and new versions of the group, who, with his wife, is very much into a ridiculous alternative religion.

Laurie Boehrner.....Jane Lynch

Terry's wife, who joined Terry and the group after first becoming a pornographic movie actress in the 1960s.

Sissy Knox.....Parker Posey

Sissy, like everyone else in the group except for Terry and Laurie, was not in the original Main Street Singers of the 1960s, but joined them in the 1990s when it was “reformed” as the New Main Street Singers, in order to play for nostalgic middle age fans on Florida cruise ships.

Mike LaFontaine.....Fred Willard

A business man and failed TV actor from the 1970s who has started his own company promoting various entertainment acts, such as The New Main Street Singers.

Lars.....Ed Begley Jr.

A TV producer for NPB (National Public Broadcasting, which is commercial-free TV supported by the government), who is a Swedish musician who loves folk music and using Jewish (Yiddish) words, even though he is not Jewish.

Plot Summary

This film is a humorous documentary (or “Mockumentary,” since to mock means to make fun of), about the American folk music subculture. The story begins with news of the death of the much loved music promoter Irving Steinbloom, who was responsible for helping many semi-famous folk music acts in the 1960s. It is now well over 30 years later, but Steinbloom’s son Jonathon, a very nervous and neurotic man, decides to organize a reunion concert of his father’s biggest stars from that time period. Most of these musicians had not seen each other in decades, but in honor of Jonathon’s dad, they agree to perform together at New York’s famous Town Hall Theatre.

The musicians include The Folksmen, a group of three singers who became successful playing coffee houses in New York City, and The New Main Street Singers, a group of nine who are known for their overly happy songs and faces, and a bit less known today for the fact that only a couple of the original singers are still with the group (and thus the reason they call themselves the *New Main Street Singers*). Finally, the true stars of the concert are Mitch and Mickey, whose songs of love and romance brought them many fans, but who could never really be romantically involved themselves, because Mitch was just too shy, distant and socially awkward. Indeed, almost every musician and every other character in this film is a bit strange or ridiculous, but of course those are the most interesting type of people when you’re making a mockumentary....

A few words about folk music: It is basically impossible to give a good definition of folk music, but you should be aware that it is often thought of as “music of the common people.” As such, it is best known as music that is played by one or more singers who play acoustic (non-electrical) guitars, and that often the song

lyrics have to deal with the struggles of everyday people, especially the poor and oppressed. Indeed, much of folk music is quite political, dealing with such issues as war, civil rights and justice, but just as often, the songs deal with the joys and common occurrences of everyday life, such as eating at a favorite restaurant.

American folk music has been around since at least the 1800s, although the first truly famous folk singer was Woody Guthrie, who wrote such classic songs as "This land is your land" in the 1930s. Starting in the late 1950s and into the 1960s, folk became more popular than ever, especially with the rise of such songwriters as Bob Dylan, who started playing in small New York City coffee houses (His best known song is "Blowing in the Wind"). Eventually, rock stars discovered folk music, and by the mid 1960s, folk-rock was one of the most successful forms of popular music. Pure folk music continues to be much loved by many today, though it is most often heard in combination with other musical genres such as rock and country music. In any case, the (fictional!) musicians in this film are good representatives of the type of folk stars that became popular in the early 1960s, in that they sang with great spirit and optimism, although now, so many years later, few are as idealistic as they were when they were younger!

A brief note: Some of the vocabulary defined below comes from the songs sung in the movie. To distinguish the song lyrics from the spoken vocabulary, a [[...]] symbol has been put around the lyrics.

Some Words and Expressions that You May not Know

After folk music promoter Irving Steinbloom dies, The Folksmen, The New Main Street Singers and Mitch and Mickey agree to a reunion concert.

The music world mourns the death of folk music icon, Irving Steinbloom.

"To mourn" the death of a person is to feel great sadness.

An "icon" is a great or dominant symbol, in this case of folk music.

An instrumental figure in guiding folk music from its humble beginnings in the 1950s to its zenith in popularity in the 1960s.

An "instrumental figure" is a very important or influential person in a particular field or area. If a group has "humble beginnings," they start out with little sign of success or hope for the future. The "zenith" is the highest point.

The sweethearts of the folk music scene, Mitch and Mickey.

The "scene" is the combination of people and events that mark a particular subculture (In this case, the folk music subculture of the 1960s).

Young people got behind the message in a big way.

"To get behind" a message is to support it.

We cannot conceive of doing this...

"To conceive" of doing something is to consider or think about doing it.

The only fitting tribute.

If something is "fitting," it is appropriate or correct. A "tribute" is an event that's held in honor of, or out of respect for someone.

My dad was really an amazing character.

A character is a common way of referring to a person with an interesting or notable personality.

A concert that would be performed by all of the fabulous groups that he used to represent.

A good alternative to excellent, wonderful or fantastic.

When I was 12, I formed the Jewish Children's Polo League.

"Polo" is a sport that is played on horseback, with large wooden sticks (mallets) and a large wood ball. A "league" is a group of sports teams that regularly play each other.

You could say she was overly protective.

If a mother is "overly protective" of her child, she is nervously doing everything she can to make sure they are never hurt.

Whenever we had chess tournaments, I had to wear a football helmet.

A "tournament" is a series of games or contests to determine who is the best in a particular sport or game. A "helmet" is a type of covering made of hard metal to protect a person's head.

We might have fallen and impaled our heads on a pointy bishop.

"To impale" a person is a horribly violent verb meaning to pierce or penetrate their body with a sharp and pointed object such as a spear.

[[They don't allow no frowns inside.]]

A "frown" is a facial expression that shows sadness or frustration.

[[There's brandy by the keg and sawdust on the floor.]]

"Brandy" is a type of sweet liquor, a "keg" is a big wooden barrel for holding liquids such as beer, and "sawdust" are the tiny bits of wood that are left on a floor after sawing pieces of wood.

[[If you got a hankering, I'll tell you where to go,
just look for the busted neon sign that flashes E-A-O.]]

A "hankering" is an old word for a craving or strong desire. If something is "busted," it's broken or not working. "Neon" is a type of light, commonly used in the signs that dominate Las Vegas casinos, and when light "flashes," it goes on and off very quickly (In this song, the neon sign is broken, so instead of saying 'Eat At Joe's,' only the E, A and O are lit).

Twobadores---There were two of us, the reasoning behind the name.

"Reasoning" is another word for logic or rationale (Twobadore is not a word, but a *troubadour* is a poet-musician who lived in England during the Middle Ages, around 1200).

Mark was a bass singer and I was a tenor singer.

"Bass" and "tenor" are musical terms that refer to the style in which a person sings (high and low).

We went to New York to see what was happening in the biz.

A common slangy way of referring to business.

The Folk Club...was a flash point. :: We ran into Jerry.

It was like a big magnet. Everyone went there.

