

THANKSGIVING WITH THE CAST OF "EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND" LET'S SHMUES--CHAT

The Yiddish word for "turkey" is "indik."
"Dankbar" is the Yiddish word for "thankful."

By



MARJORIE GOTTLIEB WOLFE

46 "milyon" turkeys are eaten each Thanksgiving. Turkey consumption has increased 104% since 1970. And 88% of Americans surveyed by the National Turkey Federation eat turkey on this holiday.

Marie Barone (Doris Roberts) is devoted to making sure her boys are well-fed. She gets her adult children back with food. It's like a culinary hostage trade-off. Marie wants Debra, her daughter-in-law, to be a better cook. She calls her "cooking-challenged" and thinks that she should live directly opposite Zabar's. Marie want the children to have better food. She says, "A mother's love for her sons is a lot like a dog's piercing bark: protective, loyal, and impossible to ignore.

Many episodes of "Everybody Loves Raymond" dealt with Thanksgiving. Grab a #2 pencil and see if you can identify which of the following story lines is real or fabricated. Good luck.

EPIISODE 1.

Thanksgiving has arrived. Marie is on a "diete." She has just returned from a residential treatment facility for weight ("vog") loss at Duke University in North Carolina. It was an expensive ("tayer") program. The lockdown began: Low-Fat, No-Sugar ("tsuker"), No Taste foods, and 750 calories a day. (That's the equivalent of a slice of chocolate cake.) One woman in the program sent herself "Candygrams" each week ("vokh").

Doris eats very little ("a bisl") at the Thanksgiving table, but as she is preparing to leave Debra's house, she asks for a little leftover turkey and apple ("ep") chutney.

_____ real episode

_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 2.

Debra wants to cook fish for Thanksgiving instead of turkey and, thinking Marie is hoping she'll fail, goes into high gear to prepare dinner. The memorable moment: Ray puts Debra's fish in the dishwasher.

_____ real episode

_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 3.

Debra's parents are visiting for Thanksgiving. Ray overhears Warren and Lois and discovers that they are going to marriage counseling. When Ray tells Debra, they debate whose parents are worse. Debra says to Ray: "You listen--if my parents burned down an orphanage on Christmas Eve, they wouldn't be as bad as your parents!" She then drops the Thanksgiving turkey on the floor, slips around, and slams it into the oven.

_____ real episode

_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 4.

A big day at the Barone household. Marie takes the plastic slipcovers off the sofa right before Thanksgiving dinner. (Plastic covers are a common thing in Italian households.) The 3 grandchildren are eating dinner. Twins, GRABBY MICHAEL, and SPILLER GEOFFREY are walking around when they accidentally spill the gravy on the couch. Although gravy complements meats and potatoes, it doesn't belong on the fabric of a couch.

Marie knows that failure to promptly remove the gravy stain causes it to set into the couch fabric and become insoluble. She checks the label on the sofa. It says "W"--which means you can clean it with water-based detergent. She runs for the clean white cloth and baking soda. Ray suggests that Marie put on her new glasses and look at the label again. It says "X"--which means the item must be professionally cleaned.

The family is told that the slipcovers will go back on right after the couch is cleaned.

_____ real episode

_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 5.

Debra's divorced parents are coming for Thanksgiving and Warren is bringing a date. Everyone assumes she'll be some young floozy, but

they are shocked when it turns out to be Emma, an elderly (“alt”) woman.

----- real episode

_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 6.

Debra has the flu. She has “di fiber”--a fever. Ray has taken over the preparation for the Thanksgiving dinner. He got on the “kompyuter” and saw ads for a conventional turkey, an organic free-range turkey, and a kosher turkey. The organic turkey was raised in the countryside of Lancaster, PA.

He reads a report showing that Empire Kosher said it takes over 3 hours to process a kosher bird, compared to only one hour at a non-kosher plant.

So, Ray orders a fresh kosher turkey, approximately 20-22 lbs.

Price: \$120.78 (list price: \$155.78). In addition, he orders homemade sweet potato kugel (\$34.99), sweet potato pudding pie (\$29.99), chocolate Babka (\$7.89), Cinnamon Cake loaf (\$6.59), and a Dried Fruit Gift Tray (\$59.99). Marie is bringing the stuffing.

Debra throws a fit at “der prayz” (the cost). Ray justifies it because he likes the idea that every kosher turkey is killed by “di hant” (by hand) by a rabbi in a method meant to reduce animal’s suffering.

Debra warns Ray NOT to tell his mother that the turkey is kosher.

----- real episode

_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 7

Marie is preparing Thanksgiving. The atmosphere is fun and humor. She makes a sumptuous dinner and everybody had eaten so much that they almost resembled the Butterball turkey. The men came up with a unique game: popping the buttons. It was hilarious (“komish”) to watch shirt (“hemd”) buttons fly out, as the men contorted their bodies so that the bellies bulged out of their “hoyzn” (trousers).

_____ real episode

----- fabricated episode

EPISODE 8.

Debra and Marie set the table for Thanksgiving. Marie quotes Erma Bombeck: [No One Diets on Thanksgiving]: “What we’re really talking about is a wonderful day set aside on the fourth Thursday of November when no one diets. I mean, why else would they call it Thanksgiving?”

As the food is served, Marie shares the following poem:

May your stuffing be tasty
May your turkey plump;
May your potatoes and gravy
Have nary a lump.
May your yams be delicious
And your pies take the prize,
And may your Thanksgiving dinner
Stay off your thighs!

_____ real episode
_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 9

Frank and Marie have high cholesterol, so Marie makes a tofu turkey. Debra is the only one who supports Marie. Ray goes so far as to order a complete holiday dinner behind Marie's back. (Marie is caught eating Ray's dinner in the middle of the night.)

Robert says: "How 'bout that, huh? Look how it jiggles."

Ray says: "That's the sign of a good bean curd bird."

Frank: "May I have my carving knife, please?"

Marie: "Thank you, Frank."

Frank: "I wanna split my throat."

----- real episode
_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 10.

Debra decides to try a new approach in dealing with Marie's negativity.

"Gobble, gobble, gobble" anyone?

----- real episode
_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 11.

Frank and Marie are invited to a dear friend's house for Thanksgiving. They're seated at the table which is decorated with fine linens, fancy china, and Waterford goblets. Frank says, "Holy c--p, no plastic Peter Rabbit plates and Santa napkins from Christmas 1997."

_____ real episode
_____ fabricated episode

EPISODE 12.

It's 4:30, Nov. 27. The turkey is out of Debra's "oyvn" (oven). Marie and Frank are due in 15 minutes. Debra calls the Butterball Turkey Hotline--which has been operating since 1981. She complains that her bird didn't have any "brust" (breast) meat. It became apparent during the ensuing conversation that her turkey was upside down.

_____ real episode
_____ fabricated

EPISODE 13.

Frank Barone (Peter Boyle) --the curmudgeon--can say anything that pops into his head, regardless of the effect on others. When Marie informs him that Debra is making Thanksgiving this year, he compiles a list of a dozen ("tsvelf") reasons to be thankful EVEN IF DEBRA SHOULD BURN ("FARBRENEN") THE TURKEY:

1. Salmonella won't be a concern.
2. No one will overeat.
3. Everyone will think it's Cajun Blackened.
4. Uninvited guests will think twice next year.
5. Your cheese broccoli lima bean casserole will gain newly found appreciation.
6. Pets won't pester you for scraps.
7. The smoke alarm was due for a test.
8. Carving the bird will provide a good cardiovascular workout.
9. After dinner, the guys can take the bird to the yard and play football.
10. The less turkey Uncle George eats, the less likely he will be to walk around with his pants unbuttoned.
11. You'll get to the desserts quicker.
12. You won't have to face three weeks of turkey sandwiches.

----- real episode
_____ fabricated episode

Episode 14

Doris is invited to Thanksgiving at Debra and Ray's house. To surprise her mother-in-law, Debra travels quite a distance to the nearest D'Agostino Supermarket to order a box of Abate fetel pears--pronounced "BAH-tay fun-TEL." It's a favorite native variety of Italy. This pear was bred by a group of monks in the 15th century.

After dinner, Debra places the barely soft, sweet, tall, slim pears on the table and can hardly wait to see the reaction ("der opruf") from Doris.

Doris looks at the pears. She's "oyfgekocht" (furious). "Abate fetel pears? Don't you know anything? I've got "tsukerkrenk"--diabetes. I take insulin four times a day. The high sugar content will kill me!"

Debra leaves the room and begins to weep ("veynen"). She tells Raymond, "I don't know anyone who would purchase a home on the same block as their parents ("tate-mame"). They kiss.

ANSWERS:

1. fabricated
2. real
3. real
4. fabricated

Note: In another episode, Marie does remove the plastic covers from the couch.

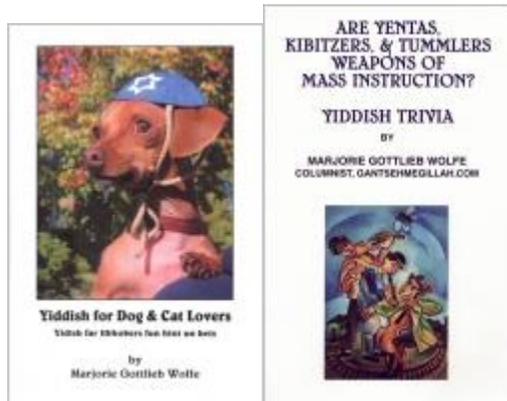
5. real
6. fabricated
7. fabricated
8. fabricated
9. real
10. real
11. fabricated
12. fabricated
13. fabricated

Source: Craig Boldman and Paul Matthews, "Every Excuse in the Ways to Say 'It's Not My Fault.'" Book: 714

14. fabricated

MARJORIE WOLFE wishes all of her family and friends a Happy Thanksgiving.

Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe is the author of two books:



"Yiddish for Dog & Cat Lovers" and
"Are Yentas, Kibitzers, & Tumblers Weapons of Mass Instruction? Yiddish
Trivia." To order a copy, go to her
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