

A HISTORY OF REALLY, REALLY BAD IDEAS (SKETCHES)

[Seven of these sketches were performed at the San Francisco Fringe Festival, 1996.]

“ . . . obviously intelligent and robust.”
– Julia Hawkins of *The Pacific Sun*

CHARACTERS:

(6) All parts are played by a cast of six, probably three men and three women

STYLE: Broadly comic

PLAYING TIME: One skit, some, or all, but probably no more than an hour and a half.

MIX AND MATCH the PAST and the PRESENT

#1- #8 – THE PAST

#9- #21 – THE PRESENT

Really, Really Bad Idea # 1: CREATION

CHARACTERS:

GOD, ADAM

SETTING: A garden.

GOD Let's see, what should I make next? That firmament was quite something, if I must say so myself! That's it! I need to make something to . . . to praise me! YES! Praise -- *that* would be nice. . . . Now what should it be? Let see, I've got infinite powers. I can do anything I want. Hmm. Look at that mud over there. I can do something with that! (Goes to the mud.) I just take a little bit of this. And a little bit of that . . .

(ADAM enters.)

ADAM What are you doing to me?

GOD Not that it's any of your business, but I'm creating you.

ADAM Oh. . . . Am I finished yet?

GOD Not quite.

ADAM Well, I have a few suggestions.

Creation

GOD Please! Would you leave this to a professional.

ADAM (pointing) What's this?

GOD Your arm.

ADAM What's it for?

GOD To pick up things.

ADAM Really? (Picks up something.)

GOD You can use it for hitch-hiking too.

ADAM Great. What's this?

GOD Your mouth.

ADAM What's it for?

GOD Talking. Like you're doing now.

ADAM Is that what I'm doing? (Moves his mouth.)

GOD You can also use it for chewing your food.
I'm trying to save space.

ADAM Are you some kind of efficiency expert?

GOD Don't interrupt me. I'm concentrating. I'm
going to give you some other parts.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

ADAM You don't want any suggestions?

GOD If I wanted suggestions, I'd put a suggestion box in your head.

ADAM What's in my head?

GOD Your brain.

ADAM What's that?

GOD It's this sort of bowl with bumps and loops all over it. It's really neat.

ADAM (doubtful) Sounds pretty.

GOD It's a fabulous breakthrough. I wish I had one.

ADAM What do you have?

GOD None of your business. By the way, I don't hear much praise yet.

ADAM Praise?

GOD Yes, like you get down on your knees and raise your arms and cry out with these words.

ADAM I do? Why?

GOD (Makes loud thunder and lightning) BOOM!

Creation

ADAM What in the hell was that?

GOD Scared you, didn't it?

ADAM Just a little bit. . . . Will it come again?

GOD (slyly) You better start praisin'.

ADAM Let me think about it.

GOD I'm not so sure this was such a good idea.

ADAM You mean me?

GOD (ignoring him) Let's see. What haven't I done yet? Oh, it gets so tiring being so creative.

ADAM Hey, what's this stuff on me?

GOD Skin.

ADAM What's it for?

GOD Doesn't it feel good?

ADAM (feeling his skin) Yeah, sort of.

GOD What do you mean sort of? It feels great.

ADAM It sort of itches. Over here.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

GOD All right, I'll put in something to fix that.
(Does "miracle" moves) How's that?

ADAM What did you do?

GOD I gave you the scratch. Use it.

ADAM What is it?

GOD Put your hand on your skin. (ADAM does so.) Now move it back and forth.

ADAM Oh, I see.

GOD Nice, huh?

ADAM Do you mind if I ask you something?

GOD (defensive) What?

ADAM Wouldn't it have been easier if you'd made the skin so it didn't itch in the first place? Then we wouldn't need the scratch.

GOD Listen, who's doing this, some committee?

ADAM Sorry.

GOD I'm the one who thought you up! So shut up!

ADAM You're sort of ill-tempered, aren't you?

Creation

- GOD You know what? I haven't heard any praise around here for at least two minutes.
- ADAM (faintly, fast) Hosanna, hosanna.
- GOD Hey, I like that. Keep it. Now let me see. Let's try . . .this.
- ADAM What? Are you winging this?
- GOD Move around.
- ADAM What? . . . Like this? (Moves around.)
- GOD Good, good! What do you feel?
- ADAM I don't know. You mean this wet stuff. Oh, my god, there's wet stuff coming out of my skin!
- GOD That's to cool you off when you get hot. Isn't that great?
- ADAM (after thinking) Why do I have to get hot in the first place?
- GOD I don't know. Physics! Somethin'. What are you complaining about now? If you get overheated, you sweat. It keeps you from blowing up. Be grateful.
- ADAM Well, if you had all these possibilities, and

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

you had to keep me from getting overheated,
why not a little bell or something? You know,
like “tinkle, tinkle. Slow down. You’re getting hot.”

GOD Who’s doing this, you or me?

ADAM Oh, god! Oh, no!

GOD What?

ADAM (sniffing himself) That wet stuff you made
come out of me?

GOD Yes?

ADAM It stinks.

GOD Only after a while. What do you want?!

ADAM Pee-yoo!

GOD So wash it off.

ADAM Can’t we change this?

GOD No! I’ve started this, I’m going to finish it.

ADAM (resigned) Okay. . . . What’s next?

GOD I think maybe I should re-tool this whole
thing—and put in a little more praise.

Creation

ADAM (faintly, fast) Hallelujah, hallelujah.

GOD And now for the *piece de resistance*!

ADAM What?

GOD I'm working on it.

ADAM What? What?

GOD (thinking) I've got it! Here it comes. (Does his "miracle" moves) How does that feel?

ADAM . . . Funny. What did you do to me?

GOD You're going to love it!

ADAM I'm waiting.

GOD A little praise first.

ADAM Glory be, glory be.

GOD Feel it?

ADAM It feels like water.

GOD It is.

ADAM Inside me?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

GOD It's coming out soon.

ADAM (antsy) What am I supposed to do with it?

GOD I don't know. I didn't plan that far ahead.

ADAM Oh no!

GOD Yes?

ADAM There's something else.

GOD Right! I almost forgot! How's it feel?

ADAM You want me to feel like this? (Has to go to the bathroom.) Like this?

GOD It's marvelous, don't you think?

ADAM But why?

GOD Well, something's got to be done with the food you'll be eating. This is just a test.

ADAM Why not just let it evaporate?

GOD Wait till you see the results?

ADAM You mean there's more?

GOD It'll be spectacular. You're gonna love it, kid.

Creation

- ADAM I don't think so. Why don't we change it? I mean, you're God, right? You can make me any way you want, isn't that correct?
- GOD On the mark, kiddo.
- ADAM Then this can't be it. I mean, you can't be serious.
- GOD Go on, go on! Let me see how it works!
- ADAM Okay, I'll praise you! I'll praise you a lot!
(louder) Hosanna-Hallelujah-Glory Be!
How's that? I love you! God, do I love you!
Only please don't make me go through this! I mean, you've got choices here! Right? (Antsy)
- GOD I like the way you're skippin'. That's nice. Skip! Skip! Yeah, skip some more! Skip to my lou!
- ADAM (begging) God! Please!
- GOD I love it! It's more than I ever dreamed of! And that fucking Lucifer said I was incompetent to rule around here. I guess I showed him!
- ADAM (jumping up and down) God! God! . . . (He's soiled himself and knows it) Oh, no.
- GOD It works! Eureka!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #2: SEX

CHARACTERS: (3)
GOD, ADAM, EVE

SETTING: Bare Stage

GOD You hoo!

ADAM (seeing GOD approaching) Oh, please! No
more! (Moves away)

GOD I have a wonderful idea.

ADAM I'll bet.

GOD Give me your rib.

ADAM What?! No way!

GOD I need it.

ADAM What for?

GOD I want to make you a helpmeet.

ADAM A what? . . . No thanks.

GOD How are the bowels working out?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- ADAM (disgusted) Fine . . . I guess.
- GOD I thought that was inspired, if I must say so myself.
- ADAM You're weird.
- GOD Hey, don't talk that way to me!
- ADAM You are.
- GOD Give me that rib!
- ADAM No!
- GOD Give it to me! (Grabs at ADAM)
- ADAM Stop it! Stop it! (Gets tickled, giggles) Hey! Hey! They feels . . . funny.
- GOD (Still grabbing) I want to give you a present.
- ADAM I don't need any presents. Just leave me alone.
- GOD That's your problem. It is not good for man to be alone.
- ADAM I'm just fine the way I am.
- GOD Have you named the animals yet?

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Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

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- ADAM No!
- GOD Give it to me! (Grabs at ADAM)
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- GOD That's your problem. It is not good for man to be alone.
- ADAM I'm just fine the way I am.
- GOD Have you named the animals yet?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

EVE It sounds good, I suppose. But . . .

ADAM It'll be fantastic! Trust me. Can I at least put it against you?

EVE I don't know.

ADAM Come on. Please. I really like you a lot. In fact, I love you. Oh, boy, do I love you! (He mounts her.) Oh, yes! Oh, yes!

EVE It feels like it's going to burst.

ADAM No, don't worry. It'll be okay.

EVE What if it goes off inside me? Eek!

ADAM I'll pull out in time. Trust me. Oh, baby!
You're the top! You're the Tower of Pisa!

GOD They're doing it! They're doing it! Hallelujah!

ADAM You're the top. You're the Mona Lisa! A waltz by Strauss. A Shakespeare sonnet. A Bendel bonnet. You're Mickey Mouse! . . . Oh, baby! Oh, baby! Oh, baby! Oh, baby! OH, BABY! (shoots) *HOOOO!*

EVE . . . Remember you promised to fix the faucets!

BLACKOUT

Sex

ADAM What animals?

GOD Oh, maybe that's later. So much to do! I can't keep all my plans straight.

ADAM I'll be moseying off now. I rather like being alone. (insincere) Nice meeting you.

GOD Oh, no you don't. Zap! (zaps him) One rib, please.(Removes a rib from ADAM)

ADAM Ouch! God! That hurt!

GOD Sorry, but this won't wait. (Fashions the rib) You're going to really like this.

(EVE appears)

EVE I feel like a rib.

ADAM There's a rib joint over that hill.

EVE That's not what I meant — although I am rather hungry. Nothing too big. Just a snack. I'm on a diet.

ADAM What's that mean? Who is this person?

GOD (Beams on his creations) Oh, it's working! They're talking already.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

EVE (to GOD) Who are you?

GOD I'm God.

EVE Do I know you?

GOD I just created you. You're his helpmeet.

EVE (resistant) Oh, I don't think so.

GOD I did. And you are. Ask him.

EVE No, no, no. I am woman. Hear me roar. (She roars slightly)

GOD Isn't she terrific?

ADAM Fine. She's fine. I'll see you both . . . around.
Goodbye! (Starts to leave)

GOD Wait! I've got plans for you two.

ADAM (wary) What plans? Why don't you leave me out of this one.

GOD Oh, no! Oh, *no!* I want more of you two.
You're so *cute!*

ADAM It's crowded enough around here already.

EVE (huffy) Well, pardon me for living!

Sex

ADAM Nothing personal.

GOD (to both, gesturing) Okay, do it.

ADAM Do what?

GOD Make babies.

ADAM I will not.

EVE Me either.

GOD I want some babies. Grandbabies.

ADAM What are those exactly?

GOD Little replicas of you. Only they crawl. They cry. They throw up.

ADAM Sounds like trouble to me.

GOD No, you'll like them!

EVE What do they do again?

GOD They pop out of you.

EVE They pop out of me?! It sounds horrible!

GOD You'll love it.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

EVE No, I won't. Don't tell me what I'll love and what I won't.

GOD I don't like your attitude.

EVE Well, I'm too sorry! If you don't mind, I think I'll also be leaving. (to ADAM) Which way are you headed?

ADAM (points) That way.

EVE Good. Then I'll be going the other way. (Starts off that way)

ADAM Fine with me. (Starts off his way)

GOD This isn't working. What have I forgotten? (Thinks) Let's see. Oh, yes. (Makes "miracle" gestures at the two departing figures.) One more ingredient! ZAP!

ADAM (stopping, feeling himself) Oh, my god! What is this sensation?

EVE (looking at ADAM over her shoulder) Well, he's not *that* bad.

(They turn and face each other.)

ADAM Oh, baby, you look great today!

Sex

EVE (coyly) Who me? I do?

ADAM Yeah, especially in that new dress.

EVE What dress? (Feels her skin) Is this a dress?

GOD It's skin.

ADAM It's all you'll ever need, baby.

EVE Why are you calling me "baby"? We've just met.

ADAM Sorry. It's just that I . . . like you. (drooling) I like you . . . a lot.

EVE Oh, you're just saying that.

ADAM Would I lie? You're the only girl in the world for me.

EVE Oh, that's so darling. I like a man with a sense of humor.

GOD Okay, now do it!

EVE Do what?

GOD It! I want to see *It*.

EVE What are you — some kind of dirty old man?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- GOD Do it. Do it.
- EVE What's he talking about?
- ADAM I'm not sure exactly, but I have an idea. Here let me show you. (Starts to mount her.)
- EVE Ooo! Stop it! What are you *doing*?
- ADAM Once you get into it, you'll like it. Oh, baby! (Humping away) Is it good for you too?
- EVE I don't want that thing in me! Yuck! (Pulls away) It's all red. Where's it been?
- ADAM Nowhere! Nowhere! I swear!
- EVE I bet you're just saying that.
- GOD Do it! Do it!
- EVE (about GOD) Ooo, he's so creepy! I can't do it when somebody watching!
- ADAM Let's go over here, under this bush.
- EVE What do you take me for? I'm not doing it under no bush. How classy!
- ADAM How about a motel?

Sex

EVE What's that?

ADAM I'll build you a house. I promise.

EVE . . . I'm not sure. I don't like this. It's too sudden. . . . You sure you like me?

ADAM A house with a dishwasher.

EVE Lots of closets?

ADAM (horny) Tons of closets. Come on, baby.

GOD Do it, you two! Do it!

EVE (to ADAM) Will you promise to fix the faucets?

ADAM Yes! Yes! Oh, baby! Oh, baby!

EVE And I want an *au pair*.

ADAM What's that? Sure. Come on! Come on!
You'll love this bush.

EVE Don't rush me. Something tells me this isn't \ going to be as nice as it seems. You're sure about the house?

ADAM Oh, baby, I'll buy you things and stay with you until the end of time. I'll hunt. I'll gather.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

EVE It sounds good, I suppose. But . . .

ADAM It'll be fantastic! Trust me. Can I at least put it against you?

EVE I don't know.

ADAM Come on. Please. I really like you a lot. In fact, I love you. Oh, boy, do I love you! (He mounts her.) Oh, yes! Oh, yes!

EVE It feels like it's going to burst.

ADAM No, don't worry. It'll be okay.

EVE What if it goes off inside me? Eek!

ADAM I'll pull out in time. Trust me. Oh, baby!
You're the top! You're the Tower of Pisa!

GOD They're doing it! They're doing it! Hallelujah!

ADAM You're the top. You're the Mona Lisa! A waltz by Strauss. A Shakespeare sonnet. A Bendel bonnet. You're Mickey Mouse! . . . Oh, baby! Oh, baby! Oh, baby! Oh, baby! OH, BABY! (shoots) *HOOOO!*

EVE . . . Remember you promised to fix the faucets!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #4: LEVITICUS

CHARACTERS: (6)

OLD TESTAMENT (played alternately by different actors — no special costumes, minimal props)

VARIOUS PEOPLE (trying to live every syllable of the Bible, all the parts *in mime*, portrayed by the five actors who aren't being the Old Testament)

OLD T #1 And the Lord called unto Moses,

(MOSES appears.)

and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying . . . And he shall kill the bullock before the Lord:

(MOSES kills the BULLOCK.)

and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood,

(BLOOD BRINGERS bring it.)

and sprinkle the blood round about the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

the congregation.

(They get confused about where the altar is.)

And he shall flay the burnt offering,

(Flays it.)

and cut it into pieces.

(Cuts it.)

. . . And the priests, Aaron's *sons*,

(The WOMEN PLAYERS back away.)

shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in
order, upon the wood that is on the fire
which is upon the altar.

(The WOMEN gather the wood, place it. AARON'S
SONS put down the fat.)

But his inwards and his legs shall he wash
in water:

(PRIEST washes it.)

and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to
be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by
fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord.

Leviticus

(PRIEST mimes making a big flame.)

OLD T #2 (Sniffs like a well-pleased pyromaniac.)
Ahh!

OLD T #3 And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering
to the Lord be of fowls.

(SOME FOWLS appear.)

then he shall bring his offering of
turtledoves, or of young pigeons.

(MORE FOWLS appear.)

And the priest shall bring it unto the altar

(PRIEST beckons PIGEON, who follows happily.)

and wring off his head,

(Does so.)

and burn it on the altar: . . . And he shall
pluck away his crop with his feathers,

(PRIEST throws away the bird's crop and feathers, some
sticking to his fingers.)

and cast it beside the altar on the *east part*

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

(PRIEST isn't sure which side that is, looks nervously at OLD T.),

by the place of the ashes:

(PRIEST still isn't sure, pretends to know, drops bird parts.)

And he shall cleave it with the wings
thereof,

(PRIEST starts to cleave, but isn't sure what he's supposed to do.)

but shall not divide it asunder:

(PRIEST isn't sure whether to cleave or not to cleave.)

and the priest shall burn it upon the altar,
upon the *wood* that is upon the fire:

(PRIEST corrects himself, nods for approval.)

it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by
fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord.

OLD T #2 (Inhales deeply) Ahh!

OLD #3 . . . As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye
shall offer them unto the Lord:

Leviticus

(An OFFER of FIRSTFRUITS is made toward the fire.)

but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savor.

(The FIRSTFRUITS are hurriedly withdrawn.)

And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering;

(The PEOPLE are trying to listen very carefully but are confused.)

(OLD T explains very slowly.)

with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

(The PEOPLE get it, jump for joy.)

And if thou offer a *meat* offering of thy firstfruits unto the Lord, (as if trying to trick them) thou shalt offer for the meat offering, of thy firstfruits, green ears of corn dried by the fire, even corn beaten out of full ears

(Somebody who's confused beats somebody's ears, until set right.)

And thou shalt put oil upon it,

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

(They do.)

and lay frankincense thereon:

(They can't find any frankincense.) it is a meat offering.

(Then somebody comes up with some frankincense; they rejoice.)

And the priest shall burn the memorial of it,
part of the beaten corn thereof,

(They get it wrong.)

and *part* of the oil thereof.