A "flash point" is a place where everything comes together or people suddenly burst into action. "To run into" a person is to see or meet them just by chance, without having intended to do so. A "magnet" is a piece of metal that physically draws or attracts other pieces of metal closer to it (And thus if a person is a magnet, they naturally attract lots of people).

I was drawn to the folk music as well, and I wound up down at the Folk Club.

To be "drawn" to something is to be very attracted to it. If you "wind up" in a place, you end up or finish there, even if that wasn't what you had intended to do.

Not a bad looking gent, to boot.

If a person is "bad looking," they are physically unattractive (the opposite of good looking, pretty or handsome). A "gent" is a short and slangy way of saying gentleman. "To boot" is an excellent colloquial expression which basically means "in addition."

We ended up getting together and... :: It clicked.

If two people get together or meet for the first time and it "clicks," this means that they got along very well or liked each other a lot (To click means to literally make a brief clicking sound, such as when you turn something on or off).

He signed us to Folk Town, which was the label to be on.

A record "label" is a particular record or music company (Mark is saying that Folk Town was a good record company that lots of people wanted to record or work for).

We were moved down the food chain a bit to the Folk Tone label, which was a subsidiary.

The "food chain" is a reference to the way certain animals eat certain other animals in nature). A "subsidiary" is a smaller business owned by a bigger one (Mark is saying that The Folksmen were put on a smaller and poorer record label than what they were originally promised).

It was a decent label. They just didn't have the distribution.

In this context, "decent" means OK or not bad. In a business context, "distribution" is the act of getting the product widely distributed or out to the public, so that they can easily buy it.

They had no hole in the center of the record, so you'd get this vinyl...and it's up to you to center it.

"Vinyl" is the black material that records used to be made of before the invention of tapes and CDs. "To center" something is to place it in such a way that it is physically stable, so that it won't fall over.

It would teeter crazily on the spindle.

"To teeter" is to move unsteadily, as if about to fall. A "spindle" is a small metal stick or shaft, in this case around which a record moves.

We had no control over that aspect of it.

An important word for a particular side or part of a situation.

It was about 1958 in Greenwich Village.

A famous part of New York City, on the island of Manhattan, that is well known for its cafes and music clubs, where folk and jazz are played.

We became the Village Folk Ensemble and we were a great group.

An "ensemble" is a small group of musicians, all equally important.

In 1960, we were at a hootenanny and we were jamping with the Klapper Family.

A "hootenanny" is a rare word for a folk music concert in which the audience is asked to sing along. "To jam" is a common slang word among musicians which means to practice or to play with great spirit on stage.

The harmonics were amazing.

"Harmonics" refers to the harmonies or melodies that make up a song.

"Amazing" is an excellent alternative to fantastic or unbelievable.

There's five of them, and four of us; It's a neuf-tete.

A totally ridiculous word that does not exist! (In English, a *quartet* is a musical group of four, and in French, *neuf* means nine).

This thing clicked with the Klappers, so we joined forces, and we became the Main Street Singers.

If a situation "clicks," it works out really well (In this case, everyone in the two groups got along really well).

10 years and 30 albums later we disbanded, but we had a good run.

If a musical group "disbands," it breaks up and stops producing music. If they have "a good run," they go through a long period of good sales and success.

We called it quits, too. I went my way and Chuck went his.

"To call it quits" is to stop doing something, often after a long time.

The Three Wisemen's Sex Emporium.

A funny play on words; In the Bible, the three *wise men* are three people who traveled to see Jesus when he was a baby, but here, 'Wisemen' is the family name of three brothers who own a sex shop ("Wise" means smart, and an "emporium" is a shop or place of trade).

It was successful for a year until they sued over something to do with a box of benwa balls.

"To sue" a person in court is to try and legally get money from them for something wrong that they have done. "Benwa balls" are a type of sex toy.

You were dad's favorite. Just deal with it! I've never said this to a single soul. If you tell a person to "deal with" a difficult situation, you're telling them to face it with bravery and determination. "A single soul" is a way of saying just one person (A "soul" is the spiritual or non-physical part of a person that lives on after the body dies. Or at least it does in theory!).

Just think about this before you make your mind up.

"To make up your mind" is to make a difficult decision between two or more choices.

It sounds cliché, but it's kind of a blur. They loved us.

If an expression is "cliché," it is said so often that it has grown tiresome or even annoying. If something is a "blur," it is distorted, hard to see, and not at all clear.

To be honest, I bought the image as much as anyone else. We represented true love and romance.

In this context, to "buy" something is to believe it. Here, a person's "image" is the way the public in general sees them.

Everybody loved to hang around Mitch.

"To hang around" a person is to spend time with them.

He was very smart, very intense....and distant, you know.

If a person is "intense," they have a strong personality marked by great energy or passion. If they are "distant," they are shy, socially reserved or hard to get to know.

You'd get closer to him and he'd just inch back that much further.

"To inch back" is to retreat or go back (an inch is a small unit of measurement). Mickey's explaining how hard it was to really know Mitch.

[When the veil of dreams is lifted and the fairly tales have all been told,
there's a kiss at the end of the rainbow more precious than a pot of gold.]]

A “veil” is a cloth that is worn over a woman’s face, or more generally, cloth that is used to hide something. “Fairy tales” are stories of mythical creatures such as witches and monsters, usually written for children. “Precious” means rare or very valuable.

The phenomenon of that kiss...can’t be overstated.

A “phenomenon” is any important fact or event that can be observed. If something is “overstated,” people claim it is more important or significant than it really is.

It was a superb moment in the history of folk music.

An interesting adjective that means excellent or of the highest quality.

I didn’t think this through. I should have talked to him beforehand.

“To think a plan through” is to carefully consider all the possible problems and outcomes that might result from it. “Beforehand” means earlier.

For a while, we were able to keep it on a professional level.

This is Mickey’s way of saying that she and Mitch could still work as music or business partners, even though they were not getting along personally.

I was in awe of Mitch and Mickey. Who wasn’t?

To be “in awe of” of a person is to be completely amazed by them, perhaps because of their talent, energy or beauty. Note the final tag question is a stylistic way of saying that everyone else was, too.

Mickey started shouting at Mitch. She just went off.

In this context, if a person “goes off,” they become extremely angry and emotional.

She started throwing anything she could get her hands on at Mitch---microphone stands, mikes, guitars.

“To get your hands on” something is to be able to grab or take it, often after looking around desperately. A “stand” is an object designed to hold papers or other objects, and a “mike” is a microphone for public speaking.

Mitch...he just snapped.

“To snap” is to break into two, or here, to get extremely upset or angry.

*Terry and Laurie remember the 1960s, and Mitch arrives
 at Mickey's house, 30 years after they were last together.*

[[It's time to kick on back, toss your cares away....]]

"To kick back" is to relax, and if you "toss your cares away," you decide to not think about your problems.

[[Cartwheels and piggybacks, it's just that kind of day...]]

