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Christopher Bernard

Ubu Triumphant!

A Farce in Five Acts

Introductory Note:

In the opening weeks of 2017, and the first administration of Donald J. Trump, I wrote a number of parodies of Western and American literary texts – from the first chapter of Genesis to poems by T. S. Eliot – expressing the horror, desperation, and absurdity that I and many others felt after a human being who was one of the worst possible candidates in our nation’s history was elected to the most powerful position in the world.

The most ambitious idea I had at the time was to write an adaptation and updating of Alfred Jarry’s notorious absurdist, proto-Dadaist play, *Ubu Roi*. Jarry’s epic farce, itself an anarchic adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, is the seed of the Theater of the Absurd, which commanded the world’s stages in the wake of World War II, the Holocaust, and the madness of the “mutual assured destruction” of the Cold War. I saw a host of parallels between the unleashed id and power-hungry clown of the anti-hero assassin and tyrant Ubu and our own newly elected

president, and I went as far as marking up my copy of the play before buckling down to writing my own version. But other projects demanded time and energy, the opportunity seemed to slip away, and by the end of four years, I was convinced Donald Trump had been definitively tossed into the ashbin of history. My play could be laid to rest as a quaint relic of a bizarre but safely forgotten era.

Earlier this year, while still trying to absorb the extent of this disaster, I remembered my old idea and spent the next month writing *Ubu Triumphant!* as a way to disgorge some of my own sense of profound horror at what we had allowed to happen. But the relief has been temporary. My sense of outrage and, more importantly, the vessels of the people's wrath at the deeds of the dictator of our newly defined order are, as I write, being refilled with every passing day and every passing hour. —Christopher Bernard

Characters in the play:

UBU, ex-King of Queens and master jester of the court of King Obomba

LYUBITCHA, his wife

MAJOR (later COLONEL) MCOFFAL

McOffal's THREE ENTOURAGE

PRINCESS HILARIA

KING OBOMBA (African American)

QUEEN OBOMBA

O'BIDEN – Obomba loyalist

SHOEMAKER – Obomba loyalist

RUDI GANGLIONI, winner of tax payers' race

EEYORE MUSKRAT, richest man in the world

THREE MUSKRATEERS: BIG DICK, BRAINY HACK, ASSWHOLE

EMPRESS CLAUDIA, of Mexico

HERMAN, leading peasant, later rebel against UBU

VANDER PANTS and KELLYANTS, advisers to UBU

MESSENGER

CLERK

MEXICAN GENERAL

FIRST SOLDIER

SECOND SOLDIER

SCOUT

TRIGGER WARNING (who periodically marches across stage with a sign reading "UNACCEPTABLE WORD!" when a politically incorrect word is about to be spoken)

CONSPIRATORS

AMERICAN SOLDIERS

MEXICAN SOLDIERS

ADVISERS

SERVANTS

PEASANTS

CROWD (in civil war against UBU)

VOICES OFFSTAGE: of Nobles, Judges, Financiers, Soldiers, Crowds, etc.

Note: All characters (except the soldiers, who are in medieval armor, etc.), except when otherwise specified, wear modern dress, sometimes with added accoutrements such as royal crowns, tiaras, etc.

First Fit

Scene 1.

(LYUBITCHA's room in UBU's penthouse, at the top of the Tower of Pizza, Manhattan. LYUBITCHA at a vanity table, in an evening gown and completing her makeup; UBU, also dressed formally, pacing.)

UBU

Loser!

LYUBITCHA

“If at first you don't succeed...” Isn't that your American expression?

UBU (appraisingly)

Pussygums? ... Hornsbugger? ... Snakeballs? ... I like snakeballs!

LYUBITCHA

Ubu darling, language! Anyway, snakes don't have balls.

UBU

Mine does.

LYUBITCHA (aside)

In your dreams, lover.

(UBU glares at her and continues pacing.)

UBU (aside)

Her parents didn't name her “Lyubitcha” for nothing.

(LYUBITCHA, who overheard, smirks and winks at the audience.)

UBU

By my gold toilet, I saw that! Watch out, or I'll bounce that pretty head off my favorite pay wall.

LYUBITCHA (coolly)

Before doing that, maybe you should consider bouncing somebody else's head first.

UBU

Not that again!

LYUBITCHA

So you're peachy keen with the way things are?

UBU

Whaddaya want? After all, I'm Boss of The Adventist Dentist. I'm decorated with the Order of the Strutting Peacock of MBC. I'm master jester of the royal court. I'm ex-King of Queens. We live in a penthouse in the Tower of Pizza, with all the pepperoni and anchovies we can eat and a view of all Five Boroughs of New York.

LYUBITCHA

First of all, I don't like anchovies. And second, pepperoni gives you hog's breath. And after being King of Queens, you're happy being the king's clown when you could just as well have the crown of America replace the crown of Queens on your big fat head?

(UBU glares at her.)

LYUBITCHA

Don't be stupid!

UBU

If he bites the long submarine, there are Democraps just salivating to take his place.

LYUBITCHA

What's keeping you from aceing all of them?

UBU

Watch your mouth or I'll stick *you* down a toilet.

LYUBITCHA

Who'd patch your pants then? I don't think the queen.

UBU

So? There are butts, and there are butts.

LYUBITCHA

And I'd want to install a certain butt on a certain seat in the White Castle.

UBU

You mean he has a gold toilet too?

LYUBITCHA

Are you kidding? Platinum covered with rubies. I know from painful experience. So, think of it: we could – I mean, *you* could get even more money that you'll never know how to spend (though

I won't have the same problem). You could eat That's Quite a Whopper's all day long and watch Cobra News: Fair When Unbalanced But Balanced When Unfair, all night, and roll around the streets of Manhattan in a stretch limo as long as Fifth Avenue.

UBU

But I do that already.

LYUBITCHA

But I could join you, Ubu darling!

UBU

Hmm... I could have a really big, bright new orange wig made for me, just like the one I had in Queens, before those spicks from the Bronx stole it.

LYUBITCHA

You'd be King of America. You could rule the world! And you'd be my hero forever.

UBU (signs of internal struggle)

Oh! ... Oh! ... Oh! ... Oh! ...

LYUBITCHA

What's wrong?

UBU

I'm struggling with myself.

LUYBITCHA

Well, don't get a hernia. We can't be here all night. (*gesturing toward the audience*) The [local public transportation] closes at midnight.

UBU

OK. – Oh! ... Oh! ... Oh! ... (*LYUBITCHA checks her watch.*) That does it! I give up. I've had enough. I'll do it! Yes! (*shaking his fist at the audience*) Watch out, kingy! Don't walk down any dark alleys! I'll be sending you back to Kenya in a box marked No Return if Not Deliverable!

LYUBITCHA

Now my Ubu is acting like a real man.

UBU

Wait! Me, Boss of The Adventist Dentist assassinate the King of America? I'd lose all my ratings!

LYUBITCHA

So Ubu darling wants to be just another zillionaire?

UBU

I'd rather keep my ratings.

LYUBITCHA

Doesn't my little piggy want to rule the world? Doesn't my little piggy want to get that nice big, bright orange wig?

UBU

Stop! You know I can't resist when you call me "little piggy"! You're tempting me, Lyubitcha! A king, my ratings, aarrghhhh...!

(He runs out, slamming the door.)

Scene 2.

(Tower of Pizza: the dining room, the table laid with a feast. A large balcony, in shadow, off to the side. UBU and LYUBITCHA are both ridiculously overdressed, LYUBITCHA in a baroque haute-couture outfit.)

LYUBITCHA

They're such a thing as fashionably late, but this is ridiculous.

UBU

So rude! And just when I'm starving. You look like quite a fright this evening. Is it because company's coming?

(LYUBITCHA shrugs, sneers, and deliberately turns her back to him. The following words are written on the back of her haute-couture jacket: "I Don't Care? Do You?")

UBU (grabbing a whole roast chicken)

Well, *I* do, so long as I can have a piece of this bird! (*with his mouth full*) Chicken?

LYUBITCHA (aside)

No, goose! Like you! (*aloud*) What are you doing? There'll be nothing left for our guests!

UBU (between mouthfuls)

What do I care? Sweetie Buns, go see if they're coming.

(LYUBITCHA goes to the wall window and peers down.)

LYUBITCHA

Everyone looks so small down there. Like ants. As if all I need do is put my foot down, and all of them would be . . .

(UBU, finished with the chicken, picks up a whole ham and starts eating.)

LYUBITCHA

What are you eating now?

(UBU speaks with his mouth full so you can't understand a word.)

LYUBITCHA

What?

(The same.)

LYUBITCHA

Ubu darling! How often do I have to tell you not to talk with your mouth full?

(UBU finishes eating, swallows, then speaks.)

UBU

The ham.

LYUBITCHA

The ham! You pig! He's eaten the ham! Help!

UBU

By my gold toilet, I'll knock you to Slovenia and back, Sweetie Buns!

(UBU chases LYUBITCHA around the room, threatening to brain her with the ham bone.)

(The door suddenly opens, and MAJOR MCOFFAL and his THREE ENTOURAGE walk in.)

LYUBITCHA

Major McOffal! Please come in! How nice to see you! And your bodyguard! They're all so ... big!

(THREE ENTOURAGE grin, embarrassed.)

LYUBITCHA

Don't mind us! We were just doing some last-minute decorating.

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Not at all, dear lady! But where is our Ubu?

UBU (stepping forward, after tossing the hambone out a nearby open window)
Here I am! Can't miss me! By my gold toilet, I'm Big Enough, aren't I?

(Screams from far below.)

LYUBITCHA (to UBU)

What was that?

UBU (to LYUBITCHA)

I guess some poor ant was crushed by a flying hambone.

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Greetings, Ubu.

UBU

Hello, McOffal!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Hello hello hello *hello!*

UBU

Hello hello hello hello *hello!*

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Hello hello hello hello hello *hello!*

UBU (more angrily, but still smiling)

Hello hello hello hello hello hello *hello!*

MAJOR MCOFFAL (furiously)

Hello hello hello hello hello hello *hello!*

UBU

HELLO!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

HELLO!

UBU

HELLOOOOOO!

(They have gotten closer and closer to each other until now, when they freeze, grinning furiously, not an inch between their noses.)

(LYUBITCHA takes out a referee's whistle and blows on it as hard as she can. Note: This is the same whistle that appears later.)

LYUBITCHA (pushing the two men apart)

Time! You can finish killing each other later. Now eat your dinner before it gets cold.

(The two men are suddenly all smiles, and everyone sits down at the table.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Well, Madam Ubu, what's on the menu today?

UBU

Whatever it is, it's the best it will be! Madam Ubu is the best cook there ever was between a fridge and a garbage can!

LYUBITCHA

Melting-pot soup, pigeon tongue, goat livers, burro butt, turkey brains, pickles

UBU

A feast for a king! You mean there's more?

LYUBITCHA

... polka-dot salad, bedspread pudding, Hard Rock peaches, boiled jellyfish, armadillo *garni*, and Baked Nebraska. Eat up, everyone!

UBU (aside)

Hey! You think I'm the King of Russia to just give away all this stuff?

LYUBITCHA (aside)

There'd have been ham and chicken if you hadn't eaten them! (*aloud*) Why don't you try the melting-pot soup, dearest? I made it expressly for Major McOffal. I made it from scratch.

UBU (tasting from his bowl)

Yuck! Tastes like it.

(MAJOR MCOFFAL tastes and stares appalled at his soup.)

LYUBITCHA (furious)

Well what did you expect! All I had was a dozen past-their-due-date Democraps and three repulsive Republicans! And don't ask me where I got the rest of the melting pot! The scum of the earth, like somebody said! Nobody could make a decent soup from that!

UBU

That gives me an idea! I'll be right back.

LYUBITCHA (aside)

Uh-oh! He's got "an idea"! (To MAJOR MCOFFAL, *servicing him*.) Would you like to try some pigeon tongue?

MAJOR MCOFFAL (partaking)

Mmm-mmm! Superb! (*The two lock eyes*.) Long live Madam Ubu!

LYUBITCHA (demurely)

Lyubitcha!

MAJOR MCOFFAL (smiling flirtatiously)

Lyubitcha!

(UBU returns, carrying a toilet brush and tosses it onto the dining table.)

LYUBITCHA

You dork, what are you up to now?

UBU

Try it – you'll like it!

(One of the THREE ENTOURAGE, who have silent up to now, hesitantly raises the brush and takes a bite, then runs out, holding his mouth.)

UBU

See? They love it!

LYUBITCHA

You're a nut case!

UBU

Please pass me the goat livers, Sweetie Buns, so I can serve our guests. (*LYUBITCHA passes it to him. Enraged*) Now everybody out but Major McOffal!

The second and third of the THREE ENTOURAGE (ad lib.)

But I haven't even eaten yet! Me too!

UBU

So what? If you wanted to eat, you should have brought your own food. What do you think I am, your cook? Out, out, out, out! You stay here, Major.

(Nobody moves.)

UBU

You haven't gone yet? By my gold toilet, I'll give you something to eat!

(UBU starts grabbing food off the table and throwing it at the second and third of the THREE ENTOURAGE.)

The second and third of the THREE ENTOURAGE (ad lib.)

Oh! Ouch! Help! Madam Ubu! What a mess!

UBU

Snakeballs! Get out! Get out! I want my way! (*He picks up the toilet brush and, holding it straight up, like a sceptre, starts banging it on the table.*) I WANT MY WAY.

The second and third of the THREE ENTOURAGE (ad lib.)

Every man for himself!

UBU

Out! OUT!

(The last two of the THREE ENTOURAGE run away.)

UBU

At last! They're gone! I can breathe again. But I still had a lousy dinner. Come on, McOffal.

MAJOR MCOFFAL (subdued; checking to make sure his head is still on)

Yes sir.

(Lights up on balcony, where all three move. Lights down on dining room.)

UBU

So, what did you think of dinner?

MAJOR MCOFFAL

It was wonderful! Though I've got to admit I'm not too fond of burro brains.

UBU

C'mon! The burro brains were yummy.

LYUBITCHA

De gustibus.

UBU

Hey, you talkin' Russian again?

LYUBITCHA

Chacun a son gout.

UBU

Cut it out! You know I hate it when you start talking Irish! Whatever. Where was I? Major McOffal, you can probably guess I invited you for more than just a very dubious dinner. (*pregnant pause*) I have decided to make you the Duke of Kentucky. Well? What do you think of that?

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Only in my dreams, Ubu.

UBU

No, I mean it! The Duke of Kentucky, with all the trimmings.

MAJOR MCOFFAL

But how can you do that? You're just the court jester, and the word on the Street is your "zillions" are nothing but debts.

UBU

All thanks to those jerks at the IRS! Well, I may just become King of America in a few days. And who'll be the boss of the IRS *then*?

MAJOR MCOFFAL (shocked)

But we already have a . . . Wait. You plan to . . . you plan to rid our groaning people from the heavy yoke of the vicious tyrant from Kenya?

UBU (aside to LYUBITCHA)

He's not such a dummy after all!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

I am shocked, shocked...

(He walks to the edge of the balcony, then turns and give the two others a hard look.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

I should take this matter and denounce you to the authorities!

LYUBITCHA

But, dear Major McOffal, you *are* the authorities.

UBU

Awk-ward!

(MAJOR MCOFFAL turns and looks across the city.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

On the other hand, I must admit that I too have wanted, bitterly, for longer than I care to admit, to rid our fair country of that . . .

(All freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage holding a sign: "UNACCEPTABLE WORD!" and exits.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

. . . in the White Castle since they crowned him king in the Palatinate of Polack. A fake crowning of a fake king!