(They separate out a part of the oil.)

with *all* the frankincense thereof :

(They throw in some they've been hiding.)

(self-importantly) it is an offering made by
fire unto the Lord.

(The PEOPLE wipe their foreheads with great relief.)

PEOPLE Are we done, Lord?

GOD #4 That's just the first part! There's lots more
to come.

Leviticus

PEOPLE (downhearted, mumbling)

GOD #4 What was that I heard?

PERSON 1 Nothing, Lord.

GOD #4 Not good enough. Try again. (Beckons for more.)

PERSON 2 (very flat) Hallelujah.

GOD #4 That's a little better. But you can do better than that.

SEVERAL
PERSONS (flatly) Hallelujah.

GOD # 4 I can't hear you! (Cups ear.)

SEVERAL
PERSONS Hallelujah!

GOD #4 We'll keep working this, till it's better than that shit!

(They try various hallelujahs as the LIGHTS FADE.)

Really, Really Bad Idea #4: THE ORACLE

CHARACTERS:

ORACLE, PRIESTESS (non-speaking role),
PETITIONER #1, PETITIONER #2,
PETITIONER #3

SETTING: A grotto

(The Oracle can be elevated behind, the Petitioners talking to her while kneeling and facing the audience.)

PETITIONER #1 (stage whisper) Is this the right grotto?

PETITIONER #2 (stage whisper) I thought you knew.

PETITIONER #1 (stage whisper) I didn't say I knew for sure.

PETITIONER #2 (stage whisper) You certainly did.

PETITIONER #1 (stage whisper) I just said *maybe* \ this was it.

PETITIONER #2 Oh, so now you're changing your mind!

PETITIONER #1 No, I'm not!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- ORACLE Shut up, you two! You're disturbing my concentration.
- PETITIONER #1 Who are you?
- ORACLE The one you came seeking. The Oracle!
- PETITIONER #2 Oh, my god! You're not!
- ORACLE Now you're going to argue with *me*?
- PETITIONER #2 I'm sorry. . . . Can you help us?
- ORACLE (playing hard to get) I don't know. Ask me and I'll see.
- PETITIONER #2 I am Cyrus, King of Parthia.
- ORACLE I know that.
- PETITIONER #2 (to #1) She knows that!
- PETITIONER #1 I *told* you she was good!
- PETITIONER#2 I am to sail in three days. I wish to overthrow Timon of Thrace.
- ORACLE I know that.

The Oracle

- PETITIONER #2 She knows that!
- PETITIONER #1 That's two in a row. She's really good!
- ORACLE What is it you want to know, Simon of Parthia?
- PETITIONER #1 (correcting her) Cyrus.
- ORACLE I know that.
- PETITIONER #2 But she doesn't know *what* I want to know. If she's the Oracle, shouldn't she know what I want to know?
- PETITIONER #1 Well, I don't suppose we can expect her to know everything.
- PETITIONER #2 Who recommended her again?
- PETITIONER #1 Myron of Melos.
- PETITIONER #2 Is he to be trusted?
- PETITIONER #1 I don't know.
- PETITIONER #2 You don't know? Why should we believe him, then?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

PETITIONER #1 What does anybody know anything?
That's why we're here!

ORACLE I am waiting. You do not make the
Oracle wait.

PETITIONER #2 Sorry, we're new at this. What do
we do next?

ORACLE I don't see any sacrifices?

PETITIONER #1 Oh god, yes! Here's a dead sheep.
(Lays it before the Oracle.)

ORACLE Is that it?

PETITIONER #2 I have brought you a dead lamb.
(Lays it before the Oracle.)

ORACLE That's all?

PETITIONER #2 Oh, please accept our offerings.

PETITIONER #1 Yes, please!

ORACLE Well, let me sniff that sheep. Hold it
up. (They do so. The Oracle takes a
whiff) Um, not bad. Let me try the
lamb. (They hold it up. She sniffs
it.) How long has it been dead?

The Oracle

PETITIONER #2 Not that long.

ORACLE (reluctantly) I've smelled better.
Don't lie to me. But, okay, what do
you want to know?

PETITIONER #2 When I sail to overthrow Timon of
Thrace, will the winds be good?

ORACLE I must consult.

PETITIONER #2 Who?

ORACLE Myself. (Makes wizard-like sounds,
grabs own head.) OOOHHH.
OWW! I look inward. I look
outward. I look inward. I look
outward. I look inward —

PETITIONER #2 (impatiently) And what do you see?

ORACLE You do not rush the Oracle!

PETITIONER #2 I'm sorry.

PETITIONER #1 He's sorry. (to #2) Don't rush her!

PETITIONER #2 Shut up!

ORACLE Me?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

PETITIONERS

#1 and #2 No, no, not you! Please continue.

ORACLE You may have thrown me off. But
wait! I am receiving a message.

PETITIONER #2 Yes?

ORACLE A message from on high.

PETITIONER #1 How high?

ORACLE The highest.

PETITIONER #2 And what does it say?

ORACLE It says . . . It says . . .

PETITIONERS

#1 and #2 Yes?

ORACLE When the mule rules, the winds will
be propitious.

PETITIONER #2 Really? . . . (to #1) What does \

propitious mean?

PETITIONER #1 Favorable, favorable!

ORACLE Anything else you want to know?

The Oracle

PETITIONER #2 Just one more question.

ORACLE Yes?

PETITIONER #2 Did you say *mule*?

ORACLE I did.

PETITIONER #2 When the mule rules?

ORACLE (impatiently) Yes!

PETITIONER #2 What does that mean?

ORACLE (loudly) “When the mule rules, the winds will be propitious!” *Got* it?

PETITIONER #1 We’d better go.

PETITIONER #2 But I don’t know what that means!

PETITIONER #1 She’s getting mad.

ORACLE Anything else for a small dead sheep and a day-old, stinky dead lamb?

PETITIONER #2 What does “mule” mean?

ORACLE Is it not obvious?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- PETITIONER #2 (after thinking) . . . No.
- ORACLE These mortals! So literal!
- PETITIONER #2 Should I sail to Thrace in three days or not?
- ORACLE Wait! . . . I have just received a second message! (via the Priestess)
- PETITIONER #1 Oh, great, she's received a second message!
- ORACLE You are blessed.
- PETITIONER #1 Oh, thank you.
- PETITIONER #2 What does this one say?
- ORACLE It is from Apollo.
- PETITIONER # 1 And that's good, right?
- ORACLE (Gives him a dismissive stare.)
- PETITIONER #1 Oh, Apollo, he's my favorite!
- PETITIONER #2 (going along) Mine too, mine too. What's he say?
- ORACLE (makes wizard-like noises)

The Oracle

OWWW! UUUUU! OWWW!
UUUUU!

PETITIONER #2 “Owww, Uuuuu, Owww, Uuuu”?

ORACLE Do not be so dense, Simon of Thrace.

PETITIONER #2 (correcting her) It’s Cyrus of Parthia.

ORACLE Whatever.

PETITIONER # 2 (to #1) What’s *dense* mean?

PETITIONER #1 Go with it, go with it!

PETITIONER #2 I’m going, I’m going. I just want to know what it means!

ORACLE Here is the second message. . . .
Winds! Winds! Blow — they blow!
Where they stop nobody know! [*sic*]

PETITIONER #2 (after a pause) That’s it?

ORACLE Is it not crystal clear?

PETITIONER #2 I guess. (to #1) Do you get it?

PETITIONER #1 I think it means yes, we *should* sail.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

PETITIONER #2 “Winds! Winds! Blow—they blow!
Where they stop nobody *know*?”
Is that good Greek?

ORACLE Oh, ye of small mind! Get out of my
sight!

PETITIONER #2 I’m sorry, I’m sorry. I’m just trying
to get this straight so I’ll do the
right thing.

ORACLE Okay. (prompting) You are
stubborn, Cyrus?

PETITIONER #2 Yes, I suppose so.

ORACLE You have always been stubborn.

PETITIONER #2 Yes.

ORACLE All the world knows of your
stubbornness.

PETITIONER #2 Right? . . . So?

ORACLE Your friend here is something of a
mule, wouldn’t you say?

PETITIONER #1 Oh, *mule*! (to #2) Get it?

PETITIONER #2 No, what?

The Oracle

- ORACLE Think!
- PETITIONER #2 Oh, *I'm* the mule that rules!
- ORACLE (aside to Priestess) And they say I don't earn my offerings!
- PETITIONER #2 (piecing it together) So, since *I'm* the mule, and I'm ruling now, that means . . .? What does it mean?
- ORACLE I've said enough.
- PETITIONER #1 That means the winds should be favorable for *us*!
- PETITIONER #2 So I'll sail to Thrace! And thrash the Thracians.
- ORACLE Thrice.
- PETITIONER #2 How many?
- ORACLE Listen carefully. You must (says it slowly) *thrash* the *Thracians* *thrice*.
- PETITIONER #2 (messing it up) I must thwash the Thwacians thwice.
- ORACLE (shaking her head) God! Just thrash them once. It should be enough.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

Now go! Go!

PETITIONER #1 We're done?

ORACLE Done.

PETITIONER #2 And I'll win the battle?

ORACLE All I'll say is this: he who is historical lives only by the Oracle.

PETITIONER #1 I think we got what we came for!

ORACLE (loudly) *Next!* (to #1 and #2) The priestess will see you out.

PETITIONERS
#1 and #2 Oh, thank you, thank you.

ORACLE (not pleased) My pleasure.

PETITIONER #2 Goodbye! And thanks again!

ORACLE *Next!* (to the Priestess) Check the crockery.

(The two Petitioners exit, waving, grinning.)

ORACLE Is the next petitioner there or not?

PETITIONER #3 I'm here, O Oracle!

The Oracle

- ORACLE Come forward from the shadows.
 (Comes forward.) What seek you?
- PETITIONER #3 I am Timon of Thrace. I understand
 that Cyrus of Parthia is planning to
 invade my country in three days.
 What should I do?
- ORACLE Let me think.
- PETITIONER #3 Oh, thank you.
- ORACLE What have you brought me?
- PETITIONER #3 Three swans a-singing.
- ORACLE Three swans a-singing. I like the
 sound of that. Anything else?
- PETITIONER #3 Six sheep and seven goats.
- ORACLE Six and seven — better and better.
 Anything else?
- PETITIONER My prize mule.
- ORACLE A mule, huh? (giggling with the
 Priestess) I *said* the mule rules!
 Well, well, well, perhaps Cyrus
 What's His Name from What the
 Fuck is in for a little surprise.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

PETITIONER #3 You've seen Cyrus — Cyrus of Parthia? He's been here?

ORACLE Do not worry, Timon of Thrace. I have a message for you.

PETITIONER #3 Oh, good. Pray tell, what is it, O divine one?

ORACLE Divine one, huh? Not too shabby. I like you, Hyman.

PETITIONER #3 Timon.

ORACLE Of course. Listen closely now. You are sure you brought me a mule?

PETITIONER #3 Yes. Absolutely the finest in all my kingdom.

ORACLE Well, as I've always said, Timon, when the mule rules, the winds will blow — and I do mean propitiously.

PETITIONER #3 For me, right?

ORACLE (cunningly) Timon, Timon. Now I ask you, would *I* steer you wrong?

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #5: PRIMOGENITURE

CHARACTERS:

COUNSELOR #1

COUNSELOR #2

PRINCE PRIMO

SETTING: A corridor in a castle

COUNS. #1 The king is dead!

COUNS. #2 No! Oh, dear god!

COUNS. #1 He choked on his cocoa.

COUNS. #2 His health never was very good after he reached thirty. What are we going to do?

COUNS. #1 The king's mad brother will want to rule.

COUNS. #2 So will his mad mistress.

COUNS. #1 And his uncle, the hunchback.

COUNS. #2 Yes, Charles the Physically Impaired.
And his three weird cousins in the north.

COUNS. #1 And I heard a rumor that Gerald the Bald of Slovenia was on the march to take the

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

throne.

COUNS. #2 But we're not even Slovenians!

COUNS. #1 Things look grim. And we're out of cocoa too.

COUNS. #2 The king drank it all?

COUNS. #1 There isn't a bean left in the store hole.

COUNS. #2 The greedy thing. (looking around, frightened) I guess I can say that now that he's dead.

COUNS. #1 Best watch yourself nonetheless.

(They look around.)

COUNS. #2 (obviously lying) The only one I trust around here is . . . you.

COUNS. #1 (also lying) And I you.

BOTH Hear! Hear! (They toast, then both throw their drinks away surreptitiously.)

COUNS. #1 So who's to take the throne?

COUNS. #2 How did his late majesty get the throne?

Primogeniture

COUNS. #1 You've never heard the ghastly story? He strangled his way to the top.

COUNS. #2 No!

COUNS. #1 The previous king, the previous queen, their seventeen children, including several of the stillborn, even the king's mastiffs and the Pope's emissary, who was only visiting.

COUNS. #2 I had no idea!

COUNS. #1 It wasn't pretty. We don't want that to happen again.

COUNS. #2 How do they get a new ruler in other places?

COUNS. #1 It's hard to say. I've never been to any other places.

COUNS. #2 We could ask the gods for a sign!

COUNS. #1 Don't you find that a trifle old-fashioned?

COUNS. #2 I suppose you're right.

COUNS. #1 What about throwing some runes? I've heard they work pretty well.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

COUNS. #2 We tried runes before, with Henry the
“Magnificent.”

COUNS. #1 Right. Henry the Magnificent with his
magnificent penchant for loading the
runes before each throw! Know any
soothsayers?

COUNS. #2 One, but he’s expensive.

COUNS. #1 It’s the next king we’re talking about!
This is no time to scrimp!

COUNS. #2 I suppose we could have the people vote.
They’ve all graduated from high school.

COUNS. #1 But they can’t even read.

COUNS. #2 And they’re easily misled. So what are
we going to do!

(A noise off.)

COUNS. #1 What’s that?

COUNS. #2 I don’t know.

(Enter PRINCE PRIMO, goofy-acting, always rhyming
but not trying to.)

Primogeniture

PRINCE Heigh ho! Heigh ho! My father's dead. I found him in his great big bed.

COUNS. #1 Good morning, Your Highness.

PRINCE I didn't see you there, you two, you pair.

COUNS. #2 Your Highness. I'm sorry about your father.

PRINCE Oh, I never liked him anyway. He hogged the cocoa — and I mean every single day. You'd think a father would share his cocoa, wouldn't you? But he considered me quite loco.

COUNS. #2 Yes, Your Highness.

PRINCE Well, what's going to happen now? I've heard troops are coming from everywhere, both up and down, to take the crown.

COUNS. #1 What exactly have you heard, Your Highness?

PRINCE Harold the Cruel is coming by sea. With terrible plans that may include me.

COUNS. #2 Perhaps Your Highness could head him off.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

PRINCE Or off his head! But the army won't do
 what I say! They don't like me. They say
 I'm fey. But I'm not, you see. I just can't
 help talking this way.

COUNS. #1 If only we had some system to guarantee
 continuity at the top!

COUNS. #2 So we wouldn't have this turmoil every
 time our monarch croaks on cocoa!

PRINCE What are you two talking about?

COUNS. #1 Nothing, Your Highness.

PRINCE If you don't tell me, I'm going to pout. Or
 even shout. (Stamps his foot) See!

COUNS. #2 We're just trying to think of some system
 whereby we can keep some awful people
 from trying to wrest the throne for
 themselves, now that your father's dead.

PRINCE Well, I'm not waiting around for any
 system. It's time to get packing. I suggest
 you leave too. For with the morrow
 comes pillage and sacking.

COUNS. #1 Wait. I've got an idea!

COUNS. #2 What?

Primogeniture

COUNS. #1 The Prince. Why hasn't anyone ever thought of this before!

COUNS. #2 What? What?!

PRINCE Yes, what?

COUNS. #1 (figuring it out as he goes along) We say the dead king . . . anointed his son with holy oil and . . . and then God appeared to us and said . . .

PRINCE Yes? Yes?

COUNS. #1 Said that the eldest child should be . . . the next monarch . . . for life. And then . . . then . . . his eldest should be the monarch after that! Also for life!

COUNS. #2 Oh, that's really stupid. What if the eldest is incompetent? You can't just hand on the crown to ever happens to be born next! What would we wind up with?

COUNS. #1 Have you got a better idea?

COUNS. #2 Well, no.

PRINCE You know, I sort of like this idea. I don't implore. But tell me more.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

COUNS. #1 You'll be the ruler.

COUNS. #2 You won't have to leave the castle.

PRINCE Oh, good. I hate packing. What do I have to do?

COUNS. #2 (to COUNS. #1) He's an idiot, you know.

COUNS. #1 I know, but it's the best we can do right now. And he does have a kind of something.

PRINCE Are you discussing me? I don't like that one little bit. But I would like some tea.

COUNS. #2 And he does have the lingo down.

COUNS. #1 Right! The tea will have to wait, Your Highness. We're going to make you the new monarch!

PRINCE (doubtful) Really? Why?

COUNS. #1 We can't go on having this constant turnover and mayhem.

COUNS. #2 Won't you consider taking the crown for yourself and your children? Please.

Primogeniture

- PRINCE Oh, I hate children. Little buggers.
 Always wanting something. No better
 than muggers.
- COUNS. #1 We'll work on the children later. Just say
 you'll consider it, Your Highness.
- PRINCE Well, maybe. It might be nice to be king.
 What are my chances? Now I don't do
 finances!
- COUNS. #1 That's all right. We'll get you some help.
- PRINCE I don't like waiting. And I never do heavy
 negotiating.
- COUNS. #2 *We'll* help you there! What do you think
 . . . Your Majesty?
- PRINCE (flattered) My Majesty? Well, I suppose I
 am the most qualified of the bunch around
 this place. But I don't do wars.
- COUNS. #2 Oh, dear, he doesn't do wars!
- COUNS. #1 Doesn't matter. We'll leave the war part
 to the generals.
- PRINCE I will do treaties!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

COUNS. #2 Oh, good!

PRINCE And I don't do . . . let me see . . . what else is it I won't do? (can't remember) Oh, poo!

COUNS. #1 How about holding court?

PRINCE Holding court would be good. Yes . . . 'twould.

COUNS. #2 How about intrigue?

PRINCE Intrigue's okay. Yes, I think I'd rather like intrigue. At least today.

COUNS. #2 Big balls?

PRINCE I beg your pardon?!

COUNS. #2 I meant will you give big balls, Your Majesty?

PRINCE (haughtily) I'll do my royal best. You'll see!

COUNS. #1 Will you listen to us and let us guide you through this perilous time?

Primogeniture

- PRINCE How do I know I can trust you slime?
- COUNS. #1 Who else has offered you the crown, if I
 may say so . . . Sire?
- PRINCE Sire! Sire! Oh, how I like the sound of
 that! Sire, Sire — it rhymes with higher!
- COUNS. #1 (to COUNS. #2) I think we've got
 something going here.
- COUNS. #2 I hope you're right. Would you
 accompany us to your father's bedroom,
 Your Majesty?
- PRINCE Why?
- COUNS. #2 Because we've got a crown to look for.
 And some holy oil for you to try on.
- PRINCE But I want some tea. For me, not you.
 That's tea for one, not tea for two.
 (Laughs.)
- COUNS. #1 We'll have some tea brought to the
 bedroom, sir.
- PRINCE (correcting him) Sire.
- COUNS. #1 Sire.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

PRINCE Well, maybe I'll try it.

COUNS. #1 Very good, Your Majesty. Just follow us,
Your Majesty.

PRINCE God, I'm a majesty! (walking off) But,
remember, I don't do arranged
marriages. And I don't visit the sick on
Christmas. And I'll need some new
clothes. Lots of new clothes. And some
jewels. I think I'd look very good in
diamonds and rubies, don't you?

COUNS. #1 Perfect, Your Majesty, just perfect!

PRINCE And maybe a couple of sapphires right
here, what do you think? And some on
my flagon? And some on my
nightclothes . . . and maybe some on my .

..

(The two Counselors ad lib, nod, bow and scrape and
lead the PRINCE off.)

(Exeunt.)

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #6: FOOD TASTER

CHARACTERS:

EMPEROR / EMPRESS

TASTER

EMP (entering) I decree that we will stop here for the night!

TASTER As you wish, Mighty Emperor / Empress!

EMP Spread out our bed over there. (Points offstage.)

TASTER It will be done, O Emperor / Empress. (Claps hands at offstage retinue.)

EMP And we think a little snack before we retire.

TASTER Are you sure about that?

EMP (snappishly) What do you mean? We're always sure! Get us some friggin' food!

TASTER I believe we ran out this morning.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- EMP What do you mean – ran out? We're the
 goddamned Emperor / Empress! You don't
 just run out on us!
- TASTER I am sorry. We will all have to go to bed
 hungry tonight.
- EMP Oh, we will, will we? We don't think so.
 What's that over there? (Points.)
- TASTER (checking) It looks like a weed, O Royal
 One.
- EMP Do you recognize it?
- TASTER Not really. It could be sorrel.
- EMP What's sorrel? Can we eat it?
- TASTER I think cattle eat it. Not people.
- EMP Have you ever tried it?
- TASTER Not really.
- EMP Why not? It might be good. We need some
 friggin' bulk in our diet.

Food Taster

TASTER I'm pretty sure it's not edible, Royal One.

EMP (irritably) How the crap would you know? You just said you haven't tried it.

TASTER Pardon, My Emperor / Empress, I am generalizing from my past tastings. That particular weed does not look promising. (Gets the weed.) Now that I look at it more closely, I don't believe it's sorrel after all. I have no idea what it is.

EMP Aren't you the one who discovered lettuce?

TASTER I am, Mighty One.

EMP And the tomato? Wasn't that you?

TASTER I hate to brag, but indeed it was.

EMP Nobody used to eat lettuce and tomatoes, right, because they thought they were poisonous? Have we got that right?

TASTER In the old days that was very true.

EMP And then you ate some lettuce and a couple of tomatoes, and that changed everybody's thinking. Correct?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- TASTER You flatter me too much, Mighty One.
- EMP Who's flattering? It's your friggin' job, isn't it?
- TASTER I am blessed to be your official taster, yes.
- EMP Naturally you are. Only you're not as good as the last one.
- TASTER I am most distressed to hear that, My Emperor/Empress.
- EMP You're too conservative.
- TASTER I apologize, Majesty.
- EMP That last taster would try anything once. But you – oh, no! Go to bed hungry! Don't try this! Don't try that! God, we wish we had our old taster back.
- TASTER Perhaps you might see about reinstating him, Majesty.
- EMP We can't do that! He's dead! That purple thing he tried over in Kazakhstan didn't agree with him.

Food Taster

TASTER I'm sorry to hear about his misfortune, O Royal One.

EMP Saved our butt, though! We were just about to have some of that purple stuff when he fell right over and puked his guts out. God, we didn't know someone could puke that much!

TASTER Must have been very stressful for you.

EMP And then he twitched for about eleven hours and kept calling out, "Kill me! Please, won't somebody kill me!"

TASTER And did anyone finally grant his wish?

EMP Don't really know. We had to leave. Had a big meeting in Outer Mongolia.

TASTER I take it your taster didn't recover.

EMP Well, *we* never saw him again! But he might have. I'll tell you one thing. I haven't touched that purple crap even once.
(Laughs)

TASTER Very wise, O Mighty One.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- EMP You've never seen us puking our guts out,
 have you?
- TASTER I can't say that I have, Majesty.
- EMP Although there was that tummy ache after
 that catered orgy in Tunis. Somebody
 wasn't doing their friggin' job apparently.
 Who could *that* have been?
- TASTER Of course it could have been because of the
 volume consumed, not the actual foodstuffs
 themselves that were the culprit.
- EMP (after a beat) You criticizing us?
- TASTER Never, O Royal One!
- EMP Let's hope not.
- TASTER It is my duty – and pleasure – to serve as
 your barrier to the unknown harms that can
 trouble my Emperor's / Empress's
 intestines.
- EMP We'll drink to that! Better yet, *you* drink to
 that!
- TASTER Most amusing, I'm sure, Highness.

Food Taster

- EMP You think you're hiding your snotty attitude. But we can feel it!
- TASTER I am mortified if I have given offence, My Imperial, Majestic Royalness.
- EMP You're laying it on pretty thick. Don't think we don't notice. . . . Friggin' asshole!
- TASTER It grieves me more than I can say to think for even one moment that I am not pleasing my Emperor / Empress. Perhaps I may beg to leave your employ?
- EMP Leave? With the benefits you've got? Full-time work! Health care! Funeral expenses paid if needed! Mister, you don't know just how good you've got it!
- TASTER I am not worthy of such largesse, so I should most probably leave. (Starts to leave.)
- EMP And leave us to taste our own food?!
- TASTER I could leave a list of things to look out for: certain colors, certain smells, certain –

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

EMP We don't want a frigging list! We want you to run everything over your tongue! That's what you get paid for, and don't you forget it for a minute!

TASTER But if I no long satisfy my Emperor/
Empress, it is no doubt best that I –

EMP Listen here. You get to eat everything I do! How many lowlifes can say that? You eat like an Emperor / Empress! And you get everything while it's fresh – while we have to wait around and take sloppy seconds!

TASTER Yes, it must be quite a hardship to have to wait.

EMP You bet your ass it is! And you're so slow besides! When we want to eat, we want to eat! Why can't you seem to get that through your thick skull?! We have a blood sugar problem, and we get cranky!

TASTER You?

EMP Yeah, me. Us.

Food Taster

TASTER I am heartily sorry to have failed you in my task, Majesty.

EMP Oh, stop being so obsequious! Sorry about this. Sorry about that. Stop being so goddamned sorry all the time! And do something!

TASTER It's my understanding that I am to be exceedingly –

EMP Oh, for the gods' sake, how bad can tasting weeds be? Huh? Give us that friggin' weed! (Grabs at it)

TASTER O Royalness, you really ought not to –

EMP Ought not to what? Taste a weed? (Sniffs it) Smells all right to us. (Examines it.) Nice color.

TASTER But the color can sometimes be –

EMP There you go again. Way too cautious. How do you think civilization advances, huh? By being scared to try a new weed? (mockingly) 'Oh, should I try that one? Oh, no, it might not agree with me!' What a sissy! Let us show you how an Emperor / Empress chows down! You see this weed?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

TASTER Yes, Majesty.

EMP You see this mouth? (The Taster bows.)
Now watch and learn. (Takes a bite of
the weed, chews.)

TASTER And?

EMP It tastes like chicken.

TASTER Really?

EMP (about to take another bite) Oh, the gods
help me! (Grabs stomach.)

TASTER Something wrong?

EMP Oh! My! God! Taster, we think we got a
bad one. (Falls down, contorts, writhes in
agony.)

(After a long bit, the Emperor / Empress dies.)

TASTER (coming over to the body, looks down at it)
Would you like, O Royal One, a friggin'
after-dinner mint with that?

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #7: BLEEDING

CHARACTERS:

BARBER

CUSTOMER

SETTING: A medieval barber shop. An ordinary chair, possibly raised, will serve for the barber's chair.

(The BARBER is sharpening his hair-cutting implements.)

CUSTOMER (popping in) Can you fit me in?

BARBER Of course! Come right in, sir.

CUSTOMER Caught you at a good time, huh?

BARBER Excellent time. (Motions CUSTOMER in.) Have a seat, won't you? (Gestures at the barber's chair.)

(CUSTOMER sits in the chair. The BARBER puts a cloth around him.)

CUSTOMER Just take a little off the sides and top.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- BARBER You got it!
- CUSTOMER Not too many customers, huh?
- BARBER Yes, business has been rather slow.
- CUSTOMER I just happened to be in the neighborhood.
- BARBER Who cut your hair last time?
- CUSTOMER My wife.
- BARBER I thought so.
- CUSTOMER Saves money.
- BARBER May I make a suggestion?
- CUSTOMER What's that?
- BARBER Your hair is sort of brittle.
- CUSTOMER It is? (Feels his own hair.)
- BARBER I have something that might help that.
- CUSTOMER Really?
- BARBER It's the latest thing. You game?

Bleeding

CUSTOMER (reluctant) I suppose.

BARBER I think it's really going to catch on.

CUSTOMER What is it?

BARBER Now it might hurt a little bit.

CUSTOMER Maybe I'd better wait till next time.

BARBER Naw! You'll love it. Your hair will never be the same again. All you might feel is a little nip right at the start. Remember: No pain, no gain!

CUSTOMER Who said that?

BARBER *I did.*

CUSTOMER It's very good, but I really . . .

BARBER Hang on. It won't take me a minute.

(The BARBER gets a large pail and a small pail and comes back to the chair.)

BARBER Here, hold this. (Places the large pail on CUSTOMER's lap) You got it?

CUSTOMER I got it. What's the pail for?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- BARBER Ah . . . to catch the bl — To catch whatever it needs to catch.
- CUSTOMER You sure this works?
- BARBER Believe me, this is going to revolutionize haircuts all over the world. Up to now it's only been available to monarchs and princes of the Church. You're one of the first peasants ever to try it.
- CUSTOMER How much is this gonna cost me?
- BARBER For you, my friend, this first time is absolutely free.
- CUSTOMER And after that?
- BARBER Don't worry! You'll be back here in six weeks begging for another treatment. So relax and let me work my magic.
- CUSTOMER Okay, I guess you know what you're doing.
- BARBER See that license. They don't give that to just anybody. (Points.)
- CUSTOMER (reading a posted license)
"Awarded to Lorenzo of Sicily" —

Bleeding

BARBER — that's Yours Truly.

CUSTOMER — “a certificate to practice barbarity in said environs” —

BARBER — That's here.

CUSTOMER Barbarity?

BARBER You know, like a barber.

CUSTOMER — “certified this day, August 2, 1457,
by the Board of Surgeons, Dentists,
Beauticians, Barbers and Meat Cutters.”
Pretty impressive.

BARBER Let me tell you — it wasn't easy to get
that either. They don't pass just anybody.
Okay, you ready?

CUSTOMER Exactly what now?

BARBER I have to put something on the back of
your neck. Is your pail ready?

CUSTOMER The back of my neck?

BARBER You won't feel hardly a thing, trust me.
Just keep the pail in the right place.
I'll move it if I have to. Just concentrate
on how good your hair is going to look

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

when I'm finished. All set?

CUSTOMER I guess. (Cringes.)

(The BARBER takes a "leech" out of the smaller pail and holds it up to examine it. The CUSTOMER can't see it, but the audience can.)

CUSTOMER Have you done it yet?

BARBER Just a sec. This has got to be done just so. (He accidentally drops the leech on the floor, bends down to look for it.)

CUSTOMER (unable to turn around) What's wrong?

BARBER (on all fours) Nothing's wrong. I'm prepping the treatment. Ah, there she goes! (Finds the "leech" although it is elusive.) Gotcha, you little bugger!

CUSTOMER What? What's going on?

BARBER Sir, you're getting upset about nothing. I've got it under control, believe me. After all, am I not a board certified barber?

CUSTOMER You sure this is going to make my hair less brittle?

Bleeding

BARBER Absolutely! Money back guarantee.
(Pulls him back into the chair.) But
you've got to co-operate with me, sir, if
this is going to work!

CUSTOMER (praying) Gesu, Maria, and Giuseppe!

BARBER All right, here she comes! Whee! (Flies
the "leech" by hand to land on the
CUSTOMER's neck.) There! At last!
Oops. She slipped. (Arranges the
"leech" again but is having trouble. Milk
this as much as is funny.)

CUSTOMER Has it started yet?

BARBER It's coming. It's coming. . . . There!

CUSTOMER It feels odd.

BARBER You shouldn't feel anything.

CUSTOMER I do, though.

BARBER I don't think so.

CUSTOMER I'm telling you I feel something odd!

BARBER Okay, what does it feel like?

CUSTOMER Little . . . nibbles.

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BARBER Sir, it's your imagination. I've been assured that you ought to feel nothing.

CUSTOMER What's back there?

BARBER I'm removing some bad blood.

CUSTOMER My blood is perfectly fine.

BARBER Oh? Who has the brittle hair? Answer me that!

CUSTOMER Something is trickling back there.

BARBER Where?

CUSTOMER Down my neck. (pointing to the side of neck opposite to the BARBER) Here.

BARBER Give me that pail now.

(CUSTOMER hands the pail to the BARBER.)

(The BARBER positions the pail in the back.)

BARBER Got it!

CUSTOMER What's in there? (Tries to see inside pail.)

Bleeding

BARBER Never you mind now, sir. (Hides the pail, pushes CUSTOMER's head away.)

CUSTOMER I don't know about this.

BARBER Sir, I am a trained professional!

CUSTOMER Hmm.

BARBER Ever get uncontrolled flatulence?

CUSTOMER Occasionally.

BARBER (snidely) I thought so. This will cure that too.

CUSTOMER You're sure about this?

BARBER How about worms? Get those?

CUSTOMER Possibly.

BARBER Your worms will be gone before the day is done.

CUSTOMER Hernias?

BARBER Sir, this little fixer-upper on your neck is good for what ails you. Cholera, cysts, tumors, anemia – you got it, this

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gets it. Don't you feel better already?

CUSTOMER Actually, I do feel sort of . . .

BARBER See! . . . Let me get that little bit that spilled over here. (Uses pail.)

CUSTOMER How long is this going to take?

BARBER No more than four hours.

CUSTOMER That's not too bad. (woozy) I feel so . . . relaxed.

BARBER And, see, you had your doubts at first.

CUSTOMER I just feel so . . . not myself.

BARBER Of course you do. And your hair is beginning to look a hundred percent better already. (Fluffs the hair up.) There's a spring to it now.

CUSTOMER Is it all right if I doze off?

BARBER Not a problem, sir! Not a problem at all.

CUSTOMER Then I think I might just possibly . . . (Conks out immediately.)

BARBER I think I may be on to something here!

Bleeding

(Looks at the sleeping CUSTOMER.)
But it is rather slow. When the
customers start coming – and they will
– I’ve got to get them in and out of
here in less than four hours. (Thinks)
Hmm. I’ve got it! (Gets the small pail of
leeches.) Come on, my friend, join your
sister for a little snack! (Puts another
“leech” on the sleeping CUSTOMER.)
Oh, hell, why be stingy with your
customers! You want them to keep
coming back, don’t you! (Takes another
“leech” from the pail and puts it on the
CUSTOMER, then another and another,
in different places, including the face, up
his nose, etc.

BARBER What can I say? You look fantastic!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea # 8: SLAVERY

CHARACTERS:
SLAVE TRADER
TRIBAL CHIEF

SETTING: A jungle

TRADER So, chief, what you got for me today?

CHIEF How about two females and seventeen males?

TRADER Is that all you've got?

CHIEF The males are real prime. Hard workers.

TRADER Then why are you getting rid of 'em?

CHIEF We need the cash. My fourth wife wants a new headband. And my lion-skin scarf is wearing out.

TRADER I'm sort of overloaded with females right now.

CHIEF They're hard workers too.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- TRADER Yeah, I'll bet! Like those last two batches you sold me? I've gotten lots of complaints.
- CHIEF Hey, listen, I guarantee my people. If they don't work out, you send 'em back to me.
- TRADER You know that's not possible. Who you bullshittin' here? Once I buy 'em from you, I'm stuck with 'em.
- CHIEF Tough. It's a seller's market right now.
- TRADER Tell you what, I've got a new market about to open. Maybe I can do some business over there.
- CHIEF Where's that?
- TRADER Oh, I don't know exactly. Someplace called the Colonies, or something like that. Part of the Empire.
- CHIEF They'll love my people over there. Top quality!
- TRADER So how much you want for 'em?
- CHIEF The usual.

Slavery

TRADER How about a discount? I bring you a lot of business.

CHIEF God, I'm practically giving them away to you as it is!

TRADER Come on! You're probably selling me damaged goods, people you want to get rid of. I've got to watch you every minute!

CHIEF The Arabs'll take 'em if you don't want 'em. Or there's a new tribe on the other side of the jungle who's looking for some fresh slaves. I can always go *there*.

TRADER Go then!

CHIEF All right I will. (Pauses.)

TRADER So why aren't you going?

CHIEF They're cannibals, that's why. They're hard to deal with.

TRADER So we got a deal then?

CHIEF I guess.

TRADER The usual — minus ten percent.

CHIEF With no returns. A sale's a sale this time!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

TRADER When did I ever return slaves to you?
 Name once.

CHIEF You tried to. I wouldn't let you.

TRADER Do you mind if I ask you something?

CHIEF What?

TRADER . . . How can you sell your own people?

CHIEF How can I sell my own people? Because I
 can't get *other* people to sell, that's why!
 What's the matter with you? All the tribes
 around here sell slaves. You going soft?

TRADER Naw, not really. It's just that sometimes I
 wonder if I'm in the right business.

CHIEF Hey, you got to earn a living.

TRADER Don't you ever wonder what happens to
 your people once they leave the village?

CHIEF They go on a trip.

TRADER It's not always nice, you know. Or so I've
 heard.

CHIEF At least they're eating. If they stayed
 around here, they might wind up as

Slavery

somebody's soup. We're having a recession.

TRADER Sometimes I wonder what happens once they get to those places we send 'em.

CHIEF You mean you haven't ever seen what happens to the . . . product, once it arrives?

TRADER I don't have time to travel to all those places. I've got a family to feed. My youngest starts divinity school next month.

CHIEF To be honest, I wonder myself. I don't suppose those rumors I've heard are true.

TRADER You know how rumors are

CHIEF They tend to be negative, right. I bet the couple of thousand I've sold you over the years fit right in over there. They like getting their hands in the soil, working the land.

TRADER Absolutely. They get religion too. Big time.

CHIEF Don't you mean Old Time?

TRADER That too! Does 'em lots of good. People *ought* to pray, don't you think?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- CHIEF Positively. There are no atheists on plantations.
- TRADER Good, clean work, a place to sleep, lots of friends around, and lots of religion. What more could they ask for?
- CHIEF Better than being eaten by the tribe next door, I'll tell you that. . . .Tell you what does trouble me, though.
- TRADER What's that?
- CHIEF What happens when the slave trade slackens off? You know, later.
- TRADER You think it might?
- CHIEF Anything can happen in today's economy.
- TRADER Yeah, sometimes you just gotta downsize . . . And so?
- CHIEF Well, I mean there'd be all these— what is it, millions by now?— folks sort of left stranded over there.
- TRADER It'll never happen.
- CHIEF You sure?

Slavery

- TRADER Never happen. People will always need slaves.
- CHIEF You're probably right. And, besides, the ones that have been shipped will no doubt find new jobs.
- TRADER Yeah, some kind of trade. Something agricultural.
- CHIEF The drug trade's good.
- TRADER It's sort of agricultural. Anyway, they'll do all right.
- CHIEF Something socially responsible.
- TRADER Something to help people. Maybe they'll open a string of phrenology parlors.
- CHIEF Phrenology? Oh yeah, reading head bumps. *I'd* buy stock in that.
- TRADER It's a coming business. In any case, I'm sure the slaves will thank us for giving them a nice ocean cruise, two or three squares a day, a work ethic, and other benefits.
- CHIEF Plus education. You did say my people would get lots of education, right?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

TRADER For sure! . . . (hedging) Now it might not come right away of course . . .

CHIEF I understand. Just as long as my people don't wind up being ignorant. Or taking to drink. Or taking to petty crime. Or to major crime. Or to violence. Or to prostitution. Or to hating themselves and the people they used to work for. Or to living in squalor in tenements and projects and having children out of wedlock and filling themselves with substances that make them nasty, threatening, and obnoxious.

TRADER It'll never happen.

CHIEF You're probably right.

TRADER You know what? We're just worrying ourselves needlessly. Who'd ever do *anything* if he thought only about the bad things that could happen?

CHIEF Absolutely! Let's get to that contract.

TRADER Right on!

(They shake and exit.)

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #9: VOICEMAIL

CHARACTERS:

MAN

1st VOICE

2nd VOICE

3rd VOICE

4th VOICE

(The MAN screams in the dark.)

MAN (dialing telephone, one arm dangling) (to himself, panicked a bit) Okay, be calm! Be calm! . . . Oh, *Jesus*, it hurts!

1st VOICE HMO Helpline. May I help you?

MAN Yes. I've broken my arm, and I wonder if someone could help me.

1st VOICE Oh, I can help you there, sir. Let me put you through to our voicemail. We're now set up to handle emergencies just like yours. Please wait while I connect you.

2nd VOICE (fast) A friendly reminder that option number ten is available only during regular business hours.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MAN No! Wait! I want to talk to a human being.

1st VOICE I am a human being, sir. To whom am I speaking with?

MAN I'm Member 23456.

1st VOICE Did you enter your number when you first called?

MAN I tried, but that's the arm that's broken, so I couldn't —

1st VOICE I believe the real problem, sir, is that you did not press the pound sign after you entered your five-digit member number.

MAN I tried. Really!

1st VOICE Let me connect you to an appropriate department. You'll be taken good care of, sir.

MAN Wait! I — (But 1st Voice is gone, replaced by music.)

4th VOICE (singing like Muzak) "What do you get when you fall in love? You get enough

Slavery

gems to catch pneumonia. If you do, she'll never phone you. Oh, I'll never fall in love againnnn! — “

1st VOICE I'm sorry I had to put you on hold, sir. I am now connecting you.

MAN Thank you.

3rd VOICE Please make a selection from the following menu. If you know your party's extension, you may dial it at any time during this message. For doctors' appointments, please press one. To cancel a doctor's appointment, please press two. To reschedule a previously cancelled doctor's appointment, press three. If you have rescheduled more than two previous doctors' appointments in the past twelve months, press four. If you have cancelled more than two previous doctors' appointments but not rescheduled them during the same time period, press five.

2nd VOICE (fast) A friendly reminder that doctors are people too and really appreciate being notified when you must cancel.

3rd VOICE To check on your Frequent Patient Mileage account, press six. For Minor Abrasions,

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

Amputations, and the Optical Department, press seven. Press eight to re-play this menu.

MAN I guess I'm seven. (Presses it.)

4th VOICE (singing like Muzak) "Fly me to the moon, and let me live among the stars. Let me know what spring is like on Jupiter and Mars —" (Stops suddenly.)

MAN Hello? . . . Hello?

1st VOICE Hello?

MAN Oh, it's you. I don't think my call went through.

1st VOICE To whom am I speaking with?

MAN I just spoke to you a few moments ago.

1st VOICE What is your member number, sir?

MAN I just gave it to you.

1st VOICE We have a lot of calls coming in, sir. What is your mother's maiden name?

Slavery

MAN Don't you recognize my voice?

1st VOICE No, sir, I can't say that I do.

MAN I didn't get through to the Broken Arm Center.

1st VOICE We don't have a Broken Arm Center, sir. No, that would be under . . . I'm checking, sir. . . . I can't seem to find it. Are you *sure* you want that section?

MAN Since I do have a broken arm, that would \ be nice.

1st VOICE Perhaps I could transfer you to Amputations.

MAN Amputations?

2nd VOICE (climax of song) "To dream the impossible dream!"

3rd VOICE Your call is very important to us. Please call back at a later time.

MAN Hello?

4th VOICE Your call is very important to us. We are currently experiencing a short delay.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

Your call will be answered in the order received. Rest assured our customer service representatives are helping other customers. At this time you can expect your call to be answered in —

2nd VOICE (very artificial sound) Seven —

4th VOICE Minutes. Thank you for your patience.

MAN (trying to look at his watch) Oh, my arm! Seven minutes! Maybe I should try to drive myself to the hospital.

2nd VOICE (an ad) Visit your HMO more than once a year? Why not earn Frequent Patient Bonus Miles? Earn a free trip to the Mayo Clinic, all expenses paid. Only 75,000 points. Or visit Lourdes in France and stay at your new HMO health spa. Only 150,000 points. Press nine for more details.

MAN Is anybody there? . . . Hello?

4th VOICE (as operator) If you'd like to make a call, please hang up and try again.

MAN Damn! (Re-dials.)

1st VOICE HMO Helpline. May I help you?

Slavery

MAN Probably not. I'm member 23456.

1st VOICE What seems to be the problem, ma'am?

MAN It's not ma'am.

1st VOICE Sorry. What seems to be the problem?

4th VOICE Sir or madame.

MAN (very slowly) I have a broken arm.

1st VOICE Left or right?

MAN What?

1st VOICE Which arm is in need of service? In order to refer you to the proper department.

MAN My right.

1st VOICE You're sure?

MAN (checking) Yes, I'm pretty sure.

1st VOICE I am now transferring you.

MAN Thank you.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

2nd VOICE American Airlines. May I help you?

MAN American Airlines?

2nd VOICE Yes, this is Miss Foster. May I assist you?

MAN But I didn't call American Airlines.

2nd VOICE For where would you like to travel to,
madame?

MAN It's mister. And I'm not traveling
anywhere. Unless I can travel to a
hospital.

2nd VOICE I'm afraid we don't provide flights to
hospitals —

3rd VOICE Sir or madame.

MAN I think I got transferred somehow in the
voicemail. I was talking to my HMO.

2nd VOICE Perhaps you should hang up and try again.
Thank you for calling American.

MAN But I didn't call American!

2nd VOICE Would you like me to transfer you to

Slavery

my supervisor, sir?

MAN Not really.

2nd VOICE Please hold while I transfer you.

MAN Wait!

4th VOICE (like Muzak) “The girl from Ipanema goes walking!”

3rd VOICE Yes, may I help you?

MAN To whom am I speak with? I mean, who am I speaking with?

3rd VOICE Mister or Miss Friendly!

MAN Am I still talking to American Airlines or is this my HMO?

3rd VOICE This is Vacations in Paradise Time Shares. Thank you for calling to take advantage of our exciting four-day, three-night stay in beautiful Antigua.

MAN (pathetic) Please! I have a broken arm. I need help.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

3rd VOICE Why yes, sir, all our accommodations are Disability Access. Your broken arm shouldn't be a problem. Play golf on our eighteen-hole championship golf course, swim in our —

MAN All right, enough! I want the Complaint Department.

3rd VOICE (hurt) Do you wish to make a complaint?

MAN No, I want to give a compliment!

3rd VOICE I'm afraid we don't have a Compliment Department, sir.

MAN (just barely maintaining) Give me the Complaint Department.
(begging) *Please*.

3rd VOICE (more hurt) I am transferring you.

2nd VOICE (singing) "Love is a many-spendored thing!"

MAN Shut up.

Slavery

- 1st VOICE May I help you?
- MAN Yes, I have a problem.
- 1st VOICE (surly) Is it a problem or a
 complaint? We have separate
 departments.
- MAN I can't get through to a doctor. That
 is my problem.
- 1st VOICE What is your member number,
 please?
- MAN 23456.
- 1st VOICE I didn't quite get that, sir. Would you
 mind repeating it?
- MAN 23456.
- 1st VOICE . . . I'm sorry, sir, we don't show that
 number as a member.
- MAN I am a member. I have been a member for
 many years.
- 1st VOICE Is that 23456 I'm checking?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- MAN Yes. That's me.
- 1st VOICE I show nothing, sir.
- MAN Can I give you my name?
- 1st VOICE Sorry, sir. We are now automated, by member number only.
- MAN But I tell you I am a member! Goddamn it, what do I have to do!
- 1st VOICE This will end our conversation, sir. We do not listen to profanity.
- MAN What *do* you listen to? There wouldn't be any profanity if you people —
- 1st VOICE I am disconnecting now, sir.
- MAN Don't you dare hang up! Who can I complain to if I can't complain to the Complaint Department! This is crazy. Absolutely crazy. (pause) Hello? . . . Hello?
- MAN'S OWN VOICE (pre-recorded) Hello?

Slavery

MAN Yes?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Who is this?

MAN Me. Who is this?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Me.

MAN Who?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Member 23456.

MAN That's *my* number.

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Perhaps there's been some mistake.
Could you please help me?

MAN (shrugs) Okay. What's your problem?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE I have a broken arm.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MAN . . . Who am I talking to again?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Isn't this the HMO?

MAN I thought *you* were the HMO!

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Please! I'm in pain! Can't you help me?

MAN Hang on, hang on. Okay, let's see. Have you got a sling?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE No.

MAN How about a scarf?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Yes, I have that.

MAN Can you make a knot?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE . . . Sort of. (muffled sound) I'm using

Slavery

my mouth.

MAN Good. Got it?

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE I think so.

MAN Now put your arm through the scarf.

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE (in pain) Oh! Oh!

MAN Hang in there. You can do it!

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE I can't. I can't!

MAN Yes, you can! I'm telling you you can do it!

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE Okay, I'll try . . . Oh! Oh!

MAN Yes?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE

My arm's in the scarf!

MAN

Great! Now don't move it. Keep it immobilized.

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE

Oh, that's so much better. Anything else I should do?

MAN

Take two aspirins and call me in the morning.

MAN'S
OWN
VOICE

Thank you.

MAN

You're welcome. (hanging up) I wonder if I'm going crazy. . . . But what about my arm? (looks at it dangling) (rising in intensity) Hello? . . . Hello? . . . *Hello?*

2nd VOICE (pre-recorded) Your call is very important to us. We are currently experiencing a short delay. Your call will be answered in the order received.

(MAN screams. "Twilight Zone" music plays.)

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #10: CROSSBREEDING (The Pit-Cat)

CHARACTERS:

PETSHOP OWNER

CUSTOMER

THE PET, played by a human being

SETTING: A Pet Shop

CUSTOMER Hello? . . . Hello? Anybody here?

OWNER (offstage) Just a moment! I'll be right there!

(Sounds of very loud snarling, hissing, growling.)

CUSTOMER Is everything okay back there?

OWNER (offstage) Stop that! Stop it right now. Help! . . . Help!

(Silence.)

CUSTOMER Hello?

OWNER (entering with THE PET on a leash)
You leave that leash on, you hear me!
I said leave it on! (The animal is trying to rub it off.) (to CUSTOMER)

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

Excuse me, we just got our first shipment of these, and they're proving to be a little hard to deal with. Can I help you?

CUSTOMER I'm looking to buy a pet, and I'm not quite sure what I want. . . . What are those exactly?

PIT-CAT You're not buying me, asshole.

OWNER As you can see, it talks.

PIT-CAT Yeah, and these are my own words, not like some fucking parrot.

CUSTOMER How cute. What is it?

OWNER It's a cross between a pit-bull and a Siamese.

CUSTOMER Really? Two different species? How'd they do that?

OWNER It wasn't easy, but they're doing wonders now with cross-breeding. They're calling this one a pit-cat.

CUSTOMER Did you say a pit-cat?

PIT-CAT Are you stupid or something? He just

The Pit-Cat

said I'm a pit-cat! Why don't you unplug your ears.

CUSTOMER I was trying to get it straight in my head.

PIT-CAT (fast) You want to pet me?

CUSTOMER Well . . . I don't know. (to OWNER) Is it safe?

OWNER I don't know. You're the very first customer.

PIT-CAT Yeah, I'm safe, I'm safe. Go ahead and pet me.

CUSTOMER Well, all right. (Starts to pet it tentatively.)

PIT-CAT (Hissing up a storm) Get your hands off me, asshole. Who do you think you are?

CUSTOMER I'm sorry. . . . (looking at his hands) You scratched me!

PIT-CAT (fast) Yeah?. Got any food?

CUSTOMER Well . . .

OWNER Now, now, I just fed you.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- PIT-CAT Shut up. You did not. (to CUSTOMER)
You gonna pet me or not?
- CUSTOMER But you just said . . .
- PIT-CAT I was just fooling. I'd like you to pet
me. Here let me rub against you.
(Does so.)
- CUSTOMER (watching the animal rub against his
legs, but nervously) Very interesting
. . . breed.
- PIT-CAT (with a final wipe of the face on his
pants) I own you now, fuckhead!
- OWNER You want to buy it?
- CUSTOMER I'm not so sure. How much are they?
- OWNER How much are you willing to pay?
- PIT-CAT Hey, hey, hey, what's going on here?
Who's buying who?
- CUSTOMER I'm buying you. . . maybe.
- PIT-CAT You're buying me? You're buying *me*?
Who says I'll go? (fast) You got any
mice?

The Pit-Cat

- CUSTOMER Not really.
- PIT-CAT You want me to come to a place
 without mice?
- CUSTOMER I suppose I could get some mice . . .
- PIT-CAT How about some other small creatures?
 Voles? I really like voles.
- CUSTOMER What exactly did you have in mind?
- PIT-CAT I like to bite their heads. You got
 some?
- CUSTOMER Not that I know of.
- PIT-CAT You either got voles or you don't.
 Which is it?
- CUSTOMER I guess I don't.
- PIT-CAT And you expect me to come to your
 place to live? (gesturing at the
OWNER) I'd rather stay here with this
 schmuck.
- OWNER (to CUSTOMER) I'm sure we can work
 out something. Maybe you —
- PIT-CAT Shut up, you! I'm handling this. (to

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

CUSTOMER) You got a fireplace? I don't come unless you got a fireplace.

CUSTOMER (intimidated) I do have a fireplace, yes!

PIT-CAT All right. Maybe you're not such an asshole after all.

CUSTOMER Why, thank you.

PIT-CAT I'm sorry I scratched you.

CUSTOMER I suppose they'll heal.

PIT-CAT (dismissively) They'll heal! Jesus!

OWNER So should I wrap it up?

PIT-CAT It? You're wrapping up an *it*?

OWNER I'm sorry. It slipped out.

PIT-CAT I can't believe this. You two piss-breaths are calling *me* an *it*? My asshole smells better than your fucking face-holes any day you'd care to name, and yet you're calling me a . . . *what*?

CUSTOMER . . . Nice kitty?

PIT-CAT Get me some food. Pronto.

The Pit-Cat

CUSTOMER What would you like?

PIT-CAT I don't know. Just get it.

CUSTOMER (picking up a can) How about some
 low-ash special kitty treat?

PIT-CAT Fuck that.

CUSTOMER How about Whiskas?

PIT-CAT That's something only a human would
 eat.

CUSTOMER How about some kibble?

PIT-CAT Well . . . I don't know. What kind is it?

OWNER You can try some of this. (Takes some
 kibble from an open sample bag.)

CUSTOMER Oh, good! I'll take some of that.

PIT-CAT (excited now) Good, good, good! I want
 it. I want that!

OWNER (to CUSTOMER) Here you feed him.

CUSTOMER Here, kitty, kitty. (Puts food down.)

PIT-CAT (rushing over, sniffing it) What is this?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

(Turns up nose.)

CUSTOMER Come on now. Eatsy-weatzy!

PIT-CAT Eatsy-weatsy? (with contempt) Eatsy-weatsy? You eatsy-weatsy this shit!

CUSTOMER He doesn't seem to like it.

OWNER He'll get used to it. I'll throw it in for free.

CUSTOMER I'm not so sure that this is the pet for me.

PIT-CAT (prickly) *Oh?*

CUSTOMER Yeah, I'd better think about it.

OWNER Please! Half price!

CUSTOMER No, I really have to be going. I just stopped in to browse. (Starts to leave.)

PIT-CAT Come here, you.

CUSTOMER Me?

PIT-CAT Yeah, you. Come over here.

CUSTOMER (afraid) What do you want?

The Pit-Cat

PIT-CAT I won't hurt you. Come here.

CUSTOMER But I'm . . . I mean . . .

PIT-CAT Get over here!

CUSTOMER (going over, trembling) What — what is it?

PIT-CAT Just want to whisper something in your ear. Bend down.

CUSTOMER But . . .

PIT-CAT Bend down! I want to purr in your ear.

CUSTOMER You sure?

PIT-CAT (purring) Real sure.

(CUSTOMER reluctantly bends down. The PIT-CAT suddenly goes into pit-bull mode and grabs him by the ear.)

CUSTOMER Help! Help!

PIT-CAT (hanging on with his teeth) How do you like it, asshole? How do you like *it*?

CUSTOMER Get him off me! Get him off me!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

OWNER Let go of him! Let go!

PIT-CAT (growling) Grrr! No way! Grrr! No way!

CUSTOMER My ear! My ear!

PIT-CAT Wait till I get to your throat! Grrr!

(The PIT-CAT throws the CUSTOMER to the floor, straddles him, goes for the throat.)

CUSTOMER (held by throat) Oh, please! Please! No!

OWNER Let go of him. (Grabs a food dish, bangs at the animal.)

CUSTOMER Ow! You hit me!

OWNER Sorry!

CUSTOMER (choking) He's gonna kill me!

OWNER Nice doggy, nice doggy!

PIT-CAT (to CUSTOMER) Do you surrender?
(growling) Grrr! Do you?

CUSTOMER Yes! Yes!

PIT-CAT Say it.

The Pit-Cat

- CUSTOMER Say what?
- PIT-CAT You know.
- CUSTOMER Okay . . . uncle.
- PIT-CAT All right. Don't try anything funny now.
And I'll let you up. (Backs off a bit.)
- CUSTOMER (sitting up, feeling his throat, his ear)
My god! I thought I was going to die.
- OWNER Tell you what. We're having a special
sale right now. One free pit-cat for
every customer who enters the store!
- CUSTOMER I don't want that thing. I don't want it!
- PIT-CAT What did you say? Grrrrr! (Advances
again) What was that?
- CUSTOMER (flinching, cowering) Nothing!
Nothing!
- PIT-CAT I hope not. Now get up and take my
leash!
- CUSTOMER Okay, okay. (Gets up.) Where is it?
- OWNER (finding the end of it) Here it is! (Puts it
into the CUSTOMER's hand.)

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- PIT-CAT Now let's get out of here. I'm tired of
 this joint. Smells like hamsters in here!
- CUSTOMER Where are we going?
- PIT-CAT Where do you live?
- CUSTOMER Not far. But it's —
- PIT-CAT Start walking. I'll check it out.
- CUSTOMER Now just a —
- PIT-CAT Move! How many times do I have to tell
 you? (threatening) Grrrr! (now gently)
 Meow! (now threatening) Grrr! (gently)
 Meow! (The animal starts to exit,
 pulling the CUSTOMER with him.
- OWNER Bye! Thanks for coming in! I'm sure
 you two will be very . . . happy
 together. Never seen a better match of
 pet and owner in my life!
- PIT-BULL (to CUSTOMER) And if you're real
 good, I'll let you masturbate me later,
 asshole!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea # 11: STUDY . . . HARD

CHARACTERS:

THEOLOGIAN, an older male, in clerical garb

SEMINARIAN, a younger male, in the same

ALTAR BOY, with a white surplice

SET: A desk set apart. On the other side of the stage is a separate lighted area.

THEOLOGIAN (entering to SEMINARIAN at desk)
Are you ready?

SEMINARIAN I am ready, Father.

THEOLOGIAN Are you certain? I will not come again.

SEMINARIAN I have studied hard, Father.

THEOLOGIAN I know you have, my son. We don't want your eight long years to go for naught. Because you do realize, don't you, that we will have to ask you to leave if you fail this preliminary test?

SEMINARIAN I understand.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

THEOLOGIAN We want our theology taught accurately. We cannot be slipshod in this very important matter. So we demand proof that you are on track.

SEMINARIAN I will do my humble best, Father.

THEOLOGIAN Just keep in mind your greater goal – bringing truth to the world.

SEMINARIAN Indeed I have my goal clearly before me, Father, at all times.

(Lights up on Altar Boy in separate area, hands held in prayer, not seen by the Theologian.)

THEOLOGIAN Very good! Because I realize that the Church's teachings are sometimes quite complicated.

SEMINARIAN They are, Father, and even, might I say, at times difficult to unravel. Still, I have locked horns with the problems and applied my mind to achieving success once I am ordained and carry the full power and authority of the Church.

(Lights down on Altar Boy.)

Study . . . Hard

- THEOLOGIAN All I can do is wish you luck. And ask three sample questions. Shall we?
- SEMINARIAN I throw myself upon my faith.
- THEOLOGIAN Excellent beginning! Remember, if some doctrinal teachings are, shall we say, unusual to today's increasingly secular minds, there is always the ultimate answer – the Glory of our Faith!
- SEMINARIAN (bowing his head) Yes, Father.
- THEOLOGIAN All right then! Question #1 . . . Part A! Is God *infinite*?
- SEMINARIAN Ah . . . yes, God is infinite.
- THEOLOGIAN Meaning that God is everywhere?
- SEMINARIAN Yes.
- THEOLOGIAN Are we therefore part of God?
- SEMINARIAN I believe the Church declares that to be a heresy. Isn't that correct?
- THEOLOGIAN Yes, it is correct, but which heresy?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- SEMINARIAN I believe that one is known as . . . pantheism.
- THEOLOGIAN Well done. We are not part of God, but God is certainly everywhere! Thomas Aquinas nails that one right on the head in the Summa Theologica, does he not?
- SEMINARIAN (not too convinced) . . . Like a pro.
- THEOLOGIAN We needn't go into all of the doctrine right now. That can happen later. For now: Question #2! Was Jesus Christ human, divine, or both human and divine?! Or neither human nor divine? Answer carefully.
- SEMINARIAN Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, was both human and divine. With a dual nature. The only such person ever to be born into this world.
- THEOLOGIAN A perfect answer! You're cookin', young man!
- SEMINARIAN Thank you, Father. I try.
- THEOLOGIAN Our Lord had to be both human and divine to be a worthy sacrifice on

Study . . . Hard

the cross – first, for us as a fellow human being. And, second, because only a divine being would be worthy enough to take on the sins of the entire human race! (getting worked up) Those hideous nails going into that divine flesh – and why? For us, for us, who otherwise would burn in Hell for all eternity carrying the Original Sin of our fore-parents! . . . And yet are most people grateful?! Not on your life. They keep on sinning and sinning and sinning! Venial! Mortal! Driving those hideous nails yet again into Our Lord's poor, bloodied, sacrificial hands and feet!

(The THEOLOGICAN mops his brow.)

SEMINARIAN Are you all right, Father?

THEOLOGIAN Give me just a moment. (Tries to re-group.)

SEMINARIAN We can wait until another day.

THEOLOGIAN No, no. We're on a roll. One more question. I'm ready now. Are you?!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- SEMINARIAN Whenever you are, Father.
- THEOLOGIAN Well then! Question #3! (slowly and solemnly) Is a priest's sperm holy?
- SEMINARIAN . . . I'm afraid I don't quite understand the question, Father.
- THEOLOGIAN It's perfectly clear.
- SEMINARIAN Could I request just a little bit of clarification?
- THEOLOGIAN And what would that be?
- SEMINARIAN Do you mean is a priest's sperm – once he is ordained – holy from that moment on at all times? Or do you mean that a priest's sperm is doubly holy after he blesses himself, the way he blesses holy water? (Makes a sign of the cross in the air to demonstrate.)
- THEOLOGIAN I can see that you have put a lot of thought into this question, my son. You bring up a very interesting issue that I confess even I have never heard before.
- SEMINARIAN I'm sorry, Father.

Study . . . Hard

THEOLOGIAN Not at all! This may be the very theological question that will save the Church! It shows we're not out of touch and think we have all the answers all wrapped up. We're still out there on the intellectual frontiers wrestling with issues that matter today! Yes!

SEMINARIAN So the answer is . . . ?

THEOLOGIAN At this point I can only venture an educated guess. I wouldn't dream of presuming to state the doctrine categorically until I have (suddenly) – until I have what?

SEMINARIAN (hesitating) Until you have . . .

THEOLOGIAN Yes?

SEMINARIAN Consulted with the Holy See?

THEOLOGIAN And not just consulted, but . . . but . . . ?

SEMINARIAN (wracking his brain) Ah . . . ah . . .
Memorized the latest encyclical written by His Holiness on matters of faith and morals?!

THEOLOGIAN Is that your final answer?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

SEMINARIAN . . . I'm afraid so, Father.

THEOLOGIAN (shakes his head sadly) I'm sorry. That answer is not – no, just teasing! That is a terrific answer!

SEMINARIAN So that means I pass?

THEOLOGIAN Oh, we mustn't jump the gun. There will be much study ahead of you and many a difficult question more. But for today I can tell you this: Welcome aboard! Welcome aboard, my boy!

(Lights up on the Altar Boy, still praying.)

SEMINARIAN Heaven be praised! I'm in! All my hard, hard study has been worth it! And, boy, has it ever been hard!

THEOLOGIAN Not many have your determination, young man, I'll tell you that. Congratulations! (They shake.) It's because of you and people like you, that the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church and its doctrines will live on forever!

SEMINARIAN Amen!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #12: MOOSEBABY

CHARACTERS:

WOMAN, MOOSE, ETHICIST

ETHICIST The question to be considered today is —
(Points.)

WOMAN (running in) No! No! Leave me alone!

ETHICIST Whether a woman has a right to an
abortion in cases of —

MOOSE (wearing antlers, running after WOMAN)
Come here, you! I want you!

WOMAN Help! Help!

MOOSE It's no use yelling. Your fate is sealed! I
will have you!

WOMAN But you're a . . . you're a moose!

MOOSE I know. Just lie back and enjoy it.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- WOMAN My god! Don't you dare!
- MOOSE I will not be denied! (Grabs her and ravishes her — in a stylized way.)
- ETHICIST We all know that rape is not funny. Murder is funny. Starvation is funny. But rape is not funny. This therefore is not funny. It is a serious illustration: (Points.)
- WOMAN I'm pregnant by a moose.
- MOOSE You wanted it.
- WOMAN I did not!
- ETHICIST So the dilemma before us is whether she should carry the child to term.
- WOMAN I'm sorry, I don't want a half-moose baby.
- MOOSE Why not?
- ETHICIST I'm afraid I rather have to agree with the moose. Life is sacred.
- WOMAN Bullshit. . . . Make that mooseshit.

Moosebaby

ETHICIST If we terminate life, we show that we don't value life.

MOOSE Right on! I can't wait to see my baby. Those little horns. That big drooping jaw.

WOMAN The smell!

MOOSE Exactly.

WOMAN I am not going to have his child!

ETHICIST Do you know the story of Leda and the swan?

WOMAN No.

ETHICIST Do you know the story of Europa and the bull?

WOMAN Who?

ETHICIST This moose could be Zeus in disguise.

MOOSE Hey, that's right! What are you trying to pull here? (Strikes a particularly unattractive posture.) I could be, you know, like, divine.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- WOMAN That is preposterous.
- ETHICIST Don't be hasty now. The divine will often displays itself in mysterious ways.
- WOMAN Well, it's not displaying itself to me! And it he's divine, then I'm Wonder Woman!
- MOOSE Hey! Maybe I'm somebody else important.
- WOMAN Like who?
- MOOSE Like . . . Father Goose.
- WOMAN Father Goose?
- MOOSE He goes with Mother Goose.
- WOMAN You must think I'm a goose.
- MOOSE How about Father Moose?
- WOMAN I will not take this another minute. (to ETHICIST) Give me a morning-after pill.
- MOOSE It wasn't good for you?
- ETHICIST How will we ever know if the child might not have turned out to be somebody splendid, like the Holy Father or Ross

Moosebaby

Perot? [or supply contemporary nerd name]

WOMAN Believe me, I can live without knowing.

MOOSE You don't want to keep my baby?

WOMAN I'm all out of tundra!

MOOSE You could put it up for adoption.

WOMAN I don't want to have it inside me! Can't you get that through your thick skull?

MOOSE (his feelings hurt) It's not that thick.

ETHICIST He's right, you know. I bet there are plenty of couples out there ready to adopt a little half-moose baby. (to audience)
Aren't there? Out there?

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #13: BALLS

CHARACTERS: (6)

THE PLAYER, who carries a gym bag with various balls inside it, and a hoop — a circle of steel without a net. Or any hoop will do, hand held.

NARRATOR

SEVERAL OTHERS

NARRATOR Once upon a time there was a small child.

PLAYER (enters) (in silly baby voice) *Hi!*

NARRATOR This child could hardly talk.

PLAYER (in baby voice) *Hi!*

NARRATOR And this child could barely read.

PLAYER *Hi!*

NARRATOR But then one day, lo and behold, this child was found to be possessed of a wondrous, indeed a miraculous, power!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- PLAYER (dropping a ball through) Look, I put the basketball through this hoop.
- NARRATOR Needless to say, his parents were amazed.
- PARENTS We've produced a genius!
- PLAYER Ah, shucks, it ain't nothin'. I just did *this*. (He drops the basketball through the hoop again.)
- FATHER My god, we've got to show our child to the right people!
- MOTHER (worried) But what if it was just a fluke and he doesn't really possess this incredible talent?
- FATHER You're right. . . . Can you do again, son? . . . (tears welling) For dad?
- MOTHER And mom?
- PLAYER Well, let me see. (Holds the basketball over the hoop, hesitates a long time, then drops it through) How's that?

Balls

- PARENTS Oh, thank you, *Jesus!*
- MOTHER We're so —
- FATHER Proud of —
- MOTHER You!
- NARRATOR Well, you can imagine the flurry of attention that resulted.
- GIRL You can put a basketball through a hoop. I like you.
- NARRATOR Said more than one young lady.
- TEACHER Of course you can cut class for practice. And forget about that essay that's due next Tuesday.
- NARRATOR Said any number of teachers.
- FRIEND You must be very proud of your boy.
- NARRATOR Said friends of the young man's parents.
- FRIEND I wish *our* boy could put a basketball through a hoop. But all he does is *read* and suspicious stuff like that.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- NARRATOR Naturally these people were very worried about their boy. He might even turn out to be a . . . well, you know. (Winks.)
- FRIEND (after pause) A writer? You want to be a *writer*? (Sobs.) Oh, how could this have happened to our family! (More sobs.)
- NARRATOR Meanwhile, the young player was growing up.
- PLAYER (same high voice) *Hi!*
- NARRATOR And he had matured in his talent as well.
- PLAYER Look! I can make this *golf ball* go through the basketball hoop. (He does so.)
- CROWD (Applauds loudly.)
- PLAYER Aw, shucks. Thanks. ‘Tweren’t nothin’.
- NARRATOR The charming modesty of the youngster always surprised others, in light of the fact that his talent was so stupendous, so vital to his society.

Balls

AGENT Here! Sign this contract.

PLAYER Me?

AGENT I'm sorry I could only get eighteen million for three years. But you'll get a bonus when you turn twelve.

PLAYER Well, I don't know . . .

NARRATOR Said the player cautiously.

PLAYER The Boise Jackrabbits are offerin' me twenty million!

AGENT Wait! Don't sign with them yet. Maybe I can get you nineteen million for six months! With an option for more later!

NARRATOR And so it went. Success after success.

PLAYER (to NARRATOR) It wasn't that easy.

NARRATOR Oh?

PLAYER I sprained my wrist in Kokomo once.

NARRATOR Really? (to audience) Yes, you're right. A subtle change was taking place in our young man.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- PLAYER Like hell! I'm the same sweet, innocent
 guy I always was. What are you
 inferring?
- NARRATOR I apologize.
- PLAYER You'd better. Or I'll beat your ass.
- NARRATOR As you can see, sports taught him
 Sportsmanship.
- PLAYER Yeah!
- NARRATOR And going professional honed his skills.
- PLAYER Watch this. (Takes something out of the
 gym bag and drops it through the
 basketball hoop.) Did you see that
 football go through that hoop, huh?
- NARRATOR I certainly did.
- CROWD (Applause, whistles.)
- PLAYER (bragging aggressively) And I can do it
 with a baseball too. (Takes out a
 baseball and tosses it through the hoop.)

Balls

TV SPORTS

ANNOUNCER Good evening, sports fans! Have we got something terrific to show you tonight, or what!? Okay, roll that clip.

PLAYER (as TV clips) And I can kick a *soccer ball* through a hoop too! (He does so, proudly.)

TV SPORTS

ANNOUNCER Roll that other clip!

PLAYER And a volleyball! (Pushes it through the hoop.)

TV SPORTS

ANNOUNCER Is he great!? Is he great?! Just *look* at that guy!

PLAYER And a hockey puck! (He throws a hockey puck through the hoop.)

SPORTS

WRITER (at post-game press conference) How did you feel out there tonight, champ? You looked a little tired.

PLAYER I had that puck under control at all times.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

SPORTS

WRITER Do you think you'll have anything left for the semi-finals?

PLAYER (profoundly) Well, Gary, I just keep playin' 'em . . . one game at a time.

CROWD (Wild applause.)

VOICE #1 How *does* he do it?

VOICE #2 I'm just constantly amazed at the man's talent.

PRESIDENT As president of the United States let me express my admiration for this young man — and every young man and woman like him. He's what we need more of in this country and in this troubled world — an outstanding role model! I'm not afraid to say that my heart wells up every time I see him.

CROWD (Wild applause.)

PLAYER That's right! Keep it up. I am hot shit!

PRESIDENT If we can only get more of our young people to put balls through hoops, I know we will be a great country again!

Balls

CROWD Yea! Yes! (Applause.) He's *so* right!

NARRATOR And so it went, this happy story — and, yes, it does have a happy ending. Let's have no negativity around here!

PLAYER Right on, man!

NARRATOR Our young player continued to grow and mature and kept developing his personal and team skills.

FEMALE

FAN #1 Oh, champ, choose me tonight! Choose me!

FEMALE

FAN #2 No, take me! Take me!

FEMALE

FAN #3 Me! Please! Me!

PLAYER (smugly) Why not *all* of you ladies tonight? You don't mind sharin', do you? Har, har, har!

THREE

FEMALE

FANS Oh, champ, you're too much!
(Giggles.)

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

TV

SPORTS-

CASTER

He shoots! He scores!

NARRATOR

And on and on he soared into legend:
Number one in most round things put
through a hoop during a lifetime.
Number one in most points scored by
bouncing a round thing off the head of
an opponent! Most round things
dribbled, kicked, thrown, or deposited
by a human being throughout the
history of humankind. And then came
— not just the money or the adulation or
the sex — no, at last came . . . (in a
hushed tone) the Balls Hall of Fame!
(Wipes away a tear.) Followed by that
illustrious career as Assistant Color
Coverage for the *Super Bowl!*

PLAYER

(baby voice) *Hi!*

NARRATOR

(rising in preacher-like enthusiasm)
Then came commercials for Nike, for
the Money Store, and for Mervyn's. . . .
And then at last came Heaven itself,
where he sits in glory forever and ever.
— Hallelujah! Hallelujah! — on the
right . . . hand . . . of . . . *God!!!*

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #14: REAL DIVERSITY

CHARACTERS:

MS LOVE, a gushy teacher
4 SECOND GRADE STUDENTS (SUSIE,
HWONG, JOSE, CHAUNDRA)

SETTING: A grade school classroom

MS LOVE Good morning, boys and girls! (no response) (too cheery) I said, “Good morning, boys and girls!”

SUSIE /
CHAUNDRA (weakly) Good morning, Ms Love.

MS LOVE That’s better! How are we today?

SUSIE /
CHAUNDRA (weakly) Fine.

MS LOVE I should hope so! It’s really good to see those shining morning faces once again! Did you have a nice vacation? I’ll bet you had a very nice vacation, didn’t you?

SUSIE Yes, Ms Love. I had a wonderful Christmas.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MS LOVE Oh, say “vacation,” Susie. Remember,
not everybody celebrates Christmas.

SUSIE (shyly) But *we* did.

MS LOVE You must think of other people, Susie.

SUSIE (softly) Okay. But I just —

MS LOVE (cutting her off) Now, class, did you
remember what we’re going to have
today? I hope you remembered to bring
something.

CHAUNDRA /
HWONG We did.

MS LOVE Well, let’s get started then! Jose, are
you with us?

JOSE (grumpily) Yeah.

MS LOVE You mustn’t sleep in class, Jose. People
will think you’re a stereotype. And
you’re not a stereotype, are you?

JOSE No, Ms. Love.

MS LOVE Of course not! We’re all individuals!
Even though we come from many

Real Diversity

different places, don't we?

CLASS (weakly) Yes.

MS LOVE And that's why we're having this special Show and Tell day, aren't we? What do we call it? . . . Jose?

JOSE I don't know.

MS LOVE Of course you do! It's Celebrate Diversity Day! (Claps her hands.) Now who's first? . . . Jose, how about you?

JOSE I don't wanna. I ain't got nothin'.

MS LOVE No rush! . . . Well, I *know*. Let's get (careful to pronounce the "h") *Hwong* to show and tell. He's never said a word all semester long. But you're ready now, aren't you, *Hwong*?

HWONG (very quiet) I guess so.

MS LOVE Wonderful! And look, *Hwong* has actually brought something to show us! Something typical of his homeland. Now where is that again, *Hwong*? What tribe in Laos? Oh, never mind. Let us guess. It'll be ever so much more educational that way! Okay, what have

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

you got for us, *Hwong*? Oh, look, boys and girls, he's got a bag! And what's in that bag? Something your mother gave you?

HWONG My father.

MS LOVE Isn't this interesting, class? Aren't we lucky to have so many people from so many different lands going to school together? I know that I personally am *enriched* every single day. . . . So, *Hwong*, what have you got to show us?

HWONG (starting to take it out) A dead puppy, honorable teacher.

CLASS (various voices) Oh, good! Really? I want it! Eek!

MS LOVE You are joking, aren't you, *Hwong*?

HWONG No, honorable teacher. I've brought a dead puppy to show. (Starts to remove it.)

MS LOVE Well, well, well, why don't you leave it in the bag, *Hwong*? Just . . . just tell us about it.

Real Diversity

- HWONG Okay. My mama bad sick. My papa try everything. Scar his forehead. Pray to moon. Sacrifice rooster. Nothing work. Mama still sick. So papa beat puppy. Now mama *much* better!
- MS LOVE Good! And how's the puppy?
- HWONG (looking in the bag) He not move for three days.
- MS LOVE Well! Thank you, *Hwong*. That was very, very interesting. Perhaps during recess you could see me about that bag, okay?
- HWONG Okay.
- SUSIE Ms Love, shouldn't we tell *Hwong* that's wrong?
- MS LOVE *Hwong* wrong? What are you saying, Susie? We mustn't criticize other people's diversity. It's such a blessing.
- SUSIE I'm sorry, Ms Love.
- MS LOVE Well, you should be. Where would be if we were xenophobic and narrow-minded? Other people have just as much right as we to do things the way

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

they want to. And when they come here, we must welcome them or we're small-minded!

SUSIE Yes, Ms Love.

MS LOVE Now who's next? . . . Jose?

JOSE Naw, I don't wanna. (Spits.)

MS LOVE Did you spit, Jose?

JOSE Yeah, why?

MS LOVE Right on the floor between the desks?

JOSE Yeah. So what?

MS LOVE Well, somebody might walk in it. And it's got germs.

JOSE I ain't got no germs. (threatening) Chou sayin' I got germs?

MS LOVE We all have germs, Jose.

JOSE Not me!

MS LOVE But you do. You just do . . . Jose.

Real Diversity

- JOSE Chou sayin' people named Jose got germs?
- MS LOVE (at a loss for words) Well . . . I'm not saying you have special germs, Jose! Just regular germs.
- JOSE (intimidating) Do chou think the *principal* thinks I got germs?
- MS LOVE (too peppy) Well, okay! If Jose doesn't want to deposit his saliva in a receptacle, I guess that's his business!
- JOSE Yeah, I'm diverse!
- CLASS (various giggles)
- MS LOVE Isn't that terrific. Jose has gotten into the spirit of today! . . . Now what else do we have for Show and Tell?
- CHAUNDRA Me.
- MS LOVE Yes, Chaundra, how marvelous of you to bring something!
- CHAUNDRA I was gonna bring my sister.
- MS LOVE You were? But?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

CHAUNDRA She hasn't recovered yet.

MS LOVE Recovered?

CHAUNDRA From her operation.

MS LOVE Oh, what an opportunity we've missed then! We could've learned all about medicine in the Sudan! What a pity your sister couldn't come. . . . (trying to change what's coming) Someone else then? Dork, perhaps you could tell us about Norway? How you tend the cows there! Dork?

DORK It's *Doork* — with an umlaut.

MS LOVE Of course — *Doork*.

CHAUNDRA I did bring some pictures of my sister's operation.

MS LOVE How thoughtful of your, Chaundra. But
—

CHAUNDRA Performed by my grandmother.

MS LOVE I'm sure they're very interesting, Chaundra. But are we quite sure what this operation is?

Real Diversity

CHAUNDRA My sister is thirteen now. In my country when a girl is thirteen she must have the operation.

JOSE What operation?

MS LOVE I'm not sure this is —

CHAUNDRA My grandmother uses a razor. She is very good. Have done many operations all up and down the Sudan.

MS LOVE Well, isn't that fascinating! Is there anyone else who has something to share with the class today?

CHAUNDRA I'm not finished yet, Ms Love. I can show the class the pictures, yes?

MS LOVE We don't really need to see those pictures, Chaundra. Let's just use our imaginations! Yes, *imaginations* are so much better!

JOSE I wanna see them pictures.

MS LOVE Well, Jose, maybe Chaundra can show them to you later.

JOSE I want to see 'em now.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- MS LOVE Well, I'm sorry, Jose, but sometimes we have to learn to . . . to delay pleasure.
- CHAUNDRA That's what my grandmother said about my sister.
- JOSE Chou tryin' to impose your values on us, Ms Love?
- MS LOVE Of course not! I would never do such a thing.
- JOSE Chou better not. Or I'll report chou.
- MS LOVE Jose, I don't like that tone.
- JOSE Chou tryin' to impose your tone on me?
- MS LOVE Certainly not. You can have any tone you like.
- JOSE Chou better say that.
- MS LOVE I'm saying it.
- JOSE As a matter of fact, I don't like *your* tone.
- MS LOVE That's too bad.

Real Diversity

- JOSE I think chou should change your tone to
my tone.
- MS LOVE Now, Jose, I think you're missing the
point of today's class!
- JOSE Bullshit I'm missin' the point! *Chou* are
missin' the point!
- MS LOVE Now, Jose, let's not turn it into one of
those days. . . . Okay? Jose? . . . What
do you say, Jose?
- SUSIE (rhyming) Ole!
- MS LOVE (sternly) Susie That's quite out of
place!
- SUSIE I'm sorry.
- JOSE I'm leavin'.
- MS LOVE Now, Jose!
- JOSE I'm leavin' the class. And I'm leavin'
school.
- MS LOVE But you're only in the second grade,
Jose!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- JOSE I don't care. I can't take this abuse!
Chou spit on my culture!
- MS LOVE I wasn't spitting. . . . *You* were spitting,
Jose.
- JOSE Now I'll never go to high school. And
it's all your fault, Ms Love! *I hate
chou! I hate chou!* (He storms out.)
- MS LOVE Well! . . . I'll see to Jose in a minute.
I'll get that all straightened out. Don't
be upset now. That boy's not leaving \
school if I can help it! So! What have
we learned today about diversity, boys
and girls?
- SUSIE It doesn't work?
- MS LOVE No, no, Susie! How could you say such
a thing?
- SUSIE I don't know. It just came out.
- MS LOVE Well, keep it in, Susie. Keep it in! . . .
Well! I think it's about time for a
recess. What about all of you? Don't
you think we've earned it? Of course
we've earned it!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #15: MAKE-A-WISH

CHARACTERS:

TIMMY, a dying teenage boy

MRS. ROLLINS, the Wish Giver

SETTING A hospital room

MRS. ROLLINS (at a distance) Timmy? . . . Timmy?
Are you asleep?

TIMMY (in bed, lethargically) Oh, hello,
Mrs. Rollins. No, I was just dozing.
Come on in.

MRS. ROLLINS (entering) My, you're looking better
today, I must say. How are you
feeling, young man?

TIMMY Not too good, Mrs. Rollins. I don't
think I've got much time left.

MRS. ROLLINS Now you mustn't say that, Timmy.
The doctors say you've got lots of
time left. Lots!

TIMMY I know you're all, like, trying to
make me feel a better by telling me
that, but I know the truth.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- MRS. ROLLINS You've got to think positively,
Timmy! It's your only hope!
- TIMMY I'm only sixteen years old, and I'm
going to die! How can I, like, be
positive?
- MRS. ROLLINS I feel for you, Timmy. Believe me,
I do. That's why I'm here. I didn't
tell you this before, but I'm from
the Make A Wish Foundation. We
go around to hospitals looking for
children to grant wishes to.
- TIMMY Really? I just thought you were
some old lady who didn't have
anything better to do with herself.
- MRS. ROLLINS No, Timmy, I've selected you out
of hundreds of dying children. We
want to make your last days as
happy as we can. We feel that if we
can alleviate the suffering of at
least one terminal child we have
fulfilled our purpose from the
Big Guy upstairs.
- TIMMY Cool.

Make a Wish

- MRS. ROLLINS So, Timmy, what is the one wish you'd most like to have come true for you?
- TIMMY Gee, it's hard to know, Mrs. Rollins.
- MRS. ROLLINS That's so like you, unassuming little lad that you are. Do you mind if I tell you what some of the other children that we've dealt with have asked for? It might help *you* decide.
- TIMMY Okay! Wow! This is, like, so great of you!
- MRS. ROLLINS Why, thank you, Timmy! . . . Let me think back now. Oh, yes, there was one young lady who asked to go to the circus and ride on Simba the elephant. It turned out that she was too sick to get up on Simba, but we arranged a very lovely tricycle ride right here in the parking lot instead.
- TIMMY Really?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MRS. ROLLINS And there was another young man
— just about your age too — who
wanted to meet Ted Williams. And
guess what?

TIMMY What?

MRS. ROLLINS He met Willie Mays! Ted Williams
wasn't quite available at the time.

TIMMY Who's Ted Williams?

MRS. ROLLINS So, Timmy, have you thought of a
wish of your very own?

TIMMY Something that will make me totally
happy before I die?

MRS. ROLLINS That's right. Have you thought of
one?

TIMMY I have.

MRS. ROLLINS And what is it, Timmy? I hope it's
not shooting a bear, like some I
could name.

TIMMY Some kid wanted to kill a bear
before he died? You mean, like,

Make a Wish

blow it away in a stream with a salmon in its mouth or something?

MRS. ROLLINS It wasn't one of the better wishes we've had over the years, no, sir.

TIMMY But you granted it?

MRS. ROLLINS We granted it. After all, a child only dies once in his life.

TIMMY Cool. Hey, you know what I really want?

MRS. ROLLINS I can't wait to hear.

TIMMY You know those nurses — Miss Laverty and Miss Mandoza?

MRS. ROLLINS Yes.

TIMMY They're, like, really hot. I like those tight white uniforms they always wear.

MRS. ROLLINS And you'd like a date with one of them!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- TIMMY Sort of. I want them both to blow me.
- MRS. ROLLINS I beg your pardon, Timmy?
- TIMMY I want them to give me head, right here, one on each side of the bed. Hey, that's a poem! So do I get my wish?
- MRS. ROLLINS But you're sick, Timmy.
- TIMMY I know, I know. That'll make me feel better! I can give them some tongue too.
- MRS. ROLLINS . . . I'm not so sure about this, Timmy.
- TIMMY And I want them to put the bedpan on my head when they blow me.
- MRS. ROLLINS Your bedpan?
- TIMMY Oh, not full or anything. Empty! But on my head when I come.
- MRS. ROLLINS I see.

Make a Wish

- TIMMY And can this be, like, a two-part wish?
- MRS. ROLLINS Now, Timmy, we mustn't be greedy.
- TIMMY But in them old stories you always get three wishes, and I'm only gettin' *one*!
- MRS. ROLLINS Well, young man, there's some doubt about the one you've already asked for.
- TIMMY Please! I'm going to die and turn all mucky and yucky in the grave, and I'm only a teenager!
- MRS. ROLLINS Now, now, calm down. What else exactly did you have in mind?
- TIMMY I want to, like, puke on a doctor.
- MRS. ROLLINS Timmy, I don't think I know you as well as I thought I did.
- TIMMY Yeah, Dr. Menzies in particular. He thinks he's hot shit, and he ain't! I want him to kneel at the end of the

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

bed and open his mouth real wide,
and I'll tickle my throat — or have
some chemo again! — and then I'll
puke right down his throat from
back here. *Projectile!*

MRS. ROLLINS Now, Timmy!

TIMMY And then I want Dr. Menzies to
chew it and swallow it —

MRS. ROLLINS Son.

TIMMY — and, like, smack his lips
afterwards.

MRS. ROLLINS (quietly) Timmy.

TIMMY And I want a video of it so I can
watch it again and again!

MRS. ROLLINS (seriously) Timmy, I think you've
misunderstood something here.

TIMMY You told me to make a wish for
something I really want.

MRS. ROLLINS Well, I know. But couldn't you
come up with a somewhat more . . .
pleasant last wish? You're making

Make a Wish

it very difficult for the Make A Wish folks.

TIMMY Oh, so you want it to be easy. That's how you adults are! Always wanting everything to be just the way *you* want. Never mind what *I* want! Yeah, I see how it is. You don't really want to give me a wish. You just want to get my hopes up and then crush them, so that I die even more miserable and sad than I otherwise would!

MRS. ROLLINS Now, Timmy, don't talk like that.

TIMMY You're just like my parents. They won't give me anything!

MRS. ROLLINS They gave you all those toys over there. (Points.) They love you very much.

TIMMY Toys aren't love! Toys are what parents give kids when they *don't* love 'em!

MRS. ROLLINS Oh, Timmy, don't talk like this. It breaks my heart.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

TIMMY I heard it on Jerry Springer. So there! You know what, Mrs. Rollins? For the first time in my life I'm saying what I really feel. Fuck mom! Fuck dad! Fuck Toys R Us! If they loved me, they'd give me what I really want!

MRS. ROLLINS All right, all right, Timmy. Just don't say "Fuck Toys R Us."

TIMMY And one more thing.

MRS. ROLLINS And just what else is it that you want?

TIMMY Can I fart in your face?

MRS. ROLLINS No.

TIMMY Is that a maybe?

MRS. ROLLINS Have you thought about leaving your teddy bear for another needy youngster, when you go?

TIMMY No.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MRS. ROLLINS But we do, Timmy, we at Make a Wish do love you.

TIMMY Prove it then. Think of all the things I didn't even ask for that I could've! I didn't ask to assassinate the principal at school! I didn't ask my brother to eat a super giant pizza with shit all over it! And I didn't get to tell you you're a very annoying person!

MRS. ROLLINS All that's too true, Timmy. But —

TIMMY So would you at least do the one thing I really and truly want, okay?

MRS. ROLLINS (resigned) I will, son, I will. What is it?

TIMMY Take this pillow and put it over my face and smother me?

MRS. ROLLINS (after a beat) Of course, Timmy, of course. Anything you say. (She picks up the pillow.)

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #16: DATING O. J.

CHARACTERS:

NICKY, a waitress, a valley girl in her late teens,
blonde, pretty

OPAL, a student, a valley girl, also in her late teens

SETTING: A restaurant

OPAL Where have you *been*? I've been here three different times!

NICKY Oh, I'm real sorry! I've been real busy! Like totally!

OPAL Your boss let you off? I can't *believe* it!

NICKY (looking around to see if the boss is listening) I told him it was an emergency.

OPAL And it wasn't?

NICKY Of course it wasn't! I, like, *lied*!

OPAL Oh, Nicky, you didn't! What if you get fired!

NICKY Oh, I hate this job anyway! So I don't care! I just don't!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

OPAL What have you been *doing*? You're up to something. I can tell. Aren't you?

NICKY I'm not telling.

OPAL You can tell *me*!

NICKY No, I can't tell *anybody*.

OPAL (whiny) *Nicky!*

NICKY Nope. I'm not telling!

OPAL I'll tell your boss about you if you don't tell me!

NICKY You wouldn't!

OPAL I would *too*!

NICKY Wait a minute. I got to give that guy his croquette! (to offstage customer) Here's your salmon croquette, sir! (Exits, returns.) (to Opal) Frankly, the salmon's a little (Makes pew sound.) today.

OPAL (impatient) So what's been *happening* that's so secret? (dawning) You've met this *guy*, haven't you?

Dating O.J.

NICKY No, I haven't.

OPAL Yes, you have!

NICKY Okay, but I'm just gonna, like, give his initials.

OPAL What? What!?

NICKY He's got two of them.

OPAL (with double meaning) He's got two of *what*?

NICKY Initials! What're you thinking!

(They giggle together.)

OPAL And what are they? B.J.? T.J.?

NICKY (changing the subject) So how's school?

OPAL (impatient) *Nick!* Never mind school. Although I guess I'm going to graduate after all. They gave me credit for speech even though I didn't take it. You know how I hate to public speak. Why do they make people take that?! I mean, like, yuck!

NICKY I know what you mean. I'm glad I quit. Totally!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- OPAL So what's the deal? Come on! Come on! I mean, is he, like, cute?
- NICKY (confidentially) Like major!
- OPAL (excited for her) *No!* A major cute guy!
- NICKY Well, yes. Only he's not exactly a guy. He's more like a *man*.
- OPAL Really! How old is he?
- NICKY Well, let's just say he's older 'n me.
- OPAL Oh, he sounds dreamy! . . . You don't mean like *real* old? Like forty or something.
- NICKY Oh, no, he's more like thirty.
- OPAL Thirty's good. But you wouldn't want to date someone who was all wrinkled or something.
- NICKY Gross! You're right. No, this guy's real athletic. With muscles!
- OPAL Oh, my god, no!
- NICKY Totally!
- OPAL So what's his whole name? Come on!

Dating O.J.

NICKY I can't say.

OPAL *Nicky!*

NICKY He said I shouldn't. He's famous.

OPAL Oh, my god, it's not James Garner, is it? [or supply other contemporary name]

NICKY I'm not supposed to say!

OPAL But you can tell your best friend! Where did you meet him?

NICKY In here.

OPAL Oh, my god, you *didn't*! It's like in the movies. What were you wearing?

NICKY Just this old uniform.

OPAL But he liked you anyway?

NICKY He said he liked what was *inside* it.

OPAL Oh, he didn't! That's so romantic! Like wow!

NICKY Yeah, he's got quite a way with words. And so charming! So I go: I'd like to see your uniform sometime! And he goes: Anytime, babe!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

OPAL He didn't! So *who* is it? No, let me guess . . .
I got it! Is he into sports?

NICKY How did you know!?

OPAL Oh, you always go for the jocks. I know you!

NICKY But this one's different! I mean he doesn't
just grunt. I mean, he shakes people's hands
and everything! He's into public speaking.

OPAL Oh, my god! He *isn't!*

NICKY And now he's asked me out — again.

OPAL He hasn't! It's too much! When?

NICKY Tonight! After I get off.

OPAL Are you going?

NICKY Of course I'm going.

OPAL But where you going?

NICKY I don't know. He knows places.

OPAL Oh, god, my best friend is going out with
somebody who knows *places!* Smart little
French restaurants with candles? (squeals)

Dating O.J.

Not *baguettes* and cool stuff like that!?

NICKY And he's got a limo!

OPAL And he's only thirty! I'm so envious of you, Nicky, I could spit!

NICKY I'll betcha I won't be working here very long. There's just something about this guy that . . . I don't know. But somehow I know. You know?

OPAL This is a dump anyway. You don't want to stay here.

NICKY Oh, Opal, it's just going to work out. I can feel it!

OPAL I'm so happy for you. See, I told you you didn't have to go to college!

NICKY You were right. You were right. What can I say. . . . But there is just one little problem.

OPAL (excited) Oh, no!

NICKY He's black.

OPAL He's black? Does your mother know? She's German, isn't she?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- NICKY I'll break it to her slowly.
- OPAL Won't she know once she sees him?
- NICKY I suppose. But I don't care! I just don't care!
And he's married too.
- OPAL Oh, no!
- NICKY But he's not happy with her. He told me.
- OPAL Are you gonna *do* it with him?
- NICKY Well, not tonight! I don't want him to
think I'm cheap!
- OPAL Who *is* it? Do I know him? How famous
is he?
- NICKY He's a college graduate, by the way. USC.
- OPAL How wonderful!
- NICKY I think he likes blondes.
- OPAL And you're so beautiful!
- NICKY Oh, come on.
- OPAL No, it's true, Nicky. You're beautiful.

Dating O.J.

Everybody says so.

NICKY Oh, they don't.

OPAL They do! You could get anybody.

NICKY There's just something about this guy. I just get really good vibes from him.

OPAL Oh, how I wish I were you! But, *no*, I have to go home and study for a mid-term!

NICKY Well, we'll just have to play it by ear, I guess. Who knows, it may, like, not work out. You never know in this life. But you gotta go by your gut instinct, don't you?

OPAL You do! I wish you the best, Nick. Just the best. I think you're a very good judge of character. It's gonna be perfect, you watch!

NICKY I think this is the one. I really think so.

OPAL And he's got initials instead of a name! How fabulous! Could it be P.J. Somebody? T.J.?

NICKY He's so much better than the other guys I've dated. I mean, he is to *die* for!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea # 17: HOW GAYS DESTROYED THE FAMILY

CHARACTERS:

NARRATOR

FATHER (HUSBAND)

MOTHER (WIFE)

TWO CHILDREN (played by adults)

TWO 'HOMOSEXUALS'

OTHERS

NARRATOR I want to tell you a story, a serious story, a very serious story — the story of how homosexuals destroyed the family.

(Melodramatic Music up.)

NARRATOR Once everything was perfect.

FAMILY Hi, we're the family. We're perfect!

NARRATOR There was a father.

FATHER That's me!

NARRATOR And a mother.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MOTHER That's me.

NARRATOR And two lovely children.

CHILDREN Guess who!

NARRATOR They were so happy, without a problem
 in the world.

FAMILY (with big smiles) That's us!

NARRATOR But then the homosexuals decided to
 destroy the family.

HOMO #1 Let's destroy the family!

HOMO#2 Okay.

(They laugh like fiends.)

NARRATOR They set about their nefarious task
 almost at once.

FATHER (to MOTHER) What is it, dear? You
 look like you have something to tell me.

MOTHER I do. I have turned into a lesbian.

FATHER Oh, no!

NARRATOR — Cried the father.

How Gays Destroyed the Family

MOTHER Don't try to stop me. I want to destroy
 the family.

CHILDREN But, Mommy, Mommy, what about
 us?

NARRATOR — Cried the children.

MOTHER I'm sorry, children. I won't be able to
 take care of you anymore. I'll be too
 busy being a lesbian.

CHILDREN Oh, Mommy!

MOTHER I want lesbian sex and a lesbian
 career, and that won't leave even five
 minutes in the day for you two.

CHILDREN Oh, Mommy!

FATHER Go, evil woman! I'll take care of my
 children without you!

NARRATOR And so she went. (She leaves.) But
 that was only the beginning.

FATHER Kids, I have something to tell you.

CHILDREN What, Daddy?

FATHER I am becoming a homosexual.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- CHILDREN Right now?
- FATHER Soon.
- CHILDREN But why, Daddy, why? Wasn't Mommy enough?
- FATHER I am doing it because there are so many advantages to becoming a homosexual. I love being fired from jobs! I love being called names and spat on! I can't get enough of religious, social, and family disgust! I don't understand why everybody doesn't become a homosexual!
- CHILDREN You faggot!
- FATHER Oh, say it again! It's music to my ears!
- CHILDREN Get out of here. We don't want a homo for a father!
- FATHER But, kids, I was going to continue to take care of you, just the way I did before, only this time with . . . Steve.
- CHILDREN We don't want two daddies! We'd rather starve!

How Gays Destroyed the Family

FATHER Please, please let me take care of you!

CHILDREN Never!

FATHER Oh, I knew it could be like this!

NARRATOR And so the children starved. Their frail, little, undernourished bodies shriveled up and blew away. (The children do so.) But that wasn't the only way the homosexuals destroyed the family. Oh, no!

MINISTER Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God to join together all the males and all the females on the earth into holy couples.

CROWD Amen!

MINISTER Do you, Steve, take Ella Louise to be Your lawfully wedded wife?

STEVE Well, I was about to, since everybody seemed to think it was the thing to do. But now I'm having Second Thoughts.

CROWD Oh, my God! Oh, my God! He's having *Second Thoughts!*

STEVE Yes. I want . . . I want to . . .

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- CROWD No! No!
- STEVE I don't want to get married! (loudly) I want to be what every homo longs to be a . . . drag queen! (He quickly puts on a woman's garment.)
- MINISTER But, why, Steve, why? Everybody should be married.
- STEVE I don't know. There's just this feeling inside me — this feeling that gnaws and gnaws at me and says, "Destroy the family, Steve. Destroy it!"
- NARRATOR And so destroy it he did. For it is written that if even one man does not marry, the family shall be laid waste!
- CROWD Hallelujah!
- NARRATOR So Steve set out on his drag queen ways.
- STEVE (sets out) And, believe me, dresses aren't cheap!
- NARRATOR He went from transvestite thrill to transvestite thrill, with nary a look back at those he had cast off!

How Gays Destroyed the Family

STEVE Eat your heart out, suckers!

NARRATOR And he was not the only one. There were many others, all intent on just one thing, any way they could!

HOMOS Destroying the family! (Maniacal laugh.)

NARRATOR Countless wives begged in vain.

WIFE But you can't divorce me! You just can't!

HUSBAND Oh, yes, I can. I'm going off to be creative and talented!

WIFE That means just one thing!

HUSBAND I know! But you can't stop me!

WIFE But I need you to mow the lawn!

HUSBAND Why would I want to mow the lawn when I can be a homosexual!? Take your John Deere and shove it!

NARRATOR And that's why the divorce rate soared. Statistics prove again and again that the number one cause of divorce worldwide is people wanting

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

to be homosexuals!

WIFE (to HUSBAND) You're back?

HUSBAND I am. I've decided to re-marry you.
The divorce rate is too high.

WIFE (sincerely) Oh, darling! How
romantic! You can start by mowing
the lawn.

HUSBAND But I don't want to mow the lawn.

WIFE But you're the daddy.

HUSBAND Why don't *you* ever mow the lawn?

WIFE Because I'm too busy doing the
dishes, that's why!

HUSBAND Well, I'll stay married, but I'm not
mowing the lawn.

WIFE Well, I'm not mowing it. That's for
sure.

HUSBAND Nor will I.

WIFE Nor I.

KIDS Mommy, Daddy! Why are you

How Gays Destroyed the Family

arguing all the time?

HUSBAND So the divorce rate won't go up!

WIFE (to Kids) Shut up, you brats! Your father and I are fighting!

KIDS (crying) Please! Please! Please don't fight! Get a divorce instead!

HUSBAND/WIFE Never! We are moral!

NARRATOR Yes, they were a perfect family again. . . . But those homosexuals were determined.

HOMO #1 I haven't destroyed a family in over a day and a half. I'd better get busy right this minute!

NARRATOR And busy they got. They went after single mothers.

SINGLE MOM Me?

HOMO #1 I'm here to destroy your family. Because I can't have a family, nobody can! (Maniacal laughter.)

SINGLE MOM So you're the reason I'm not married! I couldn't find a man!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- HOMO #1 That's right!
- SINGLE MOM And when I did find some, I only got pregnant all those times because each father of each child kept running off to become one of you!
- HOMO #1 You've got it, lady!
- SINGLE MOM And I thought it was my fault.
- HOMO #2 That's how we are, making you think it's your doing when things go wrong, and all the time it's *us* pulling the strings.
- SINGLE MOM You're not saying that you're also behind . . . ?
- HOMO #2 Drugs? You bet! Cocaine! Speed! Espresso! You name it! The Homosexual Cartel can get it for you!
- SINGLE MOM How about coffee?
- HOMO #2 Done. (Produces a cup.)
- SINGLE MOM How much?
- HOMO #2 This one's on me. . . . That's how we get you hooked.

How Gays Destroyed the Family

SINGLE MOM Will this lead to harder drugs?

HOMO #2 Without a doubt.

(Melodramatic Music up.)

NARRATOR And on and on it went. (a litany)
When ancient cities were demolished
for their sins.

HOMOS There were we among them!

NARRATOR When men were men, and women
died in childbirth.

HOMOS There were we among them!

NARRATOR When children went bad and started
beating people on the streets.

HOMOS There were we among them!

NARRATOR When children started mouthing off
and hitting teachers.

HOMOS There were we among them!

NARRATOR When parents neglected their
offspring.

HOMOS There were we among them!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

NARRATOR When parents beat the living shit out
of them for being crybabies.

HOMOS There we were among them!

NARRATOR When mothers got old and nobody
would look after them.

HOMOS There were we among them!

NARRATOR When human beings cried out for
understanding in all their variety.

HOMOS There were we among them!

NARRATOR When art, music, theater, science,
commerce, philosophy, gossip,
airline stewardship, and male figure
skating and female tennis stood on
the brink of never being.

HOMOS There were we among them!

NARRATOR And when gays and lesbians started
having children with each other.

HOMOS There were we among them too!

NARRATOR Destroying the family — as *usual!*

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #18: THE TERRIBLE TWOS

CHARACTERS:

MAMA-SAN, older female, from a real but vague culture,

TOMMMY, two (played by an adult)

MOMMY

DADDY

SETTING A living room

TOMMY (bawling, carrying on) *Wnnna!* (Lots of noise, but no words)

DADDY Now, Tommy, just cut that out!

MOMMY Right this minute.

TOMMY (bawling, carrying on even more loudly, bangs on the floor)

MOMMY Oh, these terrible twos!

DADDY And will he ever talk. Frankly, honey, I'm beginning to worry.

The Terrible Twos

(Enter MAMA-SAN, impassive.)

MOMMY Oh, Mama-san, I'm so glad you came a little early tonight. Tommy has been acting up all day. But when he's around you, he's a little —

DADDY — angel. We want you to know how much we appreciate all you do for our —

MOMMY — little family.

MAMA-SAN (bows)

MOMMY I don't know how you do it.

DADDY But you're a wonder, a positive wonder.

MAMA-SAN (bows to him)

MOMMY Wherever did you learn your child-rearing skills! We could all learn a thing or two from your culture, let me tell —

DADDY — you. Where exactly is that again?

MOMMY I think she's from Thailand, honey.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

DADDY I thought it was Vietnam, honey.

MOMMY Or was it Mexico?

DADDY Let's just call it the Old Country.

MOMMY Why, yes, that's it — the Old Country.

MAMA-SAN (bows)

MOMMY It doesn't matter one little bit that she
 doesn't speak our language. Not the
 way she handles our little demon.
 (Smiles.)

TOMMY (Cries.) *Whaaa!* (Bangs his head on
 something.)

MOMMY There he goes again!

DADDY We'd better put him in Mama-san's
 very capable hands. Or we're never
 going to get to that party.

MOMMY Bye, Tommy. We'll be home —

(TOMMY is still crying, carrying on.)

The Terrible Twos

DADDY — early. Go to it, Mama-san. He's all yours.

(MAMA-SAN bows, goes over to TOMMY, lays him down, then kneels over him and begins to suck his peepee — simulated, of course.)

TOMMY (crying, then suddenly very calm)

MOMMY (not looking at TOMMY) (to DADDY)
Just listen to that, Daddy.

DADDY (also not looking) She's amazing.

(Both MOMMY and DADDY look over and realize what is going on.)

MOMMY Oh, my —

DADDY — god!

MOMMY Mama-san, what are you doing!?

MAMA-SAN (Turns from TOMMY, bows, then goes back to her 'job.')

DADDY Mama-san! Stop that!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

MOMMY (to DADDY) Did we really see that?

DADDY Mama-san, come here, please.

(MAMA-SAN gets up, comes over, bows, looks inquisitive.)

MAMA-SAN Yes, Mr. Daddy?

MOMMY What were you doing to our Tommy?

MAMA-SAN Calm him down. (Bows.)

DADDY But you can't . . . can't —

MOMMY Suck his . . . his —

DADDY — peepee.

MAMA-SAN Old World custom. (Bows.)

MOMMY But-but-but-but —

DADDY — but!

MAMA-SAN You go to party now. Leave Tommy to me.

The Terrible Twos

- MOMMY But you're sucking his pee-pee!
- DADDY We can't go to a party if you're sucking Tommy's peepee!
- MAMA-SAN Work every time. (Starts back to TOMMY.)
- MOMMY But that's — that's child molesting!
- MAMA-SAN Soon Tommy go sleep.
- TOMMY (Starts to bawl again.)
- MAMA-SAN Tommy call.
- MOMMY Honey, what are we going to *do*?
- DADDY I don't know!
- MOMMY (horrified) What kind of people are you? What can you be thinking? This is bad, bad —
- DADDY — very bad!
- TOMMY Ma!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

DADDY Listen to that. Tommy almost said something.

MOMMY He did?

TOMMY Ma!

DADDY I think he's trying to talk.

MOMMY His very first words!

(They rush over to TOMMY, who sits up.)

DADDY What is it, Tommy? Are you okay?

TOMMY Hmm.

MOMMY What are you trying to say, precious?

TOMMY (very clearly, with great enthusiasm)
Thank you, Mama-san! Me no think
this really, really bad idea! (loudly) No
way! No way!

(MOMMY and DADDY look aghast. MAMA-SAN
smiles beatifically.)

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #19: TOILET WAR

CHARACTERS:

HE, a robot

SHE, a robot

SETTING: Bare stage, except for toilet seat, possibly
an invisible one

SHE You left the toilet seat up.

HE No, I didn't.

SHE Yes, you did. Look.

(Shows him.)

HE You know what? You're right. I did. But how
shall I say it? This is one of those — no doubt
rare — times when I'm right and you're wrong.

SHE It's very rude of you to leave it up.

(Puts it down.)

HE I have as much right to have it up as you do to
have it down.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

(He raises the seat.)

SHE Men! Always thinking about themselves and their needs!

HE Women! Always ready to play the victim! Poor me, poor me.

SHE What did you say?

HE You heard me.

SHE Don't you realize that when you leave the seat up, somebody has to put it down to use it?

HE Don't you realize that I raise it so that I won't piss on it so that somebody who wants to sit down on it won't have to clean it off first?

SHE Perhaps if one aimed better, there would be no problem.

HE Perhaps if there were no problem, there would no need to aim.

SHE Don't you realize that there are occasions when one has to sit down in here, only to discover that the seat is up and one is sitting on cold porcelain?

Toilet War

HE What kind of person doesn't even bother to *look* where he or she is sitting *before* placing his or her rump there?

SHE *She* wouldn't have to look — if the previous occupant simply bent over and lowered the seat thus.

(Lowers it.)

HE *He* wouldn't have to bend down every time he uses the facility to raise the seat — if the previous occupant used one finger and left it thus.

(Raises it with one finger.)

SHE It is more aesthetic to be down than to be up.

(Puts it down.)

HE Who says! It is more natural to be up than to be down.

(Puts it up.)

SHE But it is more inviting when down.

(Moves it.)

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

HE When I want it down — and sometimes I do — I
 put it down. I would think others would feel the
 same.

SHE Others don't. And I'm afraid I have to agree with
 them. Down has it over up any day.

(Taking turns moving it.)

HE Up!

SHE Down!

HE Up!

SHE Down!

HE Up!

SHE D — I mean Up!

HE (fooled) Down!

SHE I couldn't agree with you more.

HE Are we really having this conversation?

SHE We are. And if you think about it, it's profound!

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #20: DRIVERS FROM HELL

CHARACTERS:

TEEN, a bad driver, male or female

SENIOR, a bad driver, male or female

SETTING: A bare stage, with four chairs facing the audience, representing the driver's seat and the passenger's seat for each of the two cars. The characters mime driving and other actions. They make the car horn sounds with hand-held horns.

STYLE: They are *not* speaking directly to each other when they speak aloud.

TEEN (driving, hands on wheel, facing audience)
Mother fucker! Get out of the way!
(Honks horn.) (Swerves.) (looking back,
laughing) Eat my dust, assfuck!

SENIOR (driving, hands on wheel, facing audience)
Slow down, you little fuck! Where you
going in such a hurry? Got get home and
jack off!?! (Honks horn belatedly.)

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- TEEN Old fart!
- SENIOR Young shit!
- TEEN They ought to take your license away!
- SENIOR How did you ever get a license? You must have cheated when you applied! Or did you steal the license with a gun?!
- TEEN (Turns on the radio. Loud sound. Jiggles to the music.) *OOO EEE! OOO! EEE!*
- SENIOR (Turns on the car radio. It is a Golden Oldie.) Oh, how wonderful! It's _____! [Supply corny, out-of-date song.] They don't write music like that anymore.
- TEEN (Turns off the radio.) Bor-ing! (Mimes turning dial through many stations. Sound effects of different stations.) Bor-ing! Bor-ing! (Snaps the radio off.) (Yawns.)
- SENIOR (singing with the song) (The sound suddenly cuts out.) (Jiggles the dial.) Oh, come on. Come on! (Slaps the radio,

Drivers from Hell

gives up.) I've got to get that fixed one of these days! (Slaps it again.) (Yawns.)

TEEN (Takes a can of soda, struggles to open it with one hand, then tries two hands, eventually pops it open.) (Takes a long swallow, taking eyes off the road.)
Ahh!

SENIOR (Takes a sandwich from the passenger seat, unwraps it, drops some of it, tries to eat it, takes eyes off the road.)
Yummy! (Drops part of the sandwich. Starts feeling around on the floor, trying to drive and feel at the same time.)

TEEN (Finishes the soda. Then starts juggling the soda can from hand to hand.)

SENIOR (Has one hand on the wheel but is now not looking at the road while feeling for the lost food.) Come here, you!

TEEN Sees something in the back seat, wants it, starts reaching for it, just one hand on the steering wheel.) (Strains. Grunts.) Ugh!

SENIOR (comes up with the lost food, gobbles it up.) (Tastes some dirt in it, picks the dirt

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

out of mouth, tries to fling the bits away.
But they stick to the fingers.)

TEEN (Gets the object from the back seat at last.
It's a magazine. Flips open pages, starts to
read while driving. Begins to pick nose.)

SENIOR (Still trying to flick bits of food off
fingers, but is unsuccessful.) Goddamn it!

TEEN (Still read the magazine, flipping pages,
while picking nose.) (Examines what
has been excavated from nose. Rolls down
window, tries to flick the booger out. But
can't.) Fuck!

SENIOR (Wipes sticky fingers on car window.)

TEEN (Wipes fingers on open window ledge.
With difficulty.) There! (Reaches over
to glove compartment with difficulty.
Grabs comb. Begins to comb hair. Uses
rear-view mirror. Can't quite get the hair
right. Tries different looks.)

SENIOR (Takes out eyeglasses from pocket.) (Puts
them on.) (Takes them off.) What's wrong
with these?! Is it the other pair? (Looks for
the other glasses.)

Drivers from Hell

- TEEN (Takes sunglasses from glove compartment. Tries them on. Looks at self in rear-view mirror.) Cool! (Then looks again, changes mind. Takes them off.)
- SENIOR (Finds a second pair of glasses, then a third pair.) I think it's these. (Tries them on.) Oh, I've got to get this prescription changed one of these days. (Shakes head. Takes off glasses.)
- TEEN (Notices a zit on the chin. Checks it out. Is upset. Starts to pick at the zit.)
- SENIOR (Looks at a passing landmark.) Did I pass it already? Oh, Christ! Did I? (Looks behind. Looks ahead.) What's that cross street again?
- TEEN (Still not happy with zit. Looks at watch.) Christ, I'm late! (Accelerates, while still fiddling with the zit.) (Looks at watch again. Accelerates more.)
- SENIOR (looking) Where is that map? (Finds map in side-pocket.) (Opens it up, obscuring vision.) Jesus H. Christ! This thing! (The map is huge, out of control.)

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- TEEN (To another driver) Yeah, fuck you too!
(Gives the finger.)
- SENIOR (To another driver) Hold your horses!
I'm trying to find Suzie's street!
- TEEN (Takes cellphone from its cradle.)
(Pushes the numbers.) (Someone answers.) Hi, it's me. I'm running late. Lots of traffic. (Listens.) Tivo it! I don't want to miss it! (Listens.) (impatiently) Well, just Tivo it! (Listens.) Just push the buttons. It's the last episode! (Listens.) Will you do it or not?
- SENIOR (Takes cellphone from its cradle.)
(Pushes buttons, clumsily.) Hello? Is Suzie there? (Listens.) She's not there? (Listens.) Sorry. I guess I have the wrong number. (Pushes End Call, again not easily.) (Dials another number.)
- TEEN (on cellphone) If I miss that, I'm gonna kill you! You are so selfish!
- SENIOR (on cellphone) Hello, Suzie? It's me. I'm on my way. I'm just calling to tell you I got a little bit lost, so I'll be late.

Drivers from Hell

(Listens.) No, I'm fine. I'll just be late.
See you soon. (Listens.)

TEEN (still on cellphone, with an edge) I appreciate it! And thank you. I'll do something for you sometime. You know I love that show!

SENIOR (on cellphone) I'd better hang up. They're honking at me. (Honks the car horn at "them.") Love you, Suzie! (Ends call. Honks the horn at "them" once more, for good measure.) I hear you, I hear you! Fuckers! (Drops the phone.) Oh, God! This is just not my day!

TEEN (still on cellphone) I'm gonna cut out of this traffic shit. (Listens.) I know a shortcut. (Listens.) Naw, I'll be fine. Let these assholes contend with this. (Gestures at traffic.) Later! (Ends call.)

(The two drivers move their chairs at the same time, now facing each other.)

SENIOR I'd better step on it or Suzie will be wondering what happened to me.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

(Accelerates.)

TEEN Have fun, suckers! (Accelerates. Weaves in and out of traffic.) (Honks horn numerous times.) Get lost! . . . Screw you! (Weaves more.) (Looks back.) (Laughs.) That's right! Stay there at the red light. (loudly) Loser! (Both hands on the steering wheel, hunches over, driving straight on.)

SENIOR (still searching for the dropped cellphone) (Drives erratically.) Don't you honk at me, you jerk! I can drive you under the table any time, any day. I've been driving for more than sixty years! Can you say that? (with contempt) *Dude!*

(They both drive erratically, obviously headed toward each other.)

(Sounds of brakes squealing.)

BLACKOUT

Really, Really Bad Idea #21: HONEST XMAS PRESENTS

CHARACTERS:

(The Functional Family, all played by adults)
BILLY FUNCTIONAL, eleven,
MELISSA FUNCTIONAL, thirteen
MOM, over-indulgent American mother
DAD, over-indulgent American father
GRAN, senile, Female or Male in drag

SETTING A living room

(The family is about to open its Xmas presents.
MELISSA comes in late.)

MOM Okay, everybody — now that we're all
 here at *last*, Melissa — I guess it's *that*
 time!

MELISSA Oh, do we have to! I think this is so
 dorky.

MOM But my word! It's Christmas!

DAD We've got to exchange presents!

MELISSA No, we don't. There's no *rule*!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- BILLY Come on, Melissa! Or we're never gonna get them open!
- MELISSA Oh, you just want *things*. You're such a child!
- DAD Leave him alone now, Melissa. He's been very good this morning.
- MELISSA Only because he thinks he'll get better presents that way.
- BILLY Mom!
- MOM (very calmly, rationally) Now you two, I don't want to hear this.
- DAD (very calmly, rationally) Can we have one holiday — one — where everybody gets along? Is that too much to ask, hmm?
- GRAN (drooling, makes sounds) (sound of slurp!) Slurp! Presents! . . . Yeah, presents!
- BILLY Gran's drooling all over herself again.
- MOM No, she's not. It's just a little human moisture. (Gets up, cleans GRAN off)

Honest Xmas Presents

DAD Nothing to be so upset about. How you
 doing, Gran?

GRAN (drooling, makes sounds) Slurp! Slurp!
 (Topples over sideways)

MELISSA She is so gross!

MOM Melissa! (MOM rights GRAN)

MELISSA Well, she is!

BILLY So are you!

MELISSA Dad!

DAD Just calm down now, young man. Or
 maybe there won't be any presents
 around here!

BILLY Jeez!

GRAN (wildly) Jeez means Jesus! . . . *Praise*
 Jesus! (She topples over again)

BILLY Mom, Gran toppled over again.

MOM (straightening GRAN) It's all right,
 Gran. Everything is just fine. See, she's
 as right as rain!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- GRAN (drooling, making noises) Slurp! Slurp!
- DAD Well, I don't know about the rest of you,
but I'm ready for some presents!
- ALL (except MELISSA) Yay! (They clap.)
- DAD Okay, who's first?
- MOM Why don't *you* hand them out from the
pile, honey? You're just so good at that
kind of thing.
- DAD All right, if everyone agrees.
- MELISSA I don't.
- DAD (calmly) Now, Melissa, I think maybe
we've heard just about enough of that
today. Don't you?
- MOM Not too hard on her, dear. We don't
want to harm her self-esteem.
- DAD I know, honey. I'm sorry. I'm sorry,
Melissa. I got carried away. Do you
forgive me?
- MELISSA (sulkily) Well, I don't know . . . I'll have
to see.

Honest Xmas Presents

MOM See, she's a good girl! She's always willing to reconsider.

MELISSA I'm not a girl. I'm a woman!

DAD She's probably going to be a diplomat or something.

BILLY What about me? I want to be a diplomat too.

MOM You will be, Billy, if that's what you want. It's just a matter of putting your mind to it!

DAD That's right! Now what do you say to us putting our minds to these Christmas gifts?

MOM /
BILLY Okay! Right on!

GRAN Where the fuck's mine?

DAD /
MOM Gran!

MOM (quietly) Your language, Gran. (to DAD) What are we going to do about this, honey?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- BILLY She's sorry. Let's go! Let's go!
- DAD Okay! Here we go. (Grabs a present from the pile) This one says: From Billy to . . . The handwriting's a little hard to read. To . . . M . . . Melissa! Here you go, Muffin!
- MELISSA I've asked you and asked you not to call me that anymore. My name is Melissa!
- DAD Sorry. I'll try to remember.
- MOM Your dad calls you that, sweetie, because he wanted Muffin to be your name when you were baptized, but they made a mistake in some office some- where, and so your name never got officially registered that way. And that's why —
- MELISSA I don't care! Can we get this over with, or what?
- BILLY Open mine! Open mine!
- MELISSA (irritated) Okay, I will! (Tears off the wrapping)
- MOM What did your brother get you, honey?
- MELISSA (removing the last of the wrapping)

Honest Xmas Presents

Yuck! It's dog poop! (Holds it up)

BILLY Do you like it?

MELISSA Mom, Billy gave me dog poop! (Waves it) This is so gross!

MOM Now, honey, don't be negative. You know how much Billy likes toys like that.

BILLY It's supposed to be funny.

DAD And it must have cost Billy quite a lot to give that to you instead of keeping it for himself.

MELISSA Well, he can keep it for himself, for all I care. The last thing I need in my room is some "gosh darn" plastic dog poop.

BILLY (after a beat) It's not plastic.

MELISSA Oo! (Throws it down) Yuck! Billy, you have such bad taste!

BILLY I didn't ask you to taste it!

MELISSA I swear to god you are *so* immature.

MOM He's only eleven, honey. Give him a

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

little space.

MELISSA I'll give him a little space all right — in the attic — and forget the key.

GRAN (out of nowhere) You keep *me* in the attic!

MOM Gran, you know that's not true!

GRAN It is too true. And you beat me!

DAD Gran, we do not! How can you say these things?!

GRAN I open my mouth and they just pop out.

DAD What if people heard you? They'd want to arrest us.

GRAN Should arrest you. Should arrest us all! Sons of bitches!

DAD Okay, who's next here?

MOM (grabbing from the pile) Hey! Here's a present for me!

BILLY Go, *Mom*!

DAD What is it, honey?

Honest Xmas Presents

MOM I hope it's something I can use around the house. You didn't go spending hard-earned money on something I don't even need for myself, now did you!?
(Opens the package)

BILLY What is it?

MOM I don't quite know. Let's see what it says here. (reading) "For removal of . . . piles." Oh . . . It's a pile remover.

DAD Laser! It's called Pile Driver. Drives him up back into the body.

MOM Why, thank you. honey. It's just what I've been wanting.

DAD Me too. I know how hard it's been to get you to make an appointment at the hospital, so I saw this little gadget at The Sharper Image and so I thought . . .

MOM It's perfect. And just what I wanted.

MELISSA *I'm* not going to get piles.

BILLY You are too! Right on your face.

MELISSA *You're* already a pile.

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- BILLY And they're going to hang down off
your chin.
- GRAN I've got piles! . . . You want to see 'em?
(Gets up, starts to pull up her dress)
Big ones!
- DAD That's all right, Gran. You don't have to
show us.
- GRAN Why not? You might not believe me.
You don't believe me about anything
else I say.
- MOM We believe you, Gran. We believe you.
. . . So who's next now?
- DAD (grabbing a present) Let's see who this
one's for. (checking) Well, how about
that! It's for yours truly.
- BILLY Go, *Dad!*
- MOM Go ahead, open it up!
- DAD (unwrapping the gift) It's from (reading)
"a loving wife." Now who could that
be?! (General giggles. DAD and MOM
nuzzle a bit) (removing the last of the
wrapping) Well, would you look at this!
(holds it up) It's a penis enlarger.

Honest Xmas Presents

Goodness, it's just what I need.
How did you know, honey?

MOM I thought it might be something you'd like! You're not the only one who can shop at The Sharper Image!

(They nuzzle again)

BILLY How does it work?

MOM It clamps right on, and then it does something to the glans and something underneath. They say there's very little bleeding at all.

DAD Fantastic!

BILLY Try it out, Dad.

DAD Should I? (Stands up)

MOM I think it takes reading the instructions. The clerk was very insistent on that.

DAD Maybe we better wait then. What have I always told you kids?

BILLY /
MELISSA (sarcastically) "Always read the instructions"!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

DAD “And it shall follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.”

MOM That is so nice, dear. Perfect for Christmas.

BILLY How come I haven't got any presents yet?

MOM Your turn's coming, Billy.

MELISSA I bought Billy a present.

BILLY You did?

MELISSA Yeah, it's there somewhere.

DAD Well, how wonderful! See, Melissa's part of the family after all!

MOM (finding the gift) Here it is! (Hands it to BILLY)

BILLY Wow! What is it, Melissa?

MELISSA You'll just have to open it and see.

BILLY (tearing off the wrapping) Hey, it's candy!

Honest Xmas Presents

MOM How nice!

DAD Terrific, Melissa!

MELISSA (knowing that he will) Now don't eat it yet.

BILLY Why? It looks great!

MELISSA Save it for a rainy day.

BILLY No way! I'm gonna eat it right now.
(Pops the candy into his mouth) (Makes appreciative noises) Hm, yummy! What kind is it?

MELISSA . . . Chocolate-covered *E.coli*.

BILLY You mean that bacteria that kills kids?

MELISSA Afraid so.

BILLY Mom! Melissa poisoned me!

MOM Oh, it's just a little joke, Billy. (not so sure, to MELISSA) Isn't it, sweetie?

MELISSA Maybe.

BILLY I'm gonna die! I'm gonna die!

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- DAD Melissa, are you fibbing?
- MELISSA I'm not gonna say. You can't make me.
I've got free speech.
- GRAN Hit her! Hit the little bitch!
- MOM Gran, what did I tell you about your
language? How do you think these
children are going to grow up if they
hear language like that?
- GRAN Sons of bitches! Sons of fucking
bitches!
- MOM All right, I guess that's enough present-
giving for today.
- BILLY But what about my E.coli?!
- MELISSA Oh, for god's sake, I didn't give you
E.coli. . . . It's just a Mickey Finn.
- BILLY Oh, my god! (He falls flat on the floor,
out cold)
- DAD (going to him) Billy! Billy!
- MOM Oh, sweet Jesus!
- GRAN Praise Jesus! Praise Him!

Honest Xmas Presents

MELISSA Oh, what's everybody getting so excited about? It'll just keep Billy quiet for a day or so. Is that so bad?

DAD Billy? . . . Billy? (checks him) You're sure it's just a Mickey Finn?

MELISSA (irritated) I swear! God, what do you take me for!

MOM (to DAD) Do you think we should just let him sleep it off?

MELISSA Listen to how quiet it is around here.

(All listen. It is quiet.)

MOM It is sort of nice.

GRAN (after a beat) What the fuck did you get for me?

MELISSA Billy'll be fine! Just leave him be. Besides, I have another present to give.

DAD You do?

MELISSA It's for Gran.

GRAN For me?

Collected Plays of Daniel Curzon

- MELISSA I bought it on behalf of the whole family.
- GRAN What the hell is it? It'd better be good, you little shit!
- MELISSA (hands it to GRAN) Here it is. Open it.
- GRAN (opening the present , trying to read it)
I can't read it without my glasses. What the fuck does it say?
- MELISSA Here, let me read it for you, Gran.
(Starts to take the piece of paper)
- GRAN I can read it myself! Fuck off! (making it out slowly) "To Gran . . . from us all. Please accept this gift certificate, good at any time, for the services of Dr. Jack Kevorkian of Royal Oak, Michigan, all expenses paid."
- (Pause)
- MOM Well, how thoughtful!
- DAD Yes!
- BILLY (wakes up temporarily, sticks his arm up from the floor as a salute) Go, *Melissa!*
(Conks back out)
BLACKOUT