A "cartwheel" is the act of moving on your arms and legs like a turning wheel, and if you ride "piggyback" on a person, they carry you on their back as they walk.

I've come to understand there's been abuse in my family, but it was mostly musical in nature.

"Abuse" is physical or emotional mistreatment of a person that is so severe that it can permanently hurt them (It is never musical!).

I knew right and left and every way to Sunday.

Jerry's totally ridiculous and never used way of saying he understood something from every point of view.

I made cardboard cutouts of everybody in the group to sing with them.

"Cardboard" is the thick paper-based material that boxes are made out of, and a "cutout" is a material cut in the shape of a person or other object.

I was brought up...just far enough away to have been with people with pure , unadulterated white trash.

To be "brought up" is to be raised as a child. If something is "unadulterated," it is pure, and not diluted or corrupted. "White trash" is a very negative expression that generally refers to poor and uneducated whites, especially in the American South.

I don't believe anyone noticed when I blew town at 15 and ended up in San Francisco, California.

A very slangy way of saying to leave.

It's at this point in my story that the dark clouds part because I met a certain Mr. Wisemen.

If clouds "part," they float or fade away. "A certain" is a stylistic way of referring to a particular person who the listener probably already knows.

He tapped me to do some roles in some of his short films for more mature audiences.

In this case, "to tap" is to pick, though it usually means to strike gently. In a film context, a "mature audience" refers to those over 18.

Before long, I had landed, if you will, some leads, and then I started to do some cameos.

"To land" a part in a movie is to get it. "If you will" is a way of admitting the words just used may not be exactly what the speaker wanted to say.

A "lead" in a movie is the main role, and "cameos" are very short scenes or appearances in front of the camera.

I learned to play the ukulele in one of my last films, *Not so Tiny Tim*.

A “ukulele” is a type of very small guitar (Tiny Tim was a famous singer in the late 1960s, though here it is a play on words for an X-rated movie).

Before long I was the new Mrs. Boehner. :: Ain’t that something?!

A very old-fashioned but still used way of expressing great surprise or perhaps even happiness (Note that “Boehner” is pronounced just like “boner,” which is a colloquial word for a male sexual erection!)

Last week you were going to come in at 5: 00 and you never showed up.

A very common phrasal verb meaning “to arrive.”

I’m just looking out for you! :: Let’s not rain on the parade, OK? He’s in, OK?

“To look out” for a person is to make sure that they are doing OK. “To rain on a person’s parade” is to bring them lots of bad news or negative energy after they had just told you a lot of good or positive news.

In 1974, after the breakup, Mitch was extremely angry.

The “breakup” of a group happens when the members decide to leave and go their own ways. “Extremely” is a stronger version of ‘very.’

“May She Rot in Hell,” and this spiraled down to the next album, *Calling it Quits*.

“May she...” is a poetic way of saying “I hope that she...”, and “to rot” means to chemically dissolve or disintegrate into nothing over time (This is the name of a song that Mitch wrote about Mickey!) “To spiral down” is to head uncontrollably downward toward the ground while spinning around, perhaps like a plane that has lost its engines.

He should have stayed longer, because we really didn’t get a grip on him.

In this context, “to get a grip on” a person is to be able to control them, perhaps after understanding their problem (A nurse in a mental hospital is talking about Mitch’s stay at the hospital).

Welcome to the House of Crabbe. :: Thank you very much, I just checked into the hotel.

To “check into” a hotel is to officially register for a room.

Do you like model trains? It’s a bit of a passion for me.

“Model trains” are small toy-size trains that look exactly like the real ones, except for their size. A person’s “passion” is something for which they have great love or interest.

We’ve got a brothel down above the saloon.

A “brothel” is a building where lots of prostitutes work, and a “saloon” is an old but still used word for a bar.

I think Crabbeville in autumn would look quite magnificent.

“Magnificent” is exceptionally great, or of amazing quality and elegance.

Oak, poplar, maple, chestnut.
These are all types of trees.

It's Crabbe Town, not Crabbeville.

"Ville" is a French word, that when added to any proper name, implies a small town or city (Crabbe is the family name of Mickey's husband).

I'm in the bladder management industry. I sell catheters.

A person's bladder is the organ that holds their urine (piss).
A "catheter" is a medical device that helps people to urinate.

I have my own distribution company. Sure-flo medical appliances.

A "distribution company" buys various products from a manufacturer or producer and then sells them to lots of stores (or in this case, lots of hospitals). An "appliance" is a machine, tool or device that is used for a particular purpose.

It was named in tribute for my mother; Her name was Florence.

Note "Sure-Flo" is a logical name for a company that sells catheters, since such devices help people with the *flow* of their bodily liquids, and also note that the name Florence starts off with the same letters as flow.

It's a growth industry....because one in three people over 60 have a flaccid or a spastic bladder.

If an organ is "flaccid," it is weak, and soft, as opposed to hard or stiff.
If an organ is "spastic," it suffers from uncontrolled muscle contractions (If a person is spastic, they suffer from suddenly violent emotions).

In a sense, every 13.5 seconds a new incontinent is born, as it were.

If a person is "incontinent," they're unable to control when they urinate (or piss).

Good old constipation. You have impacted fecal mass in your rectum, pushing on your bladder.

"Constipation" is the medical condition of not being able to defecate (or more colloquially, to shit). "Impacted fecal matter" is a ridiculously clinical or medical way of referring to feces (or more colloquially, shit or pooh) that is stuck inside a constipated person. A person's "rectum" is their anus (or much more colloquially, ass hole).

We were on stage and we had a horrible little heckler.

A "heckler" is a person who shouts at, or loudly makes fun of, an entertainer on stage, or a person who is trying to give a public speech.

"You sing like crap. Get off the stage."

"Crap" is a useful alternative to shit ("You sing very poorly").

Very inarticulate, rude. :: Mean. Mean little bugger.

If a person is “inarticulate,” they are not able to express themselves well.

If a person is “rude,” they are very impolite, or perhaps vulgar. “Mean little bugger” is a British way of referring to a totally unpleasant person.

All of a sudden, he pummeled the crap out of him.

A very slangy way of saying to severely beat up or injure (“To pummel” means to hit, pound or beat, and “crap” is another word for shit).

I can’t explain what was surging through my body.

If something is “surging through” your body, it is travelling very quickly and increasing in number or volume.

I was consumed with an emotion that I had never felt before.

To be “consumed with” something is to be obsessed with it, or extremely interested in it.

We simply fused together in a very meaningful way.

If two people “fuse together,” they are combined to become one.

I just focused on Mitch.

“To focus” on a person is to put all your mental energy on them, or to study them with great concentration.

You know, I went along for the ride.

“To go along for the ride” is to join another person in order to take advantage of or enjoy all the things that happen to them.

You both climb aboard the fairy at the same time. :: OK, fair enough.