UBU

And don't forget that under him, you will never be more than a major. Maybe another king would make you ... a colonel! As well as the Duke of Kentucky!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

You think so? I've always wanted to be a colonel! (*He stares down at the city below. Dreamily*) "Colonel McOffal" at last, after five decades of never being more than a major. Colonel McOffal, Duke of Kentucky! I can't stand it! (*He shows signs of deep internal struggle.*) No! Yes! No! Yes! No! Yes... Yes... *Yes!* (*exhaustedly*) All right! I know when I am beaten! I see where my duty lies, however much I must suffer for it. I will do everything in my power to help you overturn this dictatorial regime and humbly accept a post as Colonel in your army and save the good people of Kentucky by becoming their Duke. We must save the world from the usurper! Ubu, I am behind you, just as behind you is your behind! And my warriors are behind me like my own behind! And behind them is the whole country and its behind! Sir! I salute you!

(He rushes over and grasps both of UBU's hands.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

I will follow you loyally to the bitter end if need be, or if not to the victorious glory of glorious victory! Sic semper tyrannis! Do your worst!

UBU (hugging him)

I love this guy! I knew you'd see it my way! Even if he talks Irish, just like Sweetie Buns, whenever he gets excited. He's my Best Buddy! Aren't you, McOffal?

LYUBITCHA (aside)

Till the sun goes down.

UBU

OK, Best Buddy! That's all for now. But I swear on Mizziz Ubu, I'll make you colonel and the Duke of Kentucky!

LYUBITCHA (aside)

... Fried Chicken!

UBU

Quiet, babe!

(Blackout.)

Scene 3.

(The living room in the Tower of Pizza. UBU and LYUBITCHA. UBU is engrossed in TV.

(A buzz at the door. LYUBITCHA opens it and a MESSENGER enters.

UBU

Whadda *you* want! Can't you see I'm busy? I'm waiting for the news to mention *me*!

MESSENGER

Sirrah...

UBU

"Sirrah"! Where do they find these people!

MESSENGER

... Obomba, King of America, through me accords to you from him a summons to appear immediately and instanter before him on pain of torture, death and dismemberment and the death of all your family, friends and associates if you do not Oh wait, that's the wrong summons. Sorry! Here it is: Obomba, King of America, through me accords to you from him a summons to appear immediately and instanter before him on pain of fill in the blank if you do not heed this summons instanter and immediately accorded from him to you from me. Farewell!

(MESSENGER makes to leave.)

UBU

Wait! Let me get this straight. You're telling me that Obomba, King of America, through you accorded to me from him a summons to appear immediately and instanter before him on pain of fill in the blank if I do not heed this summons instanter and immediately accorded from him to me from you?

MESSENGER

Beats me. But if I were you, I'd make tracks to the throne room, like yesterday, or kiss my sweet butt good-bye.

(MESSENGER leaves.)

UBU

Snakeballs! We've been discovered! He's gonna cut off my head! What will I do without my head? And my gorgeous orange wig!

LYUBITCHA

And just when time's running out.

UBU

I've got an idea! I'll say it was Sweetie Buns and Major McOffal.

LYUBITCHA

You fat orange lunk! If you do that, I'll never touch your thingy-wingy ever again! Not ever! Not ever!

UBU

Gotta go! Gotta see the king!

(He rushes out.)

LYUBITCHA

Just you try it...!

(She storms out after him.)

Scene 4.

(KING OBOMBA's throne room in the White Castle.

(KING OBOMBA, on his throne, which stands on a raised dais at the center, with MAJOR MCOFFAL.

(UBU runs in.)

UBU

It wasn't me! It was Sweetie Buns – I mean Missiz Ubu – and Major McOffal! I swear I had nothing to do with it.

KING OBOMBA

You off your meds, Ubu?

MAJOR MCOFFAL (scandalized)

He's drunk, Your Majesty!

UBU (offended)

I never drink!

KING OBOMBA (descending from his throne)

Don't be insulting, Major McOffal. As I always say, "You may be McOffal, but, Mac, you don't have to be Awful!" (*Laughter. He smiles smugly.*) Now, Ubu: calm down. No one is accusing you of anything. I asked you here to reward you for your many services, to name just a few: as our one adviser who is never *ever* boring, and our tirelessly absurd and endlessly ridiculous master

jester of our extravagantly resplendent Court, by making you – now wait for it – the Baronet of Staten Island.

UBU

The Baronet of . . . Staten Island?

KING OBOMBA

Yes! Now, don't faint. I realize this might seem a pretty overwhelming honor, but I sincerely feel you have deserved it entirely, after your important services in keeping Ourselves amused and the public of the realm entertained over the last ... *(turning to ADVISER, who whispers in his ear)* ... lebenty-leben decades as Boss of The Adventist Dentist. No, don't thank me, Ubu! Really, you have nothing to thank me for.

UBU (aside)

You can say that again, you pompous pig.

KING OBOMBA

At the review of Our troops next week, I'll formally announce, for the entire Kingdom of America to hear, your extraordinary ascension in rank. Be there, or be square.

UBU (aside)

"Stinking rank ascension," you mean! *(aloud)* Be assured, Your Mysterious Majestical Majesty, that Mrs. Ubu and my never humble self will assuredly be in happy intendance next week to at the spewing of Your troops. And please accept this present from both myself and my dear Sweetie ... I mean, and from Mrs. Ubu.

(He gives KING OBOMBA a toy whistle, but before giving it to him, he puts it to his lips and whistles.)

KING OBOMBA

Ah! Thank you. So. Very. Much. I think!

(He wipes the whistle dry, with a smile to UBU, then puts it to his lips and whistles.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Bravo, Your Majesty!

(KING OBOMBA whistles again, louder.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Bravo, bravo!

(KING OBOMBA whistles gaily for a time. MAJOR MCOFFAL and ADVISER applaud.)

KING OBOMBA

I know what! I'll give this to Princess Hilaria. She won't be able to say I never gave her anything!

(MAJOR MCOFFAL laughs.)

UBU

Mrs. Ubu will be so pleased you liked our little gift. Thank you so very very very very very very very much, Your Multitudinous Majesty, for the high honor and grotesque dignity of being made, at long last, the never hoped for dream of my never misspent youth: the Baronet of Staten Island! I am joyful! Lyubitcha will be joyful! (She just loves seeing me humiliated!) And now, my lord liege, may I say thank you as I depart for home so I will not miss the next exciting episode of Antiques Roadshow.

(He bows, turns and stumbles, knocking the throne off its dais and pratfalling on the floor, drawing the stumble and fall out for as long as possible so it seems to bring almost complete chaos to the throne room.)

UBU

Ouch! Help! Alas! Woe!

(The others rush to help him up near the collapsed throne.)

KING OBOMBA

My dear Ubu! Are you all right?

UBU (aside)

Why do people always say that when it's obvious you are *not* all right? (*aloud*) No, Your Mystical Majesty, I am not all right! I'm bowed and bruised and battered and beaten. I'll probably die soon! Woe is me! (*sobbing*) Whatever will happen to Lyubitcha?

KING OBOMBA

Have no fear, we will take care of Mrs. Ubu no matter what happens to you. We promise, as our sacred obligation.

UBU (aside)

I'll bet you will, so you can bone her all the quicker. (*aloud*) Oh, your kindness, Sirrah (what a word!) is unparalleled, Your Majestic Majestical Multitudinous Magnum Mysterium of Majesty. (*He turns to the audience.*) See? I can talk Irish too when I want! (*He turns back to KING OBOMBA, bows low, and walks toward the door with a limp. Aside:*) I was once the King of

Queens – and now I am the Baronet of Staten Island?! You are so headed for the chopping block, Your Mad, Mucky, Mighty Mean and Most Mendacious Majesty!

(He leaves.)

Scene 5.

(A meeting room at the Tower of Pizza.

UBU, LYUBITCHA, MAJOR MCOFFAL, his THREE ENTOURAGE, CONSPIRATORS.)

UBU (looking cautiously around him; in a loud whisper)
We're agreed then!

(The others solemnly nod.)

UBU (looking cautiously around him again)
We gotta chop the big cabbage!

(The others look perplexed.)

UBU
The Kahoona must be kahoonaed!

(The others look even more perplexed.)

UBU
The thingamajig must be kefveved!

ONE OF THE THREE ENTOURAGE (in a normal voice)
You mean King Obomba must die?

UBU
SHHHHHHH! (*still in a loud whisper*) Yes, you blockhead!

MAJOR MCOFFAL (also whispering)
Why are you whispering?

UBU (looking at him as though he's an idiot)
One of us might be a spy.

MAJOR MCOFFAL (still whispering)

Do you think the spy is deaf?

UBU (shouting)

Just testing you!

(The others look cowed.)

UBU (in a normal voice)

So! How do we do this? We can't just waltz in and ... well you know, ace the purple grandee. He's surrounded by his guards, his dogs, his wife. Anybody got any ideas? No? Well, I've got one. Somebody sneaks into the White Castle's kitchen, poisons the old Kenyan's lunch, he takes a nibble and keels over, and I become king!

One of the THREE ENTOURAGE

How awful!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

What if someone slices him in two, lengthwise, with a sword?

UBU

Lengthwise! I like that!

CONSPIRATORS

Rad! Riz! Dope! Cool!

UBU

But what if, while you're at it, he gives you a kick where you can feel it? You ever notice he wears spikes on his shoes? He'll quicker impale your slicer than your slicer can slice your impaler. (Hey, that's good. I should write that down.) If I had any brains, I'd denounce all of you for dragging me into this mess. I bet he'd give me a lot of money!

LYUBITCHA

Taitor, coward!

THE REST (ad lib; starting to swarm him)

Down with Ubu!

UBU (commandingly)

Stop! People! *Now!* All of you, calm down! Or I'll get Real Mad. And you have never seen me when I'm Real Mad. Have they, Sweetie Buns?

LYUBITCHA (aside)

They might eat your lunch, Ubu darling, if they did.

(The rest look cowed and back down.)

UBU

Anyway, I agree (*aside*) for the time being (*aloud*) with Major McOffal's awful plan. Sorry, McOffal, couldn't help myself! (*to the rest*) I'll go along with these treacherous proceedings – entirely for *your* sake, good people! And because that is the only way we can Make Ubu Great Again. (*aside to LYUBITCHA*) Whaddaya think, Sweetie Buns? I just made that up! (*To MAJOR MCOFFAL*) McOffal, you be the meat slicer.

MAJOR MCOFFAL

I don't like those shoe spikes. How about this? We swarm the king in a mob during the troops review, yelling with all our might. We'll win over the troops. They're disgruntled since the last war with Canada.

UBU

No wonder! We were pucked!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

We might even win over his guards, even his dogs, even his wife.

UBU

You're a genius, McOffal! I like that "even his wife" part! Sweetie Buns, you'd never betray me, would you?

LYUBITCHA (with her fingers clearly crossed)

Ubu darling! Never!

(They bend toward each other and kiss, fingers crossed.)

UBU

OK, Major! I like it! We'll do it! A bunch of madmen yelling like devils can sound like thousands. When the king gives the troop review, where everyone and his mother has been invited, I'll just step on his toes, all accidental like, he'll yell, and I'll shout "SNAKEBALLS!" That'll be the signal to take him down. It'll be so tragic! I can see him now, sighing out his last words as he expires in my arms: "Et tu, Ubu!" I love it!

LYUBITCHA

As soon as he's dead, I'll grab – I mean, *you* grab his crown.

MAJOR MCOFFAL

And my men and I will pursue his supporters down to the last Democrap.

UBU

Be sure you track down Princes Hilaria while you're at it. I can't tell you what a pain in the butt that woman is. So! Do all of you really swear to kill the king?

THE REST

We swear it!

UBU

Cross your heart and hope to die?

THE REST

Cross my heart (*They cross their hearts, and yet everyone [including LYUBITCHA and UBU] holds their other hand, with crossed fingers, behind their back.*) and hope to die! Or stick a needle in my eye! Long live King Ubu! (*Everyone except LYUBITCHA kneels to UBU, raising their free arm in a salute.*) Long live King Ubu! (*UBU jumps onto a chair and throws his arms up in a "V" for victory.*) Long live King Ubu!

(Blackout.)

Second Fit

Scene 1.

(KING OBOMBA's throne room.

KING OBOMBA, QUEEN OBOMBA, and PRINCESS HILARIA.)

KING OBOMBA

Princess Hilaria, you were very impertinent this morning with Ubu, Baronet of Staten Island, knight of the Strutting Peacock of MBC, and our most merry jester...

PRINCESS HILARIA

Blah, blah, blah... Yes?

KING OBOMBA (sternly but affectionately)

Exactly! And that is why, young lady, as your king and, more importantly, your ward, I am forbidding you to appear at the review of Our troops today.

QUEEN OBOMBA (aside)

But, Brakak, you'll need there every supporter you have. Remember what happened to FBK in '43!

KING OBOMBA (aside)

My love, you know, once made, I *never* retract an order. Don't be tiresome.

PRINCESS HILARIA (bowing mockingly)

I am at your command, Your Majesty.

KING OBOMBA (smiling)

I should be so lucky.

QUEEN OBOMBA (to KING OBOMBA)

So, you're definitely going to the review?

KING OBOMBA

You say that as if there's some doubt about it.

QUEEN OBOMBA

Haven't I told you a hundred times about my dream, where I saw you overthrown by an angry mob, your body thrown into the Potomac, and a bald eagle placing the crown on *his* head?

KING OBOMBA

What do you mean, Madam?

QUEEN OBOMBA

That snake in the grass.

KING OBOMBA

Nonsense! My newly minted Baron of Staten Island would let himself be torn to pieces to serve me.

QUEEN OBOMBA

He'll tear *you* to pieces first.

PRINCESS HILARIA

Sire, with all respect, you should listen to the queen.

KING OBOMBA

Quiet, both of you! I'm not going to listen to a bunch of old wives' tales. Look what I've given to that man over the years. I made him Our master jester, I made him a baronet.

QUEEN OBOMBA

You made him an ex-king.

KING OBOMBA

That was for his own good.

QUEEN OBOMBA

And you made a mockery of him at the Palace Town Criers' Peel'Em, Fry'Em, Boil'Em, and Roast.

KING OBOMBA

True, I was very clever that night. I even wrote my own jokes! But he's forgotten all that. *I've* forgotten all that! Now he worships the ground I walk on. Just to show how little afraid I am, I'll go to the review of Our troops just as I am – no armor, no sword! And for your added impertinence, Princess Hilaria, I am not going to give you my whistle! (*He takes the whistle out and blows it in her face.*) So there!

QUEEN OBOMBA (aside)

Please, Brakak, don't be so foolish! I may never see you alive again!

KING OBOMBA (aside)

Don't be childish, my love. Since when did a dream ever stand between us? (*aloud*) I'm off. I'll be home for dinner. Maybe!

(He leaves. QUEEN OBOMBA and PRINCESS HILARIA go to the window.)

QUEEN OBOMBA

May God and all the holy saints protect him! I can't get that dream out of my head. Please come with me to the chapel to light a candle and pray for him.

(She heads toward the door. Unseen by QUEEN OBOMBA, PRINCESS HILARIA looks out the window toward the departing king.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

I don't care if you did adopt me. I only know you'll make us all regret this.

(She follows the queen out the door.)

Scene 2.

(The parade grounds where troops are gathered for review.)

(KING OBOMBA, UBU (wearing a stuffed belly protector), MAJOR MCOFFAL, CONSPIRATORS, O'BIDEN, SHOEMAKER; FIRST SOLDIER and SECOND SOLDIER at attention.)

KING OBOMBA

Ubu, our friend ... you look like you've put on weight.

UBU

Nothing like being named Baronet of Staten Island to give a body an appetite, Your Mobled Magnum Majesty.

KING OBOMBA (aside)

Once a jester, always a jester. (*aloud*) Well, if you can roll over hither, please join us while we inspect Our troops.

UBU (aside to his companions)

On your toes, boys! (*to the king*) Coming, Sirrah (what a word!), coming!

(MISCELLANEOUS CONSPIRATORS and THREE ENTOURAGE gather near KING OBOMBA.)

