

OHH... THAT LIGHT !

Steve Esquerré

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Cast of Characters

***A Main Character**

***Walter Esquerré** (es-ker-ray)

OH...twenty-five years old (I'm flexible).

The finest example of a manCHILD in the history of the World.

Avoided life's trials/tribs that came his way: he'd quip, wisecrack, go jocular, witty, sing, dance, impersonate, self-effacing dialogue with himself. Brilliant childhood (socially, academically, athletically). Promising baseball career. Bad arm, lead to humdrum existence. Mortally wounded; he dies. Can't take life death, seriously. His manCHILD lurks within; surfacing at will. In and out of trouble, because of his mouth; gets on GOD's bad side, often.

***GOD a.k.a I. M. GAWD**

My GOD! in the play, is not quite GOD, OUR CREATOR.

I created HIM (pushing my luck, huh?) a bit out of character: has feelings, emotions, funny, tells corny jokes, Plays poker with Slim Pickens and Gabby Hayes, sometimes grumpy.

HE Snoozes! (takes one at a critical moment in the play);

Yet, HE is unmistakably GOD: the all-knowing, all-loving,

Almighty, all-forgiving; deeply concerned about the souls of his children.

I. M. GAWD (Isaiah Methusela Gawd. HE'S GOD, all right.

HE'S also the rich, reclusive, billionaire owner of the new Major League Baseball expansion team:

THE NEW ORLEANS SHEPHERDS.

HE'S beside HIMSELF (think about it?). HIS dream has come true.

HE'S GOD a.k.a GAWD; and,

HE OWNS A BASEBALL TEAM!

Nurse Robin

Sassy, gum-smacking, lip-synching, finger-snapping (w/Walkman on).

(a GREAT minor speaking role) Enters Esquerré's room at the moment of his death. Actress will have to bare her bosoms.

***Jane**

Esquerre's brazen, flippant sister. Loves the limelight, Cajun dancing.

Doctor # 1

Screams "*He's alive*"(like in the Frankenstein

Movie); and runs out the door; screaming like a mad man.

***Doubting Thomas**

Only line is: "*I doubt that!*"

Appears throughout play. Has 5 costume changes.

I'm probably wrong; however, I believe they'll be lining up to audition for this role. I might suggest a

GUEST CELEBRITY each night/week/Sat-Sun shows/

Who's in town/TV/Movies/Sports/anybody well known/

Ex-President/President/In-the-news/15 mins of fame/

from Audience (preselected).

I believe Regis Philbin would eat his heart out to play this part. If Rosie wants ... fine by me!

***Greeting Angels**

Three angels greet Esquerré at the end of the Tunnel;
#1-Jeremiah, gruff, scruffy, doesn't like Esquerré.
#2-Ezikel, the level headed, business-like one.
Explains to Esquerré, what's going on. A very good speaking Role.
#3-Zachariah, effeminate, dressed with matching accessories.
Hates baseball, loves Bridge, gossipy.

Vendors

Hawk their wares in stands.
Two sell unusual items: Rosaries and Holy Water
(then again, maybe they aren't unusual, ceteris paribus)

Poor Souls in Purgatory

Occupants will make themselves seen/heard throughout play.
Esquerrés wacky family members, in Purgatory,
are in charge of Weather for Heaven/Earth. They'll screw that up.

Elvis Presley

Should put an end to his sightings, huh?

***Cosmo**

The Catcher. African-American.
Loosely adapted on a person I played ball against.
Has an ax to grind with Esquerré: he didn't make an ALL-STAR team because Esquerre struck him out in the final-cut game.
CHECK OUT his RAP song in II-8-50.

***Horton**

A fop. A non-afficionado of Baseball. GOD'S GOFOR.
Feels unappreciated. Sneaks down to Earth to hobnob with Greek Gods; much to GOD'S ire.
I love this guy. I loved writing this scene:
II-4-16, 17 & 18
HORTON HEARS A WHO. It's a gas!

Announcer (On field)
(Has a headset and mike on.
Its being televised????)

Sounds/looks like that guy with the great voice; who does intros at major boxing/wrestling events. Known for: "Are you ready to rummmmmble?" ... that guy.
He announces each batter; stretching their names out like a rubber band: Arrrrrrrrrrr ... thurrrrrrrrrrrrr

Elvis Presley
Esquerré;

Sings the Star Spangled Banner; requested by
who is trying to buy more time to gather himself.
Elvis makes another appearance: attempts to escape from Purgatory.

Jose him.	A Latin American, believes Elvis/fans are singing to him.
<u>Babe Ruth</u>	The ‘real’ Babe. Just like in the newsreels: beer belly, cocky, plays to/with the fans. Snarls at Esquerré
<u>Goofy Esquerré guy or girl</u>	Bursts out of Purgatory with a ball hit by Ruth. Note: All souls in Purgatory wear a prison-type uniform with POPS imprinted on back, including Elvis Presley. POPS stands for: Property of Purgatory Security. We’ll need several people for Purgatory Security guard roles. There will be also several Fans-in-the-stands one-liner type roles.
<u>Guy in upper C/F deck</u>	Looks like Nikita Kruschev. Shouts “ <i>Crucify him</i> ”. Sent to Hell.
<u>Guy next to him</u>	Relieved that he did not say it.
<u>Mr. Rogét (of Rogét’s Thesaurus)</u>	Sheepishly leaves ballpark; after GOD complains that Lucifer has more synonyms in Rogét’s Thesaurus than HE has. Booped/hissed as he departs embarrassed.
<u>Lucifer</u>	In the shape of GOD’S SPITTOON.
<u>Mickey Mantle</u>	Non-speaking. Grins/smirks once. All business. Clothes fit perfectly. I have a BATBOY offering Mantle the warm-up ring and pine tar; which he disdains. <i>Hey, great op for a youngster to be on stage (son or daughter of a Producer, Director, ok with me)</i>
*<u>Chris</u> The 1st Baseman.	Has a great base-running Scene in ACT III.
<u>Brian</u>	3 rd Baseman. Goofy. Told to hug 3 rd base. And does?!
<u>Players Unnamed in II-6-33</u>	Affirms they are a strange/funny/goofy lot. Switching positions, bumping into/yelling at each other.
*<u>Halfred</u>	Left Fielder. His great catch keeps Esquerré and team ‘alive’. On Earth, a priest. Speaks like HAL the Computer in 2001 Space Odyssey.

***Third Batter- LUCILLE**

The LEAD FEMALE ROLE

Her entrance is electrifying, breath-taking.
Head-turning beauty. Charismatic. Athletic.
Non-speaking; were this a musical; she'd sing like an
angel.

Calms GOD down. Mothers, soothes HIM.

Moses

Non-speaking. GOD complains about Moses' penchant
for grand entrances.

Vinny

The Center Fielder. Has that NYC/NJ/NOLA mob-like
look/talk. Accompanied by two angelic bodyguards?!
Got Born-Again right at the end ...go
figure!

Junior

*The Shortstop. Almost pees on himself,
when GOD tells him to recite the first sentence in the
Bible.*

***Adam**

It hurts; but, *he's US, guys*: manChild, jock, sex
always on his mind, made his own Brewsky,
probably.

Great line: *"I was the first to score...."*

***Eye**

Male-bashin'/lovin' broad. Mae West-ish.

Rudy

Right fielder. Chubby. Over-indulges
at heaven's midnight buffet.

Bucky

2nd Baseman. Has a foul mouth.

GOD bleeps every other word out of his mouth. II-7-38

***Pontius Pilate**

Even ol' PONTIUS made it to Heaven.

He's a proud, snooty, w/affected British accent, foppy,
bastard.

GOD sees to it that he embarrasses himself.

***Cherub-A-Tub**

Cosmo's Guardian Angel. Sissified, apologetic, easily
intimidated. Very emotional angel.

***Seraph**

Esquerré's Guardian Angel. Stands by his man.

Semper fidelis tattoo. Does anything to help his charge.

Mr. And Mrs. Norman Esquerré

Esquerré's father and mother: a dapper man (always a
hat with a suit). She's a pretty, petite lady.

They really were/are.

Wave to him, just as GOD is chewing him out for swearing. Totally embarrassed; as is Esquerré.

***Little Old Lady RUTH**

Ruth's her last name. Esquerré thinks it's her first: The RUTH in the Bible. Big mistake.

***Dana-Dane**

Famous female Rock singer. She 'dies' by falling off a Stage in a alcoholic/drug stupor.

That OTHER Patient

III-1-64. Noticed in I-I-I; where, obviously, there is another PATIENT screened off, in the adjoining bed, who turns on a radio?

Same thing happens in this scene. Hmmmmmmmmm!

I'm not certain what to make of it. Same person?

Lets have fun with this character. Or shall he/she remain anonymous?

Let them sneak out with a sheet over them.

Do a hand gesture we would all recognize; e.g. President

Nixon; or, has a big cigar in sheet-enclosed mouth,

Winston Churchill ... you nasty person ... I know who you were thinking it was!

Hmmm ... Billy C may do just fine!

Guys selling Rosaries & Holy Water I'm doing a one ACT play around them.

Parts have a life of their own.

St. Peter

Wants/needs a vacation.

Left in control of Heaven. Frazzled.

***Norman Esquerré**
Shepherd's

The Color Commentator for the New Orleans

TELECAST.

***Gene Esquerré**

The Play-by-Play announcer.

Rene Stengel

He's the Shepherd's manager.

Gives a lot of signals: you've seen the array of signals baseball managers display (rapid, idiosyncratic, hilarious); touching their noses, throats, shirts, skin, belt, pants, between legs.

A good actor could have a meaty role here. Not quite a show-stealer; but great opportunity.

Lots of semaphores, signals in Baseball (let's use a flag!)

Barbara, Lorna, Linda

Flirt with Norman, Gene, and Rene who flirt back.

Twain

Doubting Thomas' twin brother.

Tutt

The bat boy. Yells a supportive, enigmatic Cajun halloo to Esquerré.

An Audience Member

Lets give it a try. Pre-selected of course: Prior to GOD's booming finale, theirs will be the last line in the Play, "Two more we'll no doubt break....great!"

Place

ACT I The hospital room of a mortally wounded Walter Esquerré.

ACT II Two settings: 1st—The dark Tunnel, in which he arrives instantly following his death.
2nd—A Baseball Field in Heaven.

ACT III Two settings: 1st—Same hospital as in ACT I.
Same room, too; and, Esquerré is in the room;
however, he isn't the patient.
2nd—A Baseball Field in New Orleans (Heaven to many).

Time

On Earth: The sooner-than-later, momentarily-existing, soon extinct Present.
In Heaven: Time's OUT...natch!

Production Notes

The spirit of this play must live up to its name: bright, lively, flashy. In ACT I-I-I, I have 42nd Street playing on the radio. Then, *You light up my life*. The male lead sings/dances and flies about stage. Fans in the stand sing, "Get outyou're rocking the boat". *OHH ... THAT LIGHT! Is SHOW TIME!;* not a balling pathos, bathos (that's a real word according to Mr. Rogét) drama. S & M boys (Sullen and Morose) have left the building. Lots of dead people in this show; **but**, they're all *ALIVE! Even GOD SINGS!*

The audience must feel it is at a baseball game.
Use of a runway might be necessary to broaden set, which will resemble a **BASEBALL** field,
with Fans in stands onstage.
Vendors can hawk their wares down the aisles.
Free Popcorn tossed to audience.

**A *hit* ball (Spotlight) could single out an audience member.
Esquerré turns toward audience; even points to an upper-balcony guy/girl.
Thunder/lightning/crack of the bat/pop of a ball into a glove/a speeding thrown/hit ball;
All should be heard clearly by ALL.**

Note: Ages are very flexible. Esquerré and Teammates are 25-30ish (less/greater is o.k., right Mr. Tune?)

Take Horton or the Three Greeting Angels; why put an age limit on them?

Now GOD/GAWD, hmmm mmmmmmm ... I see Jason Alexander.

Richard Simmons (a New Orleans boy) has two GREAT roles for him.

ACT I

Scene I

SETTING: We are in the dimly lit hospital room of Walter Esquerré. HE is plugged into a Network of cutting-edge, hi-tech gadgetry: expensive, life-sustaining, Thingamajigs; eye-popping, drop-dead gorgeous, Vital Sign monitors. There is a window for LIGHT.

AT RISE: ESQUERRE lies deathly still; mortally wounded by a fallen bullet; shot in the air at a New Year's Eve celebration. Some say, with his luck, it was probably poor Walter himself who pulled the trigger. Head heavily bandaged; his long, lanky, yet sinewy frame, stretches Lincolnesque from the bed's head to its foot. There's no hope for him. The deathwatch begins. He drifts in and out of a coma.

Eerily, the Vital Sign monitors begin "struttin' their stuff", as 'tho in competition for a MOST LUMINOUS Award. At times, ALL cooperate: their magnificent displays, Twilight-Zonish, cryptically, inexplicably, appear choreographed. They effect the synchronized 'look' of a **BROADWAY** Chorus Line.

A semi-private, the PATIENT in the adjoining bed turns on a radio. Appropriately, the song, "42nd Street", is playing. It ends; the station is changed; and, YOU LIGHT UP MY LIFE is heard. The LIGHT coming through the window begins to dwindle, fading, dimmer by the second. Dusk?

A DREAM SEQUENCE unfolds. Esquerré reacts with twitches and tremblings. Amidst a mist of fog (clouds?) a BASEBALL PLAYER charges at a ball (slo-mo). A 3-4" spotlight should serve nicely as a ball, in this, and subsequent scenes requiring one.

BALL PLAYER

(Panic-stricken)

Run! ... faster! ... idiot!

Gotta get it!

(HE screams as he leaps in the air, catches the ball, falls to the ground, tosses it; then, looks away)

Can't watch, please GAWWWWwww

DREAM SEQUENCE ends enshrouded in thick fog with fleeting glimpses of obscure images: people in stands on stage, Ballplayer spins facing them, then audience; not recognizable at the moment Ugly Angel #1 Jeremiah laughing gutturally; player and ball frozen as #1 pulls a light's chain shutting off lights in that side of stage. Lighting returns to WALTER ESQUERRE.

ESQUERRE

(Pops up. Out of his coma. Aghast)

Good Lord ... what a dream! A nightmare!

Baseball? A nightmare? Not my baseball.

(The silly, manCHILD, comes out; even as he is dying)

It's been veddy, veddy good to me.

(Pause)

My life centered around it. Morning, noon, night.

365 days a year. I wish, I wish, I wish I may. I wish I could play it forever. But

(HE raises both arms high, as though he sees something and is reaching for it; trying to touch it: the LIGHT. His time draws nearer)

ESQUERRE (Continued)

So real ... life-like. Wonder what it means?

They say dreams have a meaning. They! Hummpf!

Hey? What's with the arms?

(HIS arms go limp, collapsing to his sides)

OW! OOOH! OUCH! UGH!

I feel baaaaa

(HE drifts into a fitful sleep; jerking about.)

A booming, thunderous SOUND splits the silence.

V.O. (Henceforth: GOD, but audience unaware)

OWWWWWWWWWWTTT!

(ESQUERRE is jolted awake. Arms flailing, fists clenched)

GOD (Continued, discernible)
YOU! OUT... GET OUT... GO! OUT OF MY HOUSE!

I-I-3

ESQUERRE

(P.O'd.)

Quit tha damm shoutin' out there!
Fool's yelling loud enough to wake up the dead.
People trying to sleep ... ya nut!

GOD

I SAID OUT! O. U. T. SPELLS OUT!
GO! ... GO BACK HOME. BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM. WHO NEEDS YA?!

ESQUERRE

(Exasperated)

AGAIN?! SHUT UP would ya?! Whoever you are!
I'm trying to sleep, goddamn maniac!

GOD

GO BACK ... NOW!

ESQUERRE

HEY! ... I don't want to go back, I mean ... wake up. Good God Almighty! Who tha?...
What tha? ... Sam Hill Is This? Why am I saying that? He's not yelling at me!
I don't want to go back? ... back where? From where? ... I'm confused.

(HE tries to get out of bed, collapses, gasping)

Gotta get up. That guy out there ... HE'S crazy.

Geez ... this neighborhood's going down the tunnel, er, tubes.

People next door raising chickens. Weirdoes across the street have a colony of cats.

Maybe that's why I've never wanted to see that play.

And ... hee, hee ... that family of four down the block, all under house arrest.

What a sight! ... matching ankle bracelets. Ha

OOOOooo ... hurts!

(Tries, in vain, to get up. ManCHILD lurks within. Animated, pointing up)

ESQUERRE (Continued)

HOHBOY! OH MY GOD! OY!, I feel bad OY?

DA PLANE! DA PLANE! DA PAIN ya scatterbrain.

IMMA get up and give him a piece of my mind.

I ain't scared, I ain't scared. Put up ya dukes. Oh, I would, ofcourseserous ...

But!..... what's happening?! OHHHHHHhhhhh

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF SCENE 1)

ACT 1

SCENE 2

AT RISE:

Lapse of time of only a few moments.
We are still in WALTER ESQUERRE's hospital room.
HE's dying.

Silence, then, the SOUND of the door opening.
A NURSE enters. The name on her tag is: ROBIN.
SHE is listening to music on a WALKMAN; gyrating,
lip-syncing, smacking gum.
She breaks out into song; atrociously off-key.
Tossing the headset on the bed,
she puts on a stethoscope.

LIGHTING emphasis on monitors; then the window,
where the light is cranking up the wattage:
flickering, dancing, pulsating.
The Vital Sign monitors go Flatline,
as she bends over to sound him.
Rubinesque figure or Marilynish?
I see either. Lean toward Rubinesque.

NURSE ROBIN

(Disrespectful, sassy. Pops a bubble, unbuttons her blouse)
FBI time ... Female Body Inspection time. Ho Ho Ho.
You get an up-close and personal freebie, cutie pie.
C'mon, c'mon ... take a look at these puppies. Puppies? No way bayyybeee.
I'm talkin' GREAT DANES, m'boy. They'll shock your jock back. Viagra shmeye agra.

(Pause)

Nothing there ... sorrrrry.

(SHE buttons up, flippantly flips off the stethoscope, and
puts the WALKMAN on.

Leaves the room singing)

AND ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST... WOOOOO YEAH BAYYYBEEE.
ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 2

ESQUERRE becomes conveniently and easily distracted by his lofty position.
HE flies about the room, singing and pretending to be a bird, an airplane; avoiding the obvious.
Several people enter the room: medical and family.
THEIR activity below gets ESQUERRE's attention.

ESQUERRE

(Throws in a little Wizard of OZ)

Why that's my family down there ... and doctors ... and nurses!
NURSES AND DOCTORS AND FAMILY, OH MY!
I want to go HOME. BOOHOO. Auntie Em ... or hey, Uncle Arthur, why not, nice ol' guy... lets me sit on his lap and gives me candy ... hee, hee.

A PRIEST enters. He consoles the family;
gives the LAST RIGHTS to ESQUERRE.
NURSE ROBIN, begins to place a sheet over his head;
however, his Sister JANE has none of that.

JANE

(Feisty)

Excuse me! ... what do you think you're doing? Gink!
We're not at a crime scene, not shoveling road-kill.
Got a little more mourning to do ... ya rip. He's our brother.
Besides ... Sista Amelia, come help me ... gotta get this jewelry off him.

PRIEST sprinkles Holy Water over JANE; then on everyone, and the room. He departs.