A “fairy” is a small ship that transports people between two particular places that are usually pretty close to each other. “Fair enough” is a common way of saying “that’s fair.”

The Steinbloom kids have their own reunion, Mike LaFontaine sees money in folk music, and Lars decides to bring the concert to TV.

[[Never heard the whistle of a Southbound freight or the humming of its driving wheel. No, I never did no wandering...]]

A “freight” is a type of train that transports goods such as food and furniture. “Humming” is the low continuous sound or drone that certain insects and trains make. “To wander” is to continuously travel from one place to another, with no particular goal or destination.

We weren’t wearing the old stuff, the old gear.

“Stuff” is a very common for things in general, or in this case, for clothes.

“Gear” is a general word for machinery, though here it refers to clothes.

I'm on record as Mr. Anti-dickey. :: You were Mr. drop-the-dickey.

To be "on record as" having said something is to have been officially heard as having said something. In this case, "Mr." is used to show that this person was associated with the words that follow. A "dickey" was a brand of pants, and thus "Mr. Anti-Dickey" would be a person who never wore them, or even insisted that other people stop wearing them.

It sounds like you're thinking that the image that we had was a retro image of something that wasn't retro, because we weren't retro, we were then.

A person's "image" is the way in which others see or think about them. "Retro" is a slangy adjective which means from an earlier time, or perhaps a generation or two earlier. Note musical groups are often seen as old-fashioned or ahead of their times, and that the "then" at the end of the sentence refers to the present at that time (i.e...."now"!).

To do 'then' now would be very retro, but to do then, then, was very "now-tro," if you will.

"Now-tro" is a ridiculous word that does not exist! "If you will" is a way for the speaker to admit that what they have just said is not really correct English, but they still want to say it that way.

You're not the only person going through this...

"To go through" a difficult time is to experience it.

I don't care for folk music, and dad knew that. I didn't get it.

"To not care for" something is to not like it, and in this case, to not "get" it means to not appreciate it.

You like to make amends, but you can't.

"To make amends" is to do something financially or emotionally positive after having done harm or injury to someone else.

Let's just hang on. Oh, Jesus.

"To hang on" emotionally is to stay calm or stable during a difficult time. "Jesus" is often used to express emotion such as surprise or frustration.

I was rescued by the Main Street Singers and they really gave me a break from that darkness.

To be "rescued" is to be saved. To get a "break" from the darkness is to have a chance to escape it or get away from it.

I like to give people a break now...I want to be a vessel of love and I want to entertain and make people happy.

In general, "to give a break" to somebody is to give them an opportunity or to treat them well if they are in a difficult situation.

A "vessel" is a large container (as well as a big boat or ship).

That's what brings me real joy.

A useful word for great happiness.

Quick plugola, I'm Mike LaFontaine, owner and founder of Hi-Class management.

A "plug" is a quick piece of advertising or promotion (though the word "plugola" is a silly variation of that word which does not exist).

I starred in a series called "Hey, wha' happened?!"

"To star" in a TV show is to be the main actor, and a "series" is a TV show that is generally broadcast on a regular basis, such as once a week.

We had a lot of other catch phrases--"I got a real red wagon, I don't think so!"

A "catch phrase" is an expression that is associated with one particular person or show. "I don't think so" is a useful expression to use if you have just been told something that you are convinced is not true.

It only lasted a year and that's good, because that's how you establish a cult.

A "cult" is any type of TV show, rock group or other type of act that is followed by a small but passionate group of fans (It is also a very negative word for any religion that is thought to do harm to its followers).

I was on stage doing my shtick.

A good Jewish word for any kind of show business routine, style or joke that is done over and over again.

If someone would heckle me....I would say "that's right," and that would crack up the audience.

"To heckle" an entertainer on stage is to scream at them, taunt them or generally try to disturb them as they perform in front of the audience.

"To crack up" a person is to make them laugh.

I noticed a guy sitting down front with a long face. Nothing got to him.

If a person has a "long face," they look sad. Here, if nothing "gets to him," it means nothing helps them emotionally or makes them feel better.

I was never into folk music. I'd worked some bills with some folkies.

To be "into" something is to really enjoy it. In this context, a "bill" refers to the various artists who will perform at a concert.

I said to George, you put up some great numbers, and if you re-form your group, I can send you on the Starfish Cruise Lines.

In this context, "to put up" great numbers means to make some good money, or a good profit. "Cruise lines" are luxury ships that travel around various popular tourist cities.

Together we could make a fortune and you will have a ball.

A "fortune" is a huge amount of money, and if you "have a ball," you have a real fun time and very much enjoy yourself.

On a couple of cruises, dysentery broke out on the ship.

“Dysentery” is a very unpleasant and serious disease marked by diarrhea and upset stomach. If a disease “breaks out” in the population, it spreads quickly from one person to the next.

I think you’ve done a fabulous job and I’m very happy to be talking with you.
A good alternative adjective to wonderful or excellent.

It’s a perfect fit. Our demographics are skewering older, and that can be a minus with some of the corporate underwriters.

If two things are a “perfect fit,” that means they go together very well. “Demographics” refers to the study of various population groups, such as those of a certain age or ethnic background. If a TV audience is “skewering” older, it is becoming older over time. A “minus” is anything seen as negative. “Corporate underwriters” are the corporations or big businesses that agree to pay for a particular show on non-commercial TV in exchange for being mentioned as an official sponsor or supporter.

If you’re not weary of hearing stories about your dad, I want to tell you a story.
To be “weary” of something is to be tired of, or exhausted by it.

I got right up to the box office and like some kind of practical joke, the door slammed shut. Sold out right when I got there.

The “box office” of a theatre is where the tickets are sold to the public. A “practical joke” is usually a trick done on a person that makes them feel silly or foolish. If a door “slams” shut, it closes with great force or violence, and if a play is “sold out,” there are no longer any tickets left.

I go “What?, A scalper?” I can’t afford that kind of money for a ticket.
A “scalper” is a person who buys a ticket at the normal (face) price and then later tries to sell it for a profit.

He was generous and kind and that’s the way we’re doing this thing.
“Generous” is a good word for a person who is giving with their money, time or energy, and a “kind” person is nice, warm or good-hearted.

It’s a mitzvah what you’re dad did, and I want to try and give that back to you.
This is a Jewish (Yiddish) word meaning a good or praiseworthy action or deed. Note that Lars loves to use all kinds of Yiddish words, even though he is not Jewish!

*Terry and Laurie discuss their views on existence,
and Mike and Lars continue planning for the great reunion.*

That's it, nice and crisp!

In this context, a good word meaning fresh, lively or energetic.

You know the policy. We all gotta wear the uniform, until we're ready to take it off.

An important word for a definite course of action that has rules or guidelines that must be followed.

Eventually you'll be able to wear your civvies when you're singing.

A slang word for civilian clothes, as opposed to military uniforms.

The better news is we're going live.

If a TV show is broadcast "live," it is aired at the same time it is filmed, as opposed to being taped for broadcast later.

He just got bandwidth there and it's live.

"Bandwidth" is a term used in technology that refers to the ability of wires to carry communications or information.

The corporate underwriter wouldn't go for it. :: OK, shalom.

A "corporate underwriter" is a corporation that helps pay for the production of a show. In this case, "to go for" something is to accept or support it. "Shalom" is a Hebrew (Jewish) word that means both peace and goodbye.

Folk music is in my blood.

Lars' way of saying that he has loved folk music since he was a child.

I had a garage band in Stockholm, which was a challenge in its own right....to keep an instrument tuned in that temperature swing.

A "garage band" is a young musical group that practices in somebody's garage. Stockholm is the capital of Sweden. If an instrument is well "tuned," it is adjusted in such a way that it will sound as good as possible. A big "temperature swing" refers to the wide gap between the hottest and coldest temperatures in a short time period.

I had a hit you might have heard of....which means "How's it hanging, grandma?," and it was big on the Swedish charts.

A "hit" is a song that is popular and widely played on the radio.

In this context, "how's it hanging?" is a very slangy and never used way of asking "How's it going?" or more formally, "How are you?" In this context, the "charts" refers to the list of best selling songs.

I got in touch with the American music and I thrived on that so I came here and became part of that scene.

"To thrive" is to grow big, healthy and strong. In this context, the musical "scene" is the combination of musicians, clubs and songs that form the musical environment of a particular place.

I'm so happy to be here and come full circle,
airing that show on PBN. It's a dream come true.

"To come full circle" is to do something that you had started out doing much earlier in time. "To air" a show is to broadcast it, and PBN is the Public Broadcast network, which is government supported and does not have advertising (In real life, the radio version is called NPR, or National Public Radio). A "dream come true" is a way of referring to something that happens after working for a very long time to make sure it does.

It's confusing. I'm hearing you with the same timbre, and it's cluttered.

In music, "timbre" refers to the quality of a sound or tone, and if music is "cluttered," it is not clean or clear, but confused, messy or marked by various notes and sounds that don't seem to go together well.

Now it sounds almost more like a ventriloquist.

A "ventriloquist" is an entertainer who is able to make it appear that they are having a conversation with a puppet by producing the puppet's voice without moving their own mouths.

Can I make the radical suggestion that maybe
 this is not the best number to start with?

"Radical" means extreme, or far from traditional.

In this case, a "number" is a song.

We don't want people to reach for the remotes.

A "remote control" is the device that allows people to change the channel on their TV sets without having to move from where they are seated.

I'm always anxious. I come out.

If a person is "anxious," they're worried or nervous about something.

I could be empathetic. I'm not sure what else I could do.

If a person is "empathetic," they show their sympathy for someone else because they have experienced the same problems as the other person.

I'm getting a bounce, but there's a lightness within it, as well.

A "bounce" is the action of a ball jumping from the ground, or more generally, a sudden burst of energy or liveliness.

It's a tricky color.

A good adjective meaning difficult or hard to understand or estimate.

Terry and I worship an unconventional deity. The power of another dimension.

"To worship" is to treat with the greatest respect and honor. If something is "unconventional," it is very unusual or far from traditional, and a "deity" is a God. A "dimension" is a very general and even philosophical word for units of measurement, including the dimensions of space and time, and in Terry's case, of religious thought.

Through our ceremonies and our rituals, we have witnessed first hand the awesome and vibratory power of color.

A “ceremony” is a formal act or tradition for a specific purpose, such as a marriage or funeral, and a “ritual” is the specific way a ceremony is done. “To witness” something is to have observed or seen it. “Awesome” is a popular colloquial word among younger people that means totally amazing, fantastic or incredible, and “vibratory” refers to vibrations, which are tiny wave-like movements that travel thorough the air.

We believe this saturated energy is the basis of all creation.

If something is “saturated,” it can no longer absorb or take in any more. The “basis of all creation” is a religious way of referring to the ultimate cause of everything that exists.

We are WINC--Witches in Nature’s Colors.

A “witch” is a mythical old woman with supernatural powers, such as the ability to fly on a broomstick! (“To *wink*” is to shut one eye briefly as a signal or as a way of flirting).

The word ‘witch’....has a lot of silly connotations.

An association or suggestion that people often think of when hearing a word (Jerry’s saying ‘witch’ has silly connotations since when people hear that word, they often think of old women flying around on broomsticks).

No, we do not ride around on broomsticks and wear pointy hats.

If a hat is “pointy,” it has a sharp tip at the top.

This is not an occult science. This is not one of those crazy systems of divination and astrology.

If a belief is “occult,” it cannot be tested scientifically (The connotation of occult is a belief system that is totally ridiculous!) “Divination” is the act of guessing when something can’t be known for sure, and “astrology” refers to the (strange!) belief that a person’s life is determined by the position of the stars when they were born.

That stuff is hooey and you’ve got to have a screw loose to go in for that.

“Hooey” is an excellent word for nonsense or bullshit. If a person has a “screw loose,” they are a little crazy (A “screw” is a small metal device which hold things together). “To go in for” something is to believe it, even though it seems silly or false.

Humankind is simply materialized color operating on the 49th vibration.

You’d make that conclusion walking down the street or going to the store.

The first sentence is Jerry’s summary of his religious or spiritual beliefs about humans, existence and color. “Humankind” is another word for mankind or humanity, and if something is “materialized,” it exists in the physical world. “The 49th vibration” is meaningless nonsense.

I don't want you to feel you have to push yourself too far.

If a person "pushes themselves" too hard or far, they are using so much of their energy or emotion that it's no longer healthy.

There's a deception here. The audience, they're expecting to see a man who no longer exists.

A "deception" is the act of tricking or cheating somebody into believing something that isn't true.

[[Talking about the loco man]]

In Spanish, "loco" means crazy.

I got an idea, a very literate reference. Are you familiar with a book about a private captain? His name is Moby Dick!

A "*literary reference*" refers to a character or scene in a novel. The "captain" of a ship is its head officer or leader (Moby Dick is one of the most famous novels ever written, about a captain and a killer whale).

"There she blows!" If you could do that, we'd have someone off stage drench the group with water.

The first sentence is a famous line from Moby Dick, which is said whenever the whale blows or sprays water into the air. "To drench" a person is to get them completely wet or soaked.

By the end, you're all soaked, even the ladies.

"Soaked" is another word for totally wet or drenched.

And then you two turn the guitars upside down and water splashes out. Kerplunk.

If water "splashes," it sprays or splatters in an uncontrolled way. "Kerplunk" is the sound a rock makes dropping into water.

[[Though an ocean of tears divide us, let the bridge of our love span the sea.]]

"To span" two sides of the water is to connect them (This is the most famous line from Mickey and Mitch's best loved song).

*As the Town Hall prepares for the big day,
Jonathon Steinbloom starts to get a little nervous.*

This is more of a classical venue, but it'll be a lot of fun.

In this case, "classical" refers to classical music and a venue is another word for place, and more specifically, a place for having concerts.

It's like having a carnival come to town.

A "carnival" is a large festival with entertainment, rides, lots of food and drinks and the general atmosphere of a very big party.

I'm the events liaison.

A person responsible for making sure scheduled events take place in the right order and on time.

A lot of people call me "Your Majesty."

The way a king is addressed.

I've been up to the highest catwalk changing light bulbs.

A narrow walkway.

I like to sing in church and in places like juvenile halls.

A "juvenile hall" is a city jail where teenagers who get into legal trouble are kept (A "juvenile" is a young person, generally under 18 years old).

The acoustics are just perfect.

A scientific word that refers to how sound waves travel in a building.

It has chrome on the front of the hotel. You want to hang a left.

"Chrome" is a shiny type of pretty metal. "Hang a left" is a slangy way of telling a driver to turn left.

We're you planning to study it later, just academically?

"Academic" is the adjective that refers to school, especially university education.

Nobody's busting your chops.

A very slangy way of saying to blame, bother or annoy.

Pull over and let me drive.

"To pull over" a car is to slow down, drive to the side of the road and stop.

I'm not a fan of folk music. I could care less about it, but that doesn't matter in the business of public relations.

Note that the correct expression is "I *couldn't* care less...", which means the person has zero interest (This is a common and extremely illogical error made by native English speakers). "Public relations" refers to the business of advertising, publicity and presenting the best side of an organization to the general public.

A product that you'll love to buy; That's the way we look at the particular concert.

A "product" is a common word for any thing that one buys or uses.

And if we can't do that, we fake it.

"To fake it" is to pretend that you believe what you are saying when in fact you might think the exact opposite.

I'll have an idea, it will be just a teeny, tiny little spark,
and then it will get to Wally and he'll make it a fire.

"Teeny" and "tiny" both mean extremely small or microscopic,
and a "spark" is a tiny bit of flame or fire that flies through the air.

Not just big, but big-time stuff.

A slangy way of saying an event is going to be very important.

As Deputy Mayor, it gives me no greater pleasure than
to declare tomorrow folk music day in the Big Apple.

The "Deputy mayor" is the official immediately below the Mayor, who is the head of city government (A "deputy" is the second in charge, right below the leader of an organization). "The Big Apple" is a common way of referring to New York City.

Where's the real mayor? Someone shot
the mayor, but they did not shoot the deputy.

A silly line, making fun of the lyrics to a famous Bob Marley song that goes "I shot the Sheriff, but I did not shoot the deputy."

Incidentally, the D.A.'s office called. They
can't find any witness, so he's in the clear.

"Incidentally" is one way of saying "By the way." The "D.A." is the District Attorney, who is the government lawyer who prosecutes criminals. If a criminal is "in the clear," then they won't be punished since there's not enough evidence to charge them with the crime.

One of the founding members has passed away, but he's with us tonight anyway!

A "founding member" of an organization is a person who helped to found or create it. "To pass away" is a gentle way of saying to die.

I was at a swinger's party the other night and a fellow says to me "I'd like to meet your wife," and I said "Your honor."

A "swinger" is a colloquial word for a person or couple who have sexual relations with lots of other people ("To swing" is to rock back and forth through the air). The last line is a ridiculous play on words; "Your honor" is the way one addresses a judge in a court of law, but note that "you're on her" (i.e....you're physically on my wife) is pronounced the same way!

To paraphrase an old joke: Knock, knock. Who's there?

"To paraphrase" a joke or story is to tell it in a quick and short version.

"Knock" is the sound that is made when a hand taps on a door to see if anyone is home (And "knock knock" is how many stupid jokes begin).

Seeing those long lines of fans who want nothing more than to have you sign an autograph.

A "fan" is a person who greatly admires the work of an entertainer or athlete, and an "autograph" is the signature of a famous person.

They say “We dig what you do.” And then there’s the kids, and they say “You rock.”

“To dig” something is a very slangy way of saying to like it, and “to rock” is an equally slangy way of saying to be really cool, talented or excellent.

I was flashing back to the rush of adrenaline we used to get arriving at the concert hall.

“To flash back” on something in the past is to have such an intense or strong memory of it that one feels like they’re experiencing it again. A “rush” is a sudden surge or flow, and “adrenaline” is the hormone or chemical in the body that causes a person to get nervous.

We’d wait back stage hearing the crowd chanting “Mickey!”

“Back stage” is behind the stage of a theatre, where the audience cannot see you. “To chant” is to scream the same words over and over again.

The decibel level!

This refers to the intensity or strength of loudness.

That commercial crapola.

A slangy version of crap or shit, which in this case refers to really bad music (Crap can be either nonsense or something of really poor quality). Music that is considered too commercial, or made just to sell as much as possible, is often considered bad by those more interested in true art.

I’m a model train enthusiast.

A “model train” is a tiny version of a real train, often used as a toy for children (There are also model cars, planes, etc...). An “enthusiast” of something is a person who is passionate about it.

I’ve got a whole layout in my basement.

A layout is a map, plan or drawing of a building, town or other project.

I’d like to propose a big toast in honor of dad.

“To propose” something is to officially suggest it, and a “toast” is the act of raising a champagne or wine glass in order to honor or acknowledge a person and their accomplishments.

He had an amazing hum. Wherever he went, he would just suddenly break into a hum.

A “hum” is the sound one makes when singing with your lips completely closed. “To break into” something is to start doing it.

We do this every single day. This is just like clockwork.

To do something “just like clockwork” is to do it on a very regular basis, such as every weekday morning or afternoon.

Two weeks rehearsal. That's the way to play Town Hall.

A “rehearsal” is the act of practicing a play or concert before actually performing live in front of an audience.

If we'd stayed together, we'd be lucky to be in Branson, opening for the Main Street Singers.

Branson, Missouri is a tourist town that is well known for its country singers and other ‘family friendly’ performers.

I'm feeling very relaxed, very confident, very focused.

If a person is “focused,” they are able to concentrate on what they need to without being distracted.

35 years ago, preparing for a concert meant playing “Find the Cobra” with a hotel chambermaid.

A “cobra” is a type of snake and a “chambermaid” is a maid who works in hotel rooms.

I'm sure it will be an adventure, a voyage in this magnificent vessel into uncharted waters.

“Magnificent” means exceptionally excellent or wonderful, and a “vessel” is a type of ship or container. If a ship goes into “uncharted waters,” it is going where no others have been, where the geography is unknown.

What if we see sailfish jumping and flying across the magnificent orb of a setting sun?

An “orb” is another word for a ball or sphere.

I think it's impeccable. It says happiness, it says opening night.

“Impeccable” means perfect, or without any flaws or weaknesses.

The “opening night” of a play is the first night it is performed.

I'm a little afraid of these pokey things that are sticking out. :: Apple blossoms.

If something is “pokey,” it is pointed and sharp so that it could hurt someone who isn't careful. An “apple blossom” is a type of flower.

I'm so afraid that someone could come to sniff, to admire, and just get an eye poked out. I'd love to clip it off.

“To sniff” is to breath in air through your nose, or to smell. To “poke out” a person's eye is a violent phrasal verb which means to remove it, by sticking something sharp into it.

I have a health and safety issue. Those vinyl things, they're a disaster. They're too low, they're too tangly.

The first sentence is a slangy way of saying they are concerned about health and safety. “Vinyl” is a type of hard material (that music records used to be made of), and to get “tangled” in something is to get physically caught in its branches or vines, though “tangly” is not a real word.

They're waiting for an elderly person to wheel by,
or somebody with a walker or a brace on their leg.

If a person is "elderly," they are very old. "To wheel by" is to roll by in a wheel chair. A "walker" is a device that helps weaker people to stand and walk, and a "brace" is a device that allows weaker people to keep their legs straight.

Why don't we just get some carnations and a beer stein and put them up here?

A "carnation" is a common type of flower and a "stein" is a type of glass that is used for drinking beer or wine.

I think Jerry was razzing me the other day at Alan's house about it.

"To razz" a person is to tease or make fun of them, but this word is rare.

With that regimen, my skin will look its best in front of 2,000 people.

A "regimen" is a diet or plan with a set of rules that one has to follow in order to reach a certain goal.

You can't put a price on that.

A poetic way of saying something is so valuable or precious that no amount of money can pay for it.

I did the Good Times reunion....I want to make sure we get plenty of close-ups.

Good Times was an old 1970s TV comedy show, and a "close-up" is a view of a person's face, filmed very close so that the viewer can see it in detail.

One of those great shots where you pull back
to see the enormity of the event and the venue.

In this case, a "shot" is a view or picture taken from a film camera.
"Enormity" is the state of being extremely big, huge or gigantic.

Do we have a crane standing by?

A "crane" is a large machine which raises, lowers and moves giant objects at construction sites. If something's "standing by," it is waiting to be used.

You know those kind of swooping shots where it goes over the audience.

If a camera "swoops" over an audience, it flies low and over it, like a bird looking for food on the ground.

Or when they pull back, kind of like a California adventure ride, where you see the whole scope of the thing.

The "scope" is the entire view or perspective.

Here's your giant banjo....it's painted to look three dimensional.

A banjo is a type of small guitar. If something is "three dimensional," it looks like it exists in real life (with depth), and not just in a picture.

Just go out there and take a peek.

A "peek" is a quick look.

It's not called furniture. It's called a set.

In this context, a "set" is the furniture, props and other things on a stage that give a play the look and feel of a certain place and time.

I really don't have time to explain stagecraft 101.

"Stagecraft" is the art of producing a play and giving the stage a realistic look and feel. In universities, the number "101" added to a class (such as Psychology 101) means that it is an introduction to the subject, where students will learn only the most basic information about that topic.

We had to get rid of the lavender because it might have attacked my eyes.

"To get rid of" something is to eliminate it or perhaps throw it away.

A "lavender" is a type of plant (as well as a purplish color).

You were like 15 years old, with a deck of cards in your hands.

A "deck" of playing cards is a set of 52 cards for playing games like poker.

This flame...represents the light and the darkness.

A "flame" is the glowing part of a fire.

It also represent the uncertainty of life and its delicacy.

"Delicacy" refers to the state of being fragile or weak (though note that *a delicacy* is a delicious and expensive food).

The great reunion concert finally arrives.

Ten seconds to air, then pre-record on my count.

"To air" is to start broadcasting a TV show, and a "pre-record" is a part of the show that was taped earlier that is to be broadcast during the show.

I'd like to warn you that some of the floral arrangements here tonight have dangerously low hanging vines.

"Floral arrangements" are flowers that are professionally put together or arranged to look as pretty as possible. A "vine" is a long green plant that can climb up walls.

They may be poisonous, so whatever you do, don't eat them, and don't become entangled in them or trip.

If a plant is "poisonous," it contains a natural dangerous chemical that can harm or even kill. To get "entangled" in a large plant is to become trapped or held up by its various branches.

On behalf of the entire Steinbloom family, welcome to Ode to Irving.

"On behalf of" is a poetic way of saying "for." An "ode to" a person is a poem or song that is written in their honor.

There were the kind of infectious that was good to spread around.

If a disease is “infectious,” it passes or spreads easily from one person to another. This line sounds, and is, completely ridiculous.

[[Never did no wandering...]]

“To wander” is to travel aimlessly or without a particular destination. Much folk music is about lonely people who wander from place to place.

You swear to God you didn’t talk to Menshel about the set?

The strongest way of saying to promise.

I don’t think finger-pointing is going to help us here.

In this context, “to finger-point” is to blame somebody for something bad that just happened.

I’m going to suggest we be **bold**.

An excellent word meaning brave, courageous or decisive.

They’re currently butchering it.

“To butcher” an animal is to slaughter or kill it, and to butcher a song is to play or sing it so badly that it’s hard to listen to.

They’ve brushed their teeth by that time; It’s not even germane.

An educated word for relevant, or related to the subject being discussed.

They’re gonna be flat out confused.

One way of saying completely or totally.

[[One night mama went to fetch a sweep potato, fell down the cellar stairs....

“To fetch” something is to go and get it, but this verb is used mainly with dogs (“Spot fetched the paper”). A “cellar” is a type of basement.

...stork dropped in while mama was on
the floor so my sister was born down there...]]

A “stork” is a type of large bird that young children are told is responsible for bringing babies into the world. “To drop in” on a friend is stop by their house, usually without calling or announcing first.

It’s a major key, it’s up-tempo. We open with “Old Joe’s Place.”

In music, a “key” is a note. If a song is “up-tempo,” it is fast and happy. “To open” a concert is to start or begin it.

We do the song we’re known for, get it out
of the way, and here’s the icing on the cake.

An interesting expression for the best part of a story or plan.

Long time, no see!

A common way of greeting a person you have not seen in a long time.

[[There's pie in the pantry, and the coffee is always hot.]]

A "pantry" is a small room next to the kitchen that is used for storing food.

[[There's a puppy in the parlor and a skillet in the stove, and a smelly old blanket that a Navajo wove...]]

A "parlor" is a small sitting room. A "skillet" is a frying pan. "Navajo" is one of the better known native American tribes. Note that the past tense of "to weave" (which is to sew yarn or thread together) is wove.

In this aisle here, I want chickens. That's the ticket!

An "aisle" is a narrow passage way or walk way, such as the one between the seats on a plane. "That's the ticket" is a fun way of saying "that's what you need to succeed."

People who can do a pretty believable neigh....

we're going to put a saddle on you folks.

A "neigh" is the sound a horse makes, and a "saddle" is the leather seat one puts on the back of a horse to ride it.

Do they have a cell phone or pager or anything?

A "cell phone" is a small, wireless telephone and a "pager" is a small electronic device that can receive a written message or signal.

Is there a cockfight arena near here?

A "cockfight" is a fight between two chickens that people will bet on. An "arena" is a large public area for entertainment, such as a small stadium.

[[Chickens cluck and go fiddle-dee, bull frogs
croak and pigs oink oink...it's a barnyard symphony...]]]

The first three words are the sounds that the corresponding animal makes, at least in English! A "barnyard" is building on a farm where lots of different animals live, and a "symphony" is an orchestra with all the major instruments, such as violins and cellos.

We don't often do encores, and this is why.

An "encore" is the playing of a song at a concert by a musician after they have already left the stage, in response to audience desire for more.

In the late 1930s of the last century, Spain was wracked by civil war.

If a country is "wracked" by a war, it is totally destroyed by it.

Mitch could be lying face down in a ditch!

A long narrow hole or cavity, often dug in the ground for drainage.

Where the hell were you?!

A common filler in WH questions that expresses emotion such as anger or frustration.

They're called the Folksmen, but after tonight's performance, I think they should be called The Spokesmen.

A "spokesman" is a person who speaks as the representative of another person or organization in a professional capacity.

I have the very first poem you ever wrote me: Parched in exile, thirsty for your smile, though silence behind this barbed wire mask...

"Parched" means very dry and thirsty. If a person is "in exile," they are far from home after having escaped possible danger there. "Barbed wire" is twisted wire or metal with sharp points, often used on a fence to prevent people from climbing over it. A "mask" is a cover or partial cover on a face that is often used as a disguise, or for a costume at a party.

....Your spirit burns through that I might bask in your cool misty loveliness.

"To bask" in the sun is to enjoy it by lying down and relaxing in it. If the air is "misty," there are tiny drops of water in it.

I wonder how they're gonna handle that. :: Five dollars says they do it.

Note that "going to"----> "gonna" in rapid speech. In this case, "to handle" a problem is to take care of it or solve it. The second sentence is Jerry's way of saying he would bet \$5 dollars that Mitch and Mickey will kiss on stage at their concert.

[[And a kiss is the oath that they swear]]

An "oath" is a legal promise, and in this context, "to swear" is also to make a promise.

[[Every carpenter and cowboy, every lame man on a crutch...

If a person is "lame," they are unable to walk without great effort.

A "crutch" is a brace or stick that helps a person with a broken leg walk.

...A mighty wind's a blowin, it's kicking up the sand....

"Mighty" means strong or powerful. Note that these words are typical of folk music, which often deals with great issues of social justice.

....It's blowing peace and freedom, it's blowing equality....

A mighty wind is blowing, it's blowing you and me.....]]

A very funny (but subtle) play on words! The wind can certainly blow objects around, and perhaps even peace and freedom, but note that "to blow" a man is a slangy way of saying to give him oral sex! (A "blow job" is a common terms for the act of oral sex on a man).

The concert now behind them, our musical heroes return to their everyday lives...

The morning after, the TV network executives were crawling out of the woodwork, trying to get the New Main Street Singers into a TV series.

An “executive” is a very high level businessman in a company. If a person “crawls out of the woodwork,” they decide to act in a very public and obvious manner after having kept very quiet or hidden for a long time.

The execs said “We’re not sitting in judgement of your ideas. We love the kids.”

An “exec” is a short and slangy way of referring to an executive. “To sit in judgement” of a person is to act as if you are a judge who has the right to decide whether what a person has done is wrong or immoral.

I always thought there were 12 Supreme Court Judges, but now it seems there’s only nine. I don’t know if it’s a budget thing or not.

This is a lazy and colloquial way of saying a problem related to the budget or lack of money (Of course people overuse the word “thing” all the time). This entire sentence shows the speaker (Fred) is a truly ignorant fool; There have always been only nine people on the US Supreme Court, and for the record, at this highest level, they are called *Justices*, not judges.

Maybe during the day they hear death penalty cases and at night they argue over who cooks dinner.

This refers to criminal trials in which the defendant can be executed or killed by the state if they are convicted of the crime.

That’s sexual harassment!....I’m not doing much writing, but the ideas keep popping.

“Sexual harassment” is a legal term that often refers to the act of male employers who annoy or intimidate female employees with inappropriate sexual remarks, or even threaten to fire them if they do not agree to sexual favors. In this case, “to pop” is to suddenly appear.

[[Don’t leave them cold and damp....use our buttocks, drapes and penis clamp.]]

“Damp” means slightly wet. “Buttocks” is a way of saying ass or butt, and “drapes” are curtains. A “clamp” is a device that holds parts together.

My sister said “You led him on. You shouldn’t have kissed him if you didn’t want to go all the way.”

In this context, if a girl “leads a man on,” she flirts, or acts in such a way that he is led to believe that she is romantically or sexually interested in him. “To go all the way” is a fun colloquial expression which means to have sexual intercourse (as opposed to just kissing or petting).

You get caught up in the heat of the moment.

When this happens to a person, they become very emotional or excited by the sudden or dramatic events around them.

I didn’t lead him on, but he took it that way.

In this case, “to take” a person’s words a certain way is to interpret them or understand them in that way.

I've never been in better head space. I'm writing poetry again. I'm going through a very prolific phase.

"Head space" is a very 1960s and hippie-like way of referring to psychological or emotional health. If a person is being "prolific," they are writing or producing a lot, and a "phase" is a period of time.

My one fear in getting together with Mickey was that it might rekindle feelings she used to have for me.

"To rekindle" is to renew or bring back to life.

I feel badly that she was misled by the theatrics of the moment.

"To mislead" a person is to deceive, trick or even lie to them.

"Theatrics" refers to great drama, often that is created for a show.

I will always think of her fondly every time I see a rose.

"Fondly" is a nice little word that means with warmth or great affection.

We've got some gigs here working at the casino.

A "gig" is a very slangy word for a show or concert, and a "casino" is a room that is used for playing cards and other types of gambling.

I came to a realization that I was and am a blond female folk singer.

A "realization" is a sudden understanding about what is true or real.

When you put it that way, it's almost poetry.

In this context, "to put it" a certain way is to say it or express in that way.

A Mighty Wind

Possible Topics for ESL Class Discussion

1. Does the country where you come from have its own type of folk music?

2. Do you like folk music? Any particular singers or songs?

3. Do you think it's natural for people to grow less idealistic and more cynical as they grow older?

4. Of the three groups---The Folksmen, The New Main Street Singers and Mitch and Mickey, which was your favorite? Why?

5. Who was the most ridiculous character in the movie? The saddest? The most neurotic? The most disturbed? The most normal?

6. What did you like and not like about this movie?