KING OBOMBA

Ah! Here is the Bronx Cheers Horseradish Regiment! Aren't they magnificent!

UBU

You really think so, Your Meaty Majesty? They look rotten to me. Look at this one. (*to FIRST SOLDIER*) When did you last shave, varlet? (*poking him*) Well, you know what they say?

FIRST SOLDIER (still rigidly at attention)

What is that, sir?

UBU

A man is never a hero to his varlet!

KING OBOMBA (going up to UBU)

I think you mean valet, my dear Ubu.

UBU

No, I *think* I mean “varlet.” (*He stamps hard on KING OBOMBA’s foot, who howls in pain.*)
Snakeballs! Come on, men!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Charge!

(They rush KING OBOMBA and start beating him.)

KING OBOMBA

Traitors! Murderers! Help! No! (*He turns to UBU. Everyone freezes.*) Et tu, Ubu!

UBU

See! What did I tell you? That was so beautiful!

(The king dies in UBU’s arms. UBU promptly drops him.)

UBU

Loser!

O’BIDEN (to SHOEMAKER)

What’s all this malarkey? Let’s make tracks!

SHOEMAKER

I’m with you!

(They flee.)

UBU (plucking the crown from the ground where it has fallen, and waving it)
I’ve got the crown! (*to the troops*) What’re you waiting for? (*pointing after O’BIDEN and SHOEMAKER*) After them! They killed the king!

FIRST SOLDIER (bewilderedly; to SECOND SOLDIER)

Wait. Did you see what I saw?

SECOND SOLDIER

I don’t know. What did I see?

UBU

They killed the king!

FIRST SOLDIER

I don't know...

UBU

They killed the king!

SECOND SOLDIER

Maybe . . .

UBU

They killed the king!

FIRST SOLDIER (motioning to O'BIDEN and SHOEMAKER)

After all, when you think about it: why would Ubu lie to little old us? Maybe they did kill ...

UBU

They killed the king!

SECOND SOLDIER

... the king?

UBU

They killed the king!

FIRST SOLDIER

No, they killed your grandma, dummy! What I *think* I think I saw...

SECOND SOLDIER

Nobody *cares* what you *think* you think you saw!

FIRST SOLDIER

But here's the thing. Listen: if they *didn't* kill the king, why are they running away?

SECOND SOLDIER

Well! That proves it! What we *think* we think we saw was a false flag operation!

FIRST SOLDIER

Right! Well! (*They shake hands.*) Thank God, we got that settled.

UBU

Will you guys shut up already and do something? (*waving the crown*) Who's got the crown?

FIRST and SECOND SOLDIER

Oh! Right! Yes! You do, boss!

UBU

"Sirrah," to you! (What a word!)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

After the traitors!

(All exit, except UBU pursuing the two who fled.)

(UBU sees something on the ground near the king's body. He picks it up. It's the whistle, which he recognizes and blows on, increasingly merrily; laughs and, playing on the whistle, joins the pursuit.)

Scene 3.

(The queen's quarters in the White Castle. An armored statue with a battle ax stands near the window.)

(QUEEN OBOMBA and PRINCESS HILARIA.)

QUEEN OBOMBA

At last I can relax. I can't tell you how my nerves have been on edge since that horrible dream.

PRINCESS HILARIA

We're safe here, my queen. It was only a dream, after all.

QUEEN OBOMBA

Hilaria, I wish you would stop calling me that when the king isn't here. He's such a stickler, but there's no need when we're alone. And it puts miles between us. I wouldn't want that for the world. Please!

PRINCESS HILARIA (smiling; a little shyly)

All right. Mum!

QUEEN OBOMBA (smiling, but still sadly)

That's better!

PRINCESS HILARIA

But really – Mum! The king is safe, he'd never do anything foolish. And Ubu is too stupid to actually plot a coup. And then carry it out? All he does is lie and boast and stick a knife in the moment people turn their backs. And everybody knows it! Who would be stupid enough to follow him?

(Shouts and screams from outside. PRINCESS HILARIA goes to the window.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Oh no! It's Shoemaker and O'Biden! They're running! And who's that? No! It's Ubu and his men.

QUEEN OBOMBA (rushing to the window)

Where's the king? Oh my God! They were his most loyal aides, they've almost caught them! No, no....!

PRINCESS HILARIA

The whole army is following Ubu!

(Sounds of shots.)

QUEEN OBOMBA

Shoemaker's fallen!

PRINCESS HILARIA

Fight, O'Biden, fight! He's defending himself! Yes, yes!

QUEEN OBOMBA

They're surrounding him....

PRINCESS HILARIA (turning away in horror)

Oh....!

QUEEN OBOMBA (in shock)

Major McOffal just split him in half... from his skull to his...

(Sound of tumult downstairs.)

QUEEN OBOMBA

They've broken in ...

(Sound grows louder.)

QUEEN OBOMBA and PRINCESS HILARIA (on their knees)
God ...!

PRINCESS HILARIA (seizing the battle ax from the armored statue)
If I ever get my hands on Ubu, I'll split *him* in half! He'll see what a woman can do!

(The door is smashed down and UBU, MAJOR MCOFFAL, CONSPIRATORS, FIRST SOLDIER and SECOND SOLDIER break in.)

UBU TUMP (Note: He is wearing KING OBOMBA's crown.)
I heard that! So, Princess Hilaria, is *that* what you want to do to me?

QUEEN OBOMBA (seeing the crown on UBU's head)
The outrage!

PRINCESS HILARIA (raising the ax)
I'll defend the queen to the death! The first man to make a move dies!

UBU
Major McOffal, do your duty! I'm getting out of here!

(UBU backs toward the door.)

FIRST SOLDIER
Give yourself up, princess!

PRINCESS HILARIA
Here, you scum! Take that.

(She axes FIRST SOLDIER, who falls dead. Several others advance toward her.)

PRINCESS HILARIA
You pigs, traitors!

(She swings the ax and kills those nearest to her. The rest pull back in confusion.)

UBU
Stop her! She's stealing my coup!

PRINCESS HILARIA (aside)

My queen, escape through you know where.

QUEEN OBOMBA

I can't leave you here!

PRINCESS HILARIA

I'll follow as soon as I've dispatched these gentlemen.

(QUEEN OBOMBA runs toward the secret door; her tiara falls.)

QUEEN OBOMBA

Oh no!

(UBU snatches it up.)

UBU

Lyubitcha will look so hot in this!

(QUEEN OBOMBA screams in rage, then escapes through a secret door behind the armored statue.)

UBU

Hey, what's the matter with you? You let the queen escape! Catch her, you losers! As for you, you little bi—....

(All freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage holding a sign: "UNACCEPTABLE WORD!" and exits.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Great God, here is my vengeance!

(With a blow of the ax, she rips open UBU's belly protector, which disgorges chicken feathers all over the stage.)

PRINCESS HILARIA (rushing down the secret passage)

I'm right behind you!

(The rest try to follow, piling up at the entrance till they can't move, knocking over the armored statue, which shatters across the stage.)

UBU

What a bunch of losers!

(Blackout.)

Scene 4.

(Outside a cave in the mountains. Snow on the ground.

PRINCESS HILARIA enters, followed by QUEEN OBOMBA. Both are weak, exhausted. They have been running for days.)

QUEEN OBOMBA

Stop, stop, I can't ...

PRINCESS HILARIA

But we're almost there.

(They sit on a rock.)

QUEEN OBOMBA

Wait ... don't I know this place?

PRINCESS HILARIA

I used to hide from you in this cave when I was a kid during summer vacations. Don't you remember?

QUEEN OBOMBA

Princess, this is brilliant ... he'll never even think ...

(She rolls to the ground.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

My queen – Mum! – are you all right?

QUEEN OBOMBA (feebly)

I can't do this...

PRINCESS HILARIA

What do you mean, you can't do this? Of course you can! You can't give up after coming this far...

QUEEN OBOMBA

The king is dead, my family has been destroyed, and you, my only child, forced to flee into the mountains like a criminal. We're being hunted like animals...

PRINCESS HILARIA

And who did it? A traitor! A cringe clown fascist! If I had him here, I'd tear his eyes out and make him lick them off the ground!

QUEEN OBOMBA

That's gross...

PRINCESS HILARIA

I'd be even grosser if I could. To think the king trusted Ubu, even promoted the vile snake, and the very next day...

QUEEN OBOMBA

Don't make me see it again. When I remember how happy we were before Ubu! But that's over...

PRINCESS HILARIA

What can we do? I'll tell you what we can do: first of all, we must never renounce our rights. Ever! And second: we must learn a lesson from that serpent: wait till our chance comes – and the beauty of chance is that it always comes – and then strike with everything we've got.

QUEEN OBOMBA

I hope you get your wish, my sweet child, but I'll never see the day ...

(She starts choking.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

What's wrong?

(QUEEN OBOMBA starts heaving, then suddenly goes still and give out a long exhalation.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

My queen? Mum! Mother! Get up! Don't leave me here! Mum! Mama! God, she's dead! It's not possible! It's not possible! Ubu killed her, he killed her as surely as if he'd stuck a knife in her! (She weeps.) Great God! Why have you let this happen!

(The ghosts of GEORGE WASHINGTON, KING OBOMBA, QUEEN OBOMBA, O'BIDEN, and SHOEMAKER enter.)

GHOST OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

Hear this, princess: during my life I was Lord of Washington and founder of the Kingdom of America. I entrust our vengeance into your hands. (*He presents her with a brilliantly flashing sword.*) May it never rest till you have brought down the usurper.

(PRINCESS HILARIA takes the sword and the GHOSTS vanish.)

PRINCESS HILARIA (gazing at the sword)

There may or may not be justice in this world, but there can be revenge.

(Snow begins to fall. PRINCESS HILARIA enters the cave.)

Scene 5.

(The throne room in the White Castle.

(UBU (wearing crown), LYUBITCHA (wearing QUEEN OBOMBA's tiara), and MAJOR MCOFFAL.)

UBU

No! Never! I don't wanna! Do you want me to ruin myself for these morons?

MAJOR MCOFFAL

But don't you see your followers are waiting for gifts to celebrate your coronation?

UBU

Can I help it if my followers are idiots?

LYUBITCHA

If you don't give them some red meat, Ubu...

UBU

"My liege lord," to you, Madam Queen.

LYUBITCHA (hissing in his ear)

"My little piggy," you mean!

UBU (giggling)

Oh don't say that, Sweetie Buns!

LYUBITCHA (aloud)

... and better yet, give them some nice shiny gold, or you'll be overthrown before sunset.

UBU

Meat, yes! Gold, no! Slaughter my three oldest horses—that'll be enough for those monkeys. If they were stupid enough to follow me, they'll be too stupid to know the difference.

LYUBITCHA (aside)

How did I ever get stuck with a monkey like you!

UBU

Once and for all, I'm in this for the money. I'm not giving up one red cent!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

But you're already a zillionaire, Your Majesty.

UBU

"Your Majesty!" Now that's more like it! But so what? Eeyore Muskrat is a *kazillionaire*! I don't want anyone in my kingdom who is richer than me.

LYUBITCHA

But now we've got the whole treasury of the Kingdom of America to ourselves! That's a *kazillion* kazillion.

MAJOR MCOFFAL

And there's a treasure tucked away behind the royal toilet. It's all in unmarked bills.

UBU

What was the king selling, drugs?

LYUBITCHA

How do you think he bought all those fancy shoes for the queen?

UBU

That's so ... *wrong*!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Whatever. But we can distribute it to the masses and nobody will be the wiser.

UBU

But I want those unmarked bills! The royal toilet is *my* toilet now! Just you try that, and I'll make sure there's no "offal" like "McOffal"! (Oh I'm so witty!)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

But, Your Majesty, if you don't distribute some largesse to the people, they won't pay their taxes.

UBU

What! Really?

LYUBITCHA

And good-bye kazillion kazillions!

UBU

Oh well. In that case, it'll be an investment. I like investments! *A little* money in and a *lot* of money out! OK, withdraw a million bucks from the Treasury of the Kingdom of America, McOffal, roast a couple hundred steer, a hundred pigs, a hundred lambs, six hundred ducks, four hundred quail, five hundred turkeys, a thousand chickens, and a pheasant. That'll impress 'em! And make sure they're all cooked medium rare – 'cause that's how I like it!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

But what's the pheasant for?

UBU

What do you think? I'm gonna make the Marquis of MBC eat it one feather at a time. To think they cancelled my program just because of a little thing like a coup. The losers!

(They leave.)

Scene 6.

(A balcony at the White Castle.

UBU and LYUBITCHA (wearing crowns, otherwise in the same dress as before), and MAJOR MCOFFAL (wearing a MUGA hat) enter.)

CROWD (beneath balcony; cheering)

There's the king! It's King Ubu! Long live King Ubu! (*They start chanting, in crescendo*) Life-Long King! Life-Long King! Life-Long King! Life-Long King! Life-Long King! Life-Long King! (*Climax of cheering.*)

UBU (throwing gold pieces to the CROWD)

Here's for you! And here's for you! And here's for you! You know, I hate giving you my hard-earned money! Would you want to give *me* your hard-earned money!

CROWD

No!

UBU

But you're going to have to! It's called TAXES! Otherwise I'll have to hang you from this balcony, and we wouldn't want that to happen, now, would we?

CROWD

No!

UBU

So, if I throw you some nice shiny gold, will you promise me you'll pay your TAXES?

CROWD (all together)

We promise!

UBU

OK! Here's some more! (*throwing gold to the CROWD; aside to MAJOR MCOFFAL and LYUBITCHA*) They are so dumb! I could shoot somebody from the Royal Balcony right now, and they'd still love me!

(CROWD goes into a frenzy as UBU throws them gold.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL (to LYUBITCHA)

Your Majesty, look how they're fighting over it.

LYUBITCHA

Ugh! Someone just got his head split open!

UBU

I love it! Bring me more gold! This is more fun than World Wide Wrestling!

(SERVANTS bring in two chests, one much larger than the other.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

What about making them race for it?

UBU

Mac, you're a genius! Hey, people! You see this big chest of gold? It's got five zillion gold coins, give or take a kazillion or two, guaranteed genuine by me! We're going to have a little race for it, OK? How about it? Do you think that's a good idea?

CROWD

Yes! King Ubu's a genius! It's a great idea! Let's all race for it!

UBU

I like that "genius" bit! Yes, I'm a stable genius! And I'm not talking about horses!

(CROWD laughs hysterically.)

UBU (aside to LUYBITCHA)

See, Sweetie Buns, *they* like my jokes. (to CROWD) So! All of you go over there (*pointing*). The race will start when I wave my hand like this (*waves his hand, grinning*), and the first one to reach under the balcony (*pointing below*) wins the big chest!

(CROWD cheers.)

UBU

And those who don't win will get a consolation prize: you'll just have to share the little chest. And after the race, we'll all have dinner.

(CROWD cheers wildly.)

CROWD

Long live King Ubu! Everybody wins! Everybody eats! Everybody's happy!

UBU (to MAJOR MCOFFAL and LYUBITCHA)

Listen to them! They are so dumb. But they *really* love me! (to the CROWD) OK, ready? One, two, three! (*waves and grins*)

(Sound of CROWD running.)

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Here they come!

(Sound of CROWD falling over each other, shouting, screaming.)

UBU

Hey, it's turning into total chaos! I love it! There's a guy leading! Oh no, he's losing ground!

No, he's moving ahead again!

LYUBITCHA

The one behind him's gaining!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Oh no!

LYUBITCHA

He's passing him ...

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Oh yes!

UBU

... he's winning ...

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Oh no!

LYUBITCHA

... he's losing ...

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Oh yes!

UBU

... he's winning ...

MAJOR MCOFFAL

Oh no!...

LYUBITCHA

... he's won!

MAJOR MCOFFAL

(CROWD cheers.)

CROWD

Rudi Ganglioni is the winner! Long live Rudi Ganglioni! Long live Rudi Ganglioni!

UBU

Bring him up here!

(RUDI GANGLIONI enters, winded. He too is wearing a MUGA hat.)

RUDI GANGLIONI

Thank you ... so much ... Your Majesty!

UBU

Rudi Ganglioni! (What a name! They must have been drunk when they came up with that one!) Think nothing of it, Rudi! Here's your reward! (*gives him the big chest with the gold*) But promise me you'll pay your TAXES or I'll have to hang you from the balcony, and I wouldn't want that, would I?

RUDI GANGLIONI (crossing his fingers behind his back)

I promise I will pay my TAXES, Your Majesty.

UBU (crossing his fingers behind his back)

In that case I won't have to hang you! (*to the CROWD below*) The rest of you will just have to share the gold from this other chest.

(He dumps the gold from the smaller chest over the CROWD. CROWD goes crazy.)

UBU

Now everyone come into the White Castle! We're serving dinner for a measly \$129.95! Including dessert! Drinks extra! We accept Discover, Visa, Mastercard, and American Express.

VOICES IN THE CROWD (admiringly)

Today a king, but always an entrepreneur! Hey, how do you think he made his zillions? Anyone can be king, but not everyone can be a zillionaire!

UBU (ecstatically)

They are so *dumb*! I can't believe my luck!

(He throws off his crown, snatches the MUGA cap from MAJOR MCOFFAL, puts it on, and raises his arms in a "V" for Victory.)

CROWD (chanting)

Ubu! Ubu! Ubu! Ubu! (etc.)

(Blackout.)

Third Fit

Scene 1.

(The White Castle.

UBU and LYUBITCHA.)

UBU

By my gold toilet, here I am in the White Castle! I'm king of America. I can't believe it was that easy. As soon as I put the crown on my head, everybody gave in, just like that. They all started kowtowing, Your Majesty this, Your Majesty that - everybody and his mother wanted to "do lunch." They couldn't get down on their knees fast enough! What a bunch of sheep! If I'd known how easy it was, I'd have done this a long time ago! They're going to get me my big orange wig next.

LYUBITCHA

What's it made of, Ubu darling? Even when we're on the throne, we still have to watch our pennies.

UBU

Well, Your Miserly Majesty, my big orange wig will be made of orange peel, orange rind, orange seed, and orange juice, with a mane of orange poppy and a plume of orange parrot. You'll never guess what's my favorite color, Sweetie Buns!

LYUBITCHA

Never in a million years, Ubu darling.

UBU

Cobalt blue.

LUYBITCHA

You're so funny! It's even funnier to be on the throne of America. And me, a little girl from Slovenia!

UBU

You're right for once, Sweetie Buns.

LYUBITCHA

We owe a debt, you know, to the Duke of Kentucky.

UBU

Who?

LYUBITCHA

Major McOffal. Or is it Colonel now? Without him, we'd still be stuck at the top of the Tower of Pizza eating anchovies.

UBU

Don't remind me. And don't bother me with that buffoon. He can go whistle for his dukedom. I just made him a colonel. What else does he want?

LYUBITCHA

He's already turned against a king once.

UBU

That's where he made *his* mistake. He tries anything fancy, I'll decorate our Christmas tree with his privates! (*laughs at his own joke*) I'll decorate our Christmas tree with his privates! (*laughs harder*) I'll decorate our Christmas tree with his privates! (*laughs till he chokes*) But seriously: I feel sorry for that limp wick, but I'm not going to worry about him anymore than I do Princess Hilaria.

LYUBITCHA

You think you've seen the last of her?

UBU

Of course I have! What do you think that dried-up little ...

(They both freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage holding a sign: "UNACCEPTABLE WORD!" and exits.)

UBU

... is going to do to Me? The only thing I know about Princess Hilaria's that she's hilarious! (*laughs at his own joke*) The only thing I know about Princess Hilaria's that she's hilarious! (*laughs harder*) The only thing I know about Princess Hilaria's that she's hilarious! The only

thing I know about Princess Hilaria's that she's hilarious! The only thing I know about Princess Hilaria's that she's hilarious! (*laughs till he chokes*) What was I saying till I was so rudely interrupted by own wit? (*laughs at his own joke*) What was I saying till I was so rudely interrupted by own wit? (*laughs harder*)

LYUBITCHA

SHUT UP!

UBU

But if I shut up, I can't tell you about my secret weapon.

LYUBITCHA

What's that?

UBU

You'll never guess.

LYUBITCHA

What is it?

UBU

Never in a million years!

LYUBITCHA

Stop it! Just tell me already.

UBU

Eeyore Muskrat.

LYUBITCHA

Eeyore Muskrat? The master of L, previously known as Twatter? The mascot of Mars? The richest bro in the world?

UBU (*aside*)

For the time being.

LUYBITCHA

But I thought you hated Eeyore Muskrat.

UBU

Well, I did. Till he paid for all the pork bellies at my big feast.

LYUBITCHA

And you still charged for dinner! You've got chutzpah, Ubu darling. That puts a different color on things. But, still, Muskrat may have all the dollars, ducats, euros, yen, yuan, lire, francs, pounds and cryptocurrency in the world...

UBU (aside)

For the time being!

LYUBITCHA

... but he is still not a princess. And the people love their princess. Listen to me carefully, Your Marvelous Magnificent Most Munificently Magnanimous Majesty...

UBU

Now you're talkin'!

LYUBITCHA

... you need to be extra extra *extra* nice to Princess Hilaria. Say nice things about her, offer her forgiveness, wherever she is in her cave. Flatter her virtues, overwhelm her with promises, build her a new palace, make her feel she's the greatest thing since salted butter...

UBU

I like salted butter!

LYUBITCHA

... do anything you need to to get her on your side. I don't say it'll be easy, you have a lot of, shall we say, "prejudice" to overcome.

UBU

That's true. Half her family's in prison, the other half's in exile, all because of Little Old Me. I almost feel sorry for the little ...

(They both freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage holding a sign: "UNACCEPTABLE WORD!" and exits.)

UBU

But wait a second! What do you think, I'm made of money? You already made me waste twenty zillion bucks, you're worrying about my orange wig, and now you want me to build a brand new palace for Princess Hilaria? Don't be hilarious! (*laughs at his own joke*) Now you want me to build a palace for...

LYUBITCHA

STOP IT! – OK, have it your own way, Mister King. How do you want to be roasted, medium rare or well done?

UBU

What do you mean?

LYUBITCHA

I mean you're underestimating her.

UBU

Well, in that case *you'll* be roasted right along with me.

LYUBITCHA

For the last time, You Pig-Headed Monarch, listen to me. The princess will triumph over you, because she was one thing you don't. And even Eeyore Muskrat can't give it to you.

UBU

What do you mean by that, You Little-Brained Queenie?

LYUBITCHA

She's right and you, Sire, are wrong.

UBU

What does that have to do with anything? Where have you been living, under a rock? I figure they know even in Slovenia that "wrong" always wins over the "right" when it's got the *money*. And who's got his hand in the Treasury of the Kingdom of America? Who, baby? Little Old Ubu, that's who. And so, if she is right and Ubu is wrong, and Ubu's got the *money*, who wins, Queenie? Who wins? Who wins? *I win! Me! Ubu!* You're the one who's underestimating Me, Madam! And for that I'll roast you till you're medium rare and very well done!

(UBU chases LYUBITCHA out.)

Scene 2.

(The throne room at the White Castle, the same as before, with the throne raised on a dais at the center; the throne, however, is badly patched up after its earlier collapse and breakage.)

(LYUBITCHA, COLONEL MCOFFAL, and CLERK.

COLONEL MCOFFAL approaches LYUBITCHA.)

COLONEL MCOFFAL (singing under his breath)

“I’m on my way down to ol’ Kentucky. I’m far away, but ...”

LYUBITCHA (aside)

Shhh, be patient. You’ll get your dukedom. I’m still working on him.

(Flourish of trumpets. UBU enters; all, except LYUBITCHA, kneel as he takes the throne.)

UBU

You may stand! You are here for the first important ceremony of my reign. Sentries! Bring forward my Nobles’ money chests and my Nobles’ deeds of land and my Nobles’ accounting books. And then bring forward my Nobles!

(Sounds of a crowd of angry Nobles being hauled in by UBU’s troops.)

UBU (speaking toward the audience)

I have the honor, my dear Nobles, to announce to you that, our kingdom being suddenly insolvent – that’s Irish for “we got no more money, folks!” – that you, my dearest of dear Nobles, will have an even higher honor than I have in announcing it, the honor of mending our wounded fortunes by disappearing off the face of our beautiful earth and donating your money, after you are thus annihilated, to the Treasury of the Kingdom of America. That’s My treasury, in case you didn’t know.

(Shouts from the Nobles.)

UBU

Bring forth the first Noble. Those who are condemned to death will be dropped down the Golden Escalator we had installed just yesterday in the White Castle down to the bottom of the Bottomless Money Pit of the Treasury of the Kingdom of America, where they will be disembarked. Who are you?

VOICE OF FIRST NOBLE

I am the Count of Milwaukee, Your Majesty.

UBU

How much money did you make last year?

VOICE OF FIRST NOBLE

Three million dollars.

UBU

Is that all? You must be a lazy bum! I made ten times that much when I was only court jester.

(UBU does a thumbs down. Sounds of FIRST NOBLE screaming and falling.)

LYUBITCHA

For heaven's sake, Ubu darling! That's awful!

UBU

And who are you? (*Silence.*) Answer me!

VOICE OF SECOND NOBLE

Your Majesty, I am the Grand Duke of Las Vegas.

UBU

The Grand Duke of Las Vegas! Fantastic! I don't need to ask you how much money *you* made last year. (*Thumbs down.*)

(Sounds of SECOND NOBLE screaming and falling.)

UBU

And who are you? You sure look ugly.

VOICE OF THIRD NOBLE

I am the Duke of Portland and the suburbs of Tulatin, Tigard and Troutdale.

UBU (*sarcastically*)

And Tulatin, Tigard and Troutdale! That's impressive! Anything else?

VOICE OF THIRD NOBLE

That is all, Your Majesty.

UBU

And that's too bad! Down the hatch. (*Thumbs down.*)

(Sounds of THIRD NOBLE screaming and falling.)

UBU

And who are you?

VOICE OF FOURTH NOBLE

I am, Your Majesty, the Prince of Florida.

UBU

And how much money did you make last year?

VOICE OF FOURTH NOBLE

Nothing. I don't have two pennies to rub against each other, Your Majestic Majestical Majesty. Just yesterday I had to file for bankruptcy....

UBU

Hey, I don't like that word! (*Thumbs down.*) Down the hatch!

(Sounds of FOURTH NOBLE screaming and falling.)

COLONEL MCOFFAL (aside to LYUBITCHA)

Why was that?

LYUBITCHA

He doesn't like to remember he went bankrupt lebenty-leben times before hitting the jackpot as court jester.

UBU

Who are you? And stop shivering. You scared or something?

VOICE OF FIFTH NOBLE

I, Your Majesty, have the dubious distinction of being the Margrave of Chicago and the Paladin of Polack.

UBU

Wow! That sounds so impressive! The Margrave of Chicago and the Paladin of Polack! And you sound so modest about it too! You're sure there's nothing else to add to the list?

VOICE OF FIFTH NOBLE

Nothing else, Sire.

UBU

"Sirrah," to poor little you. (What a word!) (*Thumbs down. Sweetly*) Down the hatch!

LYUBITCHA

You're being too cruel, Ubu darling. It's going to come back and bite you.

UBU

Please! I'm working! Now, clerk, read My list of MY property.

CLERK (reading from scroll)

The Princedom of Florida, the Grand Duchy of Las Vegas, the Duchy of Portland with Tulatin, Tigard and Troutdale, the County of Milwaukee, the Margravate of Chicago and the Palatinate of Polack.

UBU

And?

CLERK

And the County of Kenya.

UBU

Right! Obomba's hometown! Well, go on.

CLERK

That is everything, Your Majesty.

UBU

Whaddaya mean, that is everything Your Majesty? Curses! Well, I'm sick of this bean counting. Stick all the Nobles down the Golden Escalator! That way I can seize all their estates at once. (I love that phrase: "seize all their estates at once." Only a king can say that!) C'mon, what are you waiting for! You heard what I said.

(Sounds of dozens of NOBLES screaming and falling.)

UBU

OK, that's done. Now I wanna make some new laws.

(Sounds of JUDGES entering the throne room.)

UBU

Hey, who are these guys?

COLONEL MCOFFAL

All the kingdom's judges, Your Majesty.

VOICE OF FIRST JUDGE

We oppose any new laws until they are agreed to by the Council.

UBU

Whaddaya mean, "the council"? I'm the Council. Snakeballs! We need to save money, so here is my first law: the judges will no longer be paid.

JUDGES

No! That's horrendous! You can't do that! What will we live on!

UBU

That's easy. You can pocket all the fines you impose and the property of everybody you condemn to death. Isn't that fair?

JUDGES

Horror! Scandalous! Infamy! Monstrous!

VOICE OF FIRST JUDGE

We refuse to act as judges under such conditions.

UBU

Okeedokee! (*Thumbs down.*) Down the hatch with all of you!

(Sounds of JUDGES screaming and falling.)

LYUBITCHA

What are you doing, Ubu darling? Who'll run the courts, who'll dispense justice?

UBU

Why me, of course. You'll be amazed at how smoothly it'll go. For every crime, there will just one penalty: death! And everybody who's accused will be found guilty! All crime will disappear overnight. It'll be amazing. And now, where are the financiers?

(Sounds of FINANCIERS entering the throne room.)

VOICE OF FIRST FINANCIER

No changes are needed, Your Majesty. We have everything in hand.

UBU

You mean you have the country's balls "in hand," you robbers. I intend to *change* everything. First of all, I'll be keeping half the taxes for myself.

VOICES OF FINANCIERS

No! No! That's too much! That's too greedy, even for us!

UBU

This will be my tax policy: fifty percent on property, thirty percent on commerce, ninety percent on industry, sixty percent on marriages, and a hundred percent on death. So, if you don't want to pay taxes, you better not die. I think that's fair.

LYUBITCHA

It's perfectly idiotic, Ubu darling.

VOICES OF FINANCIERS

It's absurd. It's impossible. It'll bankrupt the country overnight!

UBU

I don't like that word! (*Thumbs down.*) Down the hatch with all of you!

(Sounds of FINANCIERS screaming and falling.)

LYUBITCHA

Ubu darling, this is no way to be a king! You're killing everybody!

UBU

Oh snakeballs!

LYUBITCHA

No more finance, no more justice!

UBU

Have no fear, Madam Queenie, I'll go from town to town, collecting My taxes.

(Blackout.)

Scene 3.

(A room in the White Castle.

UBU and EYORE MUSKRAT.)

UBU

I've made a good beginning, if I do say so myself, but this whole place is a mess. Wherever I look, they're spending my money, Eeyore. It's a disgrace.

EYORE MUSKRAT

Right, Your Majesty.

UBU

It's time to drain the swamp. First of all, I gotta get rid of all those foreign-aid moochers...

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Right!

UBU

... and then the whole crooked S&MFCBIA....

EEYOYRE MUSKRAT

Yes!

UBU

They're a bunch of spies! Spying on me! Can you believe it? Then there's the corrupt DOJ. They actually go after criminals! Did you ever hear of such a thing?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Never!

UBU

And the useless FDA, where they actually do drugs – what a scandal! And there's the weaponized FCC, they give licenses to TV stations I don't control! I mean, it's unbelievable!

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Incredible!

UBU

And there's the CDC and the NIHS, and who knows what else! It's an alphabet soup! And I hate alphabet soup! I gotta get rid, once and for all, of the cheap-skate traitors!

EEYORE MUSKRAT

I think you mean, the deep-state traitors?