ESQUERRE

(despairingly)

Uh-oh, looks like I'm a goner. Going ... going ... gone.
Three strikes and I'm out. So much I wanted to do ... should've done.
I ... I ... I'm...melting I I I I ... I-ya-Yie! ... ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

The LIGHT outside is brilliant. ESQUERRE goes limp.
Weeping/wailing below. They're eulogizing him:
the favorite, so good, never in trouble, popular,
smart, athletic; fell on hard times of late; but, that's
life. They're stroking, hugging, kissing him; he is
being tossed about; looks like *he's alive*.

Great emphasis on the following. Take as long as necessary to make it work for audience

Above, ESQUERRE becomes animated: feet moving; he's dancing, running. Arms swinging, esp. right arm, he weeps, he laughs, he shows anger, surprise, love, shame/despair-
Picture ADAM and EVE receiving their eviction notice.

Then, he'll be limp for awhile. Back and forth.
ESQUERRE is having his After-Life Thing;
and, it must be very, very animated/noticeable/believable.
The Light then dims; fades out. A quiet, still pause.

I-3-7

ESQUERRE

(From ceiling. HE awakens. Stretching)

Aaahhh ... sweet euphoria! I feel marvelous ... jez marvelous!

(HE begins to drift down. Startled)

I ... I'm floating down ... towards Me?! I..he..me!

Returning to his body, monitors light up/sound like
a PINBALL machine.

ESQUERRE (Continued)

HOLY WHOOPIE GOLDBERG! I'M BACK ... IN ME!

ESQUERRE's sister JANE is teaching a RELUCTANT
PERSON CAJUN dancing. Most in room are aghast;
some of the wacky family members are joining in.
Lots of: "cher", "fais do do", "cooyahs" heard;
singing, dancing as if they were at a Louisiana
festival. Then: SHE sees the monitors; plows through
a wall of people; yelling a Cajun halloo;
putting on her best Praise-The-Lord act.

JANE

AAHHH...EEEEEE!

Oh sah weet Jesus ... Praise the Lord ... Thank YOU ... Praise YOU JESUS!

(On a dime, SHE switches attitude)

DOCTOR! Yeah, you. Get over here, check him out ... ya goofball!

1st Doctor checks him, then freaks out, yelling
"He's alive! He's alive". Gets tackled by orderlies off-
stage. 2nd Doctor-DOUBTING THOMAS, enters, responds
to #1, then exits.

DOUBTING THOMAS

I DOUBT THAT

JANE

(To no one, yet to everyone)

Stevie Boy. Oh,er ... Walter. Mama always called him Stevie Boy.

His middle name...Hmmm! Wonder why? It's me, Jane, your favorite sister, dawhlin'.

Gooosh-ta-bee-gahn-din-gooosh-gooosh!

[In Shave-and-a-hair-cut-two-bits cadence.]

ESQUERRE

(V.O.)

I wish I were dead. Again!
I'm mortified. That gooosh-gooosh gibberish.
That's my nutty family's nonsense.
Can't just say Hi or good-bye ... NOOOO!
Can't hear myself think. Hmmmm, my father use to say that.
Now I know what he meant.

(Pause. Singing begins at Everybody's)

Feeling better, head's clearer. Everybody's talkin' 'bout me. Don't want to hear a word they're saying, only The ECHOES OF MY MIND.
When am I gonna take life serious?! ... AFTER!
It's quiet out there. AAAAAHHHHHHHHhhhhhhhhhhhh.....

STAGE LIGHTING fades; as does OUTSIDE LIGHT.
Sound of an ambulance siren howls in distance.
STAGE LIGHTING: begins its return to normal; as does OUTSIDE LIGHT. As ambulance sound draws Nearer, the LIGHT starts up again
(pulsating, someone is going through their After-life thing ... III-3-64)
ESQUERRE awakens. He points to the window, falls (awestruck and comically) out the bed.
All Hell breaks loose: people screaming, monitors crashing, medical staff bounced about.
HE grasps the window sill;
stretching,
in pain, HE peers out.
As CURTAIN closes
and spotlight on him only; he exclaims:

ESQUERRE

HOLY UNSOLVED MYSTERIES!

(Pause. Points to AUDIENCE at word AND)

Have I got a story for them!
AND ... FOR YOU!

(BLACKOUT)

END OF ACT I

ACT II

Scene I

SETTING: In this ACT, two settings are used to play out ESQUERRE's tale of his After-life experience.
1-A dark tunnel, in which he arrives immediately upon his death.
2-a baseball field, in HEAVEN.

AT RISE: ESQUERRE 'awakens' in a dark place.
HE is in THE TUNNEL.
A LIGHT in the distance comes on. It's brilliant, bedazzling .

ESQUERRE

(confused)

Where am I? ... so dark! ... nothing.

(A LIGHT in the distance turns on)

Wha? ... what's this? WOW!

(Spotlight reveals WALTER is suspended)

It's beautiful, glowing. Such brilliance! Such charisma ... magnetism.

It's pulling me in! Gotta go to it. Gotta ...

Hey, I'm floating! ... I'm going down!..

(HE floats to the floor. More lighting reveals he is in a TUNNEL.)

I'm in some kind of tunnel ... feels weird.

Whhhhhhhhhhhhaaaaaaa.....

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 1

ACT II

Scene 2

AT RISE: A series of FLASHBACKS enfold. ESQUERRE is frozen, wide eyed. As each flashback ends, ACTORS 'freeze-frame' at FADE OUT. All of stage used (inc. above-stage) for a 'Hollywood Squares' look. Emphasize LIGHT in each frame. Following final flashback, light up the entire stage showing ALL. Songs where a propos.

1-A New Year's Eve celebration. Someone (Walter, of course) very drunk, points a gun in the air; and shoots it. Celebration continues for a while; then, the guy who shot the gun is struck by the fallen bullet. No one notices until he falls backwards; grabbing his head, oozing. They rush toward him.
Song: Spinning Wheels. WHAT GOES UP...MUST COME DOWN.
Light: a quick flash at FADE OUT.

2-ESQUERRE is in an ambulance. Paramedics working on him. Streets bad, bouncing.

ESQUERRE (V.O.)

OW OOOH OUCH OH, I HURT! WHOA ... that guys pounding on my chest!
 Sheez, streets are bad. Almost came out of my skin on that one.
 Feel weird, like I'm coming out of my skin.
 You're dying ... oh.....!

Better get a quick prayer in. LORD, YOU are about to meet a Triple X sinner.
 Oh, my GOD I Am heartily sorry for haven' offended thee ...
 did I say haven' or heaven?

Song: Please Forgive Me by Englebert Humperdink.

Light: Seen through window: pulsating. Not the ambulance light.

3-ESQUERRE suspended: watching a pitcher throw a ball (into the audience); then, the Sound of a BAT hitting a BALL. IT bounces back onto stage; and, Pitcher charges anxiously toward it.

Song: Help by Beattles

Light: Ball returns to stage through a dimly lit window.

Songs for following: Memories & Body and Soul by Don Cornel

4-A PRIEST is giving ESQUERRE the LAST RIGHTS.

HIS life flashes before him: bright child, much photo'd athlete (flashbulbs popping all over the stage), shining personality, then, a lackluster period of a humdrum, robotic existence/job. God/family keep him going; otherwise zest is gone.

5-A final Flashback has ESQUERRE making the journey from death to arrival in tunnel.

11-2-11

ESQUERRE

(True to form, HIS manCHILD emerges, and sings)

IT'S ONE...TWO...THREE STRIKES...YOU'RE OUT!!! Whoaaaaa...ride 'em cowboy.

HE goes limp as he enters the spinning tunnel.

Song: We'll Meet Again from Dr. Strangelove.

Light: to pitch-black then, as ESQUERRE slaps his head all Flashbacks are displayed at once, with great fanfare: flashing, pulsating, bright, music builds to crescendo.

ESQUERRE

(Enlightened, evangelizing, impersonating)

You ARE dead! It's THE LIGHT! Amen .. I see the light. Yes Lord.

One of these days, I'm going to act grown-up. Ha! Too late now 'ol boy. It's just like those people on TV who claimed to be in a tunnel and saw a light after they ...

Good Golly, Miss Molly. Barbra Wawwa, Sally Raphael-Ninja-Turtle Joseph, Fill-up Donahue ... who? Oops, he's been cancelled.

So have I ... but ... this isn't sooooo bah-add.

(Sings with music: James Brown song. Gyrate forward)

I FEEL GOOD ... I FEEL GOOD, SO GOOD SO GOOD ... I'm on my way!!!!!!!

(HE hears the sound of metal scraping, sparks[light] are seen)

That sound? Where have I heard it? ... TAPS?

I'm going through the PEARLY GATES with taps on?!

(HE hams it up: dances, shuffles, imitates the great ones and their great routines)

I've heard of singing for your supper! They're going to make me dance to get in.

Eat your heart out Cagney, Sammy, Gregory, Tommy ... Tommy?

I AM THE YANKEE DOODLE DANDY .. MR. BEAU JANGLES. Huh?

I smell smoke!

(Suddenly, HE stops singing/dancing. Sniffs the air. Does a Lou Costello)

Uh-oh, I've been a baaad boy.

ESQUERRE walks slower, head drooped, to a dimmer section of stage for a costume change. Reappears.

ESQUERRE

Another sound! ... I've heard it before, felt it! My CLOTHES are making it?!

Feels good, ahhhh! Cowboys must've liked the sound their clothes made!

Oh, this feels-good...sounds-great...tastes-great, tastes-lite.

Tastes-great?, tastes-lite? Mmmmmm, you got a bad case of the crazies, boy.

Spotlight hits ESQUERRE. He's in a Baseball uniform, singing "Crazy"

ESQUERRE

(Flabbergasted)

I'm in a Baseball uniform ... my old pinstripes! Those aren't taps ... my cleats!

Wow! My favorite glove! ... and, that's cigar smoke! ... aromatherapy for the soul!!!

ORGAN MUSIC strikes up. He struts;
almost to the end of the tunnel
he does a jig; then, an exaggerated walk.

11-2-12

ESQUERRE (Continued)

(Sings a FATS DOMINO favorite; then, belts like ETHEL)
I'M WALKING, YES INDEED...They think of everything. Hit it ETHEL...
WHO COULD ASK FOR ANYTHING MORE!!!

Holding the last note, he turns away from the LIGHT;
becomes grim as he looks back; gesturing longingly,
as though he has second thoughts; as though
he wants to go back. But he places his hands on his hips,
does an about-face confidently, back toward the LIGHT.

ESQUERRE

(Beginning with a parody of a Sinatra song)
REGRETS, I HAVE SOME, TOO MANY TO MENTION. Too late for regrets, boy; you're
almost there. Look at it on the LIGHT side ... hee, hee. You're finally facing the music.
(Pause. Then w/New York, New England, New Orleans accents)
YO BABY!...EHYUP!...WHEREYAT-HOWZYA MOMMA?! They're gonna love me.
But.... gotta wonder what its like. {Singing} "OVER THERE, OVER THERE"
Got a feeling I'll be in the bullpen for some time...you better pray it's Purgatory...
Hey, I smell popcorn!

Suddenly THREE FIGURES appear at the end of the tunnel.
ANGELS holding baseball bats, not swords, over their
bantam-winged shoulders. One irreverently LEANS on his.
They, and their costumes, are angel-like; but with a
definite baseball look (pinstripes, glove for halo, ONE is
unshaven, let's avoid spitting).
WINGS FLAP WHEN THEY ARE EMOTIONAL.
Good time for POPCORN?... For audience?

ESQUERRE (Continued. Still taking things Lightly)

LOOK AT THIS! MY WELCOMING COMMITTEE! Wee wittle wings...
Ha ha ... probably haf to earn 'em.
Start with people like me...low-lifes, no-lifes. A boot camp for angels...
fresh out of booooot ... Holy Cow!

ESQUERRE is stunned. He can't speak. He stands tip-toed;
looking beyond the angels. A beautiful panorama enfolds:
LIGHTS, on poles, turn on: Left, Center, then Right.
Loud chatter is heard.
The area it is coming from is illuminated:
hundreds of PEOPLE,
some recognizable, are in stadium seats: talking,
eating hot dogs, drinking beer and soda.
Some smoking cigars.
Vendors hawking their wares.

VENDORS

Peanuts.....hottie roastie here.
Popcorn.....getya kernels colonel.
Rosaries....gotta have one to pray one.
Holy water..ya don't want to get tooooo hot.

11-2-13

More lights turn on,
revealing an immaculate BASEBALL FIELD
(immaculately tended to
by GREENSPACE members/advocates with their
insignias/logos on their uniforms).
Icons of the Holy Trinity in Centerfield,
like the monuments in Yankee Stadium's C/F.
The light glows and warms him inside.

ESQUERRE

(Contented, at peace)

Ahhhh ... HEAVEN. First thing you do when you arrive in Heaven.

What else?

you go to a baseball game, natch.

Finally, a place where it's appreciated. Its beauty, its intricacies

It IS life! Well, it's this too, probably. Yahoo, I'm going to a baseball game...
in HEAVEN. HEAVENLY!

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 2

ACT II

Scene 3

AT RISE: As ESQUERRE stands in front of the 3 ANGELS who are blocking him from entering the ball field, the big, ugly angel steps toward him; kills his joy.

ANGEL 1

(Gruff, tough-guy voice and very, very ugly, cigar dangling)
You got dat haf right busta. You atta game, awrrite...har har...big shot...
(Mocking ESQUERRE)
Oh, gully, dis is wondaful ... Heben and base-a-ball, gee-oy, gee-oy!

ESQUERRE

What'd you say? I thought New Orleans YAT's bad;
but even Demonsthenes couldn't help you.
(Demonsthenes appears sans stones, no stuttering, but sounds like #1)

ANGEL 1

Youz got ears ... big ones too. Ya playing baseball, meatball!
Ya da pitcha. Ya get to chunk ya junk ya wuz known fer down der.
That writa for the Times-Picayune, Mr. Wicker, said ya had ice water in ya veins ya wuz
so cool unda presha. Well, we got a test for ya, and a deal ta boot.

ESQUERRE

What are you talking about? This is crazy!

ANGEL 2

(Brushes back #1. Appears in charge. Has big stripes)
Oh, you have that heavenly feeling now. They all do in the beginning. Who wouldn't?
Most keep it. Some, I suspect you're one, don't. Whining about an unfinished life.
Moping. NOT HERE! This is a glorious, joyous place. We ... HE won't tolerate it.
(HE walks back and forth, pondering his next words)
Some don't even get this far. They're spoken to, then sent back. Howbeit...howbeit???...
for a rare few, for YOU, my friend, something different is done. A deal is struck;
a choice is made ... even reduced time over there is to be written in.
(HE points beyond the right field fence. Sounds emanate: not tortured,
only pleading, begging, deal-making. It's PURGATORY!)

ANGEL 2 (Continued)

They're not quite ready for Prime Time. Nor, quite frankly are you.
However, HE authorized this negotiation and, while clemency is out of the question;
as I said, reduced, greatly reduced time is part of the ... covenant. A fired-up team
approach will be taken to rid you of your self-pity, which led to gross lack of use of your
God-given talents. Mortal sin ... open and shut case.

11-3-15

ESQUERRE

COVENANT?! NEGOTIATION?! FIRED-UP?! CHOICE?! Is this some kind of NEW Baseball League? Exactly where am I? What's going on ... pray tell?

ANGEL 3

(Effeminate, matching accessories w/beautiful hand fan as tiny wings not giving him enough air, animated, always primping)

Quickly now, HE's waiting. Mustn't keep HIM waiting. Decide now, for you shan't be given another chance, I assure you.

ESQUERRE

(Frustrated)

You say I must decide. Just what am I suppose to decide on? All I know is MR. UGLY says I'm da pitcha! Crimminy! And, another thing ... Who's HE?

ANGEL 3

(One hand on his hip; other pointing to HOME PLATE)

HIM ... NUMERO UNO ... the MAIN of MAINEST!!!

HALLELUJAH music. A broad shouldered, beautiful, long Silver-hair, bearded MAN is dusting off Home Plate. HE straightens up, turns toward ESQUERRE. HIS eyes: glowing, penetrating, all-knowing, all-seeing.

ESQUERRE

(In disbelief. Stuttering, stumbling, to get it out)

Uh..Aaa..is..tha-tha-tha..that...is that who I think it is? HE'S THE UMP?!

(Laughing nervously)

GOOD GAWWWwwd, hee hee ... look at HIS eyes. HE mustn't miss many calls..hee hee.

ANGEL 3

(Every time he says HE, Angel 3 arches his eyebrows; makes a disapproving face: eyes roll, lips pursed)

When HE saw you coming, HE advised us of what HE had in mind.

HE wanted to be behind... oh, what is that word? OH, yes ... behind the plate.

GOD

(Dusts Home Plate, turns, yells at # 3)

Calm down ya ol' queeeen...er, Zachariah. What's the hold up Ezekiel(#2)?

Git da kid up here, Jeremiah (#1). Let's play ball, dangit. JEEZ! (on cue JESUS

APPEARS, says, "YOU CALLED, FATHER?"; backs away saying, "OH NO, NOT AGAIN!"

ANGEL 1 = JEREMIAH

Don'tcha get on HIS mean side, nor mine, busta. Warm up fast. He wants to see yach, cuz ya had da best junk HE's ever seen...make dat created. Bedda than Dizzy Dean, Satchel Paige; even my man, da Babe, who wuz a great pitcha for da Red Sox when he foist started in da big leagues. HE wants to see ya pitch up close, becuzin' HE sez you wuz da best.

DOUBTING THOMAS

(From out of nowhere, HE appears, speaks his line; exits)

I DOUBT THAT!

11-3-16

ANGEL 2 = EZEKIEL

HE doesn't do this often. You should feel honored.

You should hear how HE and Einstein argue about your 'stuff'.

It was funny, very funny to everyone who heard it; but not to them.

GOD said your abilities were natural. You had a great wrist bone, long, strong, forearms, and a rotator cup that rotated to a greater degree than thought possible. A powerful snap-and-torque created your once-in-a-lifetime junk which defied the basic laws of physics.

GOD bragged it was at least a 1000 years in advance on the evolutionary scale.

(Pause)

Einstein said, phooey. You doctored the ball. Simple as that.

He'd try to show GOD: spitting on it, a spot of camel dung, dirt from King Tut's tomb, a booger from SADDAM HUSEIN'S nose! NOW, They both did cracked up on that one.

Poor Saddam, scared the camel dung out of him.

He got guards to guard the Palace guards!

(Pause)

Yup, He'd reach down and scoop something up for old Albert to try.

UFO sightings would shoot up every time HE did it. Ha, ha, ha. We had to caution

him. HE doesn't care much to be CAUTIONED ... but, the natural disasters he'd

cause...ugly, unfortunate...earthquakes!...yuck! GRIDLOCK at the PEARLY GATES!

I'm telling you...poor Albert couldn't prove it...the old codger could barely

throw it...ha ha ha ha...so funny you'd lose your breath some times.

GOD dusts off Home Plate some more.

He loves doing it;

loves UMPIRES, "GREAT DECISION MAKERS, NEAT PEOPLE, NO SLOUCHES, CLOTHES TUCKED IN.

CLEANLINESS

IS NEXT TO ME-LINESS...HEE, HEE."

LIGHTNING, THUNDER, SOUND OF RAIN

GOD

RAIN? ... that Esquerre bunch still in charge of weather, HORTON? Wackoes.

ESQUERRE

My people in charge of something? Up here?

Well, good to know at least they're up here!

GOD

HORTON, come here.

Spotlight on a PERSON seen chatting

with a group of Baseball non-aficianados.

He is a fop; and, he is not paying attention.

GOD gets angry and bellows.

GOD

HORRRRR.....TON!

HORTON

WHOOOOO?...WHO called WHO?

GOD

I'm no WHO, you-you, YOU know WHO I am. I AM. THAT'S WHO I AM!!!!

A WHO! ... indeed.

So Horton heard a YOU-HOO from a WHO. Just WHO DO

DO YOU think was calling YOU?

Tell ME, WHO? ... s'il VOUS.

GOOD ALMIGHTY ME!...you have me talking like DR. Seuss!

Get your butt over here! You owe me one.

HORTON

(Peeved and mocking GOD, wipes crocodile tears away)

Owe HIM one...humpf...I've paid him back a Kazillion times.

I deserve to be here, brute...sniff, sniff.

"I SHALT ALLOW YOU INSIDE THESE PEARLY GATES, BY THE GRACE OF ME."

Yee gods!!!

GOD

I heard that, mister. Now go tell that wacky bunch to shut off those dadburn rain gizmos ... whatchamacallits...machines...whatever. And, don't you try to sneak a quickie and go down to your beloved GREECE. I know you tippy-toe down there thinking you won't be caught.

Peter and the boys, they got caught sleeping three times ... NEVER AGAIN!

They tell me everything.

Humph ... sucking up to Zeus and his wannabees...aagghhh...that one with the snakes in her hair! You ... cavorting with lesser gods.

(mocks Horton)

"OH MY, OH MY, GREECE IS MAHVELOUS IN THE FALL. THE WINE, NECTAR OF THE GODS. OH ZEUS, HOW MUSCULAR YOU STAY. AND HERCULES, AND YOUR OTHER CHILDREN, SO OBEDIENT. WONDERFUL ROLE MODELS."

(Angry, GOD makes a thunderous bolt of lightning; then spits a wad of tobacco juice into a spittoon, which is the DEVIL himself. Apparently GOD loves to diss, abuse, shame, etc., the Devil. THEY are more INTERACTIVE THAN WE THOUGHT. The Devil is animated; reacts angrily as the wad pings the bottom of him (formed into a spittoon, remember?)

Don't make me sic GABRIEL on ya. OL' SCRATCH here had to learn the hard way.

Oh ... sorry GOAT-BREATH. I keep forgetting you wish to be called MEPHISTOPHELES.

It sounds more lofty! The Hell you say ... pittooeeey. Har, har!

(Pause. HE turns back to Horton)

Now, git Horton ... dadgummit. Git yer hide down tha trail, pronto.

I expect you back in the saddle in two shakes of a lambs tail,

or it's HAPPY TRAILS to you.

Reckon you gittin' the message? Dagnammit, doggonnit, goldernet. Pitooeey!

II-3-18

HORTON

(Disgusted, brazenly, as he departs)

Eye-ther Gene Autry or Roy Rogers just arrived, or,
HE's been playing poker with Gabby Hayes and Slim Pickens.

(Pause to allow laughter to subside. Then hit them with this one)

I don't like the bitch with the snakes, eye-ther.

Medusa, shma-cuza, made those fools stiff, all right.

LOTS OF GUM UNDER HER PEWS [good song title, huh?]

Falsies, I bet.

In more Houses than the AVON Lady over there. Hi sweetie, howz ya mama?

I didn't know you wore glasses. Huh?

You don't! Geez, kinda heavy with the mascara today!

Go figure ... she's a bitch too.

(Mocks Avon Lady)

"ring, ring, AVON LADY, NEED ANYTHING? ...

WHO CARES, JUST PLACE A FREAKIN' ORDER, BROAD!"

(Horton confronts the Esquerrés in purgatory)

Off. OFF! ... you heathens. I'm all wet! I'll catch my DEATH of cold.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 3

ACT II

Scene 4

AT RISE:

The PEARLY GATES close.
ESQUERRE is led to a Bullpen side-stage.

JEREMIAH

C'mon wonda boy. Let's go warm up dat miracle arm. Da way HE tawks aboutcha ya'd tink you wuz tha second comin'.
Da best...humph...CHOKA!

ZACHARIAH

(Taking a stab at talking Southern)

Junk? Doctor? Choka? My good gracious, what does that all mean?
Get a life...hee, hee. A life...here!...well, I thought it was funny.
Fiddle dee dee...GOOD GRACIOUS ME!! simply don't understand it...
nor you all's.....

ESQUERRE

(Interrupts. Can't take anyone screwing Southern up)

It's my GOODNESS gracious, and...Y'ALLS

ZACHARIAH

(Gives ESQUERRE a nasty look)

I declare I cannot for....

ESQUERRE

(Brazenly interrupts again)

DO, ya doodoo... it's I DO declare.

ZACHARIAH

(Stares coldly at ESQUERRE.
Utters curtly, crisply, bitchy.)

What.....ever.

(HE fans himself with a beautiful hand fan that matches his accessories)

Such a silly game. All that spitting, nasty crotch grabbing.
And to think they condemned Michael Jackson and Roseanne.
A good game of Bridge is more to my liking.

JEREMIAH

Clam ya chops up, wud ya? It's almost curtain time...curtains more like it...har har.

ESQUERRE

So I'm an exhibition...satisfying HIS whim. For HIS amusement
I have to put on a show. Play the jester.
HE wants to see my junk? Whoopee! That's my opportunity?!

EZEKIEL

Wellll...not precisely.
(HE pauses)
You must earn it?

ESQUERRE

Listen, you three cracked-brains, can't you just be direct with me? Get to the point.
EARN IT? Earn WHAT??
First it was COVENANT...then NEGOTIATIONS, DECISIONS, NOW it's EARN it?!
Holy Smith Barney.. what do we have here a Dead Broker's convention!!!

JEREMIAH

(HIS dislike of ESQUERRE turns up a few more notches.
Goes nose-to nose with Esquerré. Just like umpires & managers
do in a heated argument.)

Listen up, ya spoiled-rotten choka. I'm sayin' it only onest.
(HE points to THREE SHADOWY FIGURES in the 3rd base dugout)
Ya gotta git dem out...har, har...and.....har, har, har...
If youz happ'n ta...by sum MIRACLE...instead a HIM makin' the call...
You git to decide if ya wanta stay or,..I'll take Door #2..GO BACK! Har,har,a
hardee,har har...sheez, I can hartly breathe..

EZEKIEL

Don't laugh, Jeremiah. This is a serious matter.

ESQUERRE

I THOUGHT SO...can't pull the polywooly...er...hell...er heck...I was beginning not to
like it here anyhow.

ZACHARIAH

Wondering when you'd catch on...my GRACIOUS...almost had to hit you
with a lead balloon!

ESQUERRE

Yea, yea...Hey...Who's DEM? Is this I GOT A SECRET or a MASONIC LODGE?

ZACHARIAH

Two are in some sort of whoop-tee-do Hall of Fame club.
I am surprised they're even here...such carousing, debauchery.

EZEKIEL

(HE speaks first to ESQUERRE, then to ZACHARIAH as he points to
the RIGHT FIELD FENCE)
You will know when you see them...AND, mista ZACHARIAH,
They repented, spent their time over there, and have become model,
well, almost model citizens.

ESQUERRE

HALL OF FAMERS?! I gotta get them out?! Pray tell, who is the third?

II-4-21

EZEKIEL

One who is their equal but, didn't have the opportunity.

(Pause)

The talent you were given was of the highest caliber.

But you quit using it, blamed others, became selfish. In your defense, HE did say that messed up relief job that started your tailspin was not entirely your fault. HE would say, *"That boy didn't have a heater...more like a cooler...har, har."*

ESQUERRE

(Aggravated, starring a JEREMIAH)

So that's what QuasiAngelico meant by 'choka'. HaddaGotta bring it up, huh?

(Pause. Thinking back about that 'messed up relief job')

Damn...uh, darn...coach orders the Catcher to one-finger me...only fast balls.

Bases loaded, no outs, we're ahead by five.

He brings me in, and I can't use my junk...what an ass?

(Imitates coach, who sounds like OLD GUY in PETTICOAT JUNCTION.)

Listen up, Sonny...no walks, no junk, let 'em hit it if ya hafter. Just throw fast balls...NUMBER ONES. We'll win, dern tootin'.

(Imitates SONNY the Catcher)

Coach, ESQUERRE, ain't got no fast ball.

Batters can read the print

on his uh..fast..uh straight ball..you know what I mean... the one-fanger.

Nobody's ever signaled a number one to him in his lie-ff. Coach lookyheer.

Take a gander at 'im. Ain't got no fat. Looks like a needle when he yawns.

Only got one strip on his pajamas, I hear tell.

(ESQUERRE imitates Coach)

Number one...gotta go)

(HE imitates SONNY)

Umps not comin' coach. We can talk some more.

(HE imitates Coach)

Number one...I gotta go make number one...

'n my wads seepin' down my chin...

mumble, mumble..aah-chew, spittooy...dang it...all over my clothes.

ESQUERRE

Hummf...I shoulda loaded up and threw spitters. The COLLEGE WORLD SERIES and the bumkin wants fast balls from me. Shoulda rubbed it with with a dab or two.

All my coaches used to let me.

(HE imitates another Coach who sounds like DON KNOTTS)

Here ya gotta cold son. {sniff sniff} Mama took your temperature?

Hundred and one, ya say Gollee. Good phlegm day, I bet. Go ahead, get out there, enjoy yourself. Spit off the mound, mind ya...don't get any on the ball...hee, hee...

what a great kid!

JEREMIAH

Hate to menchun it but...ya got knocked out da box in jus' three pitchas.

All HOME RUNS! Har..har. Ya team was ahead by five. When da coach took ya out y'allz was losing by one...and yallz lost by one stinkin' run. And tha cry baby whiner got p.o.'d about life...choka..*help.. I'm chokin'...arrgrlllll...*

11-4-22

EZEKIEL

Jeremiah, you are a raging bull frog at times.
Don't pay any attention to him Walter. He woke up on the wrong side of his cloud.
Come now...HE wants to see you perform up-close-and-personal as they say.

ESQUERRE

I ain't PAYING attention to tha yorker.....it's HIM who concerns me.
Does HE miss anything?

EZEKIEL

Nope...HE's GOD.
HE pays attention to every little detail. It's often the lesser sins that really get to HIM. Most believe HE pays no attention to them;
too caught up with the biggies...the MORTAL sins. HE SEES THEM ALL!

ZACHARIAH

(Loves to gossip and enjoys telling a good one)
Hmmm...welllll...there are mo-ments when HE...shall we say...
when HE misses a teennie weenie, miniscule amount of...no-nos.

ESQUERRE

What in the Sam Hill is that suppose to mean?

ZACHARIAH

OH, dear...I opened my big mouth.

(Pause)

Well, if you must know.

The 'ol boy doses off a few secs. Heard HIM snoring many times ...
and...blah blah blah...yadda yadda yadda...
he misses some Baddy-boys. There, I've said it.

GOD

(Finishes dusting off Home Plate. Stands erect and BOOMS)
PLAY BALL!!!!!!

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 3

ACT II

Scene 4

AT RISE: ESQUERRE and the THREE ANGELS enter flying. HE is being carried by them and is putting up quite a fight: feet kicking, arms swinging, yelling. He's extremely nervous. THEY deposit him on the pitcher's mound and exit. PLAYERS on the field in every position.

ESQUERRE

Wait ... I didn't warm up enough My arm hurts ... shoes tight.

COSMO

(The CATCHER. HE startles ESQUERRE appearing from behind.
Mean and sarcastic)

Shutup! Let's get this straight. Don't ask for any help from me.
You decide. Junk's all you had anyway. MAYBE that's their weakness. Ha!

ESQUERRE

What's your problem?

(Pause)

Hmmmm...you look familiar.

GOD

(Advances to mound. First to COSMO, then ESQUERRE)

Git your butt back behind the plate.

(To ESQUERRE)

Not the sharpest knives in the drawer, your people.

Driving everyone bonkers in the SOUTHERN side of PURGATORY.

Guards even requesting transfers to Serial Killer section.

Ehh-yup, some up here, the ones that got in a quick ACT OF CONTRITION before they were fried. Bottom of the barrel, not a pretty site, but at least they're not getting flame-broiled ... know what I mean?

(Pause)

What's with the goofy sayings, the gibberish, the Nite Owl meetings. Hoot..Hoot, Gooshta, begotten, Goosh Goosh, Ikky, Ikky.. Fools tried to organize another tower building like Babylon but no one could understand them. Poor souls in Purgatory with 'em, some say they might request a re-sentencing, since it's HELL being with your people!

(Pause)

And this cock-n-bull about their BASQUE heritage. Why none other than PLATO witnessed them moving into the Pyrenees after I accidentally wiped out Atlantis.

Come to think of it Einstein ... gagghh ... don't want to think about it!
These people do know how to annoy you. What with ...
the BASQUE were in North America way before Columbus; and,
his crew was mostly BASQUE.

11-4-24

GOD (Continued)

They finish up their spiel with a corny joke about BASQUE inventing sunbathing
"you've heard of basking in the sun" . Ha, so funny ... NOT!

(Pause)

Just when your're about to barf, they bring up Pappa's...Ernest Hemingway's Story,
The Running of the Bulls, in Pamplona, Spain.

"Why that's mostly BASQUE running with the bulls".

getting their damn butts gored is what it is.....

HEMINGWAY? ... ERNEST HEMINGWAY ... come on down.

(Someone whispers in HIS ear)

OHHHH ... why didn't somebody stop him.

GOD becomes elevated, begins to preach on
taking one's life. Everybody drifts off to
sleep. HE zaps them with bright lights
section-by-section, in a kinda Marquis de Sade-ish
way. HE gets their attention.

ESQUERRE

(Warms up with a few harmless curves and drops, nothing
spectacular. The fans heckle him)

Don't let 'em get to you. I'm not about to show my prime time stuff. Not yet.

FAN BEHIND HOME PLATE

Give us BARRABAS if that's all you got.

Heaven security carts the GUY off to Purgatory.

ESQUERRE

(Still nervous, tries to buy more time to gather himself)

Sir GOD? OK if we sing the good ol' U S of A's Star Spangled Banner?

And, then maybe Mr. Harry Carry could sing TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME?

GOD

(sarcastically)

Why certainly we can do that...HEY, how about a little KAROKE too?=@#%&
By the way, scratch Harry, this isn't a 7th inning stretch deal.

The ANNOUNCER (looks & sounds like that guy who
introduces major boxing & wrestling events)
goes to HOME PLATE.

Doing an I-give-up-what's-next gesture,

GOD LOOKS UP, like there's another level to this THING.

Several people around him at the
time, also look up; rather puzzled, wondering
what would GOD be looking up at.

The Announcer introduces a special treat for all in his inimitable Ring Master/Ring Announcer style. Then: SPOTLIGHT on a shadowy figure reveals it to be ELVIS PRESLEY. The WOMEN go nuts.

11-4-25

ELVIS

(Giggling

Thank you, thank you very much. They're still looking for me down there.

(Pause)

OH, OH SAY, CAN YOU SEE...

MEXICAN GUY

(Only person seated)

SI, yes, I can see, muchos gracias. These are very good seats.

Thank you for asking. I love this country.

GOD

(Exasperated)

HE's not sayin' JOSE, it's OH OH SAY. Just sing it wouldja Presley...and use that side exit when you LEAVE THE BUILDING.

PRESLEY ends song and throws handkerchiefs to the women. As he turns, the words Property of Purgatory Security [POPS] are imprinted on the back of his costume. Two DEPUTIES take him away. Elvis will return for a second cameo, later.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 4

11-5-26

ACT II

Scene 5

AT RISE: Immediately following the National Anthem, GOD goes behind the CATCHER. They put on their MASKS. GOD gives a signal to the ANNOUNCER to begin.

ANNOUNCER

Laaadies and gentlemen, and children of all ages...

GOD

This isn't Barnum and Bailey, you knucklehead.

(Somewhat quieter to HIMSELF)

Although, I believe that is coming shortly...

they need things to keep 'em happy this new crop coming up.

Leisure time they call it, "*we need more*".

ANNOUNCER

Here's Gerrrrr orrrrrge Herman... THE BABE...RUTH!!!!

The FANS go wild. ORGAN music plays loud. RUTH tips his hat to them; then enters the Batter's Box spitting, sneering at ESQUERRE. SOMEONE in the Stands shouts to RUTH.

FAN IN 3rd BASE SEATING

Where ya gonna hit it, Babe?

RUTH, in a playful mood, points to the Right Field Fence; but, HE indicates he will hit it over the fence in Foul Territory, where Purgatory is.

ESQUERRE

Uh-oh, I'm in big trouble. He's toying with me right off the bat.

Well...here goes nothing.....grrruntherpfuhgaaa!

ESQUERRE's first pitch, a curve, doesn't break much to his disdain. RUTH crushes it. It travels precisely where he pointed: over R/F fence & foul. Fans cheer. A GOOFY GUY bursts through a gate, with the BALL. HE's from Purgatory, and an ESQUERRE.

SECURITY GUARDS wrestle him down
Dragging him/her back in.

11-5-27

ESQUERRE takes a deep breath, wipes his brow with his thumb; then flips the RESIN BAG, one-handed, on his hands/wrists; first palm-up, then palm down (this is a maneuver done by pitchers to send the correct body signal to the batter: I'm scared; but you're not going to see it. Look how calm I am. It also does what it was made to do in the first place: absorb the excess perspiration.)

ANNOUNCER

(Shows HIS colors)

Atta Boy...Babe!

ESQUERRE

Let's try the ol' sidewinder on ol' lefty, the ol' fashion way.

HE takes a full windup.
Today, pitchers don't windup at all.
He winds up 5 times. The fans jeer and ridicule him for doing it so many times.
He pumps a few more times and they go wild, accusing him of being afraid to throw it.
A GUY in the upper center field deck has the nerve to yell:

GUY IN UPPER C/F DECK=NIKITA KRUSCHEV

Crucify him!

GOD zaps him and he disappears.
The MAN next to KRUSCHEV exhales in relief.

MAN NEXT TO UCFD GUY [david duke's daddy]

Whew! I was about to say it too...he'll probably be over there in the Big P House for a long time.

GOD

(Booms so loud the GUY in C/F can hear HIM)

OH NO HE'S NOT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

AULD HORNIE'S BOY's got him now. I was running out of patience with him anyway. Haven't had to do that in a long time. Dang you Lucifer, you got more SYNONYMS than ME in Mister ROGET'S THESAURUS!

GOD spits into the spittoon. Devil shrieks.
ROGET is booed as he sheepishly leaves the stands.
All the while ESQUERRE has been pumping his
Old style windup.
Spotlight is on HIM and RUTH only.
No other LIGHTING. No SOUND.
HE is a Left Hander; and, of course, so is RUTH.
ESQUERRE crosses his right leg over his left
as he slopes off the mound and moves at an
angle midway between home plate and 1st base.
He snaps his wrist, with a grunt; releasing
the ball into a trajectory far behind
RUTH's back. It appears to be a very wild
pitch. Fans begin to sneer but are stopped in
their tracks.
The BALL CURVES in toward RUTH. HE thinks it's
going to hit him. HE leans back and steps in
the 'bucket'.
The BALL curves over the plate. RUTH can't
even swing at it. He falls down on his
behind. Some laugh, RUTH growls at them.

GOD

STRIKE TWO ... WHAT A PITCH!

RUTH

(To ESQUERRE)

Smart shit.

GOD chews him out.

ESQUERRE

Two strikes on Babe Ruth! I can't believe it!

(Pause)

Look at this! ... the catcher is actually giving me a target ... low and away.
All right! We're battery mates!

GOD

(ESQUERRE cannot, but GOD HEARS CATCHER telling

RUTH where the next pitch will be going. GOD slaps him on the head)

What's your name?... COSMO, huh?

I heard what you told the Babe...telling where the next pitch is going ...

low and away. I just finished my rehab on BILLY MARTIN ...

He's a ME-fearin' boy now. Want to take his place? ... TURNCOAT!

COSMO

(Responding like a CADET in Military Boot Camp)

SIR ... NO SIR!

11-5-29

SPOTLIGHT on ESQUERRE, as he faces AUDIENCE.

ESQUERRE

(Rubbing HIS left arm, turns, speaks loudly to audience)

When the count's 0 and 2, you're suppose to waist one; hoping they'll swing at a bad pitch. I dunno ... arm's kinda worn out ... HE gives ya just so many throws in life...I guess. All those curves and sinkers took their toll. I can't, I'm not waisting anything, anymore!

(Pause)

But, gotta be something he's not expecting.

(HE remains silent for a few secs; then, nods in approval of the idea he has. Gives a big, animated wink to the audience; turns and faces RUTH)

ESQUERRE

Mister Ruth, sir ... where ya gonna put this one?

RUTH

(RUTH points his bat straight over ESQUERRE's head, indicating he will hit it over the C/F fence.)

There ... over your head and over the fence ... punk!

The FANS in the STANDS, VENDORS, ANGELS, SECURITY, even the MEXICAN GUY, ETC. ALL stand and cheer. Singing: *We will rock...* Stomping their feet, going wild. While holding HIS bat high in his right hand, and still pointing to C/F, RUTH tips his hat with his left hand. ESQUERRE turns around and faces C/F. HE raises the ball high above his head, Pointing to C/F where some of audience is seated

ESQUERRE

Y'all better watch out ... he says its coming your way ... be ready ... I am!

(ESQUERRE kiddingly covers his head with both arms while ducking. RUTH is still holding the bat high and has his hat in the other hand. HE is also in the BATTER'S BOX.)

ESQUERRE (Continued)

(HE stands up quickly, swivels and throws the ball; saying)

DO IT...NOW! Not low and away...HIGH AND IN!

Kakkasmootarfgerlaaaaaapah!

HIS no-windup, quick-pitch thoroughly surprises RUTH. HE isn't ready. He throws his hat down and attempts to get both arms on the bat; into his batting position. Cussing, eyes bulging, mouth wide

open; he swings at the ball as if he has little alligator arms. He misses it.

11-5-30

GOD

STEEEE...RIKE THREE! Sah-weet Jezzz ...

ESQUERRE and HIS TEAMMATES are elated. HE picks up another ball and throws it into the audience. Use a very very soft ball. The SPOTLIGHT beams on the PERSON who catches it.

NO ONE notices the ruckus at HOME PLATE: The BALL bangs against the backstop. COSMO did not catch the 3rd strike. He could have, but purposefully didn't. RUTH is NOT OUT. AND, HE is running, Make that lumbering, to first base.

ESQUERRE

(Running for the ball. Says to COSMO)

Ya dirty rat.

GUY SEATED BEHIND HOME PLATE
WEARING A MICHAEL JORDAN #23 OUTFIT

That ol' white man is slow, but not that slow; you ain't gonna make it. Won't be no joy in your Mudville either, juz like Casey's.

GOD slaps COSMO on the head. Then, dashes and picks up the ball. HE throws a burner to the FIRST BASEMAN. The ball pops (smoke/flames) in his glove just before RUTH tags the BASE.

GOD

OUT! MY GAME! MY RULES!

RUTH

HE TRIED TO KILL ME!

GOD

BABE, YOUR'RE ALREADY DEAD...HOLY COW!

At that, crowd roars when Harry Carry stands up. RUTH continues to curse and swear. Crowd boos the call by GOD. RUTH kicks dirt on GOD. GOD raises HIS arms, and...poof, in a cloud of smoke, RUTH disappears.

GOD

Two more years in Purgatory ought to do it. ANYBODY ELSE?
A SUDDEN HUSH

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 5

11-6-31

ACT II

Scene 6

AT RISE:

GOD is walking to the Pitcher's Mound, where ESQUERRE and his TEAMMATES are celebrating. HE motions at them to get away. THEY obediently back off, bowing, never turning their backs to HIM.

GOD

(Goes midway; has HIS say; then, turns back to HOME PLATE)

Hey, whistle-britches...settle down.

By the grace of ME, you got one out. Still two to go.

Don't expect me to bail you out, again. You haf to do it yourself...

For yourself.....BATTER UP!

MAN comes out of dugout. Uniform fits perfect. BATBOY offers him a warm-up ring and pine tar. He disdains; goes directly to the BATTER'S BOX. He's all business; and, he's a right hander.

ESQUERRE

A Rightie...Oh well, had to pitch against more of them than lefties.

But...odds weren't in my favor then, or now; as usual.

I lived by my junk...so, 3 MUSKETTEER-breath... it looketh liketh thoueth willist dieist byist itist.

CHRIS the FIRST BASEMAN approaches ESQUERRE unnoticed. ESQUERRE turns to pickup the resin bag and is startled.

ESQUERRE

Geez! You scared the hell out of me!

CHRIS

(Very descriptive/animated. Speaks as though he is playing charades)

Hell?...out? better than getting' it scared in ya, huh?

Well...whatever works. Glad to oblige, pop.

(Pause)

Oh...don't bother praying, 'cause you ain't got one powerful enuf to get this guy out. He sees the ball like few ever did. They say, it's as though he slows it down; as though he has crosshairs on his eyeballs. Only Ted Williams saw it as good, they say...I say.

ESQUERRE

Any weaknesses?

CHRIS

You better have a closer look at him POPs.
That's MICKEY MANTLE! He'll hit anything thrown close.
And...when he connects...I'm talking clothes-liners, fence-busters,
HO...MERS!!!!!!

(Pause)

Looks like you'll be staying over yonder.
Look at his peeps; standing, cheering, betting...against you.
That ugly angel over there said the odds are 666-1...and no takers.

ESQUERRE

(As CHRIS leaves laughing)

Gotta think of something.

(Pause. Turns to face team; pounding his FIST in his glove;
with a new-found unbecoming, undeserved, brassbound,
devil-may-care, arrogance.)

TED WILLIAMS...SHIFT! AT MY COMMAND..NOW!!

BRIAN

(The THIRD BASEMAN. A goofy guy)

UHH, Mr. Williams was a left hander. Hear tell Mr. Mantle can bat
right or left. How we gonna know which hand he's gonna be beforehand?

ESQUERRE

(To GOD)

With all due respect Sir, might YOU have been on vacation when they were giving out
his brain?

GOD

MMMMM...Perchance.

ESQUERRE

(Exasperated, anxiety imminent)

Listen, all of you!...move over...fill the gaps...everybody.
I want the left side filled with bodies. 2nd BASE go over to shortstop. Shortstop take three
steps toward 3rd and come in on the grass. 3rd, hug the base [naturally he does hug it] right
to left-center, center to straightaway-left, left go deep, yeah deeper, deeper..just go to the
fence. 1st Base, HELLO!! CHRI..ISS! She's not going anywhere...remember where you are!
Now, come HERE, to my right. I'll cover 1st.

COSMO

(Sarcastically)

Want me too, I ain't going to be needed here!

ALL PLAYERS
(Directed to ESQUERRE, together)
YOU ARE NUTS!

11-6-33

Total confusion reigns on the field.
FANS are in an uproar; PLAYERS are yelling
at one another; bumping into each other; not certain
where to go.

PLAYERS

>Watch it...get outta my way.
>Move over...don't hug me..it's here I stay..I say.
>You,over there...I'm to be here...I think..Oh dear,
>Where did he say to go? I just don't know.
>He wants me to the fence, dense!
>I'm on the grass, you ass!

GOD

(Laughing also; then, while confusion continues HE
sternly commands ESQUERRE)
On the mound boy...time's back in. Throw.

ESQUERRE

But, but...they're not ready.

GOD

THROW...NOW!

ESQUERRE goes to the RUBBER, head down, despairing.
MANTLE takes a smooth practice swing. Grins.

ESQUERRE

(While taking many extra full windups to the fans displeasure)
I guess I really don't have a prayer...never did I suppose...shoulda 'tho.
Let's get it over with. But, I'm going to go out in a blaze of glory,
Get one for the Gipper. You're going to chunk it as fast as your skinny
Beeee..hind ever did.....gruntisflagaphorppaghhhhpooppoopdipoop!

(The ball releases. ESQUERRE is shocked)

IT'S A HEATER...I LOVE IT!

(Very short-lived elation)

...and so does he.....THAT SOUND...ARRRGH!

MANTLE swings smoothly, powerfully. The SOUND of the
BAT striking the BALL is awesome.(No doubt, the single
greatest sound in all of sports)
Following the loud crack of the bat,
an equally earsplitting swoosh sound emanates;
indicating the great speed at which the ball
is travelling. ESQUERRE collapses into a fetal position.
A MIRACLE enfolds before him:

The 1st Baseman's HAT is blown off;
and is smoking.

The Shortstop leaps high. The BALL tips
his glove; which is ripped off his hand.
It too is smoldering.

The 2nd Baseman's glove receives the same
punishment. And, his trousers are blown off
as an after-effect of being blown backwards
several feet. 3rd Baseman still hugging bag.

The Right Fielder and Center Fielder embrace
in a vise-grip, for their turn. They look at one-
another and scream in fright. They leap up
together; but, the R/F is chubby; and,
returns to the ground instantly.

As he is coming down, the C/F lands on the R/F;
who screams in pain. The BALL only tips
his webbing; however, by doing so the
TRAJECTORY is lowered a smidge.

The L/F makes a mighty leap; rising above
the fence.

The BALL hits the pocket of his glove.
However, the momentum created by the power of this
mighty hit, causes the L/F to topple over the fence as
he catches the blazing ball.

Utter silence.

A GLOVE appears above the fence.
The BALL is in it.
The L/F falls onto the field; gets up, and
raises the ball in triumph.

The TEAM goes crazy.
MANTLE fumes in disagreement of GOD's call.
Some FANS boo and hiss like devilish snakes.
Lots of THEM are ORDERED by GOD back to
PURGATORY. Amount of Fans in stands getting
thinner by the minute. {Kinda dark, I realize; but, who
really knows otherwise...people may have human
frailties in Paradise, also.}

GOD

OUT...Batter's out. Good catch Halfred..middle name's Peter..I know all about you, my son! Magnificent ordination...

Later I'll let you catch me a messa large-mouth bass...Peter...Har, har.

I know this little fishin' hole off the I-10 in Luzziana...coooweee!

Cher, I mean to tol' ya...my Cajun buddy, Justin Wilson, showed it to me one day..I know he's still alive...I got CHAT ROOM BUDDIES...anyhow, I plum forgot I made it!...Heaven on Earth!

(SOME are still hissing)

GOD (Continued)

Pipe down over there; the GREEN MONSTER in right field is hungry!...he's out...I saw it... And you KNOW I see everything. Two outs, next batter.

ESQUERRE is in ecstasy.

Then, (dramatic-entrance music) the

THIRD BATTER comes out of the DUGOUT.

Not a very imposing figure: small compared

To RUTH and MANTLE. [I wrote this with my

Wife in mind; she's 5'2"; however, any

size will do. I'm flexible!]

The BATTER approaches Home Plate: cap is pulled down;

and, doesn't walk straight-up; kind of hunched over.

Meek. Doesn't want to be noticed.

ESQUERRE can see only the batter's back and Side.

BATTER picks up a ball; tosses it up in the

air; and, takes an unbelievably mighty swing.

ESQUERRE and his TEAMMATES watch in disbelief

As it climbs and climbs over the 40' R/F fence.

ESQUERRE

Good Golly Miss Molly!!!...musta gone 600 feet!

(as lots of yelling emanating from the other side of the fence)

ESQUERRE (Continued)

Knot-holers up here too!...who could hit a ball that far with only their power? Not like a pitch; where the thrown ball supplies energy also!

GOD

Alright, already, with the Physics. Al...BERRRTI, see what you started.

ESQUERRE, get on the rubber. Hmm..that WORD again...doesn't sound right.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 6

11-7-36

ACT II

Scene 7

AT RISE: ESQUERRE dons the PITCHER'S RUBBER as commanded.
(I'm getting deeper and deeper, aren't I?)
HE is very shaky; after seeing such a small-framed person hit the ball, that far.
Head down, he mumbles.

ESQUERRE

(Dejected)
I've come this far, only to be knocked down...again. I give up.
(He raises his head and is stunned)
That's not a man!
Your Greatness, Hugh Hefner!
She's built like a brick...

GOD

(Interrupts ESQUERRE and approaches the mound)

TIME OUT!

I'll say one thing about you boy, you don't try to hide it.
You're a looker, a swivel-head.
At last count, my Independent Auditor - Very Pricey White Water Gate,
had you at 750,000 blatant, not-just-a-quick-peak-panting looks.
What are you, 24..25? You'd have taken over Clinton's Number 1 slot
by the time you had made 28. He was and is the best. HAD the
uncanny ability to swivel his neck beyond 180 degrees.
Never missed one coming or going.

(Pause)

One of man's greatest weaknesses. Look at her...er...I can't.
Gotta admit, she's one of my best; and, everything's
FACTORY INSTALLED.

(Pause. HE slaps his head to rid himself of bad thoughts)

What's with this silicone? I made sand with that stuff!
I created beauty...not to be lusted for, or coveted. I put it
in MY Ten Commandments. But, sadly, most of you didn't obey...
Softie, that I am, I still forgive those who ask.

(PEOPLE in the stands begin to snooze; as they are
prone to do when HE gets preachy)

GOD (Continued)

(1ST SENTENCE: RISING INTONATION)

Uh, hell..LO!..I'm spea..KING..listen UP.

As I was saying..oh, forget it.

MISTER MOSES...I should have put the BIG 10 on 40' tablets. But...NO!

You had to carry them..make a grand entrance. Don't lose them again, like

Ya did in the 80's. I had to get this guy from Indiana to find them.

You're not gonna sell them at SOTHEBYS?

(To Esquerre)

Well. Now you have to face it and conquer it, if you want to take control...finally...and make THE decision to stay or return and, by the grace of ME, live out a life you can be proud of...using your...MY GIVEN talents. Living a good Christian life.

(Pause)

ME...I'm going back behind the plate. I love this game! La di la la ti la la.

Oh, by the way, she probably has a weakness; but, even I

don't know what it is...har, har!

BAAA...TAAAAAAA UP!

ESQUERRE looks around for help.

They just snicker.

CHRIS

You're staying, pops. She's a legend up here.. they say she ain't never been got out.

The old timers say sometimes HE'd have her bat first, when he was having a bad day, and just wanted to get it over with.

Yeah, looks like you're stuck up here like us.....oh well.

ESQUERRE

(To GOD)

If I get her out, and decide to go back...can I take them with me?

GOD

This bunch? Yeah, they've been crying since they got here.

Now Women...they take it better...most want to stay.

HMMMM. Think I know why, too. You men, only one thing on your minds.

Yeah, it's a package deal. I've been holding them down there in comas.

40 days today. This will be their last chance. Like the song goes:

"YOU'VE GOT THE WHOLE BUNCH IN YOUR HANDS".

ESQUERRE

(Takes a few steps toward HOME to get COSMO's attention. He is stunned.)

Good Gawww...TIME OUT! Everyone, to the bat cave..oh, er... to the mound.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 7

11-8-38

AT RISE: ESQUERRE is at the top of the mound,
surrounded by his TEAMMATES

RUDY

(The RIGHT FIELDER. Chewing on a candy bar)
OK, whatcha got now, boss? Man, I can smell them Red Beans and
Rice with Pickle Pork and TABASCO SAUCE, and French Bread, and...

ESQUERRE

I've got two problems with that batter.

RUDY

Yeah, dem bazooms! Ha, Ha, Haaa,ha-ha..ha ha.

ESQUERRE

Yeah, that...I suppose. But SHE was just as beautiful inside.
Kind; everyone loved her. A good Christian, Mass with her parents.
Every day!

BUCKY

(The SECOND BASEMAN. Has a foul mouth. GOD Knows and BLEEPS
out all of his cussing.)

Hey, BLEEPhead..how the BLEEP do you know?, smartBLEEP.
BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP...
Give me a break MR. GOD...the first three, ok, venial sins, I admit it.
But all the rest, I was coughing...honest to Gawwww...
better get back to my position, pronto-like.

ESQUERRE

She was my girlfriend, Lucille. Left the world at an early age.
Got sick...never recovered. I'm sure she's a Saint up here.

VINNY

(The CENTER FIELDER. From the Ninth Ward in New Orleans.)
Talks Brooklynese/Jerseyese...help me here)

Yeah, well, I could maybe see a problem...pitchin' to ya girlfriend.....
HEY.....WEENIE...get over it! She's dead. Where as we, you're included,
may be gittin' a second shot. Don't screw it up...I'll have ya killed...
AGAIN!.....OK?
Ya big lug, howzya mama, she need anything.
Mama mia, her Pasta Milanese..to die for....hey, who loves ya? Huh?

VINNY returns to C/F. Snaps his fingers and TWO
BODY GUARDS appear.

They run with him: one on his left, the other on his right.
They constantly turn and look in all directions: up, down,
left, right. Weapons exposed; at the ready.

As they approach C/F FENCE, they take out
Weapons, hold with both hands, walk sideways,
Crouch-walk...the whole law enforcement-I-am-so-
cool-weapons-drawn-ready-to-use-ain't-scared 'look'.

11-8-39

HALFRED

(The LEFT FIELDER.

Talks like HAL THE COMPUTER in 2001 SPACE ODYSSEY).

Steve tell us Steve what is the other problem We want to know We need
To know Steve do not not tell us we feel we should know you will tell
Won't you Steve It will be best for the better for you to tell us

ESQUERRE

GOD gave her everything. Beauty inside and outside. The only thing
HE didn't give her was...a

(Pause)

a STRIKE ZONE! She'd crouch down real low...too low. Couldn't throw
High balls or Low balls at her...She didn't have a darn strike zone.
She'd hit anything I delivered. Curves, sliders, inshoots, outshoots,
drops, knucklers, change-ups, doctored-ups. She'd blast them
All to smithereens. I could never get her out!

(Pause)

When I would see her later, she'd say she was sorry. She didn't see me as the
pitcher; she was so focused. She only wanted to play the best
she could. Then smoochville, and I'm ok till the next time we had
to play her team.

GOD

(Approaching the Mound)

OK, boys, show time. Let's proceed shall we.
I'm enjoying this, so let's not spoil MY fun.

(Pause)

I love this game.

Those Dallas Cowboys..they're America's team...THEY say.

Well, guess what I tty Bitty U S of A?!

BASEBALL is my GAME!

I convoke it in the Bible, I cite it in order to summons
the powwww-wer of it's being a congregatory sustaining essence that....

Kai-ya-bunga! I sound like a televangelist.

(Embarrassed)

What I meant to say is, I had it brought up in the Bible
right off the bat.

(To JUNIOR, the SHORTSTOP. GOD'S back to HIS OLD SELF)

What's the first sentence in the Bible, son?

You know, the Book of Genesis?

YOU DO KNOW THE BOOK OF GENESIS!

DON'T YOU?

LOOK AT ME, BOY!

JUNIOR

(HIS hat is on sideways. He's trembling, biting his nails, crying for his mother, crossing his legs, so he won't pee on himself)

Uh..ahh..aeiou..I tha..I tha..I think..it's
In the beginning, you..uh, I mean GOD..YOU create...

GOD

(Interrupts him. Gives Junior a gentle pat on the head)

You're saying it wrong, son.

It's...In the BIG INNING

Get it...BIG INNING...HAR, HAR, HAR.

Shoulda had them PLAYWRIGHTS MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE AND JOHN write it like that.

Oh, well, so it be written; so it be done.

Initially appearing to be STREAKERS, a naked (not totally) MAN and WOMAN run onto the field. The MAN has a cordless mike.

MAN (let's call him ADAM)

(Very child-like, an Adam Sandler/Steve Esquerre ManCHILD)

He wrote it folks, he did, he did. Baseball's HIS GAME!

I love it too. I do too!

(ADAM grabs EVE by the hair like the apeMEN are depicted)

Hey, you know what about me and baseball?

Get this...hee, hee.

I was the first to...SCORE.....YES!!!!

EVE

(Rips the mike out of ADAM'S hands. MAE WEST type)

Ya big stupid lug. Ya shulda kep' ya choppers shut.

HE pulled off the greatest unassisted TRIPLE PLAY eva, cuza you.

ADAM

(Arms out in front, palms up, shoulders raised, mouth opened)

Whaaaah?...whatcha talkin' about, poopsie?

EVE

I'll tell ya schmo! HE made the greatest unassisted triple play of all time.

HE threw tha boat of us, and that slimy snake, out...AT THE SAME TIME!

Hey, big boy pitcha, why don't ya come up and see me some time!

GOD raises a twirling finger and they disappear. HE spits out a wad of tobacco; puts on HIS mask; and, begins to walk back to HOME PLATE.

BUCKY

(The 2nd Baseman)

YOU CHEW?!

GOD

Not a vice up here, son...but only for those who gave up something for Lent. HAR, HAR.

ESQUERRE

LORD, I'm not trying to get out of this or delay it. I would just like to know...if you want to, of course... Well, no one could ever understand or accept why such a talented human being, my girl Lucille, was taken so young.

GOD

That's a tuffy, I admit. Talent's the word. You said it. She had it; and still does. Most of the time, I plano need 'em up here. This is where it's at son. Believe me. They ain't upset when they see this place. But...it's hard for the ones that loved them.

(Pause)

I needed her. She's still using her talents. Lots of work to be done over there...this ain't no DOLLY WORLD.

(a tad sarcastically)

May I be excused. There's a pressing matter at hand.

GOD approaches LUCILLE as she leaves the ON DECK CIRCLE. HE is very animated: pointing To the L/F fence, wagging HIS FINGER at HER, then at ESQUERRE, swings with an invisible bat. Is HE laying the law down; telling her to not pull back; don't let ESQUERRE get her out easily?

GOD

(A hint of jealousy? When he says: "especially your boyfriend") Pamper me, MY DEAR. Disregard these overt animations; they're for the nosey ones; especially your boyfriend. I know you; you'll do what you have to do,...yuck, I don't like that senseless phrase. Listen up...this is MY PLAN. Go for the long ball; as near to the foul line as you can aim it. I'll take care of the rest. A little crosswind will send them...let's do it 10 times...all foul. Nasty winds up here, this time of year... hee, hee! HEY...I need some grins too!

However, his ELEVENTH pitch will be his ELEVENTH hour.

11-8-42

LUCILLE steps up to the plate.
SHE smiles at ESQUERRE. Gives him a tiny, belt-high wave. THEN,
She gives him that I-have-no-choice-sorry 'look'.
Scrunches her hat so far down; even her eyes appear to be covered. She takes a practice swing; then, gets into her very low stance.

ESQUERRE

AWWWWWW! That look!...she's focused all right. I'm toasted, all righty. Tootie fruitie awruity...alrighty...Almighty.

ESQUERRE winds up and throws his first Pitch: a sensational breaking curve. She smacks it down the L/F line. It's high. It's a HOMER. No it isn't. At the last yard, before it went over, a strong wind blew it foul. ESQUERRE deeply exhales in relief.
Pitch after pitch, his best stuff ever, everything in his repertoire; ALL with the same results: CERTAIN HOMERS blown foul by an eerily well-timed (for him) wind.

GOD

(Sings last line)

Nor'easters...very unpredictable. Bad winds, muy mala.
MA-RYE-YA...I CALL THE WIND MA-RYE-YA, MARRRRRRR RYE YA!

GOD plays a cruel joke on ESQUERRE. HE blows one ball extremely close to the foul line. It goes over the fence. He pauses for several seconds. A HUSH falls over the stadium. HE takes off HIS mask and hat and begins to take off HIS chest protector. HE nonchalantly calls it "FAIR" as he walks away. ESQUERRE collapses.

GOD

(Quickly, after saying "fair")

Just kidding...foul. HO HO HA HA HEE HEE.

EVERYONE roars along with laughter
(the sucking-up, forced, feigned kind)

11-8-43

ESQUERRE's arm begins to hurt.
He rubs it. GOD calls time out.

GOD

That's the best junk I've ever seen in MY life, son.
What's hurting? That little spot just above the elbow?
I never had a name made for it. You'd think one of them HMO BUNCH
woulda come up with one; so they could use it
on their NOT COVERED list.
Here, let me take a look.

ESQUERRE rolls up his sleeve.
He has, as always, a wrist-length slip-over
under his uniform shirt. In NEW ORLEANS!
GOD sings in a deep, baritone,:
"SUMMERTIME, WHEN THE LIVING IS EASY....."
as HE looks at ESQUERRE's arm.
HE touches it and ESQUERRE drops like
a person who has hands laid upon him; as is done at
one of those healing services.
Luckily, big RUDY catches him.

GOD

Oooops!...Forgot... Nice catch, RUDY, my boy.
Whoa!...you been hittin' that midnight buffet a tad too much, my boy.
Those 2 for 1 coupons are for two people, my boy.
Take someone with you. That JOSE chap in the stands. He looks
like he could use a good meal...something to sleep on. Put a little
lard on his bones. Take a lot of lard off yours, my boy.

I can't remember the great movie comic's
Name who said: "my boy, and my little chicadee".

GOD

(As ESQUERRE comes to)

Stay there, awhile, lad.
I put you out like I used to in the old days.
Fancy-smancy word for it... dormission ...I still got it!
(Pause)

You been throwin' hard. Like I said, that's the best I've seen.
Too bad, she's the best I've seen, also. What a team y'all woulda made.
I like to say y'all, better than 'you guys', especially when
Womenfolk involved.

GOD

I'll let you rest a spell. Guess I'm getting softer in my old age.
Meantime, chubby..er Rudy, betcha I know where you got them shoes.

RUDY

(Mystified)

You even know where I got my shoes! How, why...where I got my shoes!
You actually know where I got my shoes?

GOD

(pointing to RUDY's feet)

Yup,...you got your shoes... ON YOUR FEET!!! Weeeee...heeeee!

(ALL SUCKUPS laugh also)

Even got a better one. But, it wouldn't be fair to hog all the good stuff. So, let me get
someone else to join in in the fun.

GIVE IT UP FOR...OHHHH..PONTIUS..PONTIUS PILATE, COME ON DOWN!

(Pilate makes a flourishing entrance; dipping his hands
in a wash bowl, carried by an attendant. Another gives him
a towel to dry off. GOD sees ESQUERRE's puzzled look.)

GOD

Like I keep saying, those who ask for forgiveness, receive it.
I've yanked up a slew of atheists in foxholes at the last second.
All ya gotta do is ASK.

(Pause)

Oh, make no bones about it. He got the maximum sentence...
4000 years in Big P. Got out in 2000 years, not for good behavior.
People were complaining over the centuries about his excessive use
Of water...always with the washing of the hands.
DO YOUR SCHTIK, PP...he does it better than anybody I know. Wait'll
Ya see this guy! He's the best.

DOUBTING THOMAS

(Dressed up as a FISH mascot on top of the dugout.)
Takes off the headpiece; says his line, and runs into
the dugout tunnel; and disappears.)

I DOUBT THAT.

PONTIUS PILATE

Schtik? I'm Roman, my good man. How is your son? And the 3rd person you say you
are. Ever hear of the term...split-personality?

(Pause)

Who are these people in those dreadful clothes, stripes, leggings,
chapeauxs, one large mitten, LIKE MICHAEL JACKSON'S ONE GLOVE ONLY..
Is Shakespeare doing a play. Talk about writer's block. He takes the cake. How long
has it bean? Several centuries!

Then, again, that moving picture chap, Lucas, is more than likely inspiring the clothiers here to design them. I call it pseudo-futuristic.

11-8-45

GOD

You're puttin' on that phony Brit accent again, I see. Think you're that EDDY IZZARD transvestite comedian?

Pontius, stop your pontificating, waterboy. Do it, NOW.

No wonder MY pressure is high. Whoa...OLD FAITHFUL just broke its GUINNESS Highest recorded PRESSURE-RELEASE GEYSER.

I feel better.

PONTIUS PILATE

(To GOD then to chubby RUDY. Rolls his Rs)

My rrrroutnd non-friend, non-Roman, non-Country man, since you are bereft of any command OR appreciation of the King's English ;

ALBEIT, I despise performanci-ridiculosi I, howbeit so it be said, so shall I do it.

(To RUDY)

My even morrrre rrrrotund one. I, Pontius Pilate, wilst go into that dark, that SO-DARK-THAT-IT-CAN-BE-FELT dark of PARADISE LOST, tunnel

Then, upon my return to this very spot, I shallith find you barefooted.

RUDY & EVERYONE

(Responding simultaneously)

HUH?!

NO WAY!

PONTIUS PILATE goes into the tunnel.

RUDY reties his shoes, tighter.

PILATE returns to his precise spot on the mound.

PILATE

(Does a CAJUN HALLOO of all things, and legalese in Latin)

AHHHHH.....EEEEEEEE! I've done it! Ipso facto, prima facie, ad pro Pontius.

GOD

(While sticking HIS FINGER into his mouth)

ad nauseam.

PONTIUS

I FOUND YOU BAREFOOTED!

SPOTLIGHT hits RUDY's feet. They have shoes on them.

EVERYONE

(Collectively)

HUH?????

PONTIUS

(As he points down at his feet. The SPOTLIGHT reveals he is shoeless.)

I returned, and found him barefooted.

(He curtsies, passes his hat from his head with a grandiloquent, theatrical, rapier-matador-like swoop, across, down, and behind his body; saying)

I take my leave. Me thinks you all appear to have taken leaveof your minds, gadzooks!

GOD

(Laughing, slapping his knee)

It's all in how you listen. How you listened to what he was saying. They have forgotten how to listen down there...especially to my word.

(Pause)

Giddyup, Stevie-boy. This will be your eleventh pitch,

Better turn things up a notch; I believe she's long past due.

And, "*ALL IS CALM; ALL IS BRIGHT*". The big bag of wind appears to have no Huffs or Puffs left.....cough, cough, wheeeeeez. Must be catching Horton's cold.

ESQUERRE

(Motions to COSMO to come out)

I need your help, man! Don't you want to go back? What kind of weakness do you see she might have?

COSMO

Nope and None. She's the best, this gonna be fun!

COSMO takes off HIS mask. He angrily wags his finger at ESQUERRE. He is about to speak; (more like a bursting-a-vein eruption) when THEIR GUARDIAN ANGELS appear beside THEM.

COSMO

(Gives his GUARDIAN ANGEL a dirty look)

Where were you, when I needed ya?

COSMO'S G/A (CHERUB-A-TUB)

(Apologetic)

I had just come out of recruit ..a rookie. I was taught I could not physically assist. Your free will would be compromised. The old timers cheated. You wouldn't believe some of the shenanigans they pulled off just to make themselves look good to their superiors. They might as well had come out and shown themselves to the protectee they were safeguarding. Good PALADINS they are not!

(With great pride)
I went by HIS book. P.I.G., protect, inspire, guide...but,
THOU SHALT NOT TOUCH!!

11-8-47

ESQUERRE

(To his G/A)

I kinda suspected you were beside me. Cheated a little didn't you?
Some games ... in the late innings, I couldn't lift my arm.
I felt it being raised, like I wasn't doing the pitching.

(Pause)

I sensed you many times, but, I ignored your guidance often, didn't I?
As I grew older, I didn't even feel you were there. You must have
given up on me, I figured.

ESQUERRE' G/A (SERAPH

I was always there. You went through a terrible period in your life.
You didn't want help from anyone; particularly from me and YOU.

COSMO

(To ESQUERRE)

You don't remember me, do you?

ESQUERRE

UH, no, can't say I do.

COSMO

You struck me out.

CHERUB-A-TUB

Yeah, you struck him out, you ruffian ... you intimidator ... you.....

ESQUERRE

(Smart-alecky. Interrupts CHERB-A-TUB)

Well, I'll be darn. I struck you out, you say. Should remember
that great moment in our baseball history...huh?

Uhh...look man, I struck out mucho people.

Hell...oops...I even struck out myself, all too many times.

I don't remember you.

SERAPH

(Pertly)

Yeah, he doesn't even remember you. He K'd a lot of people.

(To CHERUB-A-TUB)

By-the-by...you're that new one aren't you? I don't even
remember your name.

He and I, we don't remember him and you.

Y'all are just two impersonal pronouns to us.

CHURB-A-TUB

(To SERAPH)

Well maybe you were giving him a little extra help.

ALL sneer at their COUNTERPARTS.

11-8-48

COSMO

(Bitterly)

The LITTLE LEAGUE ALL STAR team. I'm sure you recall that...you were The ACE. Mr. New Orleans, picture in the papers, TV, radio. First USA team to win World Series in 10 years. Beat the Taiwan team. You no-hit them and parked two homers.

ESQUERRE

What's your point? When did I strike you out?

COSMO

In the final cut of the TRYOUTS!
You probably didn't even have to go through the tryouts.

CHERUB-A-TUB

Phooey! politics!

ESQUERRE

No, man, nobody made any promises ...deals.

SERAPH

How dare you!. He had great talent and used it. he could never do less than his best. He got game. He got great stuff.

(Aside to ESQUERRE)

Occasionally you threw, shall we say, a pitch that was a tad improper. Your MOTHER, GOD bless her; however, it was of her doing. You were a sickly lad, prone to colds. She'd break out the CURES.. VICKS VASELINE rubbed on your chest and a HOT TODDY. You had your foreign substance for the game. OH HOW THE COACHES LOVED THAT SMELL! And you had less anxiety. One news guy said you must have ice water in your veins, you were so cool under fire. You had a buzz on; and spirits in your veins, is what you had.

ESQUERRE

(Angrily to COSMO)

I had to try out ... earn a spot on the team, just like everybody else. I'm not ashamed to say I was good. That was my best year. I even had a decent fastball to go with my curve... my meal ticket, my bread 'n butter pitch.

(Pause)

Lord knows...HIM...I wasn't given any thing on a silver platter...
I EARNED IT, BUSTA!

COSMO

Yeah, that curve. Whoop-tee-doo!

ESQUERRE

I struck out a lot of people with it; I'm proud to say.

COSMO

Hey, put a zipper on it!

(Pause)

Final cut came. Only 15 would make it. Coach said I'd bat only once.

I was on the bubble. I had to get a hit, or else. Do or die, like this here place.

(Pause)

When I got up to bat, I couldn't believe they kept you in.

You'd already thrown three innings...no runs, no hits. A guy got on by an error..and you even got him...you picked him off 1st Base!

But, NOOOO! FATS, remember him? The Manager?

He told the coaches in the dugout to keep you in for another man; cuz you needed to get in as much work as you could.

"*This guy's our meal ticket*" he said.

(Pause)

Oh, I know what you're gonna say. "*I didn't hear that*".

Gimme a break.

He continued reaping the praise on you. And, I'm taking Warm-ups waiting to face you. No words of encouragement reaped on me. Yeah, he said the team had a chance to go all the way, with you as the el primo man.

He was right ... y'all did, with you as the Numero Uno man.

But, not with me.

(Pause)

Meal ticket, hmmpf. Everybody had a damm meal ticket.

You had one..ya curve ball. They had one..YOU!

ME? I didn't even get freakin' dinner that night!

ESQUERRE

Look, all I'm asking is for some help...Geewillikers!

SERAPH

Let go of the past COSMO. There's a purpose for everything.

The COSMO role is played by an African American. HE is loosely based on a person I played ball against. We had our problems (similar to the issue in this scene); however we overcame them (without adult intervention I'm proud to say).

I modernized the character by having him perform the following scene in RAP a.k.a. HIP-HOP. COSMOS's backups are based on two very successful RAP singers. They were both shot to death: TUPAK SHAKUR AND BIG CITY. I can accept not naming them in the scene. I wrote it though, with them in mind. Many do not believe TUPAK SHAKUR is dead. Similar to the ELVIS thing.

COSMO

(SINGS following in RAP style with backups and instrumentation)

Easy for you to say ... chicken wings.

Button up your gab hole, soz I can tell ya cupala things.

HE should make all of you mor-tal for a spell.

Do a stretch in our skin, you'd think ya was in hell.

You try so hard to make your life worth livin'.

But, there's always people who ain't too forgivin'.

How'd he screwed up? I don't know.

With the talent HE dished to him, guy had ta be a schmo.

Next time give us homo-saps a little do-re-me-fa-so la-ti-tude.

Would do ya some good maybe change that angelic at-ti-tude.

SERAPH

WELL .. I never!

COSMO

(In New Orleans-speak)

Yeah, you right! You nevva alright!

NOOOOO! .. po' thing, you had such a tryin' job!

Protecting, Inspiring, Guiding. that'll wear ya down ... po' thing.

SERAPH

YOU MIND YOUR TONGUE!

CHERUB-A-TUB

(To SERAPH, as HE covers behind COSMO)

You had best mind yours ... SERAPH. I'll report you.

SERAPH

Pipe down, you Gray winged buffoon.

I can make it hard for you, back at the base.

Want some wing duty? remember CG? not KP! CG ... Cleaning and Grooming.

Cloudloads of our boys are coming up for a little R & R to get away

from that war in Yugoslavia. combat fatigue, and pretty messed up.

Just say the word...

COSMO

Sound like two old maids. Shad-dup , both of you...

(Pause)

As I was sayin'. I got up to the plate, shaking my behind off.

You shook off the catcher's sign. I figured you wanted to start

with your roundhouse curve. WRONG! A Fastball?!

I was shocked, it wasn't that fast, but, it came in close.

I got a piece of it. Barely, for a FOUL TIP.

You shook off the catcher's sign, again. I'm thinking another fastball's

comin' my way ... ya playin' with me. WRONG AGAIN! Your famous curve.

I swung way ahead of it. Lined a pretty good one ...

into the damn 3rd Base dugout. They did some scramblin' in there, HEE HEE!

(Pause)

The mind game's turned up 40 notches now. Count's 0-2. Time for a waist pitch.

Theory is, maybe a batter will nibble at a bad one

... get him out easy that way.

But, I know you. You don't waist.

I'll say this ... you threw every pitch the best you could. You never waisted one.

Never threw lazy. With that count, lotsa guys would throw

up a lazy wild one. Know what I mean? ... please ... don't answer that.

That's another thing I remembered about you, You talked too much ...

musta been vaccinated with a record needle.

(Pause)

Anyway, I'm figuring that you're figuring that I'm expecting a fastball, up and

away. So, I'm figuring you'll throw your curve again, since you must be figuring I

must be figuring that you're coming in straight.....

ALL

HUH?!!!!!!!!!!!!

COSMO (Continued)

WRONG! WRONG! WRONG! What they say... *two wrongs don't make a right*, Right?
Welp, and three WRONGS in LIFE get you LIFE without parole.
Hey, no problemo with that. You wanta do the crime, you gotta do tha time.
(Pause)

11-8-52

COSMO (Continued)

But nothing coulda bin worst for me that day; in front of my parents and relatives!
Three straight WRONGS in HIS game, get you out.
And, I GOT OUT! CHECKMATE!
You came in with a fastball! Up and IN.
It was really fast, a Flame-thrower! From YOU?!
It was on me in a split-second. Tight ... under my jaw ... chin music.
I was frozen. My feet felt like they'd been nailed to the ground.

SERAPH

Mind your tongue, mister. You're being disrespectful ... hmmpf,
feet nailed. HE doesn't permit such talk.

COSMO

(Gives SERAPH the finger)

I chopped at it like I had a hatchet in my hand.
Chopped like a sissy. Everyone laughed. I can still hear 'em.
Oh, I swung at it ...yeah. Chop, swing, doesn't matter what ya call it.
The results always come out the same, every time I think about it.
STRIKE THREE, yelled the ump.
Pretty embarrassing. The ball was already in the catcher's mitt by the time I swung.
You fooled me. Everyone had a good laugh ... on me.

CHERUB-A-TUB

(Tearfully, placing a wing around COSMO)

Me too, yes sir, I was fooled to!
I love you man!

COSMO

Naturally, I got cut. And, got swatted all the way home.
My old man ... he kept harping on it. O ver and over. From then on,
I was nuttin' but a failure ... the rest of my life.

ESQUERRE breaks down;
sobbing uncontrollably.

SERAPH

(To COSMO)

See, you've made him feel guilty. For your failings.

ESQUERRE

NO! .. that pitch! I remember it. It was the first time I used it.
Not just a fast ball .. a cut one!
They filed my finger nails like little saw teeth. I dug into the ball..
cut it all over the place on one side.
They wanted to see how it reacted; and if umps wouldn't suspect.
It came straight over the plate, then made a sharp right, right-atcha.
I didn't ever use it again. Hit too many people.

(Pause)

I...I'm sorry COSMO.

Hey, know what? I went downhill after that year, also.
Why did HE create BAUXITE? They started to make bats that
year with the stuff. Aluminum bats! Not satisfied with aluminum foil, BOY!

(He reacts as if in pain, despair)

ESQUERRE (Continued)

I got knocked all over the park. Pitchers didn't have a prayer.
Scores went up like we were playing football, 21-18, 35-24.
Broke our spirit. 15 and washed up!
Please forgive me.

(Pause)

I need your help; however, I don't deserve it.
I don't know what to do.

COSMO

(He's rung out. Quietly)

I said, NOTHING. She's too good.

(Pause)

I doubt if you have any, but throw something she's never seen before.
Got a fork ball, spoon ball, screw ball? Heck, throw right-handed.
Anything she's never seen; anything she won't know is comin' at her.
Use the old noggin. [prophetic words]

(Pause. HE extends his hand to ESQUERRE)

You're not so bad, I guess. Hadda get it off my chest ... feel better.

GOD

(While approaching them. Rubbing sweat off his brow)

GOOD...LORD, uh ME! What a bunch namby-pamby cry babies. Reminds me of
That BOY KING ... TUTTANKAHMAN ... something like that. What a cry baby sissy.
Things didn't go his way, he'd whine and whine, till they'd give it
to him, just to shut 'im up.

(To ESQUERRE and COSMO, and their G/As)

My, quite a tete-a-tete. Kinda like going to confession, huh?

(To the GUARDIAN ANGELS)

We'll have a little talk later, boys. Three o'clock, MY office.

(To entire TEAM)

Don't make me say this again.

COSMO

HE's sleeping!

ESQUERRE

What?! GOD doesn't sleep!

COSMO

Oh yes, HE is. Snores like my old man. Said HE didn't have to watch anyway.
HE'LL wake up to the sound of the homer.

(Pause)

I know you got trick pitches; ones that cross the legit line.
Yo, Vinny, could use some of that pomade in your hair.

(Pause)

This is your opportunity ... OURS ... Iceman! Cometh on...

COSMO races back behind the plate.
GOD snoring louder.

IF EVER A MUSICAL SOLILOQUY IS GOING TO BE
DEEMED APPROPRIATE, IT WOULD BE NOW.

ESQUERRE

I know what it must be ... always worked, if memory serves me.
Now that I said that, I remember it didn't ... always.
Risky business, these trick pitches.
Guess, it was a venial sin, every time.

(Pause)

Will HE wake up? ... Should I do it? ... Do I want to...
stay or go home? ... Is this home ... now?

(Long Pause)

NO! ... not now!

Throw it ... NOW! ... here it come's Myyyyyyy.....

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 8

ACT II

Scene 9

AT RISE:

A NEON DISPLAY surrounded by light bulbs comes on. On it are the same four words of the line ESQUERRE shrieks AT RISE:

ESQUERRE

"DEAD MAN DUCKING DROP"

The PITCH commences. Spotlited are: ESQUERRE pumping vigorously, with great resolve.

His TEAMMATES at the ready.

A HUSH falls over the CROWD.

GOD's snoring can be heard.

LUCILLE has her 'game face' on.

COSMO makes a closed-fist gesture toward ESQUERRE; and goes into his squat.

ANNOUNCER, SCOREKEEPERS, PURGATORY SECURITY, VENDORS, ALL freeze.

JOSE stands with hand over heart!

DOUBTING THOMAS sits down on the dugout roof; takes off the FISH HEAD.

HORTON and FRIENDS take notice.

The three GREETING ANGELS unwittingly make that renown, profound, hands-gesture: SPEAK-SEE-HEAR NO EVIL.

People hang over the OUTFIELD fences. People also trying to hang over PURGATORY fence; ALL pulled down.

ELVIS gets preferential treatment by

being allowed to exit PURGATORY's
SECURITY-GUARDS-ONLY DOOR.
He starts to run for it; however,
he's too heavy. A LONG HOOK grabs him around
the neck. He is yanked back inside Purgatory.
11-9-57

ANNOUNCER

(Sees that GOD is dozing again. Shakes his head & gibes in
disapproval. He's wearing a headset & microphone. Apparently this
performance is being televised to ?)
Pitcher winds up ... he winds up again, does it again, and again, and again...
Jumpin' judas, he's pumped 40 times.

ESQUERRE

Snap you wrist, like you've never snapped it before. It's gotta work...
Right?...everything ... everybody's.....gonna be alright!

HE prays an ACT OF CONTRITION; as he gets to the
words:

*I firmly resolve with the help of your grace to sin no
more...Can it be after this one Lord?*

the ball leaves his hand. It sails high above the
BATTER's head. Very high; at least 10 feet overhead.
LUCILLE RELAXES, stands straight,
places the bat on her shoulder.
COSMO stands up, raising his glove in vain.
GOD is still in his sleep-squat.

ANNOUNCER

Appears to have slipped out of his hand...headin' for the clouds!
Hee Hee h.....HUH?!

11-9-58

ANNOUNCER and EVERYONE are dumbfounded.
A collective "WHOAAAAA" resounds
throughout the stadium:

The BALL drops from its lofty elevation,
suddenly and sharply; as though it had fallen
off a table; even makes a singular sound.

LUCILLE stiffens; as though she were
flash-frozen; her mouth wide open.
HER eyes are looking up at the ball.

It is headed straight for her head.
DUCKING instinctively; she places her left
hand on her head. Bat still in right hand.

The CROWD groans, "OOOOOOOOO...OHHHHHHHHH!"

GOD awakens to see the ball heading for her head.

In panic, her ducking causes her to fall toward
The PITCHER'S mound; BUT, her BAT remains high,
and straight above her head.

THE BALL STRIKES THE BAT!

(BLACKOUT)

END OF Scene 9

ACT II

Scene 10

AT RISE:

A tumultuous, earsplitting outcry erupts from the fans. They are both horrified and excited by what they see: Their LUCILLE is in a heap on the ground. GOD is casting off his mask. HE's angry. ESQUERRE, and, unbeknown to him, his entire INFIELD (inc. the OUTFIELDERS) are charging toward the ball; which was struck, by no accident, by her bat.

ESQUERRE

It worked!...OH, NO!

The ball is moving very fast and downward; not directly to him nor any of the INFIELDERS.

It's a line drive...fast and down, and away...like a PETE SAMPRAS serve. I'm gonna be aced by my ace in the hole. Gotta get to it...

GOD helps LUCILLE get up.
SHE heads to 1st Base.

ESQUERRE

It's gonna bounce...gotta scoop it up on the first bounce. I'll have plenty of time to make the play. The grass is so perfect, it looks artificial. Naaa...can't be.

The ball bounces and goes higher than anticipated; at least 15' high. UP/DOWN-SOUND MADE. ESQUERRE anxiously awaits its return; taking quick peaks at the runner's progress. HE'S GOT COMPANY: As he strains to catch the ball, bam, he's blindsided by COSMO, the 3rd baseman, Shortstop and 2nd baseman. They fall to the ground in a heap; as they all grasp for the ball. They yell at one another to *get out the way, where is it?, ouch, you stupid s.o.b., etc.* ESQUERRE comes up with the ball. He throws it

11-10-61

GOD

(BOOMING)

OUT!

(ESQUERRE IS ELATED; JUMPING FOR JOY)

GOD (Continued)

Not her ... YOU!!!

You're not ready to be a member of MY legion. Not what you just did.
People up here ... they still can be hurt.

ESQUERRE

(Defensively)

I..I..I swear on a stack of bib.....

GOD

(Veins popping. Interrupts ESQUERRE)

No swearin'. I know your parents taught you better.

A DAPPER, HANDSOME MAN and a PRETTY, PETITE LADY
wave at ESQUERRE. He droops his head
in embarrassment.

ESQUERRE

Honest to YOU ... I wasn't tryin' to hit her. It's a pitch I've used before.

No, uhh ... not often sir, only when I was desperate.

Only when I couldn't get the batter out with any other pitches in my repertoire.

(Pause)

Please believe me! I wasn't trying to hurt her.

I knew she would react ... duck ... the way she did, if my Dead-Man-Ducking drop was
executed perfectly.

(Boastfully)

It was..she did..they all did ... uhh.

I do admit, if they didn't duck, they'd get beaned.

But, they all ducked ... mostly.

No big deal, they were safe! I had it under control! I knew what would happen!

GOD

Now, pray tell, what was it precisely that you KNEW would happen.

(To HIMSELF)

I should know it already ... but, noooo, had to take that dern nap.

Hey, it's good to be GOD, I admit it ... but talk about sleep deprivation!

(To ESQUERRE)

En-light-ten ME.

ESQUERRE

YOU're not going to believe this...I was...uhh, excuse me!.. shouldn't you know this already?

GOD

(Embarrassed. Looking away. Pops a stick of gum in HIS mouth)
Had sand in my left eye...lost my contact lense for the right one.
I..bent over lookin' for it...somethin' popped in my lower back...
still hurts...cut my finger on the ball-strike counter..drew blood.
HEY, Announcer guy, page MS. FLORENCE NIGHTENGALE would ya.
You folks in the stands, how about standing up and prayin' over ME..
FOR A HEALIN'. Aww, y'all wonderful... ME BLESS YOU!

(Pause. Composes HIMSELF)

Well, go ahead, boy. I ain't got all day.

ESQUERRE

I was not throwing at her. I was throwing at ... thee uhh ... bat.

(GOD'S laugh is boisterous, sepulchral. IT 'awakes the echoes'.
HE causes an earthquake in the BAY AREA, again.
The NEWS comes instantly to Heaven via a crawler,
e.g. used on TV for weather warnings.
It even has that special sound to alert you.
It's viewed on a humongous screen, which is elevated
to a very exalted level; so all can catch such
news-breaking special reports e.g. this one.
Multiply the size of the screen in TIMES SQUARE by 40.
Getting' carried away, aren't I?

GOD

(Sees the horrible results of the earthquake; and,)
several people shaking their heads in disappointment)

All right ...all right ... it was my fault! It wasn't Saint Andrew's this time.
Notice how he manipulated them to use the SPANISH..SAN ANDREAS FAULT.
Who's he?..people say.

ESQUERRE

(When things get too tough enter manCHILD: grabs ANNOUNCER's
mike & sings with backups)

I SAY lordy, lordy, lordy, good GODy...MY DROP SURE LOOKED GOOD TO ME.
YOU HAD A BIG LAUGH..WHEN I TOL' YA, I KNEW IT ALL OF THE WHILE
THAT THERE WAS NO WAY IN HEAVEN THAT I WAS GONNA HIT THAT CHIL'
I WASN'T AIMIN' AT HER..NO NO WAYYYY I WOULD
NO SIREE...I THREWED THAT DMDD...AT THE WOOD

(Back-ups humming softly)

PLEASE FORGIVE ME, I know it was wrong, but when they duck, they're

only thinking of one thing ... *YIPES, I DON'T WANT TO GET HURT!..*
and, fortuitously for me, they leave their bat straight up
over their head. That's my target! And, I hit it!

11-10-63

ESQUERRE (Continued)

Ergo, the batter isn't hurt. The ball advances softly, just 10-15 feet,
blah-blah-blah, yawnsville ... Next batter, puh-leez!
You see, everything is prearranged. I yell, TO THE BAT CAVE!
The 2nd Baseman responds with, HOLY ADIRONDACK.
The pitch is on ... bingo! Crowd loves it!

GOD

(So angry, HE's trembling)

OUT!

ESQUERRE

(Backing up, hands in front, tries to joke his way out of situation)

What's the matter? YOU didn't say it loud enough the first time? hee-hee ...

Suddenly, EVERYONE in the stands is 'awakened'.
They stand and sing (with a Jewish inflection).

FANS IN THE STANDS

GET OUT..GET OUT..GET OUT..GET OUT..GET OUT..YOU ROCKED THE BOAT, ALREADY!

ESQUERRE

Weirdos! Kinda like the Romans and Gladiators.
People can be ruthless ... show no mercy. Looks like even up here.
HMMMM ... question? If one can be ruthless ... might one be ruth?

(A little old lady gets up to leave. The fans cheer)

ESQUERRE (Continued)

Who are you?

LITTLE OLD LADY

My name is Ruth.

ESQUERRE

You're in the Bible! You must have had ruth to be named Ruth!

LITTLE OLD LADY

Actually, you ass, I HAD little Georgie..the BABE!
I'm MRS. RUTH, jerkolla! You caused him to serve more time in the Big P.
SHE hurdles onto the field; in hot pursuit of him.

ESQUERRE

Guess they don't appreciate real talent like mine..like I didn't either, guess?

GOD
GO..OUT..GO BACK..GET OUT...OOOOOOOOUUUUUUUTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTT...
(BLACKOUT)

END OF ACT II

III-1-64

ACT III

Scene 1

SETTING: A year has passed . We are in a HOSPITAL.
The same hospital WALTER ESQUERRE
died in: GREAT LIGHT OF HOPE MEMORIAL.
The expensive, life-sustaining, THINGAMABOBS
are more dazzling than ESQUERRE'S THINGAMAJIGS.
It also, is a semi-private room; with
one window for LIGHT.

AT RISE: GOD'S loud cry (casting ESQUERRE out of HEAVEN)
continues at the rise of this Scene. It reverberates,
'awakes the echoes'... again?; then,
lightens-up; fades out. SONGS: either theme
song from TV's COPS, or WATCHA GONNA DO: a rap
song by Group named: Three 6 MAFIA sung by
TEAR da CLUB UP THUGS.[I have a 15yr. old].
A WOMAN is in bed. She's awake; propped up,
and plugged in. It's DANA-DANE A FAMOUS FEMALE
ROCK SINGER who 'died' (fell O.S. at a concert)
A MAN is at the window; we see him from behind.
It's ESQUERRE (his back to the audience for
a brief period).
He is firmly grasping, leaning on the window sill.
He peers out. This is a tie-in, and a meaningful
duplication to ACT I-3-8, in which ESQUERRE closes ACT
I at a window (while grasping the sill as he peers out).
Operatic song plays on OTHER PATIENT'S radio.

DANA-DANE

Thanks for coming...I needed to talk about it...no one believes me. Do you?

ESQUERRE

(He has a religious stole around his shoulders)

DO YOU?

DANA-DANE

(Bewildered)

Yes ... but...I...Oh, I don't comprehend it, don't embrace, grasp...GET IT!
You must know all about these things, seeing as you're a...what are you?
AAGHH! You must hear kooks like me, all the time.

Could this have really happened?
Or was it but a dream, when I was in that coma?

III-1-65

ESQUERRE

I'm a DEACON of the Catholic Church. A rookie one at that.
I'm the assistant to the Spiritual Guidance Counselor at the Hospital.
He's a dear friend. We played baseball on the same team, as youths.
Could never stop playing baseball; however, we went our separate ways
...that's for certain!

By chance, we bumped into each other last year. Even played on the same team!
WHAT A CONTEST! Played as though our lives depended on it.....oh, er...
He's FATHER HALFRED. Hee hee, still talks like HAL in 2001 Space Odyssey;
He asked if I would see you. *STEVE I BELIEVE YOU MAY BE OF SOME HELP STEVE I KNOW
YOU WILL WILL YOU HELP HELP HER STEVE I AM CERTAIN SHE NEEDS YOU TO HELP HER*
(Pause)

But, first and foremost, Holy Communion; we'll speak more, after, O.K.?

ESQUERRE removes the wafer from his
Pic (a small round metallic container. It
resembles a closed pocket watch).
He administers the Sacramental Rite to her.

(Pause, smiling)

OH, by the way...you are my first kook.

THEY laugh as DANA-DANE wipes the tears away.

ESQUERRE

Don't be afraid. Something very special happened to you. it was real.

DANA-DANE

How do you know that?

ESQUERRE

(Turns toward the WINDOW as he speaks)
No one believed me ... either! LOOK!

The light outside suddenly becomes brilliant.
ESQUERRE's reaction says it all:
he bathes in its radiance; arms outstretched.
As the glow surrounds him, he turns to DANA;
and touches her hand.
The light enters her
as though she were struck by a bolt of lightning.
They are engulfed in the dazzling, swirling,
sparkling, DIVINE light.
(God, I hope this special effect can be achieved).

ESQUERRE

It's a sign for you ... a Baptism, by LIGHT, for your new beginning.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 1

III-2-66

ACT III

Scene 2

AT RISE:

The LIGHT SHOW ends as the brilliant, Heavenly Light rushes out the window. DANA-DANE is stunned. ESQUERRE holds her in a compassionate embrace. She trembles, weeps, hails of the unbelievable experience she experience.; and, although she doesn't deserve it, she will make the best of her second chance. She regains her composure.

She looks at ESQUERRE and laughs.

DANA-DANE

(Playful punch on ESQUERRE'S shoulder)

You stinker! You knew this was going to happen! ... didn't warn me.

(Pause)

Thank God you didn't ... I da probably not believed you.

Can't believe I didn't pass out, and miss it all.

(Pause)

And, I would never have known how it feels ...

to have such an enlightening experience. Hee hee, a little joke ... from ME!

ESQUERRE

(Darn manCHILD still lurks about. Does pitiful rap)

Give it up ... let's here an AMEN.

your cup was filleth ... you glad you didn't say WHEN?

Do some more of that praise the lord cheye-min'

hallelujah, you saw the Heavenly dia-min'.

(Pause)

Now that was pretty poor. I was taught how to RAP by a buddy. He'd just crack up, and say,

for...get...it,

you don't have the spir...it.

They laugh heartily.

DANA-DANE

(Serious, quizzically)

You didn't just come today, at this particular time, didja?; like I was on your schedule, huh?; and, what happened wasn't unforeseen, was it?
You knew it would take place. You said, no one believed you!
Finally...somebody knows!

III-2-67

ESQUERRE

My, quite the sleuth. Ya got da goods on me, sista.
I'll sing like a stool pigeon.

(Pause)

It happened last year. To me and eight others.
Precisely 40 hours following our ... shall I say ... exit from HIS KINGDOM-COME
we all got zapped, like you did.

(Pause)

Father Halfred knows of one other person who got it 40 hours after, too.
One day a wise man will figure the significance of that number.
I tried ... don't know.

(ESQUERRE walks to the window. Natural lighting only, now
and, street sounds. He sings:)

OH YEAH, I SAW THE LIGHT!

But don't bother shouting it out to everyone you meet.
Even my family didn't believe it ... well, they didn't think I was
the sharpest knife in the drawer, anyway.

People are too skeptical ... too much TV, Robert Stack, Tales from Beyond,
The Learning Channel, Discovery. Scientists say it's just the brain dying.
And all the sparkly things in there are putting on a LAST SHOW!
Kinda like UFO's, you know. Lotsa people see them; however, only
A few kooks talk about it.

My dear ... few will take you seriously. Pass on OPRAH ... please!

(DANA-DANE gets out of bed. She's plugged in; but has enough
slack to walk like FRANKENSTEIN (stiff knees, arms
outstretched) toward an unsuspecting ESQUERRE.
HE turns around, slowly, with that feeling you have, when
you sense someone is near you.)

ESQUERRE (Continued)

And, besides ... JUMPIN' JIMINEE! ... trying to give me a heart attack?!
I died once already ... don't want to kick the bucket tha second time ... this soon!
I said few will take you seriously ... appears you're included in those few.

DANA-DANE

(Singing)

I FEEL GOOD ... I FEEL GOOD..SO GOOD..SO GOOD..
I feel born-again!

ESQUERRE

You look made-again, bride of Frankie.
That's good though ... keep that child in you ... they LOVE LIFE!

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 2

III-3-68

ACT III

Scene 3

AT RISE: Passage of time is nil.
ESQUERRE tiddies up DANA-DANE's bedding.
Makes her get back in.

ESQUERRE

Now, comfy-cozy? Don't pull that again ...
you coulda pulled the plug on yourself!!
Now ... what was I saying before?

DANA-DANE

(Yawns)

You were rambling about UFOs and Robert Stack, and ... God knows what else,
Hee hee, another joke by me. That's two!

ESQUERRE

Now I know how HE felt when they drifted off as HE preached.

(Direct to DANA)

I said besides, it doesn't matter if they believe us or not.
What matters is ... we were given a second chance. Don't ask me why.
Maybe, they just don't have a place up there for people like us.
You know ... the ones whose greatest sin isn't against others; but,
against themselves. Hmmmm, anyone in this room fits that bill?
We didn't use our talents ... our GOD-GIVEN TALENTS!

(Pause)

Oh, I'm very happy I got the 2nd chance;
however, I'm not especially proud of how I got it.

DANA-DANE

(Looks at ESQUERRE quizzically)

Please ... tell me!

ESQUERRE

First, tell me why are you here?

DANA-DANE

Look at the chart. I fell off a stage. Brain caputed ... aaahhh!
I was loaded ... in concert and wired up. Cool? NOT!!!!
I'm a rock singer, success, wrong crowd, drugs, sang loaded, fell,
and DIED ... for a while.

ESQUERRE

And for your second chance, what did you have to do?

DANA-DANE

HE'S good! ... ya don't say GOOD GOD for nothing!

(Pause)

Naturally, HE knew I had operatic training. I got a rash from HIM
about that. HE chastised me for quitting. I said it was not for me ...
too prissy, sissyfyed . HE said his little cherub and seraph angels
aren't sissies ... little ETHAN, RYAN, AND EVAN ...
HE was trembling, his veins were popping, HE was so mad.

(Pause)

Truth be told, I was selfish. I didn't want to
give up my party time; and, hafta work ... really hard you know ... at it.
I let my parents, and a lot of other people, down.
It was said, I was on the path to greatness.
and, I quit ...geez!

ESQUERRE

UHH...Ramblin' Rose?...land the plane, please! What did you have to do?

DANA-DANE

This is what I meant when I said, this GUY..er.. GOD is good!

HE said my task would be to sing Figaro!

I was elated. This was a cinch!

The great operatic star DAME KIRI TE KANAWA had her first critical success
singing the female role of the Countess Almaviva in
MOZARTS'S 1786 opera...THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO. I knew her entire role!
backwards, sideways...

(Pause)

HE GOT ME! HE threw me a curve. Likes Baseball, doesn't HE?

The snicker on HIS face ... so unGOD-like!

HE said he wants me to sing FIGARO from the great composer
GIOACCHINO ANTONIO ROSSINI'S 1816 THE BARBER OF SEVILLE.

This is a male baritone song. The wonderful American baritone
Sherrill Milnes made his European debut singing it.

(Pause)

He gave me five minutes to prepare.
I had to sing it a capella, my voice trembled.....
I NAILED IT!...YES!!!!!!!

III-3-70

DANA-DANE (Continued)

It kinda ruffled HIM. Howbeit ... Hmmmm, never used that word before! Where did that come from? Albeit ... huh? You know what HE said, that stinker. Strike that!

OH, DID I MENTION THIS IS A TWO PART TASK?

FOR YOUR SECOND, YOU MUST TELL THE PRECISE AMOUNT OF TIMES

THE NAME FIGARO IS USED IN FIGARO...ta hee ta hee hee..

YOU HAVE THIRTY SECONDS.....BEGIN.

HE used the little ditty from JEOPARDY for the countdown. YUP,
the one playing during the countdown for the FINAL JEOPARDY ANSWER..QUESTION,
whatever.

ESQUERRE

You did it?

DANA-DANE

I'm here, aren't I, dufus?

I just guessed ...said 40. HE paused for the longest, sang a few bars of it
HIMSELF, while counting on HIS FINGERS! WHAT A VOICE!

Then, twirls HIS finger. Next thing I'm aware of is a doctor screaming,
She's alive!

ESQUERRE

(Does that fake crazy-madnessy schtik when he says *madness*)

That's a good one. HE does make it difficult. When you think about it,

there's a rationale to that method of HIS M A D N E S S

yipes..oh..er.. faked I'm sure.

We might both go see Father Halfred after.

A good confession gets all the junk out. JUNK, ha ha ... I have plenty of that!

DANA-DANE

JUNK! ... what do you mean? Never mind, I don't want to know.

Now you're all lit up ... turn off the beacon, deacon ... start speakin'!

Hee hee hee ... that's three!

ESQUERRE

Ready for mine ... aren't you?

DANA-DANE

Yes?

ESQUERRE approaches her. As he begins his tale,
the STAGE darkens. As it turns pitch-black, DANA
whoops a CAJUN halloo.

DANA-DANE

AAAAAEEEE! WOWWWW ... WEEEE! BABE RUTH?! GOD'S THE UMPIRE?!....
OF COURSE! HE IS!

Start from the beginning ... go slow. I don't want to miss a thing!
(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 3

III-4-71

ACT III

Scene 4

AT RISE:

DANA-DANE is crying with laughter; after hearing ESQUERRE's tale.

Even her monitors appear to be amused:
Read-outs bubble; ha sounds made,
audio vital signs giggle; and purposefully
utter outrageously false readings,
e.g. *temp.. klu-hich-iggle..erature 40 degrees..
correction ..oh..heee 99.9.*

Her lap top says, *you don't have mail...oooooeeee*

DANA-DANE

Instant foreplay?!a booger out of SADDAM HUSEIN'S nose?! HE fell asleep?!
Oh, GOD, I wish I would have died with you!

THEY are interrupted by a knock at the door.

O.S.

Ready?

ESQUERRE

OK

O.S.

RED SOX. Don't wanta be late for the game, HUH?

ESQUERRE

NO .. no way. Not for the RED SOX ... not for any!

DANA-DANE

I like baseball ...is it on TV?

ESQUERRE

Yes it is. Hey, if you see me, I'll give you a high-sign and lip-sync fi ga ro.
Those cameras are all over the place.
See ya ... remember, opera lives ...do it!

COSMO (The V.O. was him)

Told her everything?

ESQUERRE

Wellllllllll ... may have left out a couple of things ... oh-ha-ha-ho-har!

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 4

III-5-72

ACT III

Scene 5

AT RISE:

Same day. It's now early evening.

We are at a baseball game.

It's OPENING NIGHT for the MAJOR LEAGUE'S
new expansion team:

THE NEW ORLEANS' SHEPHERDS.

Their LOGO is a long-haired, long-robed
SHEPHERD (CHRIST-LIKE) not with a staff;
but, carrying a baseball bat.

Their MOTTO, draped around stadium;
displayed on scoreboard, is:

**COME ... JOIN THE FLOCK NOW!
WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO THE TOP!**

The entire stadium is decorated with
beautiful Red, White and Blue BUNTING.

The stands are full: fans are talking, eating, drinking,
smoking, relaxing.

TV crew busy setting up cameras, lines, etc.

Players are milling about in the dugouts.

Managers from opposing teams meet at home plate with
the umpire: swapping lineups, going over rules,
addressing unique problem areas of the field/stadium,
e.g. not much room between left field foul line and
seating; water soaked right field foul area.

They, also, are just plain old b.s.'ng, laughing,
gossiping. These people have known each other
for years. Managers, coaches, move around a lot.

Vendors hawking their wares: *Peanuts, Hot Dogs,*
Beer, Rosaries, holy water ... rosaries-holy water???
At this ball park?!

When the words ROSARIES & HOLY WATER are uttered,
an elevated section of the stage is lit up:
We see

ST. PETER in HEAVEN

(He looks harried, stressed out)

All right, already, I've got only two hands! Who said that? ... rosaries, holy water!
Buncha, smart alocs. You'll get yours!
This is too taxing. I need a vacation, TOO!

Managers shake hands and head back to their
respective dugouts.

Home Plate ump puts his mask on (NOT GOD).

HOME PLATE UMPIRE

BATTER UP!

The GAME begins:
PLAYERS ready themselves at their positions.

CAMERA in Center Field shows
PITCHER taking his final warm-up toss.
BATTER approaching BATTER'S BOX.

PITCHER turns to dab himself with the
RESIN BAG.

IT'S ESQUERRE!

The TV ANNOUNCERS are marveling about
this new MAJOR LEAGUE expansion team; and,
its' Billionaire OWNER; who nobody knows
anything about.
ESQUERRE gives his sign, as promised,
to DANA-DANE, back in the hospital.
SHE is seen, going ga-ga! (Light up an elevated
section of stage for this scene, also)

HE turns to the 1st base dugout; and blows
a kiss to a beautiful lady seated next
to the spry old owner.
It's LUCILLE, SHE returned also; and,

SHE's his wife!

Barbara, Lorna & Linda Esquerré are seated beside Lucille. They are flirting with Norman and Gene The announcers, and Rene, the Manager.

III-5-74

NORMAN

(The COLOR COMMENTATOR)

I had a long chat with ESQUERRE, yesterday.
Guy is definitely marching to his own beat ...
What else would you expect from a lefty.
Great story 'tho ... early success as a youngster ... All Star, All City, All State, Championships, National player of the year
His team won the Babe Ruth WORLD SERIES, but at a price.
his arm was shot ...
kid pitched 19 innings within 48 hours
They didn't have very good rules then..
anyway, it looked like a promising career was in his future..
but, his arm was dead after that year.

(Pause)

He got in a bad slump in his life.
Felt like a failure ... wasn't using his talents.
Then that New Year's Eve tragedy ... almost died!

GENE

(The PLAY-BY-PLAY ANNOUNCER)

That's a common thread in this team ... they all had unbelievable life-threatening traumas, hmmm!

NORMAN

Yeah, strange ... but I tell ya ... whatever is meant to be is meant to be.
They didn't die, thank GOD.

(Pause)

Back to Esquerré, get this, he said GOD actually intervened in the selection of his Bride to be.
Says a board of CEO-type angels gather ... howz he know that ... to select who will be married to whom. And GOD took over in his case; saying the boy wouldn't make it unless he was married to LUCILLE.
Esquerre, not knowing when to stop, keeps it up by saying ... har har ...ya never know when he's kidding or serious ...
anyway he tells me GOD actually took one of his ribs at his birth, and saved it whoeeeeee ... for LUCILLE'S SPARE RIB ... har ha ha har ...
cough cough ka ka ...
Oh, my ribs hurt!
By the way ... how many ribs we got Gene?
Hey! ... save me some!

ESQUERRE tips his hat to the owner.
They give each other the thumbs-up sign.
IT'S GOD!

ESQUERRE throws his first MAJOR LEAGUE pitch:
his meal-ticket curve. The batter swings way
ahead and misses. The ball is caught by the
CATCHER ... COSMO!

HOME PLATE UMP

STAAAH..RIKE!

GENE

His first MAJOR LEAGUE pitch! He throws a curve?!
That's captain courageous pitchin'.

(On instant replay)

Look at it! It broke over the plate, then down and away; right where the catcher's target
is. That's against the best leadoff man in both leagues.

Ricky was just fanning the air.

Sacre bleu!

COSMO throws the ball back to ESQUERRE;
he pumps his closed-fist hand. He's
excited.

ESQUERRE'S TEAMMATES talk-up, encourage, urge, taunt; in that unique baseball-speak way.

In and out of sync:

Come Walter boy, come babe, hey boy, show 'em whatcha got, you got it babe, atta boy, you can do it, get 'em, hit 'em with your best, don't let up, Come Walter boy, come babe, come boy. Batta, batta, swing batta, swing batta, betta Swing batta, betta batta he gonna getcha..SWING!

The SPOTLIGHT hits a different player; as each utters one of the baseball-speak MANTRAS. IT'S THEM; ESQUERRE'S TEAMMATES IN HEAVEN! GOD sent them all back, as promised. And, they all got back together; as friends, and, as a TEAM.

There is plenty of action in the GAME:
Strike outs by ESQUERRE,
Home Runs, Runners scoring, crowd cheering,
organ music, batter's being announced,
great plays, beautiful slides, close calls;
being called in typical, turned-up-a-notch,
sports casting by the

PLAY-BY-PLAY and COLOR COMMENTATOR ANNOUNCERS

e.g.

*Strike three by Esquerre. That retires the side.
After 3 innings it's still scoreless. Don't go away folks.*

The Shepherds are down 3-0, due to some sloppy play ... 2 errors .. one a dropped pop fly by right fielder Rudy that resulted in a run scored for the visitors; and, the other a shot to the shortstop Junior that went right through his legs. two runs came in on that one. Probably a good case of the nerves, folks. Don't give up on them yet, I'm tellin' ya!

Seventh inning stretch. .. fans are cheering and stomping. It's electric ... you can feel it!

*It's going, going, gone, outta the park!
HALFRED ...that's FATHER HALFRED ... hits a bases loaded
Home Run! WOW! SHEPHERDS AHEAD 4-3. Holy Moly!
Father Halfred .. that's right folks ... a priest
on a MAJOR LEAGUE team. Go figure.
We understand he will play only HOME games ... he's got a PARISH to run!
I know I shouldn't say this, but ... well,
I guess I let my mouth get overrun ... now, I gotta say it! Hee ... hee..
Father Halfred's sermons don't go over too well, I'm told. Heehee.
He talks like HAL the COMPUTER in that great movie...2001 SPACE ODYSSEY hee hee.*

(He mimics Father Hal)

*...would you want to know what HE loves you to do I do do you HE loves it when you do
dodo what HE loves you doing and therefore my good people be good people by being
good to one another that is very very good when you do that HE wants you to do that you
must always try to do that to be good*

*ESQUERRE is tiring folks. He's been hit hard
twice in this inning ... two doubles Game now tied 4-4.
8th inning .. two outs .. .gotta hold 'em.*

*UH-OH! ... another base hit.
Runner on second sprints for home ...
here comes the throw from Vinny!
He slides ... crashes into Cosmo! What a hit he took!
Did he hold onto the ball? UMP waits to be sure ...
HE'S OUT!
Visitor's eighth inning over. SHEPHERDS 4 TASMANIANS 4.*

Throughout the game, the ANNOUNCERS were not only doing their pitch-by-pitch, play-by-play commentary; they were also speaking about the TEAM, and its OWNER. During the 8th inning break they sum it all up.

The 8th inning break:
PLAYERS in their positions, warming up,
taking turns throwing balls;
BATTER taking his warm-up swings.
PITCHER warming up also.

NORMAN

I know we've talked about it, bit by bit, throughout the game.
Let me just have a coupla minutes, please. Before the action starts up again.

(Pause)

This team ... I tell ya ... these guys are good. That pitcher and catcher ...
they work together like they got some kind of special bond between them.
Who knows? ... maybe they've been to hell and back.
Not just them! The entire team is that way.
... They get along with each other
... I've never seen anything like it. Sure they pull silly pranks on one another
buncha wannabe comedians ... but
...they play as a TEAM. You don't see that much anymore.
They're TEAMMATES, hey look like they've played together in some tough games ...
I don't want to get too mushy ... THEY'RE SOULMATES!

(Pause)

And, you're not going to believe this,
they don't want a salary for any of the Home games! Man oh Man!
To the man, they all say ... they love this game so much, they'd play it for nothing.
Tickets are slashed in half for all home games.
It was a stampede at the ticket booths all over town this week.
Look at 'em out there on those elevated grassy knolls surrounding the park ...
shoulder to shoulder out there.

GENE

(The Play-By-Play ANNOUNCER interrupts)

Levees, Norman ... we call them levees down here. This ain't Dallas, my-boy)

NORMAN

OK ... whatever.

They say they got their second chance, and they want to make the best of it.

(Pause)

And, that OWNER! Is HE piece of work, or what?!
ISAIA METHUSELA GAWD ... har har..
HE says just call HIM I. M. GAWD!!
He ain't shy folks. HE'S a Billionaire, they say.
Nobody really knows anything about him...
story goes, HE made his fortune in rural Louisiana ... wood!
Makes railroad cross tires, telephone poles.
Doesn't socialize ... a work-a-holic according to his lawyers,
Peter, Paul, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, et al.

He does rest on Sundays, in a way.
Put up a big BILLBOARD on the Interstate, between here and Baton Rouge.
It says, COME TO MY HOUSE SUNDAY, BEFORE THE GAME ... GOD ... spelled G. O. D.
They asked HIM if he was gonna have the misspelled name corrected.
HE told 'EM, so it be written, so it be done.
What a guy! Gets a little preachy, but, hey ... with his money he can talk
whenever HE wants to ... RIGHT?
HE says HE has no children ... the whole world is HIS FAMILY.
And, it should be ours, also ... ya gotta love this guy!
I do ... I LOVE YA MAN ... LOVE YA GAWD!

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 5

ACT III

Scene 6

AT RISE: The SCOREBOARD gives the essential Information: SHEPHERDS at bat. Bottom of the 8th, 2 outs, score tied 4-4. Number 7, RUDY, at bat.

GENE

Rudy draws a walk. Two outs 'tho; and, forgive me, the weak part of the lineup follows. Well ...who knows? ... shame if they don't get anything. Maybe in the Ninth ... or extra innings. I'm getting too negative. This team is not about negative. They are so ... hey, a PINCH RUNNER for RUDY. Now that's a good idea. Let's see ... Number 1. Ohh, yeah, Esquerre's brother, Chris. Folks, you want to hear about brotherly love?

(Pause)

Chris, as you may already know, had a promising career ahead of him In the YANKEE organization Just a matter of one more season of ... hee hee ... seasoning, at the Triple A level; and, they'd pull him up toooooo ... the BIG SHOW.

He plays it all: OUTFIELD, 1ST BASE, LEADOFF, POWER ... ALL wrapped in one. Well, when old I. M. received the divine rights to a new expansion team; young Esquerré ... get this ... bought his way out of a very lucrative contract with the Yankees. He got skinned, I'm tellin' ya. However, he said he'd do it again and again. He wanted to play with his brother; and, on this team! No greater love hath one for another ... gives me the chills up and down my spine! What a great story! ... this team; and each and every one of its people! Man O Man!

NORMAN

Strange ... young Esquerré wasn't suppose to play tonight ... bad ankle. Look at the tape job on it. WOW! Well, no offense intended RUDY; however, CHRIS at only 50% is still faster than our man RUDY, Ruuuu-Deee, Ruuuuu-Deee ... what a guy!

GENE

Young Chris's not taking much of a lead off First. Just two little Arthur Murray two-steps. Pitcher looks him over ... youngster staring back.

Pitcher steps off the mound.

Back in his stretch ... doesn't check the lad, throws for home.

He breaks for Second ... here comes the catcher's throw ... SAFE!!

THIS BOY CAN RUN! He calls for time out ... ankle is hurting, folks.

They got the trainer out looking at him. He's hobbling bad ... look at this!

He's shaking his head ... NO! Gives the manager the O.K. sign.

RENE STENGEL, the Manager ... the late, great, Casey Stengel's

Grandson, clasps both hands together; lettin' the kid know,

he's in full support of the kids' decision to stay in the game.

Folks, this boy ain't comin' out..

(Pause)

Pitcher back in his stretch, checks on Chris at 2nd ... goes for home.

Chris's going for 3rd ... head first, cloud of dust ... SAFE! CROWD GOING WILD.

He can barely stand on his leg ... he's in pain. He's gotta come out.

Crowd cheering for him ... ES KER RAY- ES KER RAY... ALL THE WAY... ALL THE WAY!

NORMAN

Everybody in the ballpark knows it... this kid is gonna try to steal Home.

He is so fast, I don't think we could pick him up to show ya on

Instant Replay .. a blur ... the speed of the god MERCURY!

(Suddenly, a clap of THUNDER is heard)

NORMAN (Continued)

What the Sam Hill is That?

GENE

I dunno.

Look at ol' I. M.! He's got a bead on you ... Norman.

Something you said? ... but, HE can't hear us!

You sure got him riled up. You say anything to him lately,

HE didn't care for?

NORMAN

No ... I don't understand! Just before that thunder, I said something

about a god! Hey, if that's what it's aboutHE's the one who pronounces

His name same as G.O.D.!

Must be a lip reader ... gotta be careful around lip readers.

They pick up on every word that comes outta ya ...

every little word.

(Pause)

Oh well, these old codgers can be a might eccentric.

Especially, the rich ones .. har har.

HE'S sitting down ... that pretty young lady ... Esquerré's wife, is pattin' HIS shoulders ... calmin' the 'ol boy down.

III-6-82

Suddenly, two more loud claps of thunder peal:
ANNOUNCERS and CROWD are puzzled; looking up,
and around for their origin.

GOD

Dang Esquerre's! HORTON (he's here!) go on up 'n take care of it ... and them!
Tell 'em they have 2 strikes ag'in 'em ... 3 and they're out ... off to
... you know where to tell them they'll be off to. You do to ... WHO but you to
tell them WHO told you to tell them: "*YOO-hooooo, WHO told me to tell you.
You have used your last booboo ... you do one more and you know WHO will make
You all, y'all, boohoo; and send you to off to you know who. So turn off the freakin' rain
machine .. .I command you to so help me you know WHO."*

Oh, har, har, {a wheez-tobacco-gurgly cough}, ha-ha howeeee ... gotcha, ya 'ol que...

(Lucille pokes GOD in the ribs. SHE is trying to hold back
her laughter, also)

HORTON

(Very saucy; then weeps into hankie; blows nose loudly)

Well, I never! ... such uncalled for ridicule.

I shall indeed your I.M.GREATNESS ...vhummpf!

I AM, as usual, the one who has to fix everything that breaks.

I AM just too important, excell at everything, for my own good ... BOOHOO!

DOUBTING THOMAS

(Passes by in his Fish costume. Doesn't break his stride.)

I DOUBT THAT.

TWAIN

(DOUBTING THOMAS' TWIN BROTHER: THOMAS means TWIN remember.

THEY are identical)

You're so negative, Thomas! You don't believe in anything.

You're getting to be no fun to be with.

Anyway, nyaaah-nyaaah, I'm mom and dad's favorite, you know?

DOUBTING THOMAS

I DOUBT THAT.

GENE

This younger brother of ESQUERRE can really pick 'em up and lay 'em down.

With that bad pin 'tho ... how's he doing it? ... how's he gonna DO IT?! He's gotta be on a higher threshold than you and I ... than anyone!

(Pause)

That's the third throw over to third. Chris is barely getting back. I can't believe the long leads he's taking; and able to make it back! GOLLY, THIS IS FUN STUFF FOLKS!

OH, BOY ... he's stretching this one almost half the way down toward HOME ... I think he's going too far!

Pitcher steps off rubber ... this guy's rattled.

(He points to the SCOREBOARD)

Look at the SCOREBOARD SCREEN! It's saying, "*Hey, Pitcher, he's going for it!*" Wheeeee ... Heeeee! *It's ALIVE!*.....

Pitcher's back into his stretch

Young Esquerre is way down the line ... he's got a cold stone stare on the pitcher They're staring at one another ... like WARRIORS, GLADIATORS, NINJAS...

NORMAN

Get a hold of yourself, Gene. REMEMBER, do the play-by-play; They'll do the playing.

GENE

Thanks, I needed that.

Here comes the throw to home ... and, HERE COMES ESQUERRE!

It's off the plate ... down toward the batter's shoes! Batter bails out ...

The catcher lunges for it ... pounces on the ball! Stops it between his legs.

Esquerre is not going to make it!!!

The catcher is on his knees ... he comes up with the ball to tag ESQUERRE.

HOLY COW... I ... LOOK AT THIS SHI...!

(GENE is leaning out the PRESSBOX WINDOW. He nearly falls out. NORMAN grabs him around the waist, to safety)

GENE (Continued)

CHRIS is leaping over the catcher! he's soaring.

The catcher reaches up to tag him.

Chris comes down hard on top the plate ... lets out a groan.

Now ... you can hear a pin drop.

C'mon ump ... make the call.

SAFE! HE'S SAFE! It's ballistic out here ... we're ahead!

Uh-oh, looks like young ESQUERRE'S hurt real bad ... he ain't moving

The team doctor comes out, with the trainer.

I.M. rushes out, too.

Players surround him...

They're being pushed back. Give the boy some breathin' room, fellows.

III-6-84

Suddenly, a FLASH goes off in the midst
of the group at Home Plate.

NORMAN

Now what the Sam Hill is that all about? Taking a photo-op?

... in the middle of a pretty darn serious situation?!

This boy's health is at stake!

Security outta throw that idiot out ... wha ...?

He's up! Chrisy boy is on his feet! A little wobbly...

two of his teammates helping him; but, he's ok! ... what happened?

It's a miracle!

(Norman loses his ear piece. TECHNICIAN checks on it.

Norman thinks he has no audio)

Jesus H. Christ ... holy shit! What the hell happened down there?

Why you looking at me like that Gene? OH ...! Ahem.

The fans are cheering like mad, folks.

They just witnessed a phenomenal feat.

They're showing their appreciation ... on their feet ... applauding ... wow!

(Norman applauds and whistles)

It just don't get better than this, folks. Look at this, wudja

OL' I.M. just grabbed the mike from Wild Willy the Field-level Announcer.

He's gonna say something. Listen.

GOD

That boy just broke one of the ten commandments ...

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL ... three times in a row ... WORKS FOR ME! HAR HAR. ..

I...er...GOD bless him.

(CROWD cheers even louder.)

NORMAN

This game ... BASEBALL ... it brings out the best in ya.

That was high drama we were privileged to witness, folks.

The best that LIFE has to offer. Giving it your best; not pulling back.

They say, Baseball imitates life. Reverse that ... and you'll get the best out of yours...

GENE

Uhh ... Norman! ... land the plane, podner ... hee hee, turn about is fair play!

5-4 SHEPHERDS. Tasmanian's comin' up. Last chance for the devils.

Only three little ... make that three big ... outs to go.

Play commences on the field: hits, running, great catches,
anxiety level turned up to max..no notches left to turn;
except for the ANNOUNCER's stomachs. Too many natchos.

GENE (Continued)

You can feel it in the air. {Burp} I can feel it in my stomach.
Ninth inning, two outs, 3-2 count on the batter, a man on third.
(He turns to Norman)

I don't know about you NORMAN; I can barely breathe.

III-6-85

NORMAN

Same here, Gene.

Know what? I believe that guy on 3rd is gonna try to steal home.

I just got that feeling.

ESQUERRE is very tired ... he's toast. Operating on 100% inspiration

... zero, nada, perspiration? Looks cold as a clam.

It's as though his arm is being lifted by some unseen means..

A presence ... an entity.

Guess I might as well say it: I believe his GUARDIAN ANGEL

is doing the chunkin' for him.

GENE

UH ... BROTHER NORMAN... I agree you can stick a fork in him;

he's done ... shoulda been taken out last inning.

However, the GUARDIAN ANGEL TALK?!.....NOT!

(Pause)

He's moving very slow; when he turns and throws home ... too slow.

Speed kills; and, that guy on 3rd has plenty of it.

The SPOTLIGHT hits the GUY on 3rd Base. He's
kicking the dirt backwards like a bull at a
bullfight.

GENE (Continued)

Lack of speed kills too ...

Esquerre is not running on all 8 cylinders.

And, for CERTAIN, is running out of gas.

This is his last pitch.

ACTIVITY, as always, is in the bullpen.

... that guy sure gets around the league ... must get traded a dozen times every day.

Always on the job 'tho ... ol' ACTIVITY ... hee hee!

(NORMAN slaps GENE on the back of his head.)

GENE (Continued)

DUGOUT COACH on the phone with BULLPEN COACH.

A Lefty and Righty throwing heat ... they're ready. What's this?

COSMO calls for time ... running to the mound ... a quick exchange.

Cosmo returns to Home

...HMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!

(GENE cups his ear to hear something better)

Esquerre is yelling something to his teammates? ...

Sounds like ... listen ... he's said it three times already..

ESQUERRE

TO THE BAT CAVE!

TEAM

(In unison)
HOLY ADIRONDACK!

III-6-86

GENE

Whatcha make of that, NORMAN? They've said it five times?!

NORMAN

GENE, honest to GOD, I don't know. I've never heard or seen anything like this!

They must be psyching themselves up!

A male bonding thing? We don't know about ... or,

they're so tired, especially ESQUERRE, they've plano went goofy ... I do not know.

(NORMAN points excitedly toward the SHEPHERD's dugout)

Look at TUTT, the SHEPHERD'S BAT BOY!

He's bagging all their bats!

It's like a show of confidence, I suppose. He's putting in his two cents worth, also.

TUTT

We won't be needing these anymore, Tassy-Manassys!

You the man, WALTER! CHUCK for us ... no more walker ...ranger man!

Do it ... big brother!

GENE

WHEW! What did all that mean?! Kid's two sandwiches short of a picnic, I'm told.

(He stands up, loosens his tie)

Here comes the throw!

OH, NO ... it musta slipped out of his hand!

It's high, way up ... the CATCHER isn't getting up to at least attempt to stop it.

A wild pitch, and they score.

C'mon man, get up!

Suddenly, the ball descends abruptly;
like it rolled off a table.
A 90 degree angle drop.

GENE

GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST! That ball is coming down right at the batter.

He's ducking to get outta the way ...

What?.....it's OVER! ... Folks, it's OVER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The SHEPHERDS WON! ... SHEPHERDS WON! ... SHEPHERDS WON!

DO YOU BELIEVE IT?!

For you Radio listeners...

I'll shout it out, again! Heck, I'll even shout it to the HEAVENS.

They might hear me up there.

I know they must get the GOOD NEWS up-close-and-personal from the main-man, all the time; however, I'm gonna try to deliver these words to them, myself,

Praise the LORD, the SHEPHERDS won down here,

My brothers and sisters UP there ...THE SHEPHERDS WON!!

NORMAN

Land the plane, Gene. I'm just as thrilled as you, podner;
ALBEIT, the game is over; HOWBEIT, we have work to do.
ALBEIT????? HOWBEIT?????

III-6-87

GENE

OK .. big guy, I hear ya loud and clear.

(Gene in a whisper into his mike. NORMAN has headset off to
take a drink and wipe his brow)

Actually, folks, I didn't hear him, neither loud, nor clear ... did you?

Well, Mr. Starched Collar should loosen up a smidge, I say.

Say you also, I bet, huh? ... shhhh! quiet! ... he's back.

(As Norman puts on his headset; GENE fakes it; to
make Norman believe he was revealing the particulars
of the final play; which led to the SHEPHERD'S
astonishing victory)

GENE (Continued)

.....That's right, folks, I'll go over it again.

Heck, I'm having doubts about what I saw, myself...

The Ball dropped straight down; just as it was dye-rect-ly
above ...way way ... above the batter's head.

Poor guy, ducked

who wouldn't ... to prevent from getting' hit.

That part worked ... he didn't get hit ... BUT...

he didn't realize, compendo, know what I mean, that he left his bat
sticking straight up above his head ... and ...

I'm getting chills and goose bumps again!

THE BALL HIT THE BAT!!!!!!!!!!!!

It went straight up, oh, say 40 feet; and right into COSMO's mitt.

The man caught it in his crouched position ...

like he knew what was gonna happen!

We ... I mean the fans, were screamin' at him for not making any sort of
effort, to at least attempt to catch, knock down, whatever ...

what at the Time, appeared to be a very, very wild pitch.

NORMAN

This one is going to be on every sports show in the WORLD!

They're still celebrating on the field!

It's a fantastic moment ... better than MARDI GRAS!

Went to far, huh? ... let me back it up a tad.

This is a great celebration by a great bunch of guys!

Fans! Owner! Family! GOOD HEAVENS! ... I hope I haven't left out anyone!

The SCOREBOARD SCREEN keeps showing that last play.

Have I mentioned using a large screen monitor for: instant replays, animated fireworks,
messages, advertisements, lucky draw numbers, Will-you-marry-me's?, candid
camera shots of Fans eating, talking, sleeping, shirts off, chests painted, on and on.

OK, I'm landing the plane, now. Thank you very much for reading this far ...

I take my leave; but, first, and now last,
THE FINAL SCENE.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 6

III-7-88

ACT III

Scene 7

AT RISE: GOD, LUCILLE, EVERYONE
who is in the play is on the field.
GOD grabs the mike.
The exhibitionist in Him has really come out tonight.

GOD

(HIS voice is so beautiful; and, yes indeed, absolutely,
positively, even more so, with
the additional amplification. HE quivers a bit;
composes HIMSELF; then, captivates, mesmerizes,
HIS adoring people. Many, unknowingly, kneel.
A beautiful LIGHT surrounds the stage.
Do we finally hear our GOD's voice speaking to us? ...
OR, is it but, OH...THAT LIGHT'S GOD...
aka 'ol I.M. GAWD.
[I shan't ever be serious, for very long;
especially now, 22,000 words later?! No way.]
HIS voice reverberates.)

I LOVE THIS GAME! ... BLESS YOU BOYS! ... EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU!
I AM SO PROUD OF ALL OF Y'ALL!

The FANS applaud, yell, whistle.

GOD

And, so to you my children ... er. ... my people ... I mean fans!.
OLD I.M. loves you ... yup, GAWD,
AND, I am 100% certain
GOD, loves each and every one of y'all too!

(More cheering, adoration)

GOD

(Singing and dancing like JAMES BROWN with ANGELIC BACKUPS)
I FEEL GOOD, SO GOOD SO GOOD.....

(ESQUERRE runs to LUCILLE. THEY embrace.)

GOD

(Elevates above stage)

THOU SHALT NOT PERMIT THOUSELF TO BE HOODWINKED OR BAMBOOZLED
BY ANY OF LIFE'S god-awful HURLS.

Collectively, ALL say, HUH?!

GOD

(Slightly aggitated)

OK, I'll put it this way...
THOU SHALT NOT CAPITULATE TO ANY OF LIFE'S god-awful HURLS,
UNLESS THEY MIGHT DECAPITATE YA ...
LIKE MY HURLERS' god-awful DEAD-MAN-DUCKIN' DROP.
... HAR HAR ...

No one laughs...everyone, collectively, again says, HUH?!

GOD

(Clears it up, angrily, fire and brimstone smoldering from Him.
LUCILLE calms HIM down.
HE yells a CAJUN halloo)

AAAAAIIIIIEEEEEEE!

I SAY! Oh, just don't get suckered, and swing at any bad balls
that come your way ...
THOU SHALT NOT BITCH ABOUT LIFE'S BAD CALLS ... got it!
... Oy vey, you'd think I was talking to a bunch of meshuginas.
OH... ANNNNNNNNNNNNNND...
THOU SHALT NOT GIVE UP..
HEY, That's two more COMMANDMENTS!
I'M UP TO TWELVE ... MOSES, COME HITHER ... BRING ME A COUPLA STONES!!!!

(EVERYONE moans; including audience, by a prompter.
Someone {possibly from audience every night} says:
"Two more we'll no doubt break, great!"

GOD

(HE glows)

I REPEAT; THOU SHALT NOT GIVE UP

F O R

T H E R E I S
A L W A Y S

!!!L I G H T!!!

A T

T H E E N D
O F T H E

**T U N N E L **

END OF PLAY