

APARTMENT 111: A PLAY ABOUT OUR CULTURE'S  
OLDEST IMAGINAL GUARDIANS

by

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This thesis analyzes cultural icons categorized as Imaginal Guardians in Western civilization. The term "Imaginal Guardians" refers to figures that exist not in the physical world but in a collective social consciousness, whose role as symbols is to comfort humans from facing the tough abstract fears in life. The Imaginal Guardians examined in this thesis include Jesus Christ, the Devil, Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, the Sandman, Cupid, the Boogie Monster, the Grim Reaper, the Stork, the Easter Bunny, and Bigfoot.

As each of these beings possesses roots in the storied aspects of life, the majority of this thesis consists of a script that was written and performed at the University of Oregon in the Pocket Playhouse in the Spring of 2015. The following thesis document studies the relationships the Imaginal Guardians share with humanity, and their reasons for existence, which were synthesized into the ideas put onto the stage during the production of the play *Apartment 111*.

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## Chapter 1: Gods and Myths

A jolly old man with a long white beard, gold glasses, and a red robe with white trim tiptoes towards a snow-covered chimney. A massive rabbit wearing a vest and holding a basket full of eggs skitters about the garden. A red-skinned man with horns, a pointed tail, and a pitchfork lurks in shadows. These are just vague descriptions of characters, and yet almost anyone in the United States in this day and age immediately knows their names. Over centuries, these characters have surfaced and anchored themselves in our society as cultural touchstones. They can appear nightly or yearly in our imaginations, lurking just out of sight to true believers, and in fond memory to those who no longer believe. In truth, there are not many people in the United States who did not at one point believe in Santa Claus, and even those who have grown beyond writing yearly letters to the North Pole still often feel a surge of joy at the remembrance of listening for sleigh bells on the roof.

This thesis, in a way, seeks to find an answer to a question related to the near-universal existence of these characters in Western culture. That question is “Why?” Why does the Tooth Fairy keep receiving letters? Why are so many tombstones and metal album covers engraved with the image of a scythe-bearing skeleton in a black cloak? Why is the Devil a recurring character on countless television shows and movies? Why do we turn to these fantastical beings and creatures again and again? The answer, I believe, is poetically enough a mirror of the question. Each of these characters developed over the years to exist as an answer to the question “Why?” Why do we die? Why does evil exist? Why do we have to grow up? These characters have manifested over the centuries to explain and comfort us about the tough, abstract ideas in life. So

stories of the Grim Reaper, the Devil, the Tooth Fairy, and so forth, emerged in our society to create a physical target for our brains to understand. These figures guard us from the frightening aspects of life. Death as an existential concept can be numbingly terrifying. But the Grim Reaper is in a way reassuring, for it allows us to assign boundary conditions to this existential meaninglessness and pretend that we know there will be something more on the other side.

Subconsciously, our imaginations generate stories that are used to organize our life experiences. As Theodore R. Sarbin, emeritus professor of psychology at University of California, Santa Cruz puts it, these are “as if” narratives. Whether or not we “believe” in these characters does not mean we accept or deny their physical existence, but that we are just choosing a value to assign them as narratives in relation to other concepts in our mind (Sarbin 4-5). The conceptual framework that humans regard as their knowledge of the world they inhabit is by and large assimilated through stories they have not directly witnessed. This ranges from true events they did not witness (history broadcasts, news reports, etc.), to “false” stories they assign importance to but obviously did not participate in (movies, urban legends, etc.) (Hoorn 250). When analyzing stories simply in the framework of their impact on an individual, it is impossible to distinguish between things imagined to occur and things actually witnessed (Sarbin 5). It does not matter whether or not a scientific research expedition sent to the North Pole would actually find Santa Claus’ magical workshop. What matters is the impact he has left on our society and our ideas about the world. And hence, I will be here on out referring to them as “imaginal,” a word used by author Cindy Dell Clark to distinguish from something being “imaginary.” An imaginal

experience is one that is not physically present, but is actually experienced nonetheless in a way impossible to label as subjective or objective (Clark 3). These Imaginal Guardians exist on the storied boundary between truth and falsehood.

What better way to analyze and interact with the stories told to and by children and adults alike across our nation than with a new story? The stage and the screen are some of the few places where these characters have been permanently recorded to allow us to interpret them as physical characters with personalities. For example, *The Seventh Seal* classically introduced us to Death's penchant for playing chess with the souls he reaps as a wager for their life, while *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey* expanded that to include any board game, such as Battleship or Twister. Popular culture both responds to and helps shape our perceptions of these characters—Santa Claus' current visual appearance was shaped heavily by Coca-Cola ads of the 1930's (Stronach 15).

So, this thesis does not exist solely as an academic document—the latter half of these pages contains the script for a play. It is a play that I wrote and directed in the space of the University of Oregon's Pocket Playhouse. So the academic component in these first pages and the details of the theatrical production in the later pages go hand-in-hand, as the first half contains the research I've accumulated on these imaginal guardians, while the second half contains my response to these findings and to these characters' influences on my own life. These characters exist in a state of paradoxical logic—if their existence in the cultural mindscape causes seasonal joy, comfort in the face of terror, and reason for morality, surely they are good. But simultaneously, these characters are in a way shielding us from the harsh fears of the world—they allow us to “escape the presence of great uncertainty,” as Michael Meade puts it in his book *The*

*World Behind the World*. It is his argument that shunning fixed ideologies and embracing fear of the unknown means focusing on the struggle of maintaining the meaning of individual lives and the world as it truly is (Meade 5-6). So are these characters coddling us from the harsh but necessary truths of the world, and thus a detriment to society? It is my belief that neither perspective on the matter is the absolute truth. These figures exist with a precariousness of worldview. We cannot say absolutely whether they exist or not in a scientific sense, so whether or not they exist depends on the individual's outlook (Russell 274). However, they are deeply present aspects of our culture, so there must be a reason for their existence in our shared mindscape.

I will discuss the play in greater detail later, but boiled down to its core, the premise of *Apartment 111* was the imaginal guardians of our extremely human lives living extremely human lives themselves. By stripping these characters of their absolute "divinity" (that is, pure mystic symbolism and magic), I hoped to explore the complex relationship we humans share with these characters. When the idea for this play was still just a seed in my head, I was struck by the notion of the phrase, "What Would Jesus Do?" Most people who quote this sentence imagine Jesus Christ as a perfect being with infallible advice, but I wondered what Jesus would do if he were truly in our shoes—meaning he was just as confused and stressed about life, and the meaning of the universe, and having to deal with roommates, and paying bills, as we are.

In creating this story, I decided to narrow my list of characters down to those that I thought were the most iconic, and most representative imaginal guardians of our society. These characters are the protagonists: Jesus Christ, the Devil, Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, the Sandman, the Stork, the Grim Reaper, and Bigfoot; and a few

supporting characters in the Boogie Monster, Cupid, and the Easter Bunny. Some of those may seem out of place, but in the following pages I hope to make it clear why Bigfoot and Jesus Christ deserve to share an apartment.

When beginning the process of writing this thesis, I was warned in an email from a professor in the Folklore department at the University of Oregon about referring to all of these figures as “myths.” Only Jesus, Satan, and God should be classified “myths”—as mythicity requires religious belief. My response to this statement is that at their foundations, the beliefs in all of these characters share the same psychological roots. What is writing a letter to the Tooth Fairy but sending a prayer for good tidings? What is avoiding being on Santa’s naughty list but fearing the judgment of a morally-minded God? What is telling campfire stories about Bigfoot but spinning fables of a trickster spirit living in the woods—a practice that has existed in religions since the dawn of time? And so I have no hesitations about collecting these characters into one category. While, at the end of the day, the definition of the word “mythology” may be up for debate, I have written this play and this thesis on the conjecture that Jesus Christ, the Tooth Fairy, and Bigfoot all share their ancestry in the same deep-rooted part of the human psyche.

Of course, any individual may react to a character differently. Each Imaginal Guardian on this list has their own version of a fanatic: Satanist cults, born-again Christians, Bigfoot conspiracy nuts, and so forth. So in referring to how “we” as a culture react to these figures, I am referring to how the majority of the population views them, as I have learned from my research and my own interactions with them.

## **Growing Up**

Imaginal guardians take shape early in our lifetimes, and in fact the ones most often grouped together are those that are most associated with childhood. Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, and the Easter Bunny are three that children everywhere lie awake at night waiting for, while the Sandman and the Stork are both used to explain the more nuanced aspects of lives to children in a simple way. Childhood is itself a time of purity and innocence, and most fears of the world arrive during a loss of innocence and a departure from childhood. In fact, the desire to return to childlike trust and whimsy is an extremely common wish for any cynical, skeptical adult when reaching out spiritually in hard times (Clark 3). The body changing and growing without the individual's understanding or consent is confusing and terrifying to people in all stages of life, from childhood through puberty through old age. And the first major instance of this change in the human lifetime is the loss of one's baby teeth. The loss of one's teeth as a mark of the loss of one's childhood is so prevalent that Peter Pan, the ultimate symbol of eternal youth, is explicitly stated in J. M. Barrie's famous book as still having all his first teeth (Clark 5).

Losing a body part, especially one so important for survival as one's teeth, can be traumatizing. It is so universally traumatizing, that teeth-shedding rituals exist all over the world to help children cope, from New Guinea's burial of the lost tooth with an ancestor, to the Cherokee's leaving the tooth for a beaver to find (Clark 10). The Western world's version of this practice was to create a spritely, often female pixie who was responsible for rewarding children for their bravery in times of tooth-loss. To be able to come to terms with the idea of losing a part of their body, it is therapeutic for the

tooth to be entrusted to a higher power, as a kind of final resting place. It is a child-friendly, scaled down version of a funeral service for a loved one (Clark 11).

Even into adulthood, nightmares of tooth loss are extremely common. Dream interpretation is by no means a precise field, but a common interpretation of teeth-loss in dreams is a representation of fear of growing up or a desire to return to infantile dependency (Clark 9). Not only does this reflect a clear indication of the need for the comfort of the Tooth Fairy, but it also sheds light onto the existence of another Imaginal Guardian: the Sandman. Sleep, and consequently dreams, are both aspects of life that are universal—yet are very much still little understood. Dream interpretation is very Freudian in nature, indicating a deep connection to the subconscious (Frost 12). If it were not an activity that we perform nearly every night of our lives, sleeping and dreaming might be terrifying. To sleep is to allow the heavy sensations of fatigue to overtake us and inhibit all other mental processes, including skin sensations and auditory sensations (Frost 12). In the era of human history where we were still susceptible to predators, sleeping meant creating a complete vulnerability to danger; and furthermore, dreaming's role as an exploration of the subconscious mind is worrisome enough as it is. Dreams are just as often nightmares as pleasant dreams: a surgeon in a war-time hospital in France stated that the trauma of battle reflected itself in the dreams of soldiers so strongly that wounded men would nightly leap out of beds in a fervor to find their weapons (Frost 13). In fact, a survey of the dreams of several subjects showed that unpleasant dreams were twice as common as pleasant ones (Frost 14). Thus, it is easy to see why an Imaginal Guardian came into being. Putting the role of dream-creation into the hands of the Sandman left him—while occasionally playing an

antagonistic role in stories as a creator of nightmares—ultimately a scapegoat for the worrying reflections that the subconscious may show us.

## **Good and Evil**

Once we have grappled with the idea of growing up, the next existential quandary to face us in life is often that of the nature of right and wrong. Whether the question is why it is that evil and misfortune exist, or why one should do good for others rather than simply look out for their own benefit, the two dichotomous elements of morality have confounded minds since the dawn of time. Even the line of the distinction between good and evil can blur in complex situations. So it is no surprise that voices have sprang up over the years as personifications of these ideas.

Jeffrey Burton Russell, author of *The Prince of Darkness*, posits that there are three kinds of evil. Moral evil, that is, when an intelligent being intentionally inflicts suffering on another being without just cause; natural evil, that is, suffering as a result of natural processes like disease and disaster; and metaphysical evil, that is, if God is perfect, why does evil exist? (Russell 1). The idea of a separate personality responsible for the spread of evil came about from the dilemma of a monotheistic religion: either God is perfect, and thus evil is a part of the Universal Plan, or God is not omnipotent and has no control over chaos, free will, and evil (Russell 6). And hence, since the idea of a just and loving God was more reassuring than that of a God with a capacity for evil, the notion of the Devil came about—first introduced by Zarathustra by denying the unity and omnipotence of God to preserve his perfect goodness (Russell 19).

And so, it would seem, that the idea of the Devil's existence actually comes as a reassurance. The idea of a dark force willingly choosing to push evil into the world is

more comfortable than the idea of misery and hatred coming about as a result of pure chaotic chance, because putting a face on a concept allows one the notion that they may have a chance to fight against it. Indeed, the root for the word “Devil” is not related to “evil,” but rather to the Greek “diabolos,” which means “adversary in court,” while the Hebrew “Satan” means “obstacle or opponent” (Russell 5). In his book, Russell argues that calling the Devil a force of good is an oxymoron, since the Devil is at heart evil (Russell 5). I, however, suggest that if we analyze the Prince of Darkness as a cultural concept rather than as a physical entity, some benefits to his existence seem to materialize. In a purely rational and scientific view of the world, evil—meaning the random negative consequences of systems such as weather and sociology—will always exist. In such a worldview it can be tempting, or at least easy, to fall into the apathy of the lack of meaning in the world, and allow oneself to slip into behavior that can harm others.

So if Satan represents the eternal opponent, then who is on our side? For many in the Western world, the sign of goodness in the world is Jesus Christ. Now, Jesus is likely the most polarizing and most volatile of the figures I am analyzing to bring up in this day and age, as both believers and non-believers alike will argue vehemently about the legitimacy of his existence. This thesis does not mean to choose a stance on Jesus’ divinity either way; but rather to react to his existence as an imaginal guardian of morality and spirituality. In academic analysis of the gospels of the scope that this thesis is taking, it is prudent to give less scrutiny to minute geographic particulars and details of archaeology than to aspects with biographical and cultural significance (Rhees vii). While many “icons of good” exist in many cultures and religions around the world,

Jesus is often the go-to figure in Western civilization. Whether one is a true believer of His divinity, or just one aware of his cultural significance, Jesus' name is often synonymous with pure righteous morality.

Thus, instead of discussing the legitimacy of Jesus as a religious figure, I intend to simply discuss his role in our culture as an Imaginal Guardian for the difficulty of kindness. Whether or not you are a true Christian, you cannot deny the place Jesus holds in our social consciousness. William Tell is known to have never existed, yet has become a hero and personification of the love of liberty in the minds of humanity, especially in Switzerland where festivals are held in his honor (Brandes 17). Not only is Jesus an icon of good, but he represents a reason for humans to behave kindly to each other as well. Taking the higher road is often more trying than otherwise, so it's not uncommon for individuals to struggle with a reason for doing so. Jesus' role, then, is to give reward to those who brave the extra work required to do good, being rewarded with eternal life (*Reformation Study Bible* Matthew 25:46).

And so, Jesus and Satan are perpetually perceived as squaring off against each other for eternity. As one biblical scholar puts it, "life is not a game, but a grim, heroic combat between good and evil" (Wilson ix). But the nature of their relationship is more complicated than that, for if Jesus' teachings were universally accepted as gospel, there would be no more evil in the world. The Devil, then, plays another role in the world besides a grim face of the cruel existence of evil; he also represents the seductive attraction to sin. Pleasure and romance play as much a part in comforting humanity against the sorrows of the world as devoutness and spirituality (Wilson ix). From a rational standpoint, morality is an arbitrary concept, and what is sinful for one group

may be celebrated in another. While it is true that the general public doesn't celebrate Satan's ideals of cruelty and hatred, in the modern age devilishness has come synonymous in many ways with the free expression of sexuality and pleasure, alongside disregard for strict and seemingly unnecessary rules, such as the Biblical decree to never tattoo oneself (*Reformation Study Bible* Leviticus 19:28). Satan and Jesus are idolized and disdained by either side; Satan's followers view him as a liberator and Jesus as an oppressor, while Jesus' followers see him as a savior and Satan as a cruel tempter.

But Jesus as a moral figure is an interesting standout among the Imaginal Guardians, in that in many ways he shares a role with another one of his spiritual kin: Santa Claus. Santa Claus is good and evil packaged in a jolly container suitable for children. In truth, Santa plays nearly exactly the same role as Jesus does; by offering presents only to those he deems "nice," he creates a stimulus to reward good behavior and punish naughty behavior, creating extrinsic motivation towards a child's internalized sense of morality (Stronach 17). Santa Claus may in fact have a tighter grip on the minds of his "worshippers" than the Christian aspect of the holiday due to the physical proof he leaves behind, thanks to the midnight work of children's parents. Santa may even be responsible for the continued survival of the more "Christian" holiday, in what he compensates spiritually and materially. Many adults claim to believe in the religious holiday, but they certainly do not behave as fervently in their belief as they did as children (Stronach 18). Both Jesus and Santa, though, are nearly identical in terms of relationships with their believers. Their gospel spread to the masses by their acolytes—priests with biblical parables for Jesus; parents with Christmas carols

for Santa. And both have a very ingenious self-replicating reward system. The act of believing in either one is a rewardable quality for both. Parents convince their children that they must believe in order to receive presents, while the Bible states that “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe” (*Reformation Study Bible* John 20:29).

Christmas has for many years held within it a sort of tension between the secular and the religious. This is where Santa and Jesus butt heads the most, as Santa represents the timeless innocence of childhood, and the idea of Christmas as being a time of family and presents, while Jesus holds his camp in the carnal adult world, where Christmas is a time of repentance and spirituality (Stronach 17). There are many skeptics who deny the benefits of either figure, from youths who feel they are “too old” for the Santa myth, to the 19<sup>th</sup> century rationalists who regarded Jesus’ miracles as “naïve embellishments of historic events, or as deliberate interpolations meant to foster a belief in supernatural power” (Brandes 23). It is undeniable that many horrific things have been done in the name of Jesus Christ. What then, of people who believe in neither Santa nor Jesus? Well, in a case study of a child whose mother had denied him the privilege of the Santa myth for Santa was akin to Satan, the child then entered each holiday season without an alternative symbolic depiction of Christmas. His view on the holiday became entirely materialistic: quoting that the joy came from the toys he received, but viewing no other transcendent meaning to the holiday (Clark 117).

### **Life and Death**

Jesus and Satan’s impact extend beyond simple morality, however. They offer comfort in the promise of life after death. Death is perhaps the most terrifying aspect of

life. In many ways, the fear of death is the same as the burden of sleep. They both involve pure nonexistence and inaction of consciousness—a lack of being. And although anyone may “know” of life’s limit, death is always completely unexpected and uncomprehensible. A human has never experienced death, and has no knowledge of what the process is like, so we cannot truly know what’s coming (Anastaplo 25). Humans, like all animals, are biologically wired to fear death more than anything else. Expectations are complicated further because of a multitude of theories and opinions of what happens to the soul after death (Anastaplo 25). It’s no surprise, then, that the Grim Reaper came to be. As it exists as a transitional figure, a shepherd to the other side, the skeletal figure in a black robe is not tied to any specific religious afterlife. It simply reassures the individual that there is *something* beyond that final moment of ended consciousness.

While the terror that death brings is a fear of nothingness and a fear of nonexistence, its counterpart life brings with it a burden of meaning and the responsibility of existence. In his book *The World Behind the World*, Michael Meade puts it perfectly, that “life and death both roar at the frailty of the individual soul and it’s easy to become prey to fear of either one or the other” (Meade 3). The Imaginal Guardians assist with much of the stress and existentialism of what it is to grow and live, but the almost equally worrying counterpart to “Where do I go when I die?” is “Where did I come from when I was born?” At birth, the psyche lacks the complexity for thought as at death, and thus the question is less worrisome for people the further they get from birth, but the question of prenatal origin still persists in adults and especially children. The only instinct humans have that is as hard-wired as the desire to

avoid death is that to propagate life, and with such a universal subconscious command, there will always be some confusion and hesitancy.

The Stork, many people might think, only exists as a metaphor to avoid having to explain to children the concept of sex. But the fact that the nature of birth is kept in high enough regard to hide the “dirty” truth of procreation with a magical creature is indicative of the impact it has. The creation of a soul needs to have some meaning more significant than random generation of genetic material, which the Stork mythos provides. That babies are brought in from some distant, heavenly source by majestic birds ascribes sacredness to the notion of birth, and thus as an extension, life.

### **The Bump in the Night**

Fear of death and fear of sleep may be their own separate concepts, but they intercept in an interesting way in an entirely distinctly separate fear: the fear of the dark. The fear of things that go bump in the night is itself a fear of death, but it is distinctly more than that. We do not get the same chill down our spine when we see a gun or a speeding car or any other potentially deadly object as we do when we simply stare into the darkness around a campfire. The fear of the dark is a fear of the unknown. While it stems from an instinctual urge to avoid predators, it extends beyond that into an urge to avoid anything we cannot control and do not understand. This fear of the unknown has manifested itself into two distinct entities in our culture, with slight nuance distinguishing the two: Bigfoot and the Boogie Monster.

The Boogie Monster—or Boogieman, Bogeyman, Buggabear, or many other names—is an interesting standout from the other Imaginal Guardians in that it does not have a single unified visual description. How could it? The Boogie Monster represents

the unknown, the faceless monsters in the shadows of the subconscious. To assign it a permanent visage would siphon it of its power as a symbol. The Boogie Monster, like the Stork and Santa Claus, is often used as a tool for parents to interact with their children—in this case, coaxing to behave with the threat of punishment from a shadowy, fearsome entity (Safire). It also exists in children and adults alike who were never given the threat of a boogiemán by their parents, but still fear the dark spaces under their beds, and through the cracks in their closet doors. The Boogiemán is also used as a metaphor in adult lexicon as any issue that is concerning and not understood, such as in this example from newspaper *The Village Voice*: “Lieberman didn’t bite—even in this town where international trade is a bogeyman” (Safire). In the 1920s, due to its association with darkness, “boogie” unfortunately became to be used as a racial slur for African Americans. Due to black jazz pianists’ invention of a percussive blues style they christened “boogie-woogie,” however, the phrase eventually lost its racial context and eventually to boogie simply came to mean to dance feverishly (Safire).

If the Boogie Monster represents the faceless terror of the unknown, then Bigfoot and his cryptozoological<sup>1</sup> cousins represent the excitement that goes hand-in-hand with that same fear. The notion of an ape-like creature stalking the woods, just beyond our sight, appeals to the primitive, supernatural emotions in all of us—simultaneously evoking wonder and terror (Eberhart 151). There is no concrete evidence of Bigfoot’s existence, yet just like tales of Santa Claus, details are consistent enough among reports to make a child wonder if there is any merit to them (Daegling vii). Bigfoot sightings have been reported in every state but Rhode Island, consistently

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<sup>1</sup> Cryptozoology is the term for the pseudoscience of animals whose existence has not yet been proven—literally meaning “study of hidden animals”

describing the creature as seven to eight feet tall, upright like a man, yet covered with hair and having a flat ape-like face, long arms, and an overpowering odor (Eberhart 151-153). Bigfoot, perhaps being the Imaginal Guardian most rooted in the realm of scientific plausibility and debate over hard evidence, might seem like a modern idea. But his other name, Sasquatch, comes from the folklore of the Coast Salish: a Native American group from the region of Washington and British Columbia (Daegling 2). Furthermore, Bigfoot's Eastern cousin the Yeti has been sighted in China since ancient times (Eberhart 118). The first reported sighting of the Loch Ness Monster was in the 6<sup>th</sup> century from an Irish missionary named St. Columba, who proclaimed it a demon and drove it away with a crucifix (Eberhart 34). These creatures are just as tied to ancient religion and myth as any other Imaginal Guardian.

Why, then, do we keep telling stories around campfires about these creatures, and looking for them in the wilderness? Why, despite sightings of numerous creatures together indicating the existence of whole communities of Bigfoots and Loch Ness Monsters, do we often refer to them as one entity? When referencing the creature, our society does not mention Bigfoots; it mentions Bigfoot. Both the Loch Ness Monster and Bigfoot have transcended beyond urban legends into something greater; they are icons of humanity's fear and wonder at the unknown. Any enthusiast who still searches for Bigfoot today does not do so simply for scientific evidence; they go with the zeal of a child sneaking downstairs in hopes of catching an jolly bearded intruder on Christmas Eve or a pilgrim travelling to Bethlehem to revel in the spiritual power there. According to one anthropologist and Bigfoot fanatic, David Daegling, "the elusive nature of the quarry makes [Bigfoot hunts] a quest of intrigue and adventure" (Daegling viii).

## Chapter 2: Crafting a Narrative

I hope I have proven to you in the previous pages that these many Imaginal Guardians share the same spiritual origins: allowing us to grasp and digest abstract concepts in life by personifying them. In order to retain their magic, these figures always are claimed to live just out of sight. Our worlds intersect only when we cannot see them; they visit us in our sleep, they watch over us from some ethereal Great Beyond, or they lurk in shadows or behind trees. Each holds dominion over an aspect of life, from Satan being a “Prince of Darkness,” to Jesus being the “Lord of Heaven,” to Father Christmas having to many children the attributes of a “God of Presents” (Russell 43, Stronach 16-17). Like Gods so often do, these figures even have numerous names. The Devil is Beelzebub, Lucifer, and Satan; Santa Claus is Kris Kringle, St. Nicholas, and Father Christmas; even Bigfoot is also named Sasquatch. This shows their eclectic, branching roots spread deep into history that have accumulated together into the figures we know today.

There is trepidation in acceptance of the Imaginal Guardians. They guard us from the fears that plague us, but that may be injurious to us by coddling from the necessary undeniable evils of life. “Fear” comes from the same linguistic roots as “fare,” meaning “to go through” (Meade 6). In order to properly handle fear, one must meet it head on and fight through it, in order to understand it and the world. But on the other hand, denying the existence of the Imaginal Guardians denies us of the magic and joy that they may bring. In order to explore this contrasting dynamic of the characters, I chose to write *Apartment III* not to choose a side, but to interplay between them. The

world is too complicated to provide any single correct answer on an issue, so the most fulfilling way to gain insight is to examine and understand how humans interact with it.

### **Writing the Script**

When constructing this story, I gave myself two rules to always maintain, in order to preserve the humanity of the characters. The first was that I would never give them any conflicts with world-altering consequences. In order to make the audience truly sympathize with them as equals, I made sure the problems they had were in the same scale as the problems any of us might face. So rather than the threat of Christmas being cancelled, Santa's main conflict is being made to perform community service after his sleigh gets towed. And even when potentially world-altering storylines could arise, such as Hell freezing over or the Stork being kept from doing her job, I chose to focus on the characters' frustrations at their work lives rather than the global repercussions. I could have written a story about superhumans grappling with the fates of the Universe hanging in the balance, but that would have perpetuated the idea that these imaginal guardians are infallible. And I could have written a gritty, cynical story about washed-up frauds, such as an alcoholic Santa who despised the children he makes toys for, but that would have perpetuated the idea that these imaginal guardians are detrimental. I made sure to create characters who, while truly representing the ideas behind the figures we know and love, have exactly as much stressful humanity as we who believe in them.

That brings me to the second rule I gave myself when writing, which was thus: I would deny them the comfort that they as imaginal guardians represent. Jesus Christ is the only person in the world who, when dealing with a crisis of faith, cannot turn to

Jesus Christ as a consolation. So in this story, Jesus' main conflict comes from an existential crisis involving the lack of an apparent father figure in his life; or, the non-existence of proof of God. Jesus' character struggles essentially boil down to being a reflection of a particular passage from his source material: when nailed to the cross, his true humanity and doubt shows through his divine appearance for just a moment, causing him to cry out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (*Reformation Study Bible* Matthew 27:46). Every major character shares a similar issue of base humanity. Satan is troubled by the relationship between good and evil, and where he fits in the equation if he relies on good to exist. Santa Claus only desires time off to spend with those close to him, but after a parking violation is assigned community service to work as a mall Santa, he is forced to struggle with the conflict between his own justified, yet self-interested, desire for a break and his own love for his holiday and bringing joy to others.

The Tooth Fairy and Sandman, being two characters closely linked in being imaginal guardians of the biological aspects of growing older, and of the eternal cycle of sleeping and dreaming, share a storyline with each other. The Tooth Fairy's confusion about her desire for children, and the Sandman's insomnia plus his seemingly unattainable dream of companionship cause them to confront and explore their feelings with one another. There was a plot arc where I utilized support characters that were not as fully fleshed-out as the other main characters—those being Cupid and the Boogie Monster. Instead of giving these two their own conflicts (introducing even more protagonists would have greatly muddled the plot), I chose to have them influence the Sandman and Tooth Fairy's storyline by being prominent presences in their lives, while

failing to provide the comfort they might as pure symbols. In fact, Cupid<sup>2</sup> returns the responsibility of finding love to the Tooth Fairy and Sandman by intentionally declining to provide a straight answer about whether she had worked her “love magic” on either one of them.

Finally, the Grim Reaper and the Stork play off each other with the Stork having her soul plucked out by Death early on and thus as a ghostly figure denied the joy of being alive—while Death spends the play worrying about the most existential parts of her existence. But rather than speculating on her own death, I gave the idea a small twist by having her worry about what would happen once everyone else has died and she’s left alone.

One key figure that has not up to this point been explored is God. God is a tricky character, especially within this kind of thought experiment, because he or she as an omnipotent entity potentially encompasses all aspects of life. Beyond that, Jesus’ issues in struggling with faith hinge on the question of the existence of meaning in the world, and thus on the existence of God. So I crafted the character Mr. Morgan, the Apartment’s elderly upstairs neighbor, who throughout the whole play is hinted to be a God character and a father figure to Jesus. However, in the last scene, it is revealed that Satan has created the character of Mr. Morgan, who never truly existed. This makes Satan’s struggle throughout the play most strikingly visible, since he had to help Jesus through a crisis of faith in order to ensure his continued position as an antagonist to the force of good. God’s absence from the play also manifests the idea that these figures do not truly physically exist in observable space, and thus any influence they provide

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<sup>2</sup> Who, in my play, was played female

comes from our interactions with others. No individual creates the idea of an Imaginal Guardian on their own; they are products of society.

But I also wanted to leave the message that just because no physical evidence exists of God, that doesn't mean that God does not exist, or does not have an impact on the world. God, and by extension the other Imaginal Guardians, get their power from the simple thought in the back of the mind that there might very well be something more to the world than meets the eye. In a marvelously apt quote from the television show *Futurama*, a galactic entity states on the notion of being a God that “when you do things right, people won't be sure you've done anything at all” (Keeler).

### **As Seen on TV**

On the subject of television, here is a quote from the currently popular animated TV show *Rick and Morty*: “Nobody exists on purpose, nobody belongs anywhere, everybody's gonna die. Come watch TV” (Roiland). I think it illustrates an important point about pop culture in our modern society. The show explores many of the nihilistic aspects of life, and its response to the unyielding terror of meaningless eternity is to enjoy the motions of day-to-day life. In many ways, fictional characters of pop culture play the similar roles to the Imaginal Guardians, and have always been irrevocably linked. We interact with fictional characters in many ways the same we interact with Jesus and Santa Claus. Fictional or not, witnessing other lives helps individuals understand the outside world. People are just as apt to take cues from fictional characters as real ones. Superman is just as much a moral compass to many as Jesus or Martin Luther King, Jr.

Interaction with fictional characters helps support subjective well-being in four distinct ways. They act as models for behavior—just as anyone may ask themselves “What Would Jesus Do,” children and adults alike may ask themselves “What Would Batman Do?” Furthermore, they allow the safe exploration of emotional encounters to prepare for such instances in real life, they satisfy the need for emotional experiences by counteracting boredom and apathy, and at their base level they can simply entertain and relax (Hoorn 251). I doubt that any child on Earth has grown up without some favorite folk tale, storybook, film, or television character that has helped them shape their view of the world.

The Imaginal Guardians themselves even make repeat appearances in pop culture, and have done so since they first existed. Death has appeared as a character in popular entertainment for hundreds of years, such as the 15<sup>th</sup> century mystery play *Everyman*, which told the story of Death ushering a nondescript everyman off to the afterlife. Countless films, books, and movies utilize these characters in the modern age, both as side characters and occasionally protagonists. *Apartment 111*, then, has become meta-theatrical and meta-cinematographic by both commenting on this idea and joining its pantheon.

Within the show *Apartment 111*, I also chose to create a fictional television program called *Spadesclub Diamondheart* to give the characters an icon to respond to in this same ways as we do. For the characters of Bigfoot and the Stork especially, I fabricated the titular hero of the show Spadesclub Diamondheart to be both a distraction from the difficulties of life and a role model for tough situations. Little information about the show was given, as I preferred to leave it fairly open to the audience’s

imagination, but one thing I made sure to do was show how enamored the characters were with the show's protagonist, and how they viewed him as a role model. Thanks to the musical help of the talented Sasha Rawlinson, the show even had a short theme song, which I've heard my friends humming to this day. I guess that shows how powerful a fictional character can be, even one who exists as fictional as part of a larger story.

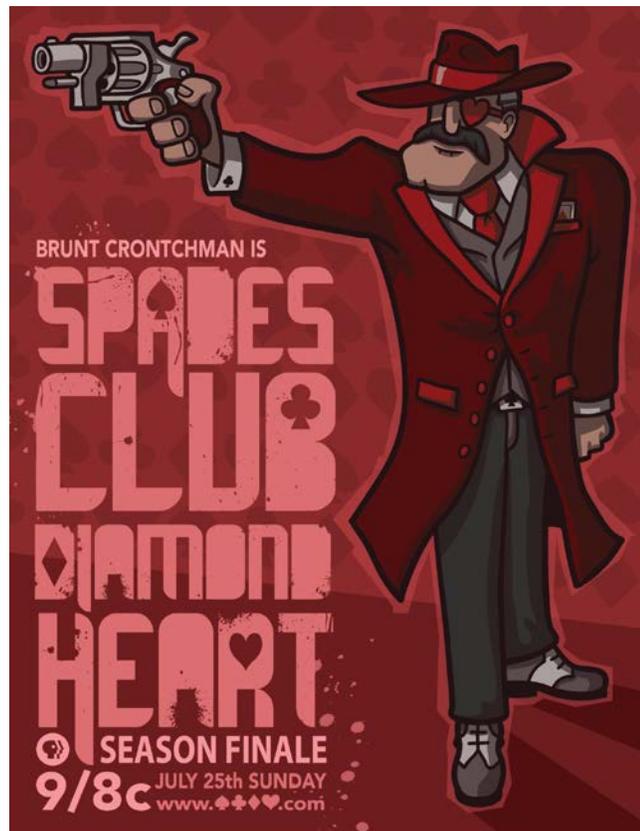


Figure 1 – *Spadesclub Diamondheart* Poster

This poster for a fictional TV Show was hung on the wall of the apartment as an element of world building for the show.

## Visual Design

To express the universal nature of these characters, I hoped to make the setting extremely ambiguous. Any set or costume designer can tell you the easiest way to pin a

play to a certain location or time period is to dress and surround the characters with clothes and furniture of the era. To show how these characters are more timeless and universal than a certain part of the Western world or a certain year, I tried to never stick to a single temporal or geographical theme. I intentionally left the dialogue free of indications of what year the play is set, and filled the set with decoration and knick-knacks from every decade of the twentieth century. Furthermore, I dressed each character in an outfit that is reminiscent of their iconic outfit, yet each resembles the casual wear of a different decade in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, to further perpetuate the anachronistic ambiguousness.

To maintain the ideals previously mentioned about these characters, I decided with my costume designer, Leah Bierly, to present all of them as human, despite the animalistic or fantastic natures of some of them. Bigfoot, the Grim Reaper, the Easter Bunny's underlings, the Boogie Monster, Satan, and the Stork all often are either specifically animals or display inhuman characteristics such as Satan's cloven hooves or Death's skeletal form. It could be assumed, in my play, that once the Stork steps through the window and flies away to deliver babies, she sprouts wings and returns to her true imaginal nature, but when within the walls of the apartment she is just another woman after a long day of work.

Below I have included photos of each of my production's actors in their final costumes, with all the reasoning behind the specific details of their design. In a perfect world with an infinite budget, the costumes might have ended up slightly different, but I'm proud of the quality we were able to attain with the workforce and budget we have—all thanks to the dedication of my costumer Leah Bierly.



Figure 2 – The Sandman

The Sandman’s costume is likely the closest to the typical representation of the character, being a nightgown and stocking cap from the 1900s. The classic, simple plain fabric matches perfectly with the Tooth Fairy’s more modern scrubs (Fig. 12).

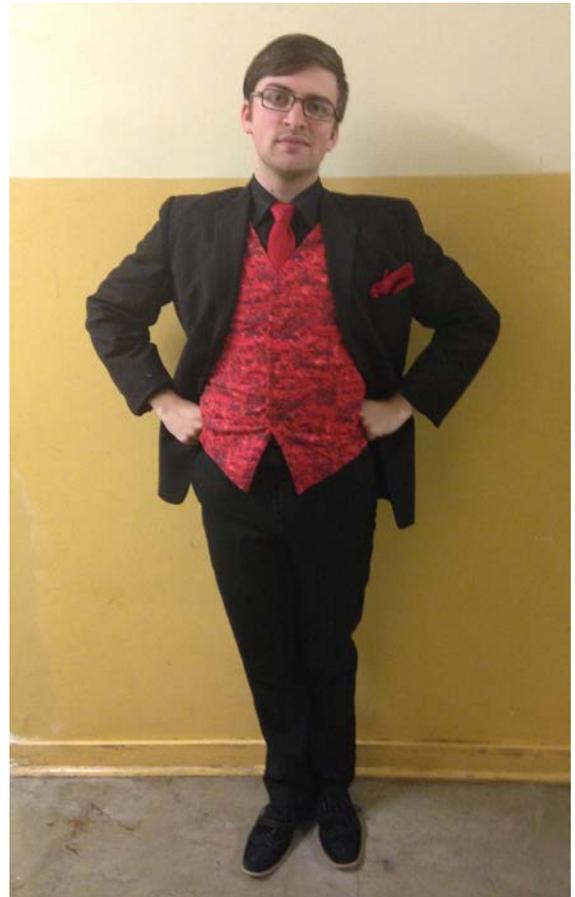


Figure 3 – Satan

The Devil was costumed in an outfit reminiscent of the wildly indulgent and bacchanalian roaring 1920s. Like a character right from “The Great Gatsby,” I saw him as paradoxically both suavely in charge and recklessly out of control. However, despite how panicked he may be inside, he displays a glossy façade that his way of life is undoubtedly superior to the rest.



Figure 4 – Easter Goons

Cadbury Malone and Jelly Belly were designed after 1930s Mafiosos. They are minor characters in the play, as I felt the Easter Bunny shared many character traits with Santa and was thus unnecessary. I did, however, want a character that could stand toe-to-toe with Satan in terms of shiftiness, so to add a little comic effect I made the never-seen Easter Bunny the Don of an Easter Mafia.



Figure 5 – Cupid

Cupid's costume is based off of World War II soldiers in the 1940s. My original idea for the character was that after so many centuries shooting lonely hearts with a bow and arrow, she might be inclined to upgrade her equipment. So, I gave her a 1940s sniper rifle and a no-nonsense attitude on love to match.



Figure 6 – The Stork

The Stork's outfit is a sort of blend between that of a pilot and an everyday mailwoman of the 1950s. She is often focused on her delivery job, but is also very eager to catch live television episodes in her off time. The 50s were also an era of the wholesome nuclear family, a concept to which the Stork is heavily tied. People have asked me what "UTRS" stands for, despite mainly existing for the sake of the visual pun of "USPS" and "Uterus," but I'd have to say it's short for "Unborn Transport Regulation Service."



Figure 7 – Santa Claus

Santa Claus' design was inspired by the hippie Deadheads of the 1960s, given that during the play he is on vacation from Christmas and just wants to relax and unwind. Due to the necessity of the actor's double-casting, we claimed he had shaved his beard for the off-season.



Figure 8 – The Boogie Monster

The Boogie Monster is set to boogie in full Disco garb of the 1970s. Her on-stage appearance is brief, but a humorous relief to the fear she represents in the others. The curved horns and white afro were a lucky dollar-store find, because besides giving her the necessary monstrous appearance, she is also visually similar to a sheep, embodying the sleep she keeps people from getting.



Figure 9 – Bigfoot

Bigfoot was comfortably dressed in an outfit akin to workout clothes of the 1980's. Bigfoot has been sort of a goofy character since conception, so the era of energetic exercise seemed to fit him perfectly. That, plus Bigfoot has been reported often to stink profusely, a trait which is shared by any sweaty individual post-aerobics.



Figure 10 – Jesus Christ

Jesus' aesthetic was inspired by the grunge bands of 1990s Seattle, such as Nirvana. Grunge music often deals with themes of social alienation and apathy, as well as a disconnect from parental and authority figures—themes that I felt resonated with Jesus' struggles during this play.



Figure 11 – The Grim Reaper

The Grim Reaper's aesthetic comes from the Hot Topic-style alternative subculture movement of the 2000s. While the above photo makes her seem rather cheerful, the character during the show was fairly brooding and forlorn, so the skinny black jeans, heavy eyeliner, and ribcage sweatshirt matched this personality, while being a modern interpretation of the classic skeletal black robe.



Figure 12 – The Tooth Fairy

The Tooth Fairy's getup is simple—dental scrubs of the modern 2010s. Being a character that is so closely linked with the dental practice, I figured that it made perfect sense that she would keep up with modern dental science as well. The light teal color also both matches the blue nightgown of her love interest, and reflects a ethereal fairy origin of her character.



Figure 13 – Mr. Morgan

The design for Mr. Morgan was not intentionally linked to any one decade. Instead, I had to create an image of what someone might design God to look like to rekindle Jesus' divine spirituality. The biggest connection Jesus once had to God, and hence has since lost in the world of my play, is the father/son relationship. So, we tried to make Mr. Morgan look as much like a dad as possible, with a golf-themed sweatshirt and comfortable loungewear.

### **The Titular Apartment**

The title of a piece tells a lot about the story, and it should be telling that this play was named after the apartment itself. I felt that the play took place in an apartment was crucial. Anything larger, even a house in the suburbs, might have an air of magic or majesty about it. I needed to make sure that the place these figures lived was 100% ordinary, and came with all of the inconveniences of anyone else's cramped and cluttered apartment. Any magic or majesty had to come from the Apartment's role as a home, as a safe space of relaxation—not from its connection to such mythic characters.



Figure 14 – The Apartment

Thanks to my fantastic set designer Nico Hewitt, we were able to put together the set for this play on a negligible budget. The living room and kitchen were pushed together in a space much too cramped for the number of people living there—a common inconvenience in this day and age. Cluttered shelves and scattered possessions indicated that the place was well lived in, and a window with a view of a backdrop of a nondescript city skyline cements the Apartment into a location in the real world. But it is never specified where it is, for while Apartment 111 has to exist in the real world, it cannot be in a place where it might be found by us mortals. Like Bigfoot spends his days in “the forest,” Apartment 111 exists in “the city.”

## **Playing and Performing**

A play has not truly existed in its full potential until it has been acted out. A script may be important as a work of literature, but for true life to enter the story it must be put onstage. Especially this play, which deals with characters as humans, must put human actors in costumes to embody the roles. Over the course of eight weeks, rehearsing roughly four times a week, my fabulous cast of nine people worked tirelessly towards creating a cohesive story. As a director, I gave my cast two very challenging tasks over a very broad scope when defining their characters. I asked them to both begin to be aware of the magical, mythic concepts each one of them represented as an icon, and to pay attention to the minute humdrum mannerisms and details that make up day-to-day life. The first challenge was especially tricky for those whose representations were of the hardest to handle issues of life, such as Jesus, Satan, and Death. If in our world, these characters exist to distract us from the pain of handling spirituality, morality, and death, then having to face them head on in order to understand them was obviously an arduous trial for the actors.

On the other hand, remaining true to humanity was interestingly enough another challenging task for the actors. I wanted my actors to be completely at home on the stage, as if they had been living in the Apartment for the last two thousand years or so. Being on a set with a script in your hand, while reading lines that somebody else wrote, is not the easiest way to be comfortable and natural. The most successful rehearsal we had, and what I think was definitely a strong turning point in the rehearsal process, was when one night we skipped rehearsing on the stage and instead ran the whole play at one of the cast members' apartment. At that moment, I could see my actors realize what

it meant to truly be present in a homely space with real furniture and real walls and real humanity. Their characters came to life in interacting with the space around them like they were finally comfortable in it. From that day forward, the set took on the properties of, funnily enough, imaginably guarding my actors from the truth of what they were doing and the pressures of performing in front of an audience. Santa Claus and Jesus and the Tooth Fairy came to life through them in some way while they were performing on that stage. Even for me, who had seen the project through from its very inception, and watched the set be built from scratch and the actors learn their lines, the magic of the theatre transformed the stage into a real apartment with real creatures living in it. If the play did for the rest of the audience what I hoped it would, then they would have during the hour and a half when the lights were down believed wholeheartedly that Santa Claus and Jesus and the Devil and so forth were speaking in front of them. And when they left the theater, I hope that what I presented to them did not command them to follow any one way of life or aspect of thinking, but rather it gave them further information to help shape their own personal worldview. Because whether you believe in the Imaginal Guardians or you don't, they and what they represent are deeply ingrained in our lives.

## **Chapter 3: The Play Itself**

### **Cast**

Jesus Christ	Noah Schoenfeld
Satan	Matt Bogle
Santa Claus / Mr. Morgan	Dylan Buntun
Sandman / Cadbury Malone	Alex Hardin
Tooth Fairy / Jelly Belly	Kelsey Ketcham
Cupid / Boogie Monster	Izzy Storm
Stork	Mallory Oslund
Grim Reaper	Michelle Jordan
Bigfoot	Neal Campbell-Balkits

### **Crew**

Stage Manager	Ana Lind
Costume Designer	Leah Bierly
Set Designer	Nico Hewitt
Light Designer	Matt Ober
Sound Designer	Ryan Burke
Technical Director	Sam Fleig
Props	Mia Baum
Music	Sasha Rawlinson



Figure 15 – The Poster

Designed by myself in a 3D Modeling program, I decided to use the “family photo” motif to capture the homeliness of the apartment and its inhabitants.

# The Thackray Tribune

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# APARTMENT 111



*Thesis Play is a Rollicking Romp Through the Lives of Our Oldest Imaginary Friends*

BY G. W. THACKRAY

Life can be hard for any person living in the big city, but imagine how stressful it must be to have to juggle paying rent and dealing with roommates while also having to fly around the world every night collecting teeth or making presents for every child in the world. This is the premise of Grant Thackray's "Apartment 111," which debuted on Thursday in the Pocket theater at the University of Oregon. The play was written and directed as part of Thackray's thesis for the Clark Honors College. The show is just under an hour and a half, and is jam-packed with humor that'll keep your sides in stitches. That is, unless you're not a fan of puns, in which case you probably shouldn't attend anyway. The story follows characters you've known your whole life—but you've never seen them like this before. "Apartment 111" is a peek at what those beings you thought you heard at night as a kid do in their off hours. After the Sandman is done putting people to sleep, and the Devil is done spreading sin and vice, they both take off their shoes... (continued on pg. A2)

## Bigfoot Spotted in Food Truck District

*"He took way too many napkins"*

BY SOME OTHER GUY

Hungry locals were surprised this last Tuesday by purportedly witnessing a legendary ape creature calmly ordering a gyro from "Super-Gyro-ism" on 37th

Street. It is unclear whether this was a publicity stunt, or possibly simply a Sasquatch fan in a costume, but several witnesses insist that it was the real deal. Calli Layton, who works at the food truck, claims that the creature "ordered two chicken gyros with tzaziki, but only after asking if we had haggis. He said that he was also apparently ordering on the behalf of the Loch Ness Monster." The creature vanished into Central Park before he could be approached for comment. He was reportedly whistling the theme song to the popular television show "Spadesclub Diamondheart."

(continued on pg. B7)



No photographers were on hand to capture a photo, so this is an artist's recreation. Unfortunately, image resolution is lacking due to a glitch in the photo editing software's "Gaussian blur" function.

WEATHER  
IN HELL

High  
**352° C**  
Low  
**34° C**

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Figure 16 – The Program (Continued on next three pages)

## “Apartment 111” Director Rambles On and On About Talented Friends

*Continued from page A1*

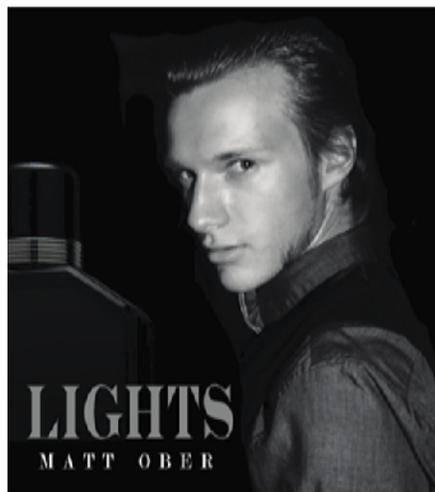
...and hang up their coats in closet of Apartment 111.

For being a student-produced show, the play boasts a suprising production value, thanks mostly to the astounding talent of the cast and crew Thackray collaborated with. “I am lucky beyond all measure to have the chance to work with these people,” said Thackray in a recent interview. “Some people might say that directing can be like herding cats. But my experience with this show was more akin to herding lions. I just vaguely pointed them in the right direction and they were off. I would never have believed I’d ever have produced a show with a real set, actual costumes, a full light and sound setup, and live music to boot? And that’s not even mentioning the actors I managed to snag are all talented as hell—but more than that I’m just glad for the chance to call these wonderful people my friends. I feel like this play in the end is less my personal project and more a collaboration with all the talented, hard-working friends I’ve made over the course of my college career. All I did was write a script and point a group of people in the same direction.” Sources indicate that Thackray told us this information while under the influence of sleep deprivation, so any information presented above can be assumed to be an understatement.

If you’re still on the fence about seeing the show, we talked to a few audience members about their opinions. “That sure was...a show,” said Anna Klos, age 48. “I was particularly impressed by the part where it ended.” When asked on his thoughts of the first act during intermission\*, Nathan Urbach, age 12, grunted unintelligibly. Beyond an audience perspective, we were also able to talk to some of the crew backstage for their opinions on the show. One Mia Baum wholeheartedly regretted her involvement in the show, and asked that she not be named; to no avail. Grant’s mom loved it.

But not everyone is pleased with the way this show turned out. Father Time was publicly outraged by his lack of representation in the story. He was unavailable for comment, but fellow imaginary being Jack Frost told us that Time took the news rather poorly. Ever since the new millenium, he has been feeling rather worn down, and we speculate that his ire is a result of this work pressure. However, Frost also told us that he was sure Time would be going to see the show anyways, because he knew it was something he shouldn’t miss. Book your tickets early, as the seats are promising to fill up quickly! And in the words of our theater critic, “It’s a blasphemous must-see!”

\*The show does not have an intermission.



OBIT. -- BURKE, RYAN

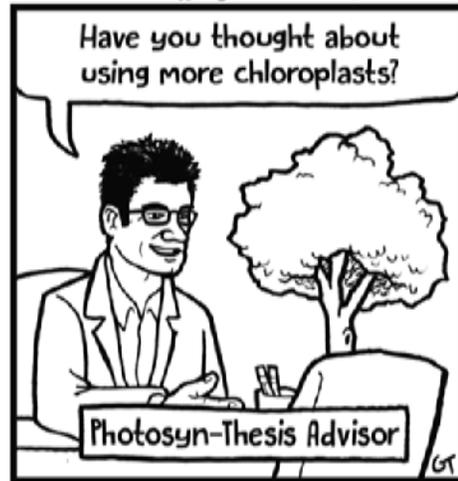


Ryanford Maximillian Burke, 22, of Eugene, died Sunday in a tragic unavoidable sound design accident. He was a beloved member of the community, and a talented sound designer. He will be missed.

## Comic Corner

Professional Najjargon

by Grant Thackray



## Apartment 111 Gets an 11 ...Out of 100!

BY SAMUEL H. CAIN

Apartment 111 is the worst play I’ve ever seen. The play follows a bunch of mythical characters who live together in, you guessed it—Apartment 111 (real clever there, Thackray). While they look like our beloved mythical creatures, the act like a bunch eighth graders fighting over the last pop tart. If you like terrible puns and unconvincing mockeries of our most cherished myths, then this show is for you and I hate you. More like “Apparently not 111!”

## Ask Sasha

DEAR MS. RAWLINSON: I’ve been feeling generally listless and uncreative lately. I just don’t have the same joie de vivre that I used to have. Help, please!

SPIRITLESS IN SEATTLE

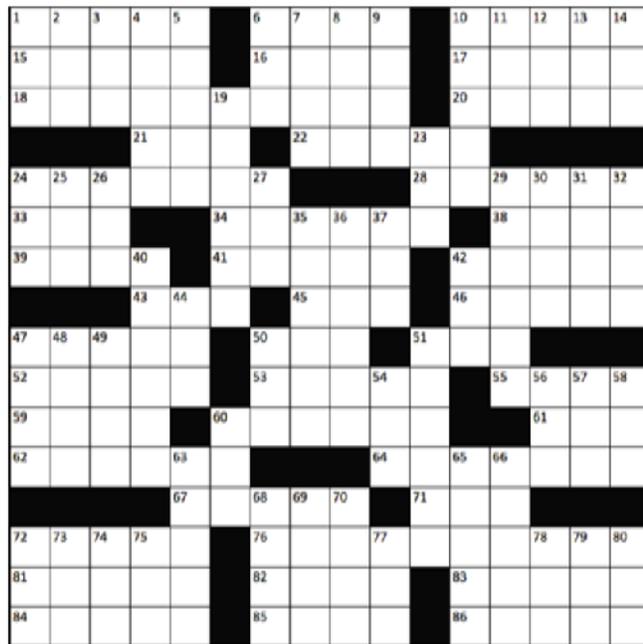
DEAR SPIRITLESS: I’ve always found that the best way to put the pep back in your step is to just try everything! You may know that I enjoy cooking, dancing, sewing, singing, and ornithology. Find yourself a project to complete! I, for example, just finished composing the theme song for the critically acclaimed television show “Spadesclub Diamond-heart” with the help of my good friend George Wiederkehr. I’m also doing live music for “Apt. 111.” Maybe try that?

# Crossword

Edited by Bill "Bermuda" Shortz

- ACROSS**
- 1 \*With 10-Across, character played by Kelsey Ketchum
  - 6 \*Character played by Michelle Jordan, familiarly
  - 10 See 1-Across
  - 15 "Service \_\_\_\_\_ smile"
  - 16 For, to Pedro
  - 17 Large pepperoni and a Diet Coke, e.g.
  - 18 Part of a fan that allows you to cool a whole room
  - 20 Takes by the hand
  - 21 Sho, in Rio
  - 22 Nomadic people living on the Yenisei River (this one's hard; it's just "Ents")
  - 24 \*Character played by Neal Campbell-Balkits
  - 28 \*Character played by Izzy Storm, familiarly
  - 33 Its, on a toothpaste tube
  - 34 Prominently displayed Gene Simmons feature
  - 38 Rabbit fur
  - 39 Sport loved by Mary Queen of Scots
  - 41 \*Character played by Malloy Oslund
  - 42 42" descriptor
  - 43 Consternation
  - 45 Book ends?
  - 46 \*Another character played by Izzy Storm
  - 47 Country containing "The Last Supper"
  - 50 Cookie-selling org.
  - 51 Oktoberfest start mo.
  - 52 \*Organization themed to a certain holiday that employs minor characters played by Alex Hardin and

- Kelsey Ketchum
- 53 \*Character played by Noah Schoenfeld
  - 55 Himalayan native that may just be 24-Across
  - 59 Video game heroine Samus
  - 60 Adoptive father of 53-Across
  - 61 One born in early August
  - 62 \*Character played by Dylan Bunten, with "Mr."
  - 64 \*Character played by Alex Hardin
  - 67 "The Devil Wears \_\_\_\_\_"
  - 71 Hawaiian nosh
  - 72 Rock beater
  - 76 What most of the starred answers are, in "Apartment 111"
  - 81 Egypt's capital
  - 82 Christ preceder
  - 83 Licorice flavoring
  - 84 \*Character played by Matt Bogle
  - 85 "\_\_\_\_\_ the lookout"
  - 86 \*Another character played by Dylan Bunten
- DOWN**
- 1 Tango requirement
  - 2 "\_\_\_\_\_ for Octopus"
  - 3 Non-Rx
  - 4 Artful Dodger or Carmen Sandiego
  - 5 Fox-hunter's cry
  - 6 Transcript no.
  - 7 Clip
  - 8 \_\_\_\_\_ Man
  - 9 Outlet
  - 10 Gutenberg bible page
  - 11 Plural of am



- 12 Mrs. McKinley
- 13 Andy Dufresne's friend
- 14 Many mos.
- 19 Confucius contemporary
- 23 Homestarrunner.com correspondence series, for short
- 24 Shoot
- 25 Altar words
- 26 Ladyfriend
- 27 Tater unit
- 29 Political movement popular in 2011
- 30 \_\_\_\_\_ in flames
- 31 Incan sun god
- 32 Peepod
- 35 Michael Frayn's \_\_\_\_\_ Off
- 36 "Rama lama lama ka dinga da dinga dong"
- 37 Be onging to England, Wales, Scotland, and N. Ireland
- 40 Organizing folders
- 42 Snoopy's alter ego; the WWI Flying \_\_\_\_\_
- 44 Swedish rug
- 47 Mosque big w
- 48 71-Across ingredient
- 49 Waaaaay over there
- 50 Albanian guerilla Ded \_\_\_\_\_ Lull
- 51 Outline of many mountain roads
- 54 Tacoma-based college, Abbr.
- 56 Street which Freddy Krueger terrorized
- 57 Boston harbor jelsam, once
- 58 The 1 of TIE Fighter
- 60 Dad's namesake; Abbr.
- 63 Stage area in front of the proscenium
- 65 "Eso es suficiente"
- 66 Supreme leader?
- 68 Pequod's captain
- 69 Ready to eat
- 70 "Wall-E" antagonist
- 72 Mac alternatives
- 73 Penlight; power source
- 74 Where snakes are found, proverbially
- 75 Mesozoic or Paleozoic
- 77 84-Across' handiwork
- 78 \_\_\_\_\_ Man
- 79 Superlative suffix
- 80 Pirate's love

(Answers on Page A4)

**- CORRECTION -**

A headline on an item in the Jan. 30 edition of this paper incorrectly labeled Ana Lind as the "President of Outer Space." It should have read "Stage Manager."

## HELP WANTED

Positions available in scene shop. Construction, set painting, and power tool experience necessary. Reasonable hours. Applicant must supply own safety goggles and table saw. For questions, contact **Set Designer Nico Hewitt** or **Technical Director Sam Fleig**. Email resume to 541-555-2368.

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ACT I

Scene I

*A well-lived in apartment, before sunrise. There is the front door, on the outside of which is the number "111;" a door leading to a coat closet; a sofa with a coffee table; a bookshelf with a radio and a phone set; a television; a small kitchen area with a refrigerator; and a hallway leading to the rest of the apartment. A window gives us a view of a typical city. The sofa is covered with a mound of blankets and pillows. From all the various styles of furniture and the things lying around, it's not quite clear exactly what year it is.*

*An alarm radio on the sideboard clicks on, and begins playing "Operator" by Manhattan Transfer. The blankets on the sofa shift, and out emerges JESUS.*

JESUS

Today's reading comes from Second Corinthians, Chapter eleven, verse fourteen: "And the lord said, 'Shut the hell up, I'm trying to sleep!'"

*He gets up and turns the radio off.*

Snooze.

*Then he stumbles back onto the sofa and lies down again.*

*The sound of a key in the lock is heard, and then SATAN enters through the front door.*

Who's that?

SATAN

It's me. Did we forget to go to bed again last night?

*He takes off his overcoat and hangs it up in the coat closet.*

JESUS

Where were you?

SATAN

Corrupting virgins and the like.

JESUS

It's not even light out yet.

*Satan sits on the sofa on top of Jesus.*

SATAN

Let's see what kept you up so late, shall we? Where's the remote?

JESUS

I'm not telling you.

SATAN

Too late, I found it.

*He turns the television on.*

Oh, Jesus. The home shopping network? Even I think they're evil. You didn't actually order anything, did you?

JESUS

No.

SATAN

You did! You so did, you ordered something! Ooh, I can't wait until it gets here so I can mock you with proper context. I have some really good insults planned but I have to know exactly what it is. Don't tell me! I like to speculate. It's probably something extremely useless, isn't it? Did it come with a book light?

JESUS

This is me turning the other cheek.

*Satan turns the television back off.*

SATAN

We have got to get you a hobby. How about arson?

JESUS

I would tell you to go to hell if you didn't hang out there all the time.

*Satan gets up and goes towards the kitchen.*

SATAN

Do we have anything to eat?

JESUS

I think T.F. is going shopping on her way home from work.

SATAN

What? Who decided it's her turn? She always gets sugar-free stuff. That settles it, we're going to Big Papa Tony's.

JESUS

Bring me back some wine coolers and some bread sticks.

SATAN

Oh no you don't, you lazy ass-riding lazy-ass. You're coming with me. I refuse to go out to eat alone because that denies me the chance for an argument over how to split the check.

JESUS

Does it have to be Italian? I'm still a bit pissed off at the Romans.

SATAN

Wow. Excuse me, Mr. Love thy Enemy. It has been over a thousand years. I mean, I'm all for a grudge, but you are a terrible person. I think a slice of deep-dish will help you forgive those who have trespassed against you. Get those blessed feet into some sandals and lets get out of here like a bat out of you know the rest. I'll meet you downstairs.

*He swoops out the front door.*

JESUS

Jesus Christ.

*He gets up slowly and begins putting on his sandals. Satan reenters.*

SATAN

For the love of the seven circles, have you always been this slow? No wonder they had soldiers whipping you, otherwise you carrying your own cross would've taken from Deutoronomy to Revelations.

JESUS

The cross carrying was in the gospels, actually.

SATAN

Well I haven't read the damn thing, okay? Put some pep in that step.

*Jesus has now finished putting on his sandals. Satan pushes him towards the door, and they are about to exit when the phone rings.*

That's for me. I'll meet you outside.

*He pushes Jesus out and closes the door.*

JESUS

Hey!

*Satan rushes over and answers the phone.*

SATAN

Talk to me. What's it like down there? Damn it. Well, damn it again. I don't know, keep damning it, try something!

*As he speaks, he grabs the remote and throws it out the window.*

I'm doing something evil as we speak! Look, I'm hanging up now. Let me know if it gets worse. I mean let me know when it gets more worse. Don't let me know, and don't let it get worse.

*He hangs up and rushes out the door.*

*The scene is peaceful for a brief second. Then, a figure dressed in all black skulks in and silently moves about the room as if searching for something. The front door opens, causing the figure to leave. In the doorway stands the SANDMAN, who remains groggily still. The window then opens and in climbs the TOOTH FAIRY holding a coffee. She watches the Sandman for a moment, bemused.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Good morning, Sandy.

SANDMAN

Hmm? Oh! Hey. Yeah, hey. Good morning. Coffee?

*The Tooth Fairy hands him the coffee.*

Mm coffee.

*He takes a sip and then reads the name on the cup.*

*This is a game the two have played before.*

Elizabeth. Gimme a sec. Elizabeth. Beth. No, Lizzie. Liz. What's it start with?

TOOTH FAIRY

T.

SANDMAN

No, wait. Elizabeth...Terine! Liz Terine!

TOOTH FAIRY

Yes! Dental hygiene puns!

*They high five.*

SANDMAN

How was work?

TOOTH FAIRY

Good, exhausting, good. It was a profitable night in the incisor department. I accidentally dropped an entire roll of quarters behind a kid's bed and I couldn't reach it so that's going to be a pleasant surprise for her someday.

SANDMAN

You did not. How much are in those? That's like ten dollars, right?

TOOTH FAIRY

Shut up.

*Jesus enters through the front door.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Hey, Jesus! How--

JESUS

Next time I let the Devil talk me into going out in public with him, nail me down so I can't leave the house. What an asshole.

*He exits down the hallway.*

SANDMAN

Yeah, good morning! Someone got up on the wrong side of the manger.

*The front door opens again, and in walks MR. MORGAN, and short-sighted elderly man in simple white robes.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Oh! Mr. Morgan! You got off on the wrong floor again.

MR. MORGAN

Hey! This is my home, you thief! You vandal! Arsonist! I'm just a defenseless old man! I'll call the cops on you! Get out!

TOOTH FAIRY

No no no no no! Mr. Morgan! It's us, your downstairs neighbors!

MR. MORGAN

Locusts upon you! Boils! Toads!

TOOTH FAIRY  
Sandy!

SANDMAN  
I got it, I got it.

*He brushes some sand out of his hair into his hand and blows it at Mr. Morgan. Mr. Morgan immediately falls asleep on his feet. Then he jerks back awake.*

MR. MORGAN  
Oh, good heaven above. I'm so sorry.

TOOTH FAIRY  
It's us, Mr. Morgan. Do you recognize us? We're your neighbors.

MR. MORGAN  
Of course, of course. I remember you from your lovely smile. Why are you in my home?

TOOTH FAIRY  
This is our apartment, Mr. Morgan. Apartment one eleven. You got off on the wrong floor.

MR. MORGAN  
One eleven? What floor am I on?

TOOTH FAIRY  
The sixth. Don't ask why--

MR. MORGAN  
Why is apartment one eleven on the sixth floor?

SANDMAN  
God only knows.

MR. MORGAN  
You're absolutely right. I am so sorry I got a bit carried away there. I was a bit of a hothead in my younger days. I could have sworn I pushed the button for the seventh floor.

TOOTH FAIRY  
That's quite all right. Mistakes happen to the best of us.

MR. MORGAN  
Not me, not me. I'm sorry to bother, I'll be going.

SANDMAN

Do you need any help...?

MR. MORGAN

Oh, no, don't you worry about me. I'm so old I'm pretty sure I invented elevators--I can figure it out. Bless you both.

*He exits through the front door. The Sandman closes it behind him.*

TOOTH FAIRY

What a sweet old man. I hope I don't get that crazy when I'm old.

SANDMAN

I doubt that'll be a problem. How many hundreds of years old are we?

TOOTH FAIRY

Yeah, but I just can't shake the thought that the clock is ticking. God, do you ever get the urge to just scoop up one of the little kids and take them home with you?

SANDMAN

No.

TOOTH FAIRY

Yeah, no, me neither. I suppose if I ever want kids I'll need to at least find a boyfriend first.

*Beat.*

SANDMAN

Yeah. Well, you know what, you should probably get to bed soon. Boogie could get here at any moment.

*The shadowy hooded figure returns to the room. She stands watching in the corner, unnoticed by the both of them.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Yeah, you're right. You're right. I need to be under the covers before she shows up. Would you mind? Sprinkle some of your magic sand?

SANDMAN

Yeah, I can do that. Yeah.

*They turn to exit down the hallway. As they do so, the Tooth Fairy notices the hooded figure and jumps with surprise. As it turns out, the figure is the Grim Reaper.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Grim! You scared the fillings out of me.

GRIM REAPER

Have you seen my scythe?

SANDMAN

You've got to stop just putting that thing down places.

TOOTH FAIRY

Yeah, it's a powerful artifact. Being careless with it will cause some big trouble someday. Sorry, I haven't seen it.

SANDMAN

Have you checked the--

*Suddenly, BIGFOOT wanders onstage, sniffing madly.  
Beat.*

Um. Have you looked in...

BIGFOOT

Something smells like Chinese food but I think it might just be the inside of my nose.

SANDMAN

The--y...hm. What?

TOOTH FAIRY

Good morning, Bigfoot.

BIGFOOT

Emergency take-out menu!

*He grabs a takeout menu from somewhere.*

How much is food? No, second thought. Do we have any food?

TOOTH FAIRY

Plaque. I forgot to get groceries. I guess I'll have to go back out.

SANDMAN

Hey, if you want I'll take care of it. You're exhausted.

TOOTH FAIRY

Really? You sure? I wouldn't want you to...

SANDMAN

No, I'm not really that tired.

TOOTH FAIRY

You're such a sweetheart. Come on.

*She takes him by the hand and drags him away.*

SANDMAN

(To the others)

She's going to bed. I'm just helping.

*They exit down the hallway.*

BIGFOOT

Grim, when you see Stork tell her I made the T-shirts for the Spadesclub Diamondheart finale. Man, I'm hungrier than that time just before that time I ate that dead raccoon. I am going to order some kung pow chicken!

*Bigfoot grabs the phone receiver and closes himself in the closet, stretching the cord across the room.*

Nǐ hǎo, liú zǒng! Nǐ hé nǐ háizi zuìjìn hái hǎo ma?

*The STORK enters from the hallway. She is holding the Grim Reaper's scythe.*

STORK

Hey bonehead, you left this in the bathroom.

GRIM REAPER

Thank you so much.

*She rushes over and takes it from her.*

I am glad you are here, Stork. Our paths have not crossed in nearly a fortnight.

STORK

Yeah, you too. I'm running late; I've got triplets to ship out that are already like two days overdue.

*She gestures to the phone cord stretched across the room.*

Bigfoot?

*The Grim Reaper nods. Stork steps over the chord and starts rummaging about the kitchen for food.*

GRIM REAPER

He told me to tell you something about a spade and a club.

STORK

Did he make the T-Shirts? They're for a show we like to watch together. The season finale's coming up.

*She opens the fridge.*

Is this applesauce the only thing we have to eat? I'll just grab something on the way.

GRIM REAPER

Stork, I need to talk to you about something.

STORK

Can it wait? I really have to go. Childbirth is, like, the most painful thing ever and I really don't want to keep these poor women waiting.

GRIM REAPER

Yes. Yes, it can wait.

STORK

I'll be back when I'm done with these deliveries, and then I've got some birth request forms to fill out so you can talk to me then. I really need to stay on top of those because they take like nine months to go through. Should be at like seven pm. Okay? See ya, bone butt.

GRIM REAPER

Farewell.

*She climbs out the window.*

*Bigfoot comes out of the closet wearing a bathing suit and goggles and holding a towel. While he's speaking, he opens the closet door, retrieves the phone cord, and hangs it back up.*

BIGFOOT

I'm gonna go down to the pool to hang out with Nessie. Our anniversary's in the next couple of days or so, I think, so I have to figure out if she likes things and whether or not I should get one for her. Could you do me a solid and answer the door when my Chinese food gets here? If you do I'll tell you the secret ingredient to my special vegan cupcakes.

(Whispering)

It's bacon.

*He vanishes through the front door.*

*The Grim Reaper stares into space for a second, until the radio turns on again. It continues playing "Operator."*

*The Grim Reaper raises her and and the radio  
fizzles and dies.*

Scene II

*A few days later, mid-afternoon; we find Stork  
sitting on the sofa reading a book, and CUPID  
aiming a sniper rifle out the window.*

CUPID

I see you. You think you can get away but you can't run  
from me. Your heart is mine.

*The Tooth Fairy strolls in from the hallway naked  
except for a towel wrapped around her body and  
another around her hair.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Hey, Cupid. Brought work home with you again, I see.

CUPID

This punk won't know what hit him.

TOOTH FAIRY

He's cute. Who's the lucky lady?

CUPID

She's coming. All I have to do is wait. He'll sit next  
to her in the last available seat on the bus. She'll  
knock over his coffee. When they both reach to pick it  
up, their hands will touch. WABAM! It'll be beautiful.

TOOTH FAIRY

Someone keeps using up all my bobby pins.

*She ruffles around in a drawer and finds one or  
two.*

STORK

It's not me. Probably Sasquatch. Did you know he curls  
all his body hair?

TOOTH FAIRY

No, really? I have got to figure out what shampoo he  
uses; his hair is really soft. Whoops!

*She drops the bobby pins. As she bends over to  
pick them up, the Sandman enters. He sees her,  
gawks, chokes, and then promptly exits again  
unnoticed.*

Do you think he leaves it in the bathroom?

*She exits down the hallway.*

STORK

No, he probably just rubs berries all over himself out in the wilderness or something.

TOOTH FAIRY

(Offstage)

Hey, I don't know if you guys saw but Krankowitz wants us all to re-sign the lease. It's on the fridge.

STORK

Yeah, I think I remember signing that or something at some point.

TOOTH FAIRY

(Offstage)

It's kind of urgent, so could you take care of that soon?

CUPID

Bring it over here.

STORK

I got it.

*The Stork stands up, grabs the document stuck to the fridge and a pen and takes them to Cupid. Without taking her eye from the sight of the rifle, she signs the bottom of the document.*

*Suddenly, Satan leaps back in from the hallway wearing the same exact towels in the same exact way that the Tooth Fairy just left in--in fact, it was him the whole time.*

SATAN

Ah ha! I totally got you!

*He strides over and triumphantly snatches the document.*

(Reading)

"I do hereby relinquish my soul and all other ephemeral spiritual property to Lucifer, Prince of Darkness, Overlord of the Underworld, CEO and chairperson to Hell Incorporated. Signed: You're not getting me that easily." Dammit! I hate you so much. One day you'll all pay. What's my day to do dishes?

STORK

Week from Friday.

SATAN

Then I'll make you pay that Thursday or earlier so I don't have to do dishes. I will tear down the very  
(MORE)

SATAN (cont'd)

gates of Heaven themselves and cast them into the furnace of Hell to form a massive golden statue of myself crushing your puny skulls in! Whatcha reading?

STORK

"Spadesclub Diamondheart" fan encyclopedia. It's all the behind-the-scenes stuff and junk.

SATAN

That's the show that you and the athlete's foot factory love so much?

STORK

Yeah, it's about a merciless anti-hero bounty hunter with a passion for justice and who always has an ace up his sleeve. He's got a heart of diamond, which is like a heart of gold but more badass. The season finale is coming up.

CUPID

The bitch missed the bus. I can't take the shot. I'm going to see those two happily gazing into each other's eyes if it means hunting her down and personally shoving this bullet into her chest with a knife.

SATAN

Good luck, G.I. John Coltrane. Go get those random strangers to get it on.

CUPID

Love is war.

*She puts her knife between her teeth and climbs out the window.*

*The phone rings, and Satan answers it hurriedly.*

SATAN

This better not be what I think it is. That's your job, so fix it! I don't know, turn it off and turn it on again! You've got matches, ignite stuff! Have you located codename Technicolor Waiscoat? Of course not. Do whatever it takes. Also, you're fired.

*He hangs up.*

STORK

Having some problems in Hell?

SATAN

I will burn down your family. Can't even trick people into signing things anymore.

*He exits.*

*The Grim Reaper enters quietly, holding her scythe.*

GRIM REAPER  
Stork.

STORK  
Oh no, don't tell me my time has come already! I'm too young! Please, let me finish this chapter!

*The Grim Reaper sits down next to her.*

GRIM REAPER  
Stork, are you happy?

STORK  
Like, in general or at this particular moment?

GRIM REAPER  
Being the Stork.

STORK  
Well, it's my name, species, and job description, so I'd hope so. Why? Something's up.

GRIM REAPER  
Never mind.

STORK  
Hold on, you can't do that. You brought it up so now you have to tell me. Come on.

GRIM REAPER  
Okay. Do not lose your head.

*She unzips and takes off her hooded sweatshirt. Underneath she is wearing a very colorful pastel button-up vest.*

STORK  
Finally! I've been telling you for, like, centuries that it'll help you stop being moody and depressed by not wearing all black all the time. This vest looks familiar. Do we know someone with a vest like this?

GRIM REAPER  
Hershey Corlioni died two and a half weeks ago.

STORK  
He worked for the Easter Bunny, didn't he? Oh, that's where I've seen this vest, it looks like the Easter

(MORE)

STORK (cont'd)

Bunny's. No, it is the Easter Bunny's. Why did he give it to you?

*The Grim Reaper is silent.*

He didn't give it to you. No. No. You STOLE it? What the ever-loving holy flying fallopian tubes were you thinking?

GRIM REAPER

I was not. It was an impulse.

STORK

You have a pantheon of the most magical mythical immortals in the world from which you could swipe clothes off of and you chose the Easter Bunny?

GRIM REAPER

You told me I should get...Nobody was around. I liked the color.

STORK

Yeah, and that's why they invented J.C. Penny's! They SELL vests! You didn't have to steal from--you are so dead. Death is going to get murdered.

GRIM REAPER

So what do I do?

STORK

Run away and hide forever. Maybe we can, like, sneak the vest back into his office or something before he notices?

*There's a knock on the door.*

VOICE

(Outside)

Ey, open up! We wanna talk to youse!

GRIM REAPER

Who is that?

*The Stork looks through the peephole. She whirls around.*

STORK

It's two of the Easter Bunny's goons!

GRIM REAPER

Oh no.

STORK  
Quick, hide your legs so they can't break 'em. You're a skeleton, so they're removable, right?

GRIM REAPER  
No!

STORK  
Dammit. You know what? We're going to have to tell them.

GRIM REAPER  
No!

STORK  
Yes, we're telling them.

GRIM REAPER  
You are not telling anybody.

*There are more knocks on the door.*

VOICE  
We can hear youse flappin' your lips! Open up!

STORK  
We have to tell somebody! We can't take on the Easter Bunny by ourselves. I'm calling Satan.

*She goes to the phone and starts dialing.*

GRIM REAPER  
No. Stop it, right now.

STORK  
6...6...6...

GRIM REAPER  
Stop!

*She swings her scythe at Stork, and Stork crumples to the floor.*

VOICE  
(Outside)  
If youse don't open up we'll bust down this here door over here!

OTHER VOICE  
(Outside)  
Yeah, then we'll bust it up!

*The Grim Reaper puts on her black sweatshirt over the vest. She speaks the next line to an invisible figure in the room, like a ghost.*

GRIM REAPER

You left me no choice. No, you shut up.

*She answers the door. Through the door step  
CADBURY MALONE and JELLY BELLY.*

Hello.

CADBURY MALONE

Hello. It is a pleasure to acquaintance your humble abode. Enough pleasantries. We are here to, ah, "discuss" something with a certain fellow of some such persuasion.

JELLY BELLY

And den we'll make dat plastic easter grass outta his entrails.

CADBURY MALONE

Ay, button your Easter bonnet. First we go through with da veiled threats, then you can hard-boil his eggs, if you catch my drift.

JELLY BELLY

I gotcha, boss.

*Jelly Belly pulls out a small card and reads a name from it.*

We're lookin' for a stoolie what often wears red and goes by the name, eh, Santa. You know 'im?

GRIM REAPER

Oh. Yes, I know him. He lives here sometimes.

(To the invisible figure)

You be quiet.

CADBURY MALONE

I see. And is he, ah, present at the current time?

GRIM REAPER

No, he is not. His month off begins soon, however, so he may return within the week.

CADBURY MALONE

I see. It seems we have arrived too early for our quote unquote appointment with the gentleman. It's just that, you see, we've got a certain arrangement with the crumb that he's been failing to deliverate upon. So it has come time to generate some persuasive action. But as he's not currently here, we'll leave you be for now.

(MORE)

CADBURY MALONE (cont'd)

However, if you do see your friend of yours, tell 'im that when we get a hold of him plastic eggs won't be the only things strewn about the garden. Sorry to bother ya, Mr. Draper. C'mon, let's make like Jesus Christ and get outta this tomb.

*The two mobsters exit. The Grim Reaper closes the door.*

GRIM REAPER

That was a close one.

(To the invisible figure)

No, I will not put you back in your body. Because then you'll get right up and call Satan. I just need time to think.

*She leans her scythe against the wall and begins to drag the Stork's body away down the hall.*

Well, how am I supposed to drag you?

*The front door opens and in comes Mr. Morgan.*

MR. MORGAN

Who were those two gents I passed in the hallway? Also, who are you and why are you in my apartment?

GRIM REAPER

Mr. Morgan, this is our apartment. You live upstairs.

MR. MORGAN

Ah. This again? I think the elevator must be broken. I pushed the sixth floor for sure.

GRIM REAPER

This is the sixth floor. You live on the seventh.

MR. MORGAN

(Pointing to the Stork)

What happened to her? Is she dead?

GRIM REAPER

No! She is not dead, she is just asleep.

MR. MORGAN

So you're taking her to her bed, I suppose. What a responsible friend, I ought to give you a raise.

GRIM REAPER

I do not work for you.

MR. MORGAN

Right. Sorry to intrude. Bless you both.

*He exits.*

GRIM REAPER

What a bizarre old man. Well, then I am not talking to you as well.

*She drags Stork's body off down the hallway.*

Scene III

*That evening. The Tooth Fairy and Sandman are doing a crossword puzzle together.*

SANDMAN

Move your thumb. I can't read the clues.

TOOTH FAIRY

I think 5-Down is "thorny." How many letters is it?

*Jesus walks through the front door, leaving it open.*

JESUS

Bluggghhhghnh.

SANDMAN

Close the door. Were you born in a barn?

JESUS

Technically it was a manger.

TOOTH FAIRY

62-Across is "sheep."

JESUS

Where's the Holy Grail? I'm thirsty.

SANDMAN

Haven't seen it.

JESUS

We need to put it on a string or something so it doesn't keep going missing all the time. Like those pens at the bank.

SANDMAN

I would love to see the look on Dan Brown's face if he ever learned that it's just a cup that we use to microwave soup.

*The Tooth Fairy giggles.*

JESUS

Hey, it's still sacred. Just because it has coffee stains and a dent in it from the time Cupid used it to kill a spider doesn't mean...

TOOTH FAIRY

Yeah, we know.

*Bigfoot enters through the front door.*

JESUS

Bigfoot, where have you been for the last three days?

BIGFOOT

Nepal. Say, did my Chinese food come yet?

JESUS

Yeah, three days ago.

BIGFOOT

Good, I'm starving! Where is it?

SANDMAN

We ate it.

BIGFOOT

What?

SANDMAN

You didn't leave any money, so we ate it.

TOOTH FAIRY

Have them put on less soy sauce next time. That stuff is super bad for your teeth.

JESUS

We did save you the fortune cookie, though. It think it's on the bookshelf.

SANDMAN

Satan ate it. But we did save you the fortune.

BIGFOOT

I can't eat a fortune! Someone else can have it.

SANDMAN

(Reading)

"You will soon spend some quality time with an old friend."

TOOTH FAIRY  
In bed!

*The Tooth Fairy and Sandman glance at each other,  
then look away quickly.*

BIGFOOT  
So do we actually have anything to eat?

JESUS  
Check the fridge.

BIGFOOT  
Applesauce!

*He tries to open it but the lid is stuck.  
Jumping jackalopes! This lid is on tight. My superior  
ape-like woodland strength can't even budge it. I'm  
going to go see if anyone else can help.*

*He exits down the hallway.*

TOOTH FAIRY  
27 Across. Isn't "God Particle" that thing, the Higgs  
Boson? Does that sound familiar?

*The door is thrown open, and Satan traipses in.*

SATAN  
Quick, somebody turn on the TV! There's a huge group of  
religious fundamentalists protesting gay marriage right  
now. Where's the remote? Oh, yeah. Damn.

SANDMAN  
How many billions of years old is the Earth? Is it  
hundreds or thousands?

TOOTH FAIRY  
According to science? I think it's like four billion.  
Which clue is that?

*Satan rushes over and tries to turn on the radio.  
It doesn't work.*

SATAN  
God darn it and gosh damn it. The radio's dead.

JESUS  
I'm just...I'm gonna go lie down.

SATAN  
Oh, come on. You're not upset about the protesters, are  
you? I mean they're just following your advice, right?

JESUS

I never said any of that! I said love thy neighbor and be tolerant of others, and one verse in Leviticus mentions homosexuality and suddenly it's God's will!

*He flops down on the sofa.*

Bible, chapter whatever, verse who gives a shit! Thou shalt go fuck yourselves!

SATAN

Hey! Watch your mouth. What would your mother say if she heard you using language like that? She's Jewish, right? So probably something like,

(In a Jewish mother impression)

"You never call. When are you going to settle down and give me grandchildren? I schlepped a hundred miles to Bethlehem, pregnant on a donkey, and this is the thanks I get?"

JESUS

There are about two billion devout Christians in the world who would lynch you if they heard you talking about my mother that way.

SATAN

They wouldn't lynch me before? I'm already the Devil.

(In a Jewish mother impression)

"Good heavens. Nine months of pregnancy and I didn't even get the fun of making the baby to begin with."

JESUS

Why are you such an asshole?

SATAN

Satan!

JESUS

That's no excuse. I thought you were at least my friend.

TOOTH FAIRY

Oh, by the way. I got a call from Mrs. Claus, so we can expect a jolly old visitor any time now.

JESUS

Oh, no. It's July already?

SANDMAN

What is it with you and Santa? He's the nicest person on the planet.

JESUS

Who's he to decide who's naughty and nice when he's Mr. Perfect all the time?

*From the hallway, we hear a jubilant "Ho ho ho!"*

SATAN

Speak of the devil, and he shall appear.

JESUS

I just remembered that I'm late for...toast...

*He tries to exit down the hallway, but at that moment SANTA enters through the front door. He is holding a package.*

SANTA

Present for a Mr. J. Christ! Merry Summer!

JESUS

Hello, Kringle.

SANTA

I am on vacation! Time for thirty days of rest and relaxation! I love Christmas more than anybody, but if one of you even mentions sugarplums, I'll stuff your stocking with so much coal you'll be able to start an electric company.

JESUS

Why did you make me a present?

SANTA

Oh, I didn't make this one, sport! It was just on the doorstep here.

SATAN

Ooh! Is that what I think it is?

*He takes the package from Santa.*

JESUS

Great. Now look what you've done.

*He goes over and sulks by the window.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Good to see you Santa. We're off to work.

*She and the Sandman exit.*

SATAN

From "Homeware Kitchen Accessories," "As Seen On TV!"  
Oh boy oh boy, what could this be? I'm so excited. If  
there's two in here for the price of one I think I  
might just faint.

*He gets the package open.*

SANTA

What is it?

SATAN

"Now you too can be the talk of the party! Make wine  
from almost nothing with the Homeware Kitchen  
Accessories Make Your Own Wine Kit. It's not a miracle,  
just..." Actually, this is mine. I forgot I ordered  
this with Jesus' credit card. Gonna get drunk tonight!  
Well. I've got things to see and people to do. Good to  
see you, Kringle.

*He flits off down the hallway with the package.*

SANTA

So how have you been, Jesus? Enjoying your summer?

JESUS

Hey Santa, is that your sleigh down there?

SANTA

Is it big and red and gold and sitting behind nine  
magical reindeer?

JESUS

It's getting towed. And there go the reindeer into the  
Farmer's Market.

SANTA

What?!

*He leaps up and stares out the window.*

Hey! That's mine! I fed the meter! You can't take that!  
Get your hands off my reindeer!

*He rushes out the front door. Jesus chuckles.*

*Bigfoot enters through the front door with the  
applesauce.*

BIGFOOT

This thing is on tight! Even Nessie couldn't budge it.  
And she's Scottish!

JESUS

Didn't you leave down the hallway? How do you do that?

BIGFOOT

Trade secret. Like how we can never take a good group photo because it's always out of focus. I need something that can really pry this lid off, something really...ah ha!

*He rushes over and grabs the Grim Reaper's scythe, which is leaning against the wall.*

JESUS

You can't use that. It can rip a soul from it's mortal coil!

BIGFOOT

Which is why it'll torque this sucker right open!

JESUS

Whatever. Just don't do it in here or you'll get applesauce all over the place.

BIGFOOT

Good point. I'll do it in Satan's room.

*He exits down the hallway.*

*Jesus stares glumly into nowhere. At that moment, Mr. Morgan enters from the hallway.*

MR. MORGAN

Evening.

JESUS

Hey, Mr. Morgan.

MR. MORGAN

Is this my house?

JESUS

I don't think so.

MR. MORGAN

Oh, my head is always way up in the clouds. Lots of people say that's my biggest flaw.

JESUS

Mm-hm.

MR. MORGAN

Let me know if you ever want to chat for a while. If you're ever in need of some wisdom from a wise old man.

JESUS  
I'll do that.

MR. MORGAN  
Well, I'll be going now. Upstairs. Where I live.

JESUS  
See ya.

*Mr. Morgan looks in concern at Jesus for a split second, then exits through the front door. Jesus walks over to the hallway.*

How goes it, Sasquatch?

BIGFOOT  
(Offstage)  
I almost got it! I can feel it giving way!

*There is a loud crack.*

JESUS  
Did you get it?

*Bigfoot enters holding the applesauce in one hand, and the scythe in two pieces in the other.*

BIGFOOT  
Who on Earth CLOSED this thing?

#### Scene IV

*The next morning. Jesus and Satan are sitting on the sofa. Jesus is leafing through the bible.*

JESUS  
I don't get this.

SATAN  
What?

JESUS  
This. Who even wrote this?

SATAN  
Didn't you?

JESUS  
Of course not! I mean, a lot of my stuff is in here, but...you know how sometimes you remember something happening and then you see it written down and it's all factually correct but they chose different words than you would have used to describe it so it just seems all wrong but after you've read it you can't remember your  
(MORE)

JESUS (cont'd)

own version? Like what they wrote becomes all you can think about. I can't believe that this little book knows more about my life than I do.

SATAN

Hey. Do you remember the desert? You know, the desert you spent a month and a half in. From the bible. That was the first time we hung out together.

JESUS

Hung out? You tormented me mercilessly.

SATAN

I did! You do remember! Good times. You got so mad!

JESUS

No I didn't.

SATAN

Yeah, you did! You were so pissed off!

JESUS

I was not! I was Jesus Christ. I am Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ doesn't get angry. Satan, does God ever talk to you?

SATAN

Of course not.

JESUS

I just don't get it. I read an article the other day about Charles Guiteau--he was the guy that shot Garfield. He claims God told him to do it. God himself whispered in his ear. Why is God talking to schizophrenics and nutjobs but not me?

SATAN

You really think it's God telling people to murder?

JESUS

Why, is it you?

SATAN

No. I rarely talk to anyone these days. They seem to have figured it out by themselves.

JESUS

Tell me about it.

*Satan goes to the window.*

SATAN

(Yelling)

Hey you! Yeah, you with the ironic haircut! Blondie! Fuck you! Yeah, you heard me. Why don't you burn down a hospital about it? Get angry at people who are different from you! Do some heroin! Covet thy neighbor's wife! If you steal that kid's popsicle I'll give you ten dollars!

(To Jesus)

Well, aren't you going to come play the other side? Come on, tell 'em not to do the stuff I'm telling 'em to do.

(Out the window)

Twelve dollars!

JESUS

No. I'm gonna go down to the ocean and take a walk along it. Or across it.

*He exits.*

SATAN

What? Hey, come on, you can't. Hey, what are ya, chicken? You think the glory of heaven can't take me on? Eternal battle of good and evil! You little piece of...holy shit! God damn it.

*He checks the thermometer.*

God diggety ding dong damn it!

*He exits.*

#### Scene V

*Cupid and the Tooth Fairy sit near each other.*

*Cupid is doing a magic trick with a deck of cards.*

CUPID

So you've put your card back in the deck. I shuffle it up real nice, and then you draw a card.

*The Tooth Fairy draws a card.*

What card is it?

TOOTH FAIRY

(Looking at the card)

It's the rules card that comes with the deck, but you wrote "This is your card" on it in Sharpie.

*Cupid has begun threateningly inspecting her knife.*

CUPID

Well? Is it your card?

TOOTH FAIRY

Why yes it is!

CUPID

I thought so. Let me tell you a secret about magic.

TOOTH FAIRY

Stage magic?

CUPID

Either one. It's all about the setup. You just do it right when you get the thing ready, and then wait and let it fall into place.

TOOTH FAIRY

Okay, that's all well and good. Um. Thanks.

*Sandman enters from the hallway.*

Sure, I'll lend you some quarters, Cupid! Oh, that darn laundry, huh? Hey Sandy. Well, anyways, bye Sandy.

*She exits hurriedly.*

SANDMAN

Bye.

CUPID

You wanted to talk, private?

SANDMAN

Yeah, hey. Um. So, I was wondering...

CUPID

Look, kid. I know what you want. Only one reason people come to Cupid. Your tender aching heart yearns for the touch of another. But you're too nervous to ask her yourself so you come straight to the source to see if you can cut some corners.

SANDMAN

Uh, yeah. I guess that's pretty much exactly it.

CUPID

Well kid, I like you. I've known you a long time. So I'll tell you what.

*She tosses out two playing cards, face down.*

Pick a card. You choose the two of hearts, you get your true love. You choose the other one, you get zip.

*Sandman hesitates, then points to a card. Cupid lifts it up and peeks at it.*

SANDMAN

Well? What was it?

CUPID

You'll see, won't you?

*She sticks the card the fridge with a magnet, still face down.*

Scene VI

*Bigfoot enters with the applesauce and broken scythe. Soon after, the Grim Reaper enters followed by Stork, who is wearing an outfit identical to her previous one except it's completely white.*

GRIM REAPER

Okay, okay, I will put you back. But only if--

*As the two enter, Bigfoot quickly shoves the broken scythe under the sofa. The Grim Reaper notices Bigfoot.*

BIGFOOT

Hello. How is it going?

STORK

She's a total munchwad, that's how it's going.

GRIM REAPER

Nothing much is happening at the moment. Do you know where my schy--

BIGFOOT

No. No I don't know where that is. If you can find Stork, she probably knows where it is.

GRIM REAPER

Well, I do not know where she is at all. I have no idea to her whereabouts.

BIGFOOT

I see. Well, if you see her, tell her to get her butt back here because the finale is coming up. Figures she'd ditch town on her week to pay the utilities.

STORK

What's that supposed to mean? I already paid all the bills, thank you very much.

GRIM REAPER

I think she has been very occupied with work.

STORK

Shut up.

BIGFOOT

I'm just gonna, real quick--

*He throws the applesauce out the window.*

Rest in hell, demon spawn!

*(Then, in a husky voice)*

And if you don't, I'll come down there and personally read you a bedtime story.

STORK

*(Simultaneously, gruffly)*

...and personally read you a bedtime story.

BIGFOOT

Anyone? No? I wish Stork was here, she'd get my Spadesclub Diamondheart references.

STORK

I am here! Damn it, Grim! Hurry up and find your scythe and get me back in my body before it starts to rot!

GRIM REAPER

I am trying to find it.

*She gets out a Connect Four game and begins to set it up.*

BIGFOOT

Trying to find what?

GRIM REAPER

Nothing.

*There's a pause.*

BIGFOOT

Well. See ya.

*He books it out the front door.*

STORK

You better find your scythe soon because the season finale is coming up and if my physical body isn't there then Bigfoot's going to be suspicious, and you're going to get found out.

GRIM REAPER

Well, if I do put you back in your body then I will get found out anyway.

*She begins the Connect Four game.*

STORK

What is wrong with you? You can't do this! Do you know how many babies are going undelivered here?

*She continues the game.*

GRIM REAPER

Do you know how many deaths are not occurring that ought to be? I am doing this because I have to. I cannot afford to let you--

STORK

Let me? Look, buddy. Don't act like you're some sort of, like, high and mighty end-all force of the Universe. We are equals. You end it but I start it.

GRIM REAPER

I did not mean to imply anything otherwise.

STORK

Then why won't you let me back in my body?

GRIM REAPER

I do not have my scythe! Even if I wanted to, I could not!

STORK

Oh, so you don't want to.

GRIM REAPER

No, I do not. Not if you are going to be like that.

STORK

How am I supposed to behave, huh? Am I supposed to murder the only person who ever talks to me and then act like a total twat about it?

GRIM REAPER

Just because your life is so great prancing about, delivering bundles of joy makes you think--

STORK

My job is hard! I have tons of tedious request paperwork to do, which is backing up because I can't do it right now, might I remind you, and lots of times a birth isn't the happiest thing ever to be around for.

GRIM REAPER

I have personally witnessed the death of every single living thing that has ever existed. Every car crash. Every kid with cancer. Every frightened animal and murder victim and suicidal teenager. I was at the Holocaust, the Titanic, Pompeii, Hiroshima, and 9/11. Every single animal. And human. Ever.

STORK

Hey, at least they get to go to Heaven usually.

GRIM REAPER

Yes. The deceased do not bother me. It is the ones that remain among the living. I have to watch them cry over the bodies of their loved ones. Not knowing what will come next. And...do you ever wonder what will happen when people stop believing in us?

STORK

Oh, you don't have worry about that. People are never going to stop believing in death. You'll be here forever.

GRIM REAPER

That is what I am worried about. Eventually the stories will fade--the childhood tales and the urban legends and the biblical parables will no longer be told. And I will have to face a day when I live alone.

*After a moment, the Stork puts her arm around her.*

STORK

But you know what? That's not today.

*Beat.*

Hey, let's keep looking for your scythe. And if we can't find it, I have an idea for what we can do for the finale. C'mon. You ever seen "Weekend at Bernie's?"

*They exit down the hallway.*

*Jesus enters through the front door holding the applesauce.*

JESUS

I was going to go to the beach, but then I almost got killed by some falling applesauce so I figured screw everything. I'm going back to bed. Oh. Nobody's here.

*He leaves the applesauce on the counter.*

If anyone else wants to whip me, or make fun of me, or leave me nailed to some lumber for a few days, now would be a good time.

*Santa enters, dejectedly and holding an envelope.*  
Oh, great. What do you want?

SANTA  
I just got back from a trial.

JESUS  
Yeah? Are you going to jail?

SANTA  
They charged me for parking a commercial transport vehicle without a permit, unauthorized ownership of wild animals, and disorderly conduct. Even though I insisted that they were magical reindeer.

JESUS  
So? Do you have to pay a fine or something?

SANTA  
I was sentenced to thirty days of community service. I just received my assignment in the mail. It's unfortunate that I have to spend my month off working, but at least I'll be helping the less fortunate.

*Satan enters from the hallway.*

SATAN  
I heard what's going on. What's the verdict?

SANTA  
It's right here. And my assignment is...

*He opens the envelope.*  
Oh, Krampus.

JESUS  
What?

SANTA  
I have to play the part of Santa at the Mill District Mall's "Christmas in July" celebration.

SATAN  
Wow. Talk about your cruel irony.

JESUS  
(Reading from the letter)  
You'll be listening to what kids want and everything.  
So much for a month off.

SATAN  
When do you start?

SANTA

Tomorrow. I guess I'd better go get the old red suit from my sleigh.

SATAN

Hey, you know what? I'll go get it. I saw some kid spraypainting a building with "Hail Santa," and it made me laugh. Is the sleigh unlocked?

SANTA

Yes. They're in a compartment under the seat. Thank you.

*Satan goes to leave through the front door, but standing on the other side are Jelly Belly and Cadbury Malone. He immediately slams the door again.*

SATAN

You know what I think I'll take the fire escape instead just for the hell of it.

*He scrambles out the window.*

*Immediately, there is a knock on the door. Jesus gets up and answers it.*

JESUS

Hello?

CADBURY MALONE

Jesus Christ, it's Jesus Christ.

JELLY BELLY

Who?

CADBURY MALONE

What are ya, stupid? He's that guy who's name what we Mafia types say all the time, for Christ's sake.

JELLY BELLY

Oh, yeah. Ain't he also involved in Easter in some way?

CADBURY MALONE

Eh, I don't remember. In all honesty who gives two shits and a marshmallow peep. It is with much gusto that I meet you, Mr. Christ. My current alias is Cadbury Malone, and this here is my partner Jelly Belly.

JELLY BELLY

How goes it?

JESUS

Okay. What do you want?

CADBURY MALONE

We're looking for, ah, hey, Jelly Belly, what was the guy's name?

JELLY BELLY

Oh, I brought the photograph this time.

*He holds out a photo to Jesus.*

JESUS

You just missed him. He just climbed out the window to go get stuff out of the sleigh down on the street. You might still be able to catch him.

CADBURY MALONE

Right. Sleigh on the street. Jelly Belly, go after 'im. Clobber 'im with the chocolate bunny if you have to, and make sure it's not the hollow one.

*Jelly Belly leaves.*

*(To Jesus)*

Oh, and by "clobber 'im with the bunny," that's code for, uh, "take 'im out to brunch." I promise you on my seedy, questionable honor that nothing bad's gonna happen to your friend Santa.

JESUS

Sorry, Sant--?

*He looks over at Santa, at the photo, then back at Cadbury Malone.*

Sure, whatever.

CADBURY MALONE

Have an above-adequate day, Mr. Christ, eh?

*He takes the photo back from Jesus and exits through the front door.*

*Satan enters, panting, through the window. He tosses Santa's red suit to him.*

SATAN

Here's your thing.

SANTA

Thank you so much.

SATAN

Did anybody happen to come to the door while I was gone?

JESUS

Yeah, two guys from the Easter Bunny. They're looking for you, I think. Or him. I don't know. And I'm not sure they know, exactly.

SATAN

Hmm.

*The phone rings. Jesus, who is nearest to it, goes to pick it up.*

I got it!

*He leaps over the sofa, across the room, and grabs the phone.*

Hello? What is it? Thirty f--celcius or farenheit? Jean Claude van Damn it! Wait, didn't I fire you? Well, you're fired too. At least try to slow it down!

*He hangs up.*

Wrong number.

*He exits quickly down the hallway.*

#### Scene VII

*Later. Stork and the Grim Reaper are in the room.*

GRIM REAPER

Okay. To make this work, you will have to practice lifting objects. As a ghost, you can manipulate and interact with certain physical forms, as long as--

STORK

Yeah, yeah, I've seen the movies. I just have to pick stuff up and it'll seem like it's floating.

*She goes for a pillow, but can't lift it. She heaves for a few seconds, but it doesn't budge.*

Um, what.

GRIM REAPER

Polyester is one of the hardest things for ghosts to manipulate. It has a very complex molecular structure. Your body is wearing cotton, correct? We need you to practice on some organic matter, such as meat or vegetables, and then we can move on to manipulating electronics.

STORK

I won't need to manipulate electronics, I just have to make it seem like I'm still alive. Let's find some food.

*The Grim Reaper finds the applesauce on the counter.*

GRIM REAPER

This will do nicely.

STORK

Okay, give it here.

*The Grim Reaper hands her the applesauce, and she struggles a bit but catches on quickly.*

Hmm. This is a little tricky. Hey, being a ghost is fun!

*She begins to fly the applesauce around the room, making airplane noises. As she nears the hallway, Bigfoot enters.*

*He sees the floating applesauce, and immediately faints.*

STORK

Oops. Sorry, Bigfoot.

*She puts the applesauce on the counter.*

GRIM REAPER

You seem to have the hang of normal objects, but manipulating a fully articulated corpse will be much more difficult. We need something to practice on.

STORK

First! You have to hold up your end of the bargain. Take that vest off.

GRIM REAPER

Where will I put it?

STORK

I don't know. In the closet. Nobody will find it suspicious hanging up with all the other junk.

GRIM REAPER

Okay.

*She goes over to the still-open closet and takes off her outer sweatshirt, revealing the vest. At that moment, the Sandman and Tooth Fairy enter from the hallway, talking.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Central incisor, lateral incisor, canine, first premolar, second premolar, first molar, second molar, third molar.

*Stork shoves the Grim Reaper in the closet and slams the door.*

SANDMAN

Did you see that? Do you think that was Boogie?

TOOTH FAIRY

Boogie? Boogie monster? I don't think so. Let's just thank our lucky stars she rarely comes home anymore. I forgot my purse. Let's get out of here before he shows up.

SANDMAN

Okay. I'm going to grab my coat if the closet lets me.

*The Tooth Fairy exits down the hallway.*

*The Sandman walks over to the closet and tries to open the door. It doesn't budge, because Stork is leaning against it.*

Okayy...

*He tries to open the door again, but Stork is pushing all of her weight against it. She is obviously losing, and is very nervous about it.*

STORK

Uh...um...ring ring!

*The Sandman stops and looks over at the phone.*  
Ring ring! Ring ring!

*The Sandman goes over and answers the phone. The Stork follows him over.*

SANDMAN

Hello?

STORK

(Speaking with a masculine voice)

Um. Hello! This is, uh, Doctor...Brunt...Crontch...man.

SANDMAN

Doctor Brunt Crontchman?

STORK

Yeah, that's right. Listen, is, um, that cute chick with the blonde hair here? Wears scrubs, great smile?  
(MORE)

STORK (cont'd)

We met at the orthodontist's and she gave me this number. Is she there?

SANDMAN

Uh...yeah, she is. Uh, listen. She's busy right now but I'll have her call you back, okay?

STORK

Um. Yeah, sure! You should definitely go tell her I called, and not do anything else that you were just about to do.

SANDMAN

Okay...sure. Good bye, sir.

*He hangs up, then sighs. Dejectedly, he heads towards the hallway.*

STORK

Damn. I need to get better at improv.

*The Tooth Fairy comes back with her purse.*

TOOTH FAIRY

You ready to go?

SANDMAN

Yeah.

TOOTH FAIRY

Did I hear you answer the phone?

SANDMAN

Oh, yeah. It...um...telemarketer.

TOOTH FAIRY

Ah. Is Bigfoot...?

SANDMAN

Just let him do him.

*They exit through the front door.*

*The Grim Reaper comes out of the closet without the vest.*

GRIM REAPER

So you do not want anybody to find out after all?

STORK

Of course not! Not when I'm this invested in a poorly-conceived scheme. I feel like Spadesclub  
(MORE)

STORK (cont'd)

Diamondheart. Let's keep practicing. Fully articulated corpse. Do you think Bigfoot would notice?

Scene VIII

*Jesus is reading the bible. Satan is conniving. Santa stumbles through the front door dressed in his classic red suit. He sits down on the sofa, exhausted.*

SANTA

I'm ho ho home.

SATAN

Wow. You better take it easy with this government-mandated community service. You looked old before.

SANTA

I don't know if I'm going to keep this up. I can't do a year straight of Christmas.

JESUS

I'm so sorry. You have to sit around all day and listen to stuff. That sounds awful.

SANTA

Do you realize how many times I've heard "The Twelve Days of Christmas?" More or less once a day since it was written in 1780.

SATAN

I agree. Goodwill towards men can go suck a bag of matzah balls.

SANTA

That's not it at all. I should think I love Christmas more than anyone. I'm Santa Claus. But one month off is all I ask. Even just a week. A day where I don't have to hear the word "wassailing."

JESUS

So don't go.

SANTA

I'm sorry, but I have to.

JESUS

No you don't. What are they going to do? They can't arrest Santa Claus. You're a figment of their imagination.

SANTA  
That just wouldn't be right. That's not in the true spirit of Christmas.

JESUS  
Ha! Spirit of Christmas.

SATAN  
You know, Jesus, you should be grateful to Old Saint Nick for taking over your holiday. Now you can devote your time to more important things, like watching the home shopping network.

JESUS  
He did not take over my holiday.

SANTA  
Yes, Christmas has room in it for Jesus Christ as well.

JESUS  
You know how lots of people complain because their birthday is so close to Christmas that their birthday gets overshadowed? Well Christmas is literally my birthday! That's the point of Christmas, and it still overshadows my birthday!

SANTA  
I'm sorry to hear that, Jesus, but Christmas means a lot of things to a lot more people than just yourself.

JESUS  
Oh, yeah, it's not about ribbons, it's not about tags, it's not about packages, boxes, or bags. I get it. You know what? Fine. Fine. Let's just change the name of the holiday to Clausmas, and then there won't be any more confusion.

SANTA  
Jesus, I want to try and help you out. Christmas is about--

JESUS  
Just go away, okay?

*He raises his hand at Santa. Over the next line, Santa begins to wobble on his feet and his eyes slowly begin to blur.*

Just go back to the North Pole and build your LEGOs and Barbies and monster trucks. Go star in Coca-Cola ads and terrible Tim Allen movies, I don't care. Go sing your songs about snow and presents and chimneys and getting drunk off your ass. Just do it somewhere else so I don't have to hear it.

SANTA

Will you let me jusht--

JESUS

Deck the halls with boughs of holly, fa la la la la, la  
la la la!

*Santa hiccups, and collapses to the floor. Jesus  
lowers his hand in shock.*

SATAN

What the hell was that?

JESUS

Blood is fifty percent water.

*Santa staggers to his feet, now completely drunk.*

SANTA

Okay, I can shее I'm not wanted here. But you know--ya  
know what? I'm don't have to take thish. I'm the  
God-damn Shanta Claush. I know what do is good for all  
the kidsh sho I'm gonga keep doin' it. You don't like  
me and I can reckspeck that. But I thought he without  
shin should cast the firshst shtone. Think about that,  
bubaroo. Geroff me, I'm still talking. So, whatever,  
I'm gonna go back to the South Pole for a while and let  
you simmer down for a bit, okay? Merry Christmas to  
all, and to I gonna where's my hat.

*He stumbles through the front door.*

SATAN

(To Jesus)

That...seemed a bit out of character.

JESUS

He'll be fine in the morning. He's just drunk.

SATAN

Is he going to be able to fly that sleigh?

JESUS

Relax! He doesn't even do anything. The reindeer'll get  
him home.

SATAN

Hmm.

JESUS

Oh, sure. Worry about him.

SATAN

(Looking out the window)  
He made it to the street. He's getting in the sleigh.

*Bigfoot enters through the front door.*

BIGFOOT

Hey, do you guys know who this note is from?

*He grabs a note from off the door.*

SATAN

He's starting the engine.

BIGFOOT

(Reading)  
"Dear Santa. We left youse a warning. May it gratuitously kill you dead. Happy Easter." What does that mean? It's not Easter, is it?

*From down on the street, there is a humongous explosion.*

SATAN

Jesus Christ! Holy hell! Somebody call an ambulance!

BIGFOOT

What's going on? What just exploded?

*Satan and Bigfoot rush out the front door.*

*Jesus stands in shock at the window.*

JESUS

I didn't mean...I don't...

Scene IX

*Jesus dials a number on the telephone.*

VOICE

We're sorry, your call cannot be completed as dialed.  
Please check your number and try again.

*There is a beep. At some point during the following monologue, Satan enters.*

JESUS

Hey Dad, it's me. How are you? I was just calling because, um...I, uh...just wanted to know what the hell happened to you? Why have you forsaken me? If I had seen you leave, if you had packed all your plain white robes in a suitcase and left to get cigarettes and  
(MORE)

JESUS (cont'd)

never came back, sure, I would hate you, but at least I'd know how to handle it. I know how to...forgive my enemy. But you couldn't have the decency to even do that for me, could you? You had to go and maybe not even exist in the first place. I remember you. I remember a feeling, a joy, a warmth, and anger. But I don't remember a face, or even a voice. Just...pain. Mostly in my hands and feet. Sometimes I wish I wasn't a miracle baby. I used to do everything right, just by existing. People worshipped me. Animals bowed at my feet. I don't even know what the hell frankincense is. Life was simpler then. I had a holy doctrine. Everything complex could be boiled down into two lines of scripture. Now the world's gone nuts. What do I do? I...

*He notices Satan watching, and quickly hangs up.  
Fuck off.*

*He starts to exit, then stops.  
You know, I only said those things because I thought nobody was listening.*

*He exits.*

#### Scene X

*The Sandman and Tooth Fairy enter, coming home from work.*

SANDMAN

I still can't believe you put tooth paste on your French Fries.

TOOTH FAIRY

They're called Fresh Fries, thank you very much.

SANDMAN

I guess I shouldn't be surprised after that mouthwash mojito you made me.

TOOTH FAIRY

Wow, is it that early? I can't believe we both got done so quickly tonight!

SANDMAN

Now here we are, just the both of us, alone. Together. I wonder if anyone else would want to do anything.

TOOTH FAIRY

Sandy, do you realize what time it is? Nobody else is up. Are you expecting a visitor at three in the morning?

*At that moment, there is a loud thump on the closet door. Both the Tooth Fairy and Sandman stare at the door in terror.*

TOOTH FAIRY

(Weakly, frightened)  
...Boogie Monster? Was that you?

*There is another loud thump.*

SANDMAN

Maybe if we're quiet she'll just leave.

TOOTH FAIRY

I am not in a secure enough state of mind to handle him right now.

*The thumping becomes rhythmic.*

SANDMAN

Please go away, please go away, please go away, please go away.

*Suddenly, the door bursts open and the lights come up, through the door struts the BOOGIE MONSTER, dressed to the nines like John Travolta on the dance floor. The disco strains of "I'm Your Boogie Man" by KC and the Sunshine Band fill the air. The Boogie Monster shows her best disco dance moves.*

TOOTH FAIRY

NOOOOOOOOO!

SANDMAN

I am so sick of Disco!

TOOTH FAIRY

Quick! Get under the blanket! Maybe it will muffle the sound!

*The two of them dive under the covers of the sofa.*

BOOGIE MONSTER

Ow! I got Saturday Nightmare Fever! The Boogie Monster is back in town!

SANDMAN

(Poking his head out)  
Go away!

TOOTH FAIRY

Disco is dead! Get out of here!

SANDMAN

Scram!

*The music stops. The Sandman gestures towards the door, and the Boogie Man leaves. The two suddenly notice what close proximity they're in, and bolt upright.*

SANDMAN

That song's going to be stuck in my head for a week.

TOOTH FAIRY

Yeah.

SANDMAN

Had any interesting dreams lately?

TOOTH FAIRY

Yes, I have, thank you very much Mr. Sandman.

SANDMAN

What? I don't choose them.

TOOTH FAIRY

It was awful. I'm getting freaked out just thinking about it. It was me and Stork and that brunette barista that looks like Kate Middleton all at the State Fair. We got cotton candy from a vending machine, and the second I took a bite--this is the creepy part. Oh, man.

SANDMAN

What happened? I won't tell.

TOOTH FAIRY

All my teeth fell out. I can still feel it happening. The little fibers in my gums loosening, and they all just tumble out into my hand like tiny ivory candies or...ugh. I felt so powerless.

SANDMAN

That's actually a pretty common dream. I think I read somewhere that it had something to do with...fear of growing up? Or, no. Pregnancy maybe.

TOOTH FAIRY

Well, I'm sure not pregnant yet. Maybe in my case it's just stress over my job.

SANDMAN

You do think about teeth a lot.

TOOTH FAIRY

Almost constantly.

*The Sandman yawns.*

Wow, the bags under your eyes have bags under their eyes. You need to get more sleep.

SANDMAN

Hmm? Oh, yeah, that's a good one.

TOOTH FAIRY

Seriously, you need to get more sleep. How many hours do you get a night?

SANDMAN

Literally zero.

TOOTH FAIRY

What? Wait. What. Wait, hold on. I just realized that I don't think I've ever in my entire life seen you asleep. Have you not been sleeping?

SANDMAN

Of course not! Does Santa deliver himself presents?

TOOTH FAIRY

Oh my God, because who would put you to sleep? No wonder you always seem so exhausted! What have you tried?

SANDMAN

Everything. Coffee, Red Bull, cold showers, loud music.

TOOTH FAIRY

No, I mean what have you tried to help you sleep?

SANDMAN

Oh. I never thought of that.

*He brushes some sand off of her shoulder.*

Sorry. I generate a lot of sand.

TOOTH FAIRY

I like it. It's like you perpetually just got back from the beach.

*She runs her hand through his hair and collects some sand in her cupped hand.*

*The Stork enters quietly. She notices the couple on the couch, then slowly sneaks over to the kitchen and grabs the applesauce.*

SANDMAN

Hey, listen. I, uh, forgot to tell you, but you got a phone call.

*Stork freezes.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Oh, I've been expecting one! From who?

SANDMAN

Some guy who seemed to have a thing for you. Brunt Crontchman.

*Stork cringes.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Oh my God. I hate him! Brunt Crontchman can get gingivits for all I care.

*Stork stares in disbelief. She mouths "Brunt Crontchman?"*

SANDMAN

Really?

TOOTH FAIRY

He is such a pretentious jerk. He thinks that he's the best thing since mint-flavored floss. He asks me out at least once a month. He's a creep.

*Stork exits down the hallway. Beat.*

SANDMAN

T.F., will you sleep with me?

TOOTH FAIRY

Excuse me?

SANDMAN

No! I meant--not that--I want to sleep with, in the proximity of you! I don't know what it's like to fall asleep so I'd want someone who I know would want to sleep near me that I can put my arm around and hear them breathing and know that whatever sleep is like, I'll be safe with you.

TOOTH FAIRY

Aw...! You want to sleep with me?

SANDMAN

Yeah.

TOOTH FAIRY

That's so sweet!

SANDMAN

I was worried you'd say no and then I'd feel the same way you feel when you drop the toothpaste.

TOOTH FAIRY

How do you mean?

SANDMAN

Crestfallen.

TOOTH FAIRY

That joke was so dumb I'm going to kiss you.

SANDMAN

Okay.

*They kiss. After a second, she pulls back and blows the sand she had kept in her hand in his face.*

What was...

*He drops immediately to sleep on her lap. She smiles, yawns, and sits there stroking his head and listening to the rain.*

#### Scene XI

*Bigfoot is sitting on the sofa, wriggling in anticipation. He is wearing one of his homemade Spadesclub Diamondheart shirts. Satan is seated at the kitchen table, carefully transferring mustard into a toothpaste tube using a stainless steel marinade injector.*

VOICE

(From television)

Mr. Diamondheart, how do you respond to these accusations of triple murdercide?

SPADESCLUB DIAMONDHEART

(From television)

I plead the second.

VOICE

(From television)

I'm sorry, don't you mean the fifth?

SPADESCLUB DIAMONDHEART

(From television)

Nope.

*There are several gunshot sounds from the television.*

VOICE

(From television)  
The Spadesclub Diamondheart marathon will return after these commercial messages.

*Bigfoot mutes the television.*

SATAN

Wait a minute, where'd the remote come from?

BIGFOOT

I don't know. Couch cushions? Where is Stork? It's not like her to be late!

*The Tooth Fairy comes in yawning from the hallway.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Did one of you steal my tooth paste again?

*Satan quickly hides the mustard and syringe.*

SATAN

Yeah, Jesus did and I just got it back from him! Here you go.

*He gives her the tooth paste tube.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Thanks. Do you guys smell mustard?

SATAN

No.

TOOTH FAIRY

Man, I'm really craving mustard right now. Just straight mustard. Is it weird to want to brush your teeth with mustard?

SATAN

Oh, come on! Can't I do one evil thing anymore? I thought you hated mustard.

*The Sandman enters.*

SANDMAN

Good morning.

TOOTH FAIRY

Good morning.

SANDMAN

Have you seen Cupid? I want to thank her for...you know.

TOOTH FAIRY

I wouldn't mind thanking her myself. You know, I actually asked her about you and she did this thing with two playing cards, and if I chose the right one...

SANDMAN

No way. She did the same thing to me. The card's still stuck to the fridge.

TOOTH FAIRY

Really? Mine's over here.

*She grabs another playing card from a shelf.*  
I'm glad we both picked the right card. Unless. Do you think we did? What if one of us got it wrong?

SANDMAN

Do you want to check?

TOOTH FAIRY

No. Yes. Three. Two. One.

*They both look. Brief confusion.*

SANDMAN

(Reading)  
"I shot you two..."

TOOTH FAIRY

(Reading)  
"...a long time ago."

*They look at each other and smile. Taking hands, they exit through the front door.*

*The Grim Reaper enters from the hallway, followed by the Stork--she is wearing her normal outfit and large sunglasses, and is moving awkwardly and jerkily. In fact, it is her invisible soul clumsily trying to hold up and manipulate her physical body.*

GRIM REAPER

Hello everyone, we are here for the television event! Both of us are completely fine and alive.

*The Stork gives a clumsy wave.*

BIGFOOT

Where have you been? I haven't seen you in weeks!

GRIM REAPER

Stork has been really busy with work.

BIGFOOT

I need to talk to you. We only have a few minutes to coordinate our fan theories. Personally, I think Spadesclub escaped the collapsing tower by sliding down a chute at the last second, and the Colonel we've been seeing is actually an imposter--one of the robots that he beat up in episode 5. Also, I think the entire season 4 is an allegory for cheating at Monopoly. But you're always good at predicting the twist endings. Who do you think Dr. Mancala really is? Oh wait, you never got your T-Shirt. Here.

*He tosses it to Stork. It hits her square in the face, and she immediately falls to the ground.*

GRIM REAPER

What is that shirt made of?

BIGFOOT

I don't know. Poly...polyesth...T-Shirt stuff. Stork, are you okay? Stork? What's going on?

*He grabs her hand.*

Holy cow, Stork! Your hands are cold as hell!

SATAN

No it's not! Hell isn't cold, it's warm. It's super warm all the time. Hot, even, you might say.

BIGFOOT

What?

*The front door opens, and in comes Santa wearing a neck brace and one arm in a sling. He is holding his magic sack with the other arm.*

SANTA

Ho ho ho!

BIGFOOT

Santa! You're back on your feet! How are you feeling?

SANTA

I'm fine, I'm fine. Good thing I came back when I did because my Christmas senses were tingling. Someone in here desperately needs a present that just got shipped in straight from the North Pole this morning.

*He produces a brand new scythe with a bow stuck to it. It is similar to the Grim Reaper's old scythe, but is decorated with flames.*

GRIM REAPER

For me? Wow. I like the flames.

SANTA

A little bird told me you've been needing some accessorizing. Why don't you try it out?

*He winks knowingly.*

GRIM REAPER

Of course!

*She taps the scythe on the floor. Stork bolts upright, gasping for air.*

STORK

(Raspily)

Dr. Mancala is really the Wizard of the Coast. He didn't die in that operation. He escaped on the missing battleship and masterminded the whole trouble with Mille Bornes.

BIGFOOT

Of course! That even explains the whole Parker brothers thing!

*Stork coughs a few times and playfully punches Death.*

Everybody shut up! Stork, it's starting!

*They clamber to the sofa. The Spadesclub Diamondheart theme song begins to play.*

VOICE

(From the television)

To win at war you need an ace.  
He'll start the pot with a swift kick in the face.  
So go all in, then up the ante.  
He's a loose-cannon vigilante.

He's trouble  
With a Pop-o-matic bubble.

Guess who? It's  
Spadesclub Diamondheart  
He'll stack the deck and case the joint.  
Spadesclub Diamondheart  
In a game of Scrabble, that's 36 points.

(MORE)

VOICE (cont'd)

If you tangle with the hero of this TV Show,  
You'll end up in jail and you will not pass Go.  
If you're a lowlife, villain, or liar,  
You'll get caught up in the crossfire.  
So shut your trap, 'cause it's about to start...

Spadesclub Diamondheart!

Last week on Spadesclub Diamondheart:

SPADESCLUB DIAMONDHEART

(From the television)

I don't know who you are but you're asking for a  
pinochle sandwich. Now give me the recipe to my wife or  
this bomb won't live to see tomorrow morning.

DR. MANCALA

(From the television)

Sorry, Mr. Diamondheart! You seem to have forgotten I  
am holding all the cards, and those cards spell  
checkmate in the corner pocket! Yahtzee!

VOICE

(From the television)

Will Spadesclub and his young sidekick Mousetrap be  
able to once again fist-punch their way out of this  
mess? Now for the mind-boggling conclusion.

*Suddenly, the power goes out.*

STORK

Oh, fuck! I did forget to pay the power bill.

BIGFOOT

No no no no no no what no what no!

STORK

Well. I guess that's that.

BIGFOOT

No, that is not that's that! There has to be  
something--

JESUS

Isn't there a TV down by the swimming pool? Where your  
girlfriend lives?

BIGFOOT

Oh my God, you are so right. Jesus, you're a genius.  
I'm coming, honey!

*He sprints out the front door.*

GRIM

Are you not going to join him?

STORK

Nah. I guess I'm kinda over it. I can catch it on reruns. I'll give them some time together alone.

SATAN

I really hope that they have kids someday. I would love to see the weird hybrid nightmare offspring of Sasquatch and the Loch Ness Monster.

STORK

Oh, cervix! I am so behind on deliveries!

*She grabs a clipboard from the shelf and frantically flips through it.*

Look at all these infant request forms I still need to submit! Tim and Caren Hardin, David and Kimberly Adams, Th--

*She freezes on a certain pair of names, her mouth hanging open.*

JESUS

What?

*Stork shows the list to the others.*

SATAN

Oh my God!

JESUS

They did not.

SANTA

I knew it!

JESUS

Mazeltov to them.

SATAN

Does this mean that the kid is going to be someone who puts people's teeth to sleep? The Novocaine Pixie?

STORK

How long has this been a thing? Did any of you know about this?

SANTA

I had a hunch. I did see them when they were sleeping.

*There's a knock at the door.*

SATAN

I got it.

*He traipses over and peeks through the peephole.  
No I don't!*

*He closes himself in the closet.*

SANTA

Okay then, I'll get it.

*He opens the door, to find Cadbury Malone and  
Jelly Belly.*

CADBURY MALONE

Mr. Kringle, we would like to formally apologize for  
incorrectly identifying you as our stoolie and, er...

JELLY BELLY

Explodings ya.

CADBURY MALONE

Exactly. Our boss the Easter Bunny would like to state  
that he respects you very much as a holiday figure, and  
has no intentions of usurping Christmas.

JELLY BELLY

It was just a mistake, honest.

SANTA

No harm done, boys. I believe that everyone is nice  
until proven naughty. And I believe you that it was an  
innocent mistake.

CADBURY MALONE

Thank you so much, sir.

JELLY BELLY

And I just wanted to also thank you for the tricycle  
you brought me when I was five. I loved that thing.

CADBURY MALONE

I can assure you that from now on, we will redouble our  
attempts to correctly exploding the fellow who we were  
previously attempting to bump off.

JELLY BELLY

If he doesn't deliver on his end of the deal, that is.

*Suddenly, there are muffled screams of delight  
from the closet. Satan bursts out of it holding  
the vest.*

SATAN

Yes! I found it! I don't know how but I found it!

*He throws the vest at the two mafiosos.*

Take your stupid vest! Ha! I fulfilled my end of the bargain, so tell your boss to get cracking!

CADBURY MALONE

Youse may have squirmed out of it this time, but youse better watch youse-self, Beelze-Bub.

SATAN

I will see you goons in Hell!

*He slams the door.*

Hot damn!

STORK

What was that all about?

SATAN

Well, I guess since it's over I might as well tell you. Brace yourselves. Hell...is freezing over.

JESUS

Oh no! Did that brunette barista finally agree to go on a date with you?

SATAN

No! It's because--well, it doesn't really matter why. Regardless, I made a little deal that I perhaps shouldn't have with the old Easter Bunny, and now that I delivered on my end he'll send some of his goons to help reverse the dropping temperature. So everything will finally be under control.

JESUS

Not really. You're not addressing whatever's causing Hell to free--

SATAN

For all eternity.

JESUS

But--

SATAN

Tell you what, since this is the last time Hell won't be stifflingly hot, what say you all I take you down there and we can hit up a rock and roll concert or play some video games? My treat.

STORK

God yes. Come on, Grim.

SATAN

You coming?

JESUS

Yeah, just a sec. I'll see you in Hell.

*Satan, Grim, and Stork exit. Santa hands Jesus a gift in red and green wrapping with a note attached.*

SANTA

I realize it's a bit early.

*He exits out the front door.*

JESUS

(Reading)

"Happy...Birthday. Look, kid. Everybody struggles with faith from time to time. I realize it's not my place to say, but if you want my advice, I'd tell you even people who seem to have all the answers are just people. I had to pull a lot of strings to find this--they only produced eight copies before someone caught the printing error. Romans 8, verse 39."

*He opens the package to find a bible. He flips to the correct page.*

"Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of our Lord and Savior...good old what's his name. I've plumb forgotten and I can't be bothered to ask someone else. Starts with a J, I think. If someone asks you to typeset a bible, don't do it. They don't pay you jack shit. Actually, I've just remembered the bloke's name, but I can't be arsed to change this so I'm leaving it in."

*Jesus begins to laugh. He looks around.*

Sorry I got you drunk. And blown up. Merry Christmas, Santa Claus.

## Scene XII

*Time has passed. Quite a bit of it. Satan is concernedly investigating the thermometer. The Tooth Fairy, now beginning to be visibly pregnant, walks into the kitchen.*

TOOTH FAIRY

Oog.

*She opens the fridge and gets the mustard..  
Morning.*

SATAN

Good morning. Wow, you're getting fat.

TOOTH FAIRY

Hey!

SATAN

Evil!

*The Tooth Fairy gives him a sneer and sits at the table with her mustard, slurping some straight out of the bottle. Satan exits down the hallway, passing Jesus entering.*

JESUS

Good morning!

TOOTH FAIRY

You're up early.

JESUS

I've got to get to work. The soup kitchen is doing fish stew tonight so I've got to set up the crock pot and pick up some bread from the bakery.

TOOTH FAIRY

Doing good, I see. Got some pep back in your step.

JESUS

Yeah.

TOOTH FAIRY

What changed?

JESUS

Yeah.

*The Sandman enters. He looks positively refreshed.*

SANDMAN

Howdy ho, Jesus!

JESUS

Morning.

*The Sandman kisses the Tooth Fairy.*

SANDMAN

Ech. You've got mustard breath.

TOOTH FAIRY

Yeah, well now I've got sand in my teeth, so we're even.

*Bigfoot enters from the hallway.*

BIGFOOT

You guys about ready?

SANDMAN

Yep.

JESUS

Where are you going?

BIGFOOT

We're finally going grocery shopping. Cough up.

*Jesus hands over some cash.*

TOOTH FAIRY

If you see Satan tell him if he wants raw goat meat he can get it himself. See ya!

*The Tooth Fairy, Sandman, and Bigfoot exit through the front door.*

*Then, Mr. Morgan enters from the hallway.*

MR. MORGAN

I thought they'd never leave.

JESUS

Hey, Mr. Morgan.

MR. MORGAN

Have you ever noticed how many different types of vehicles they have at airports? It's a veritable Galapagos Island of different species of trucks and things. Stairs trucks. Food trucks. Fuel trucks. Ramp trucks. Luggage trucks. It's the finches all over again. Evolution is a marvelous thing.

JESUS

Trucks don't evolve. They're built.

*Mr. Morgan sits down on the sofa.*

Say, Mr. Morgan--have you by any chance found a goblet sort of thing around your apartment anywhere? It's gone missing.

*Mr. Morgan laughs.*

MR. MORGAN

Don't you remember the most fundamental rule of the Universe? Where do lost things end up?

JESUS

In the couch cushions?

*He reaches, unconvinced, into the sofa, and is amazed to find the Holy Grail.*

Wow! How did you know that?

MR. MORGAN

Oh, everything sounds wiser when it's said by a wrinkled old fart.

*Jesus laughs.*

You seem to be in a much better mood now than you were a few weeks ago.

JESUS

Yeah. I don't know what it is, but I feel like a normal person. It's nice.

MR. MORGAN

A normal person?

JESUS

Yeah. Just another guy. I haven't tried any miracles lately. Maybe it's for the best.

MR. MORGAN

Hmm.

JESUS

Hold on, I need water. I'm thirsty.

*He exits down the hallway with the Holy Grail.*

MR. MORGAN

Hello thirsty, I'm Mr. Morgan.

JESUS

(Offstage)

Do you consider yourself religious, Mr. Morgan?

MR. MORGAN

Oh, I spend a lot of time in churches, yes.

*Jesus returns.*

JESUS

Why do you think God had his son crucified?

MR. MORGAN

For the sins of the innocent, I believe is what they say.

JESUS

Well, don't you think he should have sacrificed himself instead of sending his son? Don't you think that's a little selfish?

MR. MORGAN

Well, I'd say it's the same reason a dad would send his son to play junior football even though he knew he would get scrapes and bruises. Because he wanted to make sure his son grew up tough.

JESUS

I wouldn't call being nailed to a cross "scrapes and bruises."

MR. MORGAN

Bigger kids require bigger boo boos. And the son of God is a pretty Big kid.

JESUS

Hmm.

MR. MORGAN

You're asking some pretty deep questions here, bud.

JESUS

Yeah.

MR. MORGAN

I suppose next you'll ask what it's all about.

JESUS

Why, do you have an answer for that?

MR. MORGAN

Oh, everybody knows what it's all about. The Hokey Pokey.

*He laughs jovially.*

When are you going to get your hair cut, young man? You look like a hippie.

JESUS

Get off my back. I like it this way.

*Pause. (MORE)*

JESUS (cont'd)

Well, I've got to get to work.

MR. MORGAN

You know, I'm sure your father is very proud of you.

JESUS

Yeah, I'm sure. My father.

MR. MORGAN

I'll be going back upstairs now.

JESUS

Okay. See ya.

*Mr. Morgan goes to the front door. Jesus begins to take a drink of water from the Holy Grail.*

MR. MORGAN

Oh, and say hello to your mother for me.

*He leaves.*

*Jesus coughs, and chokes on the water he was drinking. He smacks his lips and looks in the Grail.*

*Chardonnay.*

*He laughs. With new life in him, he strolls out the front door.*

*After a short pause, Satan sneaks in through the front door. He is wearing Mr. Morgan's outfit. In fact, it was him the whole time. Suddenly, Bigfoot leaps out from the hallway.*

BIGFOOT

I knew it!

*Satan starts in surprise.*

I have been keeping a mental list of every person I know who I haven't seen in the same room at the same time. I had narrowed down Mr. Morgan to secretly being either you or Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

SATAN

I never knew it was possible to be so astute and so imbecillic at the same time.

BIGFOOT

Hey! Wait. Thanks? Wait. Hey! Wait.

*Satan sits down on the sofa.*

SATAN

Do you believe in yourself?

BIGFOOT

As in do I think I can accomplish stuff? No.

SATAN

Hell isn't actually freezing over. That's just an expression. It's just stopping to be hot. It's disappearing. Do you know how long it's been since someone said "damn you to hell," and meant it literally? We've become an idiom. We used to have a sign on our gates that said, "Abandon All Hope, Ye Who Enter Here." Now it might as well say "Vacancy--Free WiFi and HBO." People just don't have the fear of God anymore. Like a bunch of jerks. But the worst part! I'm not surprised Joe Schmo is agnostic when the Son of God himself is having a crisis of faith. So I created Mr. Morgan to try and jump start him back to the Jesus I used to know. People need a symbol to hold on to. I keep telling myself that it's just business. I need him to get Hell burning hot again. But do the ends justify the means? Does it make sense to do good for the sake of evil? He used to have such a spark in his eye. Miracles left and right, healing lepers and doing God's work. He was someone worth conspiring against. I really used to hate him. But now, after living with the guy for almost two thousand years, I hate to see him sad. And I don't know why.

BIGFOOT

A fallen angel is still an angel.

SATAN

I have never wanted more to see someone get chained to a rock and have eagles rip out their entrails twice a day for all eternity.

BIGFOOT

You know, If there's one thing I still don't understand, it's the applesauce.

SATAN

What applesauce?

BIGFOOT

Where did it come from? Why can nobody open it?

SATAN

Applesauce? Applesauce? Oh my God, applesauce? Where is the applesauce?

BIGFOOT

It's over there!

SATAN

Don't you get it? Is this a sign? Did we find it? Apple sauce! The fruit of knowledge! I can't believe I'm saying this, but Bigfoot, I think God might have sent us this applesauce.

BIGFOOT

You think so? That would explain so much probably!

SATAN

I have never believed harder in anything harder than I do this very second. I think I feel the Holy Spirit.

BIGFOOT

Open it open it open it open it open it!

*Satan tries, and fails. He inspects the jar. Beat.*

SATAN

Or. Counterargument. Nobody could open this because it's thirty years past its expiration date.

BIGFOOT

When all seems hopeful, cold hard logic ruins everything yet again.

SATAN

I'm sick of all this wishy-washy metaphorical spiritual B.S. Isn't there some way to cheer yourself up that doesn't involve the inner truths of the soul?

BIGFOOT

Well, it's a scientific fact that exercise and exposure to nature increase your happiness levels. I've been meaning to take Nessie out sometime, and I'm sure she wouldn't mind a third wheel.

SATAN

What are you saying?

BIGFOOT

Want to go dance in the pale moonlight?

SATAN

Hot damn. So be it.

*They exit out the front door. THUS*

*ENDS THE READING.*

## Chapter 4: Closing Thoughts

I was asked by my advisor to consider whether I have achieved what I set out to do. I could nitpick every aspect of the play to find a way to be unsatisfied, but I'm not going to do that. Instead, I will say that I achieved what I wanted, which was two things: write, direct, and produce a play that I'm proud of; and learn how to do those same things even better the next time. I wanted to make a play that people would enjoy and remember, and from the feedback from audience members I think I've accomplished that. The point of a University, however, is to teach students to succeed in their craft, so I hope that this experience has given me knowledge of my own mistakes in order to resolve them in the future.

Looking back at a piece of work, it is common for a creative mind in any field of art to see flaws jump out at them, and this play is no exception. I am certainly proud of the work I produced and the effort put in by everyone involved, but looking forward there are some mistakes I made that I hope I can learn from. The biggest thing I've learned is the knowledge of how important it is to be able to step back from a work and make sure every piece is going in the same direction. I will admit that occasionally I lost track of the central theme, or idea, of the play over the probably three years I've worked on *Apartment 111*. It's difficult, when lost in the mire of minutia that occupies every step of the process, to see the big picture when you're focused on small details. I do believe that I was able to wrangle a cohesive idea in the end. There were definitely times when I wrote a line for the sake of writing a line or directed a scene for the sake of finishing rehearsal. But I hope I was able to trim those stray bits down to the best of my ability.

To any aspiring playwrights who are going out to write and direct their own plays, no matter the genre, let me offer this advice from what I've learned through this experience. The advice that I kept close in mind throughout this process—and that has been invaluable to me since the day I saw it scrawled on a wall in Australia—is this: “Nobody knows that you don't know what you're doing but you.” The biggest steps I took in this project, from research to writing the script to directing to penning this document were simply pushing aside the nagging voices of doubt in my head and taking action. If you trust in yourself to complete something and trust in the others you rely on to complete their tasks, you will produce something. And even producing something mediocre is better than producing nothing at all.

Taking the first step is only the first step, however, and I learned many other valuable lessons along the way. Especially in directing, a process that I was least familiar with and encompassed the most instances of other people relying in me, I was glad for some guidance of any kind. The advice my advisor Dr. Najjar told me that helped me with the most was that as a director it was my duty to call people out. Too often I would sit quietly while actors finished a scene because I didn't want to interrupt, but as director it is crucial that you call out your actors when you see that they don't understand or aren't giving their all. Especially with a play like *Apartment III*, it was crucial that my actors understood and believed their motives and their emotions on every line. The theater is a magical place where stories can get the spark of life, so everyone in the production must constantly be on the edge and giving their all. Going through the motions is the death of theatre. It's important enough to believe in others who will help ease the way, but just as importantly you must believe in yourself.

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