UBU

Cheap skate, deep state, what's the difference? They're draining my treasury – so I'm going to drain them. So, since you, Eeyore Muskrat, are the richest man in the Kingdom of America, and some say in the entire world (*aside*) for the time being (*aloud*), a man who, for a mere zillion dollars, made and broke and made again that great company Hooters...

EEYOREE MUSKRAT

With respect, Your Majesty, Twatter.

UBU

Hooters, Twaaters, what's in a name? (Though personally I prefer "Hooters.") As the "break it up and make a billion bucks" genius of our time (*aside*) until proven otherwise (*aloud*), you're the best man to drain the swamp and give me back all my cash. So, whaddaya say, Eeeyore?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Sounds great to me, Your Majesty. And I know the best guys to do it. I brought them along, they're just outside.

UBU

You're a smart guy, I knew it – always a step ahead! Any friends of yours (*aside*) I'll make sure are friends of mine.

EEYORE MUSKRAT (calling offstage)

Guys, come on in, the king wants to meet you.

(Enter the three MUSKRATEERS.)

EEYORE MUSKRAT

My Muskrateers! They learned hacking in the cradle. That's how long they've had cell phones! Their parents were really dumb. But their stupidity helps our cupidity! Furthermore: they're all high school dropouts! No university leftwing lunacy for them.

UBU

I love the uneducated! (*to first MUSKRATEERS*) What's your name, bright guy?

FIRST MUSKRATEER (who is scrawny)

Big Dick.

UBU (*aside*)

It better be. (*to second MUSKRATEER*) And how about you?

SECOND MUSKRATEER (who is fat)

I'm Brainy Hack.

UBU

Nobody's gonna get around you! And you, big guy?

THIRD MUSKRATEER (who is very tall)

Asswhole.

UBU (very politely)

Ass ... hole?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

No, Your Majesty: "Asswhole"... wh, wh.... Ass...*whole*.

UBU (aside)

Good luck with that! (*aloud*) Well, looks like you've got quite a team, Eeyore! I hereby grant you free access to all departments of my government to go fast and break things at will. Just make sure at the end of the day there's more money in my coffers than at the beginning. And now I have to go collect my taxes! Eeyore, come with me.

EEYORE MUSKRAT (to MUSKRATEERS)

You heard the king! Get hacking!

(They all leave.)

Scene 4.

(The house of a peasant near the capital. Several PEASANTS are assembled.)

FIRST PEASANT (entering)

Have you heard the news? The king and all the nobles are dead!

(Other peasants groan.)

FIRST PEASANT

But so are all the judges and all the financiers!

(Other peasants cheer.)

SECOND PEASANT

What's a financier?

THIRD PEASANT

I dunno. But if they're dead with the judges I'm all for it.

FIRST PEASANT

And Princess Hilaria and the queen have fled to the mountains.

(Other peasants groan.)

FIRST PEASANT

And Ubu has seized the throne!

(Other peasants cheer.)

FIRST PEASANT

Why are you cheering?

SECOND PEASANT

Well, he killed all the judges and financeers, didn't he?

THIRD PEASANT

And that kinda makes up for killing the nobles and the king. You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.

FOURTH PEASANT (aka HERMAN)

And Ubu always said the system was rigged against little guys like him, and so he's for little guys like us.

FIFTH PEASANT

I like it when a zillionaire acts like he's one of us.

FIRST PEASANT

But I've got more. They say our taxes are being doubled and Ubu's gonna come and collect them himself.

(Other peasants groan.)

THIRD PEASANT

But Ubu always said if he were king, he'd *lower* taxes.

FOURTH PEASANT

For rich people. You need to read the fine print. Well, that's what I'd do too, if I were in his shoes. After all, this is America, and people can do just that they want, and if they want to screw the little guy, well that just means...

SECOND PEASANT

What does that mean?

FOURTH PEASANT

It means you gotta get rich so you can too.

PEASANTS

That's right! This is America!

(Loud knocking at the door.)

VOICE OF UBU

Hornsbuggers! Open up, by my gold toilet, Saint John, Saint Peter, Saint Nicholas and Two Chronicles! I'm coming to collect my TAXES.

(The door is smashed in, and UBU enters with EEYORE MUSKRAT and the THREE ENTOURAGE, fully armed.)

UBU

Which one of you is head peasant?

(FOURTH PEASANT steps forward.)

UBU

What's your name?

FOURTH PEASANT

Herman Leczinski.

UBU

Another Irishman! They're all over the place. Well, listen to me, Herman Leczinski, if you don't listen to me, these gentlemen here will cut off your ears. Well, are you listening to me?

HERMAN

Yes, Your Kingship, but you haven't really said anything yet, pardon the expression.

UBU

Haven't said anything yet! Why you insolent little peasant Irishman! I've been speaking for an hour. Do you think I've come here to preach in the desert, like that John the Baptist guy? (Though honestly I always thought he sounded more like an Episcopalian than a Baptist! I'm *so* funny!) Well?

HERMAN

No, Your Kingship, I didn't really think that.

UBU

You didn't really think that! I'll tell you what you're going to think. You're going to think that I have come to order you ... (*aside*) No, that's not right, it's not kingly enough – "I've come to *order* you!" I'm not some sergeant in the ranks, no, oh wait I've got it... (*aloud*) I have come to *command* you to produce, I have come to *command* you to produce (*aside to EEYORE MUSKRAT*) Whaddaya think, Eeyore?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

You're the king, Your Majesty!

UBU (returning to FOURTH PEASANT)

I have come to *command* you to produce forthwith at once all your money so I can take all of it for my TAXES. I know there'll be a little pain, you'll all be thrown into the street and the price of bread will be a hundred bucks a loaf, and many of you will die in the gutter, but afterwards it'll be great again, I promise! And, anyway if you don't, you'll all be slaughtered, you and your entire family, by these gentlemen. So, what do you say?

HERMAN

But we paid our two hundred ninety dollars in taxes for each of us three weeks ago, according to the law, and that's all we owe for this year.

UBU

Well, I've got news for you, Herman Leczinski. I've changed the law. Now everybody has got to pay this year's taxes twice, and all those I'll levy later will have to pay this year's taxes *three* times. That's the law. The law is that I'm the law, because I'm the only one who makes the law because I execute the law without fear or favor, I execute the law the same way I execute a murderer! That's fair! More important, it's the law. The king is the law and anything he says is the law. The Supreme Pigpen said so. Got it?

PEASANTS

But we're poor, we have no money! You said you'd lower our taxes.

UBU

I changed my mind. Don't I have the right to change my mind? What are you, tyrants? We're in America!

PEASANTS

Oh yes, Sire! You have the right to change your mind. Every American has the right to change his mind.

UBU

That's right. So pay up!

PEASANTS

But we can't! We'll die!

UBU

So die, we're overpopulated as it is. If you don't, you'll die anyway. I'll cut off all your heads and deport your kids to Rwanda. (Those Brits have the right idea!) I'll take over your land and turn it into golf courses. I'll impound your farms, I'll steal your chickens, I'll rob your banks, I'll burn your villages, I'll wreak so much havoc you'll never believe so much havoc could ever be wreaked!

PEASANTS (ad lib.)

No! Never! Down with Ubu! Down with the dictator! To arms! Long live Princess Hilaria, by grace of God Queen of America and Indiana!

UBU (to the THREE ENTOURAGE)

Kill them all! Let God sort 'em out.

(Carnage ensues, the house is destroyed, and HERMAN flees, alone. UBU remains, in triumph.

(EEYORE MUSKRAT gives him a Roman salute.

Blackout.)

Scene 5.

(A dungeon in the Fortress of Trenton.

MCOFFAL (who has been stripped of his officer's stripes) in chains and UBU)

UBU

Let's at least try to end this on a more positive note, Mac. This is a pretty miserable end for a guy who was once so promising. You wanted me to make you a duke, then you rebelled because I didn't. Well, why didn't I make you a duke? Let's be honest: your work wasn't all that great. Why should I pay for shoddy work? I made you a colonel, whaddya want? Now you don't even have that. So, you conspired and now you're retired. Hey, I'm a poet, and I didn't know it! But seriously: all I need is a few names of the other people in the conspiracy against me. Come on, help me here.

MCOFFAL

Careful, Ubu. You've only been king a week, and you've committed enough crimes to damn the saints. The death of the king and almost everyone in the state, all the lives you have wrecked, cry out for revenge. The people are enraged. You have betrayed every promise you ever made. You are a despot, a dictator, a tyrant. There will be blood!

UBU

You saw that movie too! Wasn't Daniel Day Lewis great in it? Boy I learned a lot watching that movie. But back to business. You've got quite a tongue, my old friend. With a tongue like that, you might give me a couple sleepless nights if I ever let you see daylight again. But we're at the deepest level of the deepest dungeon of the Fortress of Trenton, and nobody's ever escaped—alive. Did I tell you I fired all the old jail keepers and hired a bunch of new ones, all totally loyal to yours truly? I even gave them a test. Question number 7: "Who was the king before King Ubu?" It's multiple choice. Correct answer: "There was no king before King Ubu." Only those who give the correct answer are allowed to be jail keepers. I'm not stupid. Anyway, you should be grateful. I let you live, didn't I? I didn't kill you or your family or anybody you really knew, right? I mean, you hated King Obomba almost as much as I did. And you didn't exactly love the nobles or the judges or the financiers or the peasants, despite all those crocodile tears. Where's the gratitude? I mean, what's the world coming to? So, don't even THINK about escaping, it'll just give you indigestion. Anyway, there are dungeons and there are dungeons. You could get a really nice cell with actual food to eat and not just dry cockroaches and dead rats. And no chains! And who knows what else? I wouldn't want to have to ask Eeyore Muskrat to ask you. He's kind of a rough guy on the interrogation front, if you know what I mean. (*Silence as he lets that sink in.*) So, is there anything you'd like to tell me, Mac?

(Silence as the two men stare at each other.)

UBU

Look, I come here with all the good will in the world, with the hope we can at least part on good terms. (*Silence.*) You sure about this. (*Silence.*) Well! If you insist on being stubborn, there's nothing I can do about it. Hey, jailer!

MCOFFAL

Wait!

UBU (to the unseen JAIL KEEPER)

Hold it! (*to MCOFFAL*) You have any names you wanna give me?

MCOFFAL

I have one name.

UBU

Well, that's better one than none. What is it?

MCOFFAL

Come closer.

(UBU gets closer, his ear close to MCOFFAL's mouth.)

MCOFFAL (whispering)

The most important conspirator in our gang is (*shouting*) *Ubu!*

(UBU leaps back, scandalized.)

UBU

Jailer!

(The jail keeper, who wears a black eye patch, opens the cell door.)

JAIL KEEPER

Yes, Your Majis-sirrah-sir?

UBU (to MCOFFAL)

You'll pay for this, loser! You'll damn the day you were born! (*to the JAIL KEEPER*) And don't call me "Sirrah"!

(UBU storms out. The jail keeper and COLONEL MCOFFAL trade a long look. The jail keeper raises his eye patch and gives MCOFFAL a big wink—it's HERMAN. Then he closes the cell door.)

Scene 6.

(The Palace of Mexico.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA, in magnificent Aztec regalia, and MCOFFAL.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Infamous adventurer, speculator, assassin – aren't you one of those notorious conspirers who overthrew our friend, supporter, and ally, King Obomba?

MCOFFAL

Your Highness, forgive me. I was carried away by mad ambition and the insolent lies of Ubu.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA (aside, contemptuously)

They make one every minute! (*aloud*) Well, why have you come to the court of Mexico, and what do you want from me?

MCOFFAL

Ubu imprisoned me in the Fortress of Trenton on charges of conspiracy to overthrow him.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Did he indeed? That's what they call "poetic justice" in this country. Well? Go on.

MCOFFAL

One night I escaped ...

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

One night he escaped! Just like that! I heard the Fortress of Trenton is inescapable. Once you are in Trenton, you're pretty well stuck there forever. So how did you manage that?

MCOFFAL

All I can say is I had help from someone whose name I won't betray.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

And why not? You seem to have betrayed everyone else, much like your new king Ubu.

MCOFFAL

Not everyone, Your Highness.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

No, not absolutely *everyone*. That might be a feat beyond even *his* capacities. Go on.

MCOFFAL

I have ridden for ten days and ten nights, past the Line called Mason-Dixon, down the rivers of Mississippi, over the deserts of Texas, across the Sierra Madre, to the base of Popocatepetl and Iztaccíhuatl, volcanoes that sleep now but someday will awake in fire, to the Palace of the Empress Claudia, to come and beg her gracious forgiveness.

(MCOFFAL kneels and bows.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Forgiveness for what? What have you done to me that I should forgive you?

MCOFFAL

For my betrayal of your friend and ally, King Obomba.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

You did not “betray” King Obomba. You *killed* him. By rights, I should have you strung from the nearest tree.

(MCOFFAL remains kneeling with head bent.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

What was your rank in the American military?

MCOFFAL

Major until Ubu made me colonel, though he promised to make me Duke of Kentucky before breaking his word like the liar and coward he is. I commanded the fifth regiment of the Board of Normal and a company of mercenaries in Ubu’s service.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

What proof of loyalty to me do you have?

MCOFFAL

My honor as a Kentuckian, and a map of the capital that reveals all the secret passages in and between the White Castle, the Senate, the courts, and all the agencies of government, from the FBI to the CIA to the FDC to the FYMe.

(MCOFFAL offers the map to the Empress.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA (taking the map)

Hm, that’s nice. And what do you expect me to do with this?

MCOFFAL

Princess Hilaria, the adopted daughter of King Obomba, is still alive and hiding in the mountains. She’s the legitimate heir to the throne of America. I would do whatever I can to restore her to her rightful place

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

I’ll bet you would. And has she promised to make you Duke of Kentucky?

(MCOFFAL is silent.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

In this country we take silence as consent. So, what you really want is for me to help restore the princess by invading America and ridding your land of the usurper, and making you Duke of Kentucky. Hm?

MCOFFAL

You might say that, Your Highness.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

I *am* saying that, Your Lowness. Well, let me think about it.

(She considers for a moment.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

All right, I have thought about it. It may be foolish to do this, since treachery seems to run like ice water in your veins, but I am going to appoint you second in command of the Tenth Regiment of Monterrey. But woe to you if you betray me as you betrayed King Obomba and the Pretender Ubu, and now your country. I will not be as kind as Ubu or as blind as Obomba. If you're a brave warrior, you will be rewarded with the Order of Pancho Villa, but if you betray me, I will have you crushed, a centimeter at a time, under the Stone of Huitzilopochtli.

MCOFFAL

I promise you my fealty, on my honor and the honor of Princess Hilaria.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

We'll see about that. You may go.

(MCOFFAL leaves.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

I may regret this. But I have been looking for an excuse to invade America for a very long time. Maybe it's payback time for my betrayed and beaten ancestors. But can I trust this map?

(She opens map and leaves.)

Scene 7.

(The council chamber at the White Castle.

UBU LYUBITCHA, EEYORE MUSKRAT and ADVISERS.)

UBU

I now call to order this meeting of my advisers and Eeyore Muskrat, my Potentate Plenipotentiary to Fill My Coffers to Mars and Beyond. So keep your ears open and your mouths shut. First we will deal with finances, then we'll talk about a little scheme I've cooked up with my Best Buddy Eeyore to bring nice weather and make sure it doesn't rain. I hate it when it rains

on my parade! (*laughs at his own joke; EEYORE MUSKRAT laughs with him*) I hate it when it rains on my parade! (*laughs harder*) I hate it when it rains on my.... (*menacingly*) Hey, why aren't you laughing?

ADVISERS

You told us to keep our mouths shut, Your Majesty.

UBU

Well, maybe I changed my mind...!

ADVISERS (ad lib.)

Oh! Yes! Well! In that case! (*forced laughter*)

UBU

That's better.

LYUBITCHA (aside)

Don't be stupid!

UBU (aside)

By my ... *platinum* toilet, be quiet, Madam Queenie. I'm not going to take your whining much longer. (*aloud*) Gentlemen, as you know, my finances are proceeding very satisfactorily. Eeyore Muskrat has taken all that over, haven't you Eeyore?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

With pleasure, Your Majesty.

UBU

The streets are mobbed every morning by a mob of lowlife, and Eeyore is doing wonders with those poor mobbing slobs. In all directions you can see the burning houses of people who didn't genuflect quite low enough to please me. The people are now bent double with misery, they're too crushed to even think of rebelling.

(EEYORE MUSKRAT, beaming, bows to UBU)

ADVISER

Are the new taxes going well, Your Majesty?

LYUBITCHA

Not very. The new tax on marriages has only brought in \$3.47. The king has to chase people all over the place to convince them to get married. Maybe you should send Eeyore after them too.

(EEYORE MUSKRAT grins.)

UBU

Hornsbuggers, Madam Queenie! I've got an elbow to speak with and you've got a butt to listen!

(ADVISERS laugh uneasily. EEYORE MUSKRAT grins.)

UBU

You're mixing me up! By the horn of Ubu...

(MESSENGER enters, holding a letter.)

UBU

Hey, are you still here? Get out, you little monkey, before I have you beheaded!

(MESSENGER leaves, dropping letter.)

UBU (aside to LYUBITCHA)

I thought he looked familiar. I should have gotten rid of him when I was cleaning up after you know who.

LYUBITCHA (picking up letter)

You might want to read this, Your Majesty.

UBU

You know I hate reading. You read it, Madam Queenie.

LYUBITCHA

It's from McOffal.

UBU

Must be a love letter. What does he say?

LYUBITCHA

He says the Empress of Mexico ...

UBU

That cow!

LYUBITCHA

... has made him leader of the Mexican army and, if you don't abdicate immediately and put Princess Hilaria on the throne instead of your sorry butt, he will lead an invasion of the Kingdom of America, and he will personally tear you limb from limb beneath the dome of the Capitol. I am reading verbatim.

UBU

Tear me limb from limb beneath the dome of the Capitol?

LYUBITCHA

That's what he says.

UBU

Do you really think he would do it?

LYUBITCHA

I have no doubt he would.

UBU

AHHHH! (*He starts sobbing.*) He doesn't love me anymore!

LYUBITCHA

No, I don't think he does.

UBU

But what did I ever do to him to deserve this? He's so ungrateful! I even made him colonel! He told me he always wanted to be colonel.

LYUBITCHA

You put him in prison, you put half his family in...

UBU

But I didn't have him beheaded like I did everyone else! Everything's relative. Where's the gratitude?

LYUBITCHA

There's only one thing to do.

UBU

And what's that, Sweetie Buns?

LYUBITCHA

Oh, it's "Sweetie Buns" when you want something from me.

UBU

No matter what I say, you'll always be Sweetie Buns to me.

LYUBITCHA

Well, the one safe course is...

UBU

Well?

LYUBITCHA

Beat them to the punch. Declare war and invade Mexico.

ADVISERS

Yes! That's it! Declare war! Invade Mexico!

(EEYORE MUSKRAT beams.)

UBU (sarcastically)

Sure! Right! "Declare war! Invade Mexico!" And I'll get it in the butt, as usual.

ADVISERS (severally, excitedly)

We'll have to organize the army. And requisition provisions. And set up artillery brigades and fortresses. And get more money for the troops. They haven't been paid in months.

UBU

Hey, wait a minute. That's enough from you guys, or I'll give you all root canals on national television, just like I did on MBC's Adventist Dentist. Remember that? I loved that show! But you know what happens when a *king* fires you...

(ADVISERS go silent.)

UBU

Well! So you want to invade Mexico?

ADVISERS

Yes, Sire!

UBU

And to do that, you first want to declare war?

ADVISERS

It's the usual practice, Sire.

UBU

What do I care about the usual practice? Well, I'm not going to spend My money on any war, and especially not a war with Mexico. No way, Jose! (Hey, isn't that cute! So appropriate!) I used to be paid a lot of money to wage war against VICIS and MYCIS and SLISIS and DICIS, under a certain person who shall not be named - and now war is going to be waged at My expense? What universe do you live in? You can have as much war as you want, but you're going to have to pay for it all by your little, tiny pipsqueak selves. Am I clear about that?

(ADVISERS look at each other.)

ADVISERS (whispering)

Who needs the zillions of a king when we've got the kazillions of Eeyore Muskrat!

(They give a big wink to EEYORE MUSKRAT, who winks back.)

ADVISERS (shouting)

OK, Your Majesty! Have it your way! We won't need a penny from you. We're off to war on Mexico! We're off to war on Mexico!

(LYUBITCHA looks disgusted at UBU)

(All freeze.)

LYUBITCHA (aside to EEYORE)

Ubu darling won't be able to help himself as long as you're paying. While the cat's away, the mice will play, won't we, Eeyore darling?

ADVISERS (shouting)

We're off to war on Mexico! We're off to war on Mexico! We're off to war on Mexico! We're off to war on Mexico!

(Blackout.)

Scene 8.

(An army camp outside the capital.

UBU and LYUBITCHA)

Cheers of SOLDIERS (offstage)

USA! USA! Ubu, Ubu! USA! USA!

UBU (waving to the soldiers offstage)

We're going to Make Us Great Again!

(SOLDIERS cheer.)

UBU

And we begin by invading Mexico (now that Eeyore Muskrat has agreed to pay for it!) and defeat the traitor McAwful and teach Empress Claudia a lesson she'll never forget.

(Climax of cheering.)

UBU

Sweetie Buns, give me my breastplate and my helmet and my sword and my spear. Hey, wait a minute. I'll be so heavy I won't be able to run away if they chase me.

LYUBITCHA (aside)

What a dolt!

(Over the following, she helps him don his belly protector, which is strung with empty tin cans, jangling with every move.)

UBU

Ah! Here's my sword of snakeballs and my spear of power! (*He seizes and drops both.*) By my toilet, I'll never be ready! And the Mexicans are coming, the Mexicans are coming! I'm so sorry I ever called you spicks! Please don't kill me!

LYUBITCHA

Your Mistaken Misfit of a Majesty, you dropped your sceptre.

(She picks up a toilet plunger lying nearby and gives it to UBU)

UBU

Ah! Thank you, Sweetie Buns. And where's my helmet?

(LYUBITCHA puts a colander on his head.)

UBU

That's much better!

(He takes a stance. The tin cans jangle.)

LYUBITCHA

How handsome you are, Ubu darling! You look just like an armed pumpkin.

UBU

You're such a flatterer! Now, where's my horse?

LYUBITCHA

But your horse is at death's door.

UBU

What!

LYUBITCHA

It's had nothing to eat for a week.

UBU

Why is that?

LYUBITCHA

Because of your cost cutting.

UBU

I like that! I pay 37 cents a day to feed an old hack, and it can't even carry me into battle? I'll sue!

LYUBITCHA

Who, your horse?

UBU

Somebody's been stealing from me again!

LYUBITCHA (disingenuously)

But whoever would be doing that, Ubu darling?

UBU

Well... bring me another horse. I'm not marching to Mexico on foot!

(A donkey is brought in.)

UBU (covering his face with the colander)

OK, help me on.

(He is helped onto the donkey, holding the toilet plunger and facing backwards.)

UBU

Forward, march!

(Donkey moves ahead.)

UBU

Hey, I'm going backwards! I'm gonna fall, I'm gonna die! Help!

(He tumbles from the donkey, is helped on, again backwards and falls again, yelling; then is helped on a last time, this time facing front.)

LYUBITCHA

He really is an absolute idiot. It's almost impressive.

UBU

Horn of Ubu, I feel half dead, and I haven't even invaded Mexico yet. Never mind, I'm going to war, I'm going to kill 'em all. Woe to anybody who doesn't keep up with me! I'll stick him and I'll spear him and I'll sword him and I'll boil him! I'll eat him for breakfast! I'll hang him from my balcony!

LYUBITCHA

That's telling 'em, Your Majesty!

UBU

You be regent while I'm away, Madam Queenie. Eeyore Muskrat will be your right-hand man. Be nice to him – but not too nice! No monkey business while I'm fighting the Mexicans.

LYUBITCHA

Why, Ubu darling! What can you possibly be thinking of?

UBU

OK, which way is Mexico?

LYUBITCHA (pointing)

That way.

UBU

How far is it?

LYUBITCHA

About two thousand miles.

UBU

Two thousand miles! I better make tracks.

LYUBITCHA

It's time to put Empress Claudia in her place!

UBU

In the kitchen—and in the bedroom!

LYUBITCHA (with crossed fingers)

Good luck, Ubu darling! I love you!

(UBU lifts his colander and blows her kiss, then rides the donkey away.)

Sounds of SOLDIERS (offstage; rising in a climax)

USA! USA! Ubu! Ubu! USA! USA! (ad lib.)

(LYUBITCHA uncrosses her fingers and makes an insulting gesture, using the same hand, toward the departing UBU.)

Blackout.)

Fourth Fit

Scene 1.

(The royal crypt in the capital's cathedral.)

LYUBITCHA, carrying a sack, and EEYORE MUSKRAT, holding a stake.)

LYUBITCHA (tapping stone slabs with her shoe)

None of the slabs of all the Founders of the Kingdom of America sounds remotely hollow. How disappointing! I never realized there were so many. I've counted thirteen past the tomb of Big Andy Hamilton, three past Tom the Bomb Jefferson, two past Jimbo Madison, seven past Johnnie Hancock, and nine past Pat the Mat Henry—"Give me liberty, or give me death!" I learned that in Slovenia! Well, guess what, Patrick? You got 'em both! But I still don't hear anything...

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Maybe somebody lied to you.

LYUBITCHA

Everybody lies to me! Wait, what's this? This one sounds hollow. (*reads*) Big Ben Franklin. Let's pry it up.

(EEYORE MUSKRAT tries to pry it up with the stake.)

EEYORE MUSKRAT

It won't move.

LYUBITCHA

Try it with the other end, over here.

(He does so; eventually, after much effort, the slab rises.)

LYUBITCHA

Phew! What a smell! But there it is. Look at all the gold in the middle of all those bones! The Founders weren't so useless after all. You can't take it with you? Seems Big Ben Franklin had other plans. And to think a little girl from Slovenia gets to have it all!

(EEYORE MUSKRAT gives her a look.)

LYUBITCHA

With my loyal Eeyore, of course. I'm going to help make you the world's very first (*aside*) for about five minutes (*aloud*) gazillionaire! Go ahead, put it in the sack. Hey, what's that noise?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

I didn't hear anything.

LYUBITCHA

I swear I heard something. Anybody there?

(Silence.)

LYUBITCHA

Maybe the Founders of the Kingdom of America aren't so dead after all.

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Oh they're dead all right.

(Silence.)

LYUBITCHA

Well, let's put it in the sack. The gold will look a lot better in daylight. And you can put back the stone. We wouldn't want Big Ben Franklin getting any ideas! Hey, there's that noise again. This place is giving me the creeps. Let's get out of here, we can come back for the rest tomorrow.

VOICE

Never!

LYUBITCHA

Who is that?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

It came from that tomb. It reads "Honest Abe, last Emperor of America."

LYUBITCHA

"Honest!" I don't like the sound of that. Let's get out of here! The gold will wait for us.

(They rush out.)

VOICE

Never! Never! Never!...

Scene 2.

(Outside the White Castle.

PRINCESS HILARIA, in armor, with sword – the same sword given to her by the GHOST OF WASHINGTON.)

PRINCESS HILARIA (raising her sword and addressing audience)

Forward, my friends! Long live the memory of our beloved Obombas! Long live America! The traitor has set off with his army to invade Mexico. We have the capital to ourselves.

CROWD (offstage)

Hooray!

PRINCESS HILARIA

The Phony Queen and her Rasputin Eeyore Muskrat are in the White Castle.

CROWD

Down with Eeyore Muskrat!

PRINCESS HILARISA

We have come to restore my father's house to the throne.

CROWD (ad lib.)

Yes, yes! Long live Princess Hilaria! Down with Ubu!

PRINCESS HILARIA

We will abolish the Pretender's cruel taxes on the people, and make Eeyore Muskrat and his buddies in the zillionaire class pay their rightful share.

CROWD

Yes! Yes!

PRINCESS HILARIA

And if they don't like it – well, we'll be needing new ornaments for the capital's Christmas tree this year!

(Roars of laughter from the CROWD.)

CROWD (chanting)

Death to Ubu! Death to Ubu!

(LYUBITCHA and EEYORE MUSKRAT, wearing a MUGA hat, appear on the White Castle's balcony.)

Voice in CROWD

Look, there she is with Eeyore Muskrat!

LYUBITCHA

People darling! Welcome! There's no need to be angry. I'm sure we can settle all this amicably. After all, whatever we have done, we have only done for the people of America. We have done it all for you! Haven't we, Eeyore?

EEYORE MUSKRAT

We're Making Us Great Again!

First Voice in CROWD

You're making Ubu rich again, you mean!

Second Voice in CROWD

And making yourself filthy richer!

CROWD (ad lib.)

Ubu rich and yourself richer! Ubu rich and yourself richer!

(The CROWD starts throwing stones as it continues heckling and jeering; sounds of crashing windows.)

LYUBITCHA

They've broken all the windows!

EEYORE MUSKRAT

They want to kill us! They want to kill *me*! What did I do? They wanted to defund the police, didn't they? Well, I defunded the government! What's the problem?

(Unseen, PRINCESS HILARIA has climbed to the balcony.)

PRINCESS HILARIA (to EEYORE MUSKRAT)

Rasputin!

(She unsheathes the flashing sword of Washington and attacks him; he runs squealing around the balcony, climbs down, followed by the princess, and runs about the stage.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Stand and fight, you coward!

EEYORE MUSKRAT

But I just know how to fight in video games!

PRINCESS HILARIA

How is this for a video game?

(She stabs him through the heart. The sword flashes even more brilliantly.)

VOICES OF GHOSTS OF WASHINGTON, KING OBOMBA, and QUEEN OBOMBA
Victory!

LYUBITCHA

Eeyore!

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Arghh! Farewell, my dream. And I wanted to live forever!

(He dies.)

LYUBITCHA (aside)

Well, look at the bright side. Now I won't have to share the gold!

PRINCESS HILARIA (overhearing)

We'll see about that! (*to the CROWD*) And now for the Phony Queen!

LYUBITCHA

My people! Wait! Have a heart! I love all of you! Really, I do! I gave a whole dollar last year to Meals on Wheels! Do you have any idea how hard that was?

(CROWD roars with laughter.)

CROWD

Wow! How could you afford it!

LYUBITCHA

I had to wait a whole week to have my hair done!

(Sound of trumpets.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Here comes the National Guard! Late as usual, but never mind. Get the hag! Put the wheels on her meals! Lock her up! She'll have to do till we can strangle the assassin himself.

(LYUBITCHA runs away.)

CROWD (chanting)

Lock her up! Lock her up! (*continues to the end of the scene*)

(PRINCESS HILARIA raises the flashing sword toward the sky, then rushes out.)

(A final hail of stones, rifle shots.

Blackout.)

Scene 3.

(The Principate of Texas, near the Mexican border.

UBU, in the same armor as before; awkwardly carrying sword, spear and toilet plunger (sceptre); and several SOLDIERS.

UBU

Hornsbuggers, godspits, cowsudders! I'm dog tired, I'm dying of thirst, I'm on my last legs! Somebody take my helmet! Somebody take my spear! Somebody take my sword! Somebody take my – no, I better keep my sceptre. Never know who's planning a coup.

(SOLDIERS respond to his requests.

(SCOUT enters.)

SCOUT (kneeling before UBU)

Your Majesty, there's no sign of the Mexican army. I've looked everywhere, even in Mexico.

UBU

Well isn't that just peachy! We must have scared them off. It's like what they say about torture. Sometimes all you have to do is show your tools, and your poor prisoner is reduced to babbling any secret you want. Same with war. Want to win? Just show up with your army! Where's my crown?

(SOLDIER hands it to him.)

UBU (putting it on)

That's better. Anybody got a mirror? I hate it when my crown's on crooked.

(MESSENGER runs in.)

UBU

Oh no, it's you again! Haven't I had you beheaded yet? What is it now?

MESSENGER

All is lost, Sirrah!

UBU

Didn't I tell you never to call me "Sirrah"? Off with his head!

MESSENGER

But there's been a revolt at the capital! Eeyore Muskrat is dead. The queen has fled to the mountains.

UBU

The queen has fled to the mountains! The princess has fled to the mountains! Everyone has "fled to the mountains"! But there are no "mountains" within a hundred leagues of the capital – it's flat as a pancake! (to the *audience*) Will somebody please tell the author to get his geography straight? Among other things! (to the *MESSENGER*) Bird of night, beast of misery, owl's underwear! Where did you hear this nonsense? Who's responsible? Princess Hilaria, I'll bet. Where'd you just come from?

MESSENGER

The capital, Sirr—Your Majesty.

UBU

That's better! If I thought you had your head on straight, I'd sweep my army, like a blood-stained cape, back to the capital. But you've got feathers for brains. My people would never rebel against me! They love me. They hate the princess. Go to the vanguard; the Mexicans can't be far, I don't care what the scout says. We'll soon be flourishing our weapons in their faces. And I'll be saying my favorite line: I win!

SCOUT (pointing toward the audience)

Your Majesty! The Mexicans!

UBU

Hey, didn't you just tell me there was no sign of them? Off with his head! I want to run away! I don't want to be killed! But we're stuck on this hill. We're exposed on all sides.

VOICES OF THE ARMY (ad lib.)

The enemy! The Mexicans! We're under attack!

UBU

Everyone to your battle stations! Hold the top of the hill! Defend it to the last man! I'll stay at the center like a living fortress. (I like that! It's one for the history books!) Load your guns to the full! The more bullets, the less Mexicans! Station the infantry at the foot of the hill, with the cavalry behind them and the artillery behind them and me behind the artillery. Fire through the windows if you can't through the doors, bar the gates, storm the walls, if anybody tricks you, attack him with your snakeballs and my toilet! Now, charge!

(VOICES OF ARMY cheer.)

UBU

Great! I win! What time is it?

MESSENGER

Thirteen o'clock, Sirr—Your Majesty.

UBU

Hm, I'm late for lunch. The Mexicans won't attack till after they're had their siesta. (*to the audience*) See, I can be culturally sensitive when I want to. (*to the SOLDIERS*) Tell the troops to break for lunch. We can battle later. After all, an army marches on its belly.

(MESSENGER leaves.)

VOICES OF ARMY (ad lib.)

Long live Ubu! Long live the king! Long live lunch!

UBU

They love me!

(A sudden barrage of cannon fire.)

UBU

How rude! How treacherous! I thought all Mexicans took a siesta after lunch! Now I'm dead! Poor me! Oh wait, no I'm not.

(MESSENGER runs back in.)

MESSENGER

The Mexicans are attacking, Sirr—Your Majesty!

UBU

Like, no shit, Sherlock. Well, what do you want me to do about it? I didn't ask them to attack, did I? (*to SOLDIERS*) Sorry, guys! Lunch will have to wait. Prepare for battle!

Voices of SOLDIERS

Groan!

(Another barrage of cannon fire.)

UBU

Enough of that! It's raining lead and steel around here, and it might ding my delicate body! No way that's happening. Where's my helmet?

(Sounds of battle offstage.)

MEXICAN GENERAL runs in, waving a sword.)

MEXICAN GENERAL

Para Dios y la reina!

UBU

Uh oh!

(He waves the toilet plunger at the general.)

UBU

It's still called the Gulf of America! So take that!

(MEXICAN GENERAL and UBU fight.)

UBU

Ah! I'm wounded, I'm full of holes, I'm perforated, I'm done for, I'm dead and buried, I'm being gathered to the angels ...

(MEXICAN GENERAL sheathes his sword, grinning.)

UBU (jumping up)

Fool me once, shame on you! Fool me twice, shame on me!

(Knocks him down with the plunger.)

UBU

Forward, men! Charge! Across the border wall! I told you I'd make Mexico pay for it! Victory is ours! (*stopping*) Really? My head's got more lumps than laurels.

(SOLDIERS, including three uniformed as generals, rush in and surround UBU)

MEXICAN SOLDIERS (rushing in)

Dejar paso a la reina!

(EMPRESS CLAUDIA, in magnificent Aztec regalia, enters, accompanied by MCOFFAL, wearing a mask and holding a bloodied sword, and HERMAN)

FIRST AMERICAN SOLDIER

The empress of Mexico and her private assassins!

SECOND AMERICAN SOLDIER

She's broken through the wall! They'll never pay for it now!

THIRD AMERICAN SOLDIER

A dozen more of us killed by that bloody sword!

MCOFFAL

So, do the rest of you surrender? All right, your time has come! I know you, Moneybags Gates! (*He runs him through.*) And you too, Gristle Vaunt! (*Runs him through.*) And you too, Junior, Jr.! (*Runs him through.*)

UBU

The mad Mexican is killing all my generals! Onward, soldiers! Capture the rat! Make mincemeat of the Mexicans! Victory is ours! Long live the Bald Eagle! I win!

AMERICAN SOLDIERS

Charge! Capture the rat! USA, USA!

(They fight MCOFFAL and HERMAN and capture MCOFFAL.)

MCOFFAL (to HERMAN)

If I don't survive, you must live to carry on the fight against the Pretender!

HERMAN

I shall! Death to the tyrant! Long live Princess Hilaria!

(He rushes out, pursued.)

(The other SOLDIERS bring MCOFFAL to UBU, who pulls off MCOFFAL's mask.)

UBU

McOffal! How awful! (*sarcastically*) I would never have guessed! So, how are you doing now, my treasonous treacherous traitorous ol' Best Buddy? Ah, remember the good old days? When we were young and foolish, and you loved the pretty little waitress with the dimple, and she loved gorgeous Ubu! Things never change. Now I'm king, and you're dead meat. You never did like burro butt, do you? Well, who's the burro butt now? I'm going to broil *your* butt over a slow fire. Gentleman, light a fire.

(The sound of a shot.)

UBU (grabbing his ear)

Oh! Ah! Oh! I'm dead! I'm hit! It was a cannon ball! As big as this! Where's a heel spur when you need it! I might have gotten out of leading this army business! Lord, please forgive me my sins! I never meant any of it! I was just kidding! Can't anyone take a joke! Oh, my poor ear!

MCOFFAL (who has escaped)

You always did have an ear for trouble.

UBU

You making fun of me? Well, Best Buddy, down you go! (*to SOLDIERS*) Well, what are you waiting for? I can't go after him! I'm king!

(SOLDIER and MCOFFAL fight. MCOFFAL is run through. He knocks about the stage in a prolonged Shakespearean death while everyone stops and watches.)

MCOFFAL

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ahh! Ahhhh! Ahhhhhh! (*at last collapsing*) Farewell, cruel Ubu! Farewell, fair queen ...

(He expires and his body is dragged out.)

UBU (aside)

What's this "fair queen" business? Claudia? I don't think so, though on second thought, she is kinda hot. I'd date her if we weren't at war. (*aloud*) Boy I thought that guy would never die. I'm beat! The Mexicans may be advancing on all fronts, but everybody's stepping on my toes, like I did to Obomba of cursed memory. I need a break. Stop the battle for five!

EVERYONE (except EMPRESS CLAUDIA)

OK.

(Sounds of fighting continue offstage.)

UBU (shouting)

Hey! Did you hear what I just said?

VOICES OF SOLDIERS

OK!

(Sounds of fighting cease.)

UBU

Where's my bottle?

MESSENGER

I'll get it for you, Your Majesty.

(MESSENGER runs out and immediately returns with an extra-large baby bottle, with a huge nipple and filled with milk, and a napkin over his arm.)

MESSENGER

Here, Sirr—Your Majesty.

UBU (sucking from bottle)

Ah! Mmm-mmm-mmm!

(Everyone else watches in fascination as UBU drinks the entire bottle.)

UBU (finishing and wiping his mouth with napkin)

That hit the spot. OK, where was I? Oh, right! (*raises the plunger*) Sceptre of power, do your duty! Empress of Mexico, even if you are kinda hot, watch out! Soldiers, charge! I can't get my hands dirty!

(SOLDIERS attack EMPRESS CLAUDIA. MEXICAN SOLDIERS surround her, preventing them from reaching her.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Traitor, usurper, assassin! We have watched your hideous progress with horror and disdain. The blood of your king cries out for vengeance. We will lead the battle to free your suffering nation from your tyranny. Your head will ornament our palace to warn the serpents who lurk in the gardens of our prosperity and peace what awaits them when they succumb to greed, blood lust and the unslakable thirst for power.

(Several MEXICAN SOLDIERS attack UBU)

UBU (fighting with the plunger)

Hey! You're not supposed to attack *me*! No fair! Take that! And that! Oh! Ow! Ah! Ouch! Leave me alone! Don't you see you're hurting me? I swear I didn't do it on purpose!

(He runs off.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Like every bully and tyrant, at heart a coward and slave. After him!

(She pursues him with her entourage, all in full cry. After a moment, UBU runs on from the other side of the stage.)

UBU

Holy Ghost, that mother is coming after me! What shall I do? (*A chasm opens midstage.*) Oh, look!

(EMPRESS CLAUDIA appears behind him.)

UBU

A chasm ahead of me, an empress behind me. Hold your breath, Ubu. One, two, three...

(He takes a flying leap over the chasm, then runs a few paces and halts, with his hand over his eyes.)

EMPERESS CLAUDIA

I have you now!

(She chases after, trips and falls into the chasm.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Ahhh! The devil has all the luck!

UBU

I'm afraid to look. (*He peeps around, goes over and looks down the chasm.*) Well how about that! (*waving the plunger*) Hi Empress! How you feeling now?

VOICE OF EMPRESS CLAUDIA (as from a great echoing space)

Curses on your head!

UBU

There may be curses on my head, but there are bumps on your rump! (I like that! I have to write that down.) Well, my predictions have come true. I'm a prophet—who always makes a profit! (*wagging and admiring the plunger*) And my sceptre has done such wonders like no sceptre ever did before. I would have sent the Empress to the eternal land of Nod hadn't a sudden sense of noble compassion come over me to neutralize within my courageous heart the fruits of my incredible courage. I owe my salvation to the wonderful skill and truly admirable power of my butt muscles and my speedy calves, that impelled me swift as a Nascar ace away from lethal peril and into the arms of victory, as well as to a chasm to which I was driven by the force of intuition amounting to genius, a chasm that placed itself so appropriately beneath my enemy at the supreme moment of danger. That was very nice, but where is everybody? Uh oh, I see a bunch of Mexicans coming.

(MEXICAN SOLDIERS rush onstage.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

I'm down here! Save me from this droning bore! Who needs an army when you can massacre with sheer tedium?

(As EMPRESS CLAUDIA is helped out of the chasm, AMERICAN SOLDIERS appear behind UBU. The empress and the MEXICAN SOLDIERS and UBU and his SOLDIERS shake their weapons at each other across the chasm.)

UBU

Avaunt! Away! Beware! Be scared! Nyaah-nyah-nya-nyah-nayh! All right! Enough of this. It's time to make tracks. Soldiers, forward! I mean, backward! Retreat! Charge! Onward! Escape!

AMERICAN SOLDIERS

Every man for himself!

(They rush away.)

UBU

That's what I always say! They're learning! (*watching them*) What a mob, what a stampede!

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Dirígete a ellos en el pase!

MEXICAN SOLDIERS

Si! Si! Si, Mi Reina! Andale todos!

(EMPRESS CLAUDIA and MEXICAN SOLDIERS rush out.)

UBU

How am I going to get out of this mess? Where's my trusty charger? Bring me my steed! A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse! (That sounds so familiar!)

(A soldier brings in UBU's donkey.)

UBU

I said a horse! Well, beggars can't be choosers. My helmet! Help me up before the empress gets back. Boy she's sure looks good when she's mad!

(Soldier puts the colander on UBU's head, covering his face so he can't see; then helps UBU on the donkey, facing UBU backward again.)

(The donkey walks slowly offstage with UBU on back.)

UBU (waving the plunger)

Retreat! Attack! Onward! Charge! I win! I win! I win!

(Blackout.)

Scene 4.

(Outside a cave in the Duchy of Virginia.

(UBU, holding the plunger, with his crown on awry and a patch on his ear, and his advisers VANDER PANTS and KELLYANTS.)

UBU

Stop! I've lost my steed! I've lost my army! I've lost my way! Woe is me! What a conqueror the world has lost in me! Where are we? Are the Mexicans still after us?

VANDER PANTS

It looks like the Duchy of Virginia, Your Majesty.

UBU

Humph! That's a "fur piece" from the Principate of Texas. No wonder I'm beat! But never beaten! What a week! What a battle! What a pain!

KELLYANTS

Is your wound feeling any better, Your Majesty?

UBU

No, my wound is not feeling any better, Your Majesty! I can't get this bullet out of my ear, and it makes me tilt.

(He shows this by walking in a circle with a tilt.)

UBU

See? There was an FBI agent in the Mexican army! How else would they have known just where my ear is? It's Top Secret – even the Secret Service doesn't know! But it was still such a beautiful battle, wasn't it Kellyants?

KELLYANTS

Yes, Sirr—Your Majesty.

UBU

And I'm sure Vander Pants agrees with you.

VANDER PANTS

Oh yes, of course, Your Majesty. It was a glorious censorious decidedly notorious ever victorious battle.

UBU

You really ought to go on Broadway! Kellyants, Vander Pants – did you ever notice they rhyme?

KELLYANTS and VANDER PANTS (together)

Yes, Your Majesty. We did.

UBU

Good! Gotta be sharp when you're around me. I demonstrated amazing valor, if I do say so myself. And I do say so myself! Without exposing myself to the slightest sign of any kind of dangerous peril or perilous danger, I massacred forty-seven with my own hand. I counted them! Including beetles, cockroaches, spiders and gophers! And not including, of course, the losers who were already dead. I just poked 'em to make sure they'll never see Mexico again. As the poppy and the dandelion are scythed in the flower of their youth by the pitiless scythe of the pitiless scyther who scythes pitilessly their pitiful petals and piteous private parts... (Hey, that's as good as Shakespeare! I'm such a poet!) Of course, in the tragedy of battle, a few of them were my own soldiers. But what are you gonna do? The fog of war! The smog of battle! Collateral damage! Friendly fire! Though it wasn't so friendly for them. Oh well, there's no use crying over spilt milk. It's water under the bridge. No matter what, you always gotta look ahead. Tomorrow is a new day.

(Sound of rumbling in the distance.)

VANDER PANTS

Your Majesty!

KELLYANTS

Sirrah! I mean, Sire! I mean, I mean, Your—

UBU

Calm down, Kellyants. Breathe, count to ten, and start over.

KELLYANTS (after doing so)

Your Majesty! The Mexicans are coming.

UBU

Why didn't you say so! The Mexicans again! Boy those guys at least show some initiative. To come as far as Virginia. I wonder if the empress is with them? She sure is hot. Well, whatever, I've had enough of them. They're gonna get a taste of my sceptre of power! And then I'll flush them down the toilet! Though it'll be no gold toilet for them! Ah ha!

(He charges but, because of his tilt, runs in a circle.

(A bear charges in.)

UBU

Ahhhh!

(Bear chases UBU in a circle.)

UBU (to his advisers)

I thought you said it was the Mexicans! Well, what are you going to do? Get him away from me!

KELLYANTS

Me? But I've never had to fight a bear before.

VANDER PANTS

Me neither, Your Majesty. Anyway, you seem to be doing just fine.

UBU (still chased by the bear; threateningly)

Just wait till I get out of this!

VANDER PANTS (to KELLYPANTS)

Maybe we better do something. What if he eats the king but he's still hungry?

KELLYPANTS

True. He might want us for dessert.

VANDER PANTS

Let's rush him, screaming bloody murder. It might scare him off.

KELLYPANTS

Sounds good to me.

(Yelling, they rush, VANDER PANTS toward the bear, KELLYANTS toward the king.)

VANDER PANTS

Toward the bear, dummy!

KELLYANTS

Oh!

(Everyone freezes.)

KELLYANTS

Your reference to “him” was ambiguous, Vander Pants. You really need to be clear when giving directions, especially in dire situations such as this.

VANDER PANTS

Shut up, you pointy-headed idiot, and charge!

(They return to the charge. The bear chases one, then the other, and finally runs away, the advisers following.)

UBU

That was a little too close for comfort. One good thing: it popped the bullet out of my ear. (*He raises it to the light.*) I think I’ll keep it as a souvenir. Now I can walk straight again, right into that cave. I’ll be safe there, it looks cozy, and night’s falling.

(He enters the cave.)

UBU

Anybody home? No?

(He curls up and quickly goes to sleep. Sound of loud snoring.)

(The bear comes back, wanders briefly about outside the cave, then, catching sight of UBU, quietly goes up to him and sniffs.)

UBU (laughing and talking in his sleep)

Sweetie Buns! You’re tickling me!

(The bear sniffs some more.)

UBU (laughing)

Stop it! Stop it! .., (*sing-song*) I know what you want....

(UBU slowly opens his eyes. He is eye to eye with the bear.

(He gives out a piercing shriek and the bear runs away.

(Shaking with fear, UBU curls his arms around his knees and presses against the wall as the light slowly fades on his wide-open eyes.)

Fifth Fit

Scene 1.

(The same cave, later that night. UBU is curled up asleep. Shafts of moonlight here and there, the rest pitch black. Enter LYUBITCHA, exhausted, bedraggled, without seeing him, from the same side as the bear earlier. Her cautious movements are similar to those of the bear.)

LYUBITCHA (sitting on a moonlit stone)

I think I crossed most of America in the last week. I never knew there were so many trees! It's so green it's disgusting! And not a Sephora in sight! How can people live here! I can't believe everything that happened since that fat fool went off to Mexico. All that gold among all those bones, and me almost stoned to death by that fake princess and her mob, Eeyore and his Muskraters strung up outside the White Castle, Big Dick and Brainy Hack and Asshole, Asshole, whatever, they told me they were last seen swaying in the wind. Eeyore and McOffal were so in love with me, they almost fainted whenever I came into a room. Now they're both dead. How romantic! It's like a fairy tale. But fairy tales are supposed to have a happy ending. I thought I might not make it out of the capital, that mob had death in its eyes and blood on its tongue. I had to cross the Potomac under a swarm of helicopters searching for little old me, and then run for days across the snow, never knowing where to hide. It's like everybody hates me! I can't believe it! If only they'd quieted down for a moment, I could have explained I've been on their side all along, really! Really, I was! I was the rebels' biggest ally in the White Castle! But would they listen? No! They know everything! I was the queen and so of course I was with the king. But that wasn't it at all! Why are people so stupid! I sometimes wonder whatever happened to that buffoon, my liege lord, pepperoni-stinking significant other. He was last seen on a donkey, with the Empress of Mexico in hot pursuit! I sure fooled that lunk, I fleeced him down to his tender lambskin, got his gold toilet and his platinum one too, drained his treasury while he drained the swamp! And then I lost it all. Now I'm shivering in my last Givenchy, I've lost my earrings, my brooch, my pearls, and these stupid high heels ... (*aside to the audience*: Never run away from a mob and over a hundred miles of open country in the snow in high heels, ladies! Just so you know when the mob comes after you!) ... and all I have now is a single diamond ring! I can't believe it! I never thought I'd end up poor! This wasn't supposed to happen! I didn't sign up for this! This wasn't in the contract! I'm going to sue! Who? That big fat fellow, that's who!

UBU (talking in his sleep; a shaft of moonlight reveals him)
Aargh! After the queen! Forward! Retreat! Charge! Cut off her ears! Her toes! Her noodle!

LYUBITCHA

Oh my God! I can't believe this. Just my luck! All the caves in Appalachia, and I had to choose this one. Wait, Lyubitcha, if you play your cards right, you can get out of this too. Use the brains that got you out of Slovenia! (*slipping into the shadows*) Ubu darling! It's you! I can't believe it! What a miracle! Oh sweetheart! My little piggy! You're having a nightmare! Wake up, sweetheart, wake up!

UBU (half awake, though he can't see LYUBITCHA)

Wait... Who... What... There was a bear, and there was a fight, there was hunger against muscle, but hunger ate muscle, like it always does! Do you hear me, Kellyants, Vander Pants? Even if your names rhyme!

LYUBITCHA

What's he babbling about? He's even more senile than when he left. What's wrong with him?

UBU

Hey you guys, answer me! Where are you? I can't see anything! I'm scared! I heard someone speak! Was it Lyubitcha? But that can't be. She's hundreds of miles away. Maybe the bear? With AI, anything's possible! Snakeballs! Where are my matches? Oh right, I lost them in the battle. That empress is sure hot!

LYUBITCHA

I know! I'll pretend I'm a ghost or whatever. He was always superstitious. It'll scare the pants off him. I'll twist him around my little finger just like I used to!

UBU

Argh! I hear voices! Godslegs, I'll be damned! Who's there?

LYUBITCHA (deepening her voice)

Indeed you do, Ubu Sirrah...

UBU

Oh no! It's a ghost! Please don't call me "Sirrah!" I hate that word!

LYUBITCHA

Very well, I will call you Ubu Tr... (*lightning, thunder*).

(UBU howls with fear.)

LYUBITCHA

Someone is speaking indeed, and the archangel that one day with his tr... (*lightning, thunder*) shall call forth the dead from ashes and dust on the Day of Judgment could not do otherwise but speak in such divine and irresistible tones! Listen! Hear! It is the voice of Gabriel that speaks to you, Ubu Tr...! (*lightning, thunder*)

UBU

Yes, yes, anything you say! I'm listening! Aargh!

LYUBITCHA

Do not interrupt me, or I will tell you nothing of all that you need to know to escape an otherwise harsh and cruel fate. Your hash will be settled indeed!

UBU

Oh buggers! Oh donkeypuzzle! Oh apewiggles! I'll be quiet! I promise! Mum's the word! Zip! Please go on, Mister – or is it Missus? – Gabriel!

LYUBITCHA

Your Awful Awesome Almightyness, to you!

UBU

Yes, yes, Your Awesome Awful...!

LYUBITCHA

Awful Awesome!

UBU

Your Awful *Awesome* Almightyness!

LYUBITCHA

That's better. We were saying that you are a big fat fellow.

UBU

Ay me! Yes, that's true, that's so true, Your Mighty Awesomeess, I can't say it isn't, that is I *could* say it is, but if I did I'd be...

LYUBITCHA

SHUT UP, Goddammit!

UBU

I didn't think angels were allowed to curse.

LYUBITCHA (aside)

Snakeballs! (*aloud*) I said BE QUIET, Ubu Tr.... (*lightning, thunder*)

UBU

Aaaaarrghhhhh!

LYUBITCHA

We understand that you are a married man.

UBU

Right you are. I'm married to the Queen of ...

(Both freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage holding a sign: "UNACCEPTABLE WORD!" and exits.)

LYUBITCHA

We believe what you mean to say is that you are married to the most charming, most beautiful, most intelligent woman who now graces the world with her gracefully gracious presence.

UBU

Well, you could say that. Or you could say she is the most treacherous, most sneaky, most nefarious, most nauseating excuse for a piece of femininity that ever walked on two legs. She's one big claw; you don't know where to grab her.

LYUBITCHA

You should grab her with sweetness, hold her with tenderness, lift her with kindness, and caress her with love. If you did so, Venus herself would not bless you with greater blessings than you were ever blessed with or ever indeed will know. The divine goddess herself could never be so nice.

UBU

If your idea of nice is somewhere between lies and lice.

LYUBITCHA

You're not listening, Your Mischievous Majesty. Try to keep those donkey's ears open. (*aside*) The sun's rising, gotta get a move on. (*aloud*) Your feted, elated, high Yelp-rated spouse has not a single fault (*aside*) aside from how she chooses husbands.

UBU

You mean "sated, dated and lowest Yelp-rated"! There isn't a fault she *doesn't* have. She's lying, treacherous, greedy, stingy. She's a mean queen in a nightmare dream. She's a slut, she's a woe, she's fat, she's a ho. She's hot to the touch, she's out to lunch. She's nice? That's rich!

She's a Hellion B....

(Both freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage holding a sign: "UNACCEPTABLE WORD!" and exits.)

LYUBITCHA

Enough, foul king! I have it on unimpeachable authority that she is not stingy!

UBU

She's a witch, she's a harpy, she's a lush!

LYUBITCHA

Slander! She never drinks anything stronger than Dr. Pepper.

UBU

I wish she swam in vodka! She might prove human after all.

LYUBITCHA

And she's not fat!

UBU

That's true. I got a little over enthusiastic there. But there's one sin I haven't told you yet: she hates animals! She starved my noble charger and steed, my donkey of merit, my burro of power! No wonder he almost died as I led our retreat (it was strategic, mind you, we weren't running away from those nefarious Mexicans and that wily, but hot, empress) to our beachhead in the Fiefdom of Oklahoma.

LYUBITCHA

But Oklahoma doesn't have a seacoast.

UBU

It does now – on the Gulf of America! And anyone who doesn't say so I'll have beheaded!

LYUBITCHA

It's all lies! You have a model wife – and you, Sirrah, are a monster!

UBU

Aargh! Don't call me "Sirrah"! My wife's a ho and you're a sausage!

LYUBITCHA

Remember who you're talking to!

UBU

Oh right, I'm so sorry! Please forgive me! Don't hurt me! I take it all back. My wife is wonderful, kind and sweet. As loving as a tomato and as honest as me.

LYUBITCHA

You killed King Obomba.

UBU

It wasn't my fault! It was all the idea of my lovely wife.

LYUBITCHA

You had O'Biden and Shoemaker killed.

UBU

They wanted to kill me! What's a king to do?

LYUBITCHA

You betrayed McOffal and threw him prison, and then had him killed too!

UBU

Well, look at it my way. Who would I rather rule America – him or me? But right now, neither of us is. Certainly not poor little me! A guy has his reasons.

LYUBITCHA

There is only one way you can make up for the heinous life you have led, you wretch.

UBU

I'll do anything you want! I'll even become a priest, a friar, a monk. Hey, what if you make me Bishop of America and put my name on the calendar? Saint Ubu's day, on April 1st, my birthday. People could pray to me to intercede with Your Flighty Highness to intercede with Mr. God for their sins. Would that be cool or what? And talk about irony!

LYUBITCHA

Not on your life. Here's the way: You must forgive the queen for any, let's say, inadvertent malfeasances she may have done while you were away. After all, she was lonely and bored, and a girl needs to fill her time somehow while her man is off saving the world.

UBU

What do you think I am, a saint? I'll pardon that broad when she's given everything back, sent her boyfriends packing, she's soundly thrashed, and gets me back a noble steed even nobler than the noble steed I lost!

LYUBITCHA

He's got donkey on the brain. (*A ray of sunlight breaks against the back wall.*) Uh oh, here comes the sun! Better get a move on.

UBU

Well, it's nice to know at long last my dear wife has, in truth and in fact, been guilty in every way I ever imagined! And I imagined a lot! I have it on the highest authority. The angels have been watching! This will put the noses of all those new atheists out of joint! But Her Awful Awesome Almightyness has gone silent. You gotta admit she's a sharp cookie.

(The cave brightens with sunlight.)

UBU

Oh no! I don't believe it's...

LYUBITCHA

You're hallucinating as usual, you sovereign idiot! Let the thunderbolt fall on the head of Ubu Tr.... (*lightning, thunder*)

UBU

Aaarrrrghhhhh! Hey wait! That's me! Who do you think you are, peabrain! I'll get you!

(He chases LYUBITCHA around the cave. She clammers up a wall out of his reach.)

UBU

What are you doing here, you harpy!

LYUBITCHA

There's been a revolt in the capital! The White Castle has burnt to the ground! Eeyore Muskrat and his Muskraters are all dead! I barely escaped with my life!

UBU

Well, what goes around comes around. And the Mexicans chased me to this cave. So a mighty genius and a fallen angel meet again!

LYUBITCHA

Say rather the angel has met an ass!

UBU

I'll get you!

(He climbs up after her. She jumps to the floor and tries to escape.)

(The bear leaps into the cave with a roar, LYUBITCHA screams as the bear chases her around the cave.)

LYUBITCHA

Help me! Save me! I'll never betray you again! I promise! Please! Just get this bear off me! Ubu darling! Little piggy!

UBU

Not that! Not "little piggy"!

(He jumps down, chases the bear as the bear chases LYUBITCHA. Several times, the bear turns and chases UBU and is chased by LYUBITCHA, then turns back to LYUBITCHA. At one point, taking a rock, UBU brains the bear, who stops, staggers around the cave and collapses.)

LYUBITCHA (falling into his arms)

Ubu darling! You saved me!

UBU

It was nothing.. It was pure reflex. It was just the right thing to do. Anyone would have done the same thing in my place. You're embarrassing me. Please don't call me a hero!

LYUBITCHA

I didn't.

UBU

You don't have to rub it in!

(He picks up the rock and throws it at LYUBITCHA, missing her.)

LYUBITCHA

I don't believe it!

(She runs over the recumbent bear toward UBU. The bear roars and lurches up. LYUBITCHA shrieks.

(The bear roars and looks menacingly back and forth between LYUBITCHA and UBU)

UBU

Good bear! Nice bear! Doesn't want to eat Ubu! Wants to eat Ubu's tasty wife! See? There she is! Over there!

(But the bear decides to chase UBU around the cave. On passing her the second or third time, LYUBITCHA takes the rock and knocks the bear down.)

UBU

Aarrgh! (*aside*) There's no getting rid of her! Just when I thought I was free forever! (*aloud*) Is he dead yet? How'd you do that?

LYUBITCHA

Of course he is. It's all in the wrist. I'll show you sometime.

UBU

I don't think so! Come over here, you old slut! Get down on your knees to your master, or I'll brain you!

(He grabs her and forces her to her knees.)

UBU

I've just about had enough of your intently intending insular inbred insolent insulting insolence!

(He raises his hand to strike LYUBITCHA, who glares at him in defiance.

(The sound of a trumpet outside the cave.

(PRINCESS HILARIA and a SOLDIER enter.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

I thought I heard them in here! Down with Ubu! Down with his wife! Long live America!

UBU

Can't you wait a second? I'm not finished with the queen.

PRINCESS HILARIA

At them!

(SOLDIER starts striking at UBU, who defends himself with the plunger.)

PRINCESS HILARIA (in time to the SOLDIER's strokes)

Take that for my queen! And that for my king! And that! And that!

UBU

Take that, traitor, murderer, assassin!

LYUBITCHA (attacking PRINCESS HILARIA; they fight)

And that, you prig, you phony, you dirty—

(All freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage holding a sign: “UNACCEPTABLE WORD!” and exits.)

LYUBITCHA

... you filthy—

(All freeze while TRIGGER WARNING walks rapidly across the stage the other way, holding a sign: “UNACCEPTABLE WORD!” and exits.)

LYUBITCHA

... you—

(All freeze while TRIGGER WