



By Margaret Evans, Editor

An actual (slightly edited) conversation in a typical Beaufort living room, the night before Thanksgiving...

Mother (at her computer): So, what do y'all have on your minds this holiday season? I'm looking for a column topic . . .

Daughter (on the sofa, not looking up from her iPhone): Clothes. I have clothes on my mind.

Mother: I need something a little more compelling than clothes.

Daughter: Hey, I know! We should go Black Friday shopping and you could write about it!

Mother: You know I categorically refuse to go Black Friday shopping . . .

Daughter: But, Mom... I've never been! I think it would be fun. We could buy some more candles like that one we got the other day... the smelly one. You love candles!

Father (looking up from a classic 'Star Trek' episode): Did somebody say hand tools?

Mother: No, she said candles. Our daughter is trying to lure me into Black Friday with candles. Some kind of "light in the darkness" metaphor, or something . . .

Daughter: But Dad, we could get hand tools, too! They have a ton of hand tools at WalMart . . .

Father: I could use some new hand tools . . .

Mother: Down, boy. If you really need a new wrench, I'll find you a nice one online. You don't have to sell your soul.

Daughter: Did you hear we're getting a Starbucks in Beaufort?!

Mom: Who told you that? They've been saying that for years and it never happens.

Daughter: Seriously, it's true! Everybody's talking about it. My world is turning upside down!

Mother: Why? You don't even drink coffee . . .

Daughter: I like the *frozen* coffee. And the snacks. Besides, it's Starbucks!

Mother: Okay, whatever.

Father: Whatevs.

Daughter: Ugh. Dad, stop saying that! I will *pay* you to stop saying that!

Mother: Let's change the subject. Can y'all believe 'Rudolph' was on last night? Two nights before Thanksgiving!? I love me some Christmas specials, but that's ridiculous. Hey, maybe I could write about Christmas specials. Help me out here. What are your favorites?

Father (annoyed): My favorite is "Ren and Stimpy's Gross Christmas."

Mother: Ha ha. Seriously, how 'bout you, sweetie?

Daughter: Mommmm.... I don't want to do this!

Mother: Do what?

Daughter: Have a fake conversation so you can write a column.

Mother: Oh. That.

Same living room, Thanksgiving morning, watching the Macy's Parade . . .

Mother: Hey, are we gonna watch the Carrie Underwood 'Sound of Music' remake Thursday night? I was totally opposed when I heard about it – You don't just "remake" 'The Sound of Music'! – but the previews are looking pretty good. Besides, they're not doing the movie... they're doing the play. And they're doing the whole thing *live*. That's pretty cool, I think. And really gutsy.

Daughter: Mom, Carrie Underwood's the chubby one, right?

Father: No, Kelly Pickler's the chubby one. Carrie Underwood's the country one.

Mother: No, no. You're both wrong. Kelly Pickler is NOT the chubby one. That's Kelly Clarkson. Carrie Underwood *is* the country one. Kelly Pickler is also country. And not remotely chubby. And, really, Kelly Clarkson's not that chubby, either. And her voice is kind of country. So it's all very confusing. . . . Look, here comes a scene from the play. "Sixteen Going on Seventeen." Shhh... let's watch . . .

Daughter: What's up with this guy's hair? Rolf is supposed to have blond hair. This guy looks nothing like Rolf . . .

Mother: It doesn't matter. Shhh.... Hey, wait, they left out the beginning! (sings) "*You wait little girl, on an empty stage, for fate to turn the light on...*"
What's up with THAT?

Daughter: Shhhhh....

Mother: Don't shush me! By the way, you need to go finish icing your Puritan cupcakes.

Father: Are those cupcakes Puritans or Pilgrims? I thought they were supposed to be Pilgrims . . .

Mother: I'm not sure there's a difference. I need to Google that . . .

Father: Whatevs.

Daughter: Dad!!! Stop saying that! Seriously, I'm *begging* you . . .

Mother: Stop reacting and he'll stop saying it. Hey, is that Justin Bieber up there singing on that float?

Daughter: Mom, are you kidding me?!?! Does that LOOK like Justin Bieber?

Mother: Um, yes it does, actually. He's got the hair thing going.

Daughter: Mom, that's Austin Mahone. He's only 17. Justin Bieber's hair hasn't looked like that in at least two years.

Mother: Oh, right. Now he has that glamorous pompadour, all the better to highlight his fancy earrings. You know, your Uncle Ben says Justin Bieber is really a 33-year-old woman.

Daughter: Mom!!!

Mother: Speaking of your uncle . . . apparently he has just recorded "The Confrontation" from 'Les Mis,' with himself singing both parts – Valjean and Javert. How many uncles can do that?? Your aunt Cally is bringing a recording to Thanksgiving dinner. I can't wait to hear it!

Daughter: Great. That's just great. Like I care about 'Les Mis.'

Mother: You don't even know 'Les Mis.' You won't give it a chance. You're too busy worshipping at the shrine of Justin Bieber.

Daughter: That's because I have good taste.

Mother: Speaking of good taste . . . go ice your Puritans!

Same living room, Thanksgiving night . . .

Daughter (wandering in from her bedroom): I feel like I'm in a dream.

Mother (at computer): Why?

Daughter: The TV is off and there's Christmas music playing. And Dad is wearing a mustache.

Mother: Yeah, it's from that fake mustache set we got at Lulu Burgess for his birthday. Pretty funny, huh? And, yes, your father has lifted the moratorium on Christmas music a day early. Isn't it nice?!

Father: I figured, what the heck. I even thought I might go out to the shed and get the Christmas decorations! You guys can start decorating the house. This is my Thursday mustache, by the way . .

Mother: What?! You hate it when we decorate the house this early. It's not even December yet. Besides, it's almost 9:30. I'm stuffed and tired and ready for bed. I don't feel like decorating . . .

Father: Oh, come on! It'll be fun...

Daughter: Who is this mustached man and what has he done with my father?

Mother: I am absolutely NOT decorating tonight. Do NOT go get those decorations. I'm serious . . .

Daughter: Our family has flipped! Completely flipped! My grumpy, grouchy dad wants to decorate the house and my cheery, Christmas-loving mom is being a Grinch. What's going on here?

Mother: I'm not being a Grinch. I'm just too tired to decorate. As for your dad . . . it must be the mustache. The mustache has gone to his head. He's feeling giddy. Or maybe it's that "Apple Pie in a Jar" we were drinking around the fire earlier. Maybe THAT's gone to his head.

Daughter: Whatever it is, I like it! It feels cozy and Christmas-y in here, even without decorations. Let's light that smelly candle, Mom. And Dad, whatever you do, don't take off that mustache.

Father: Whatevs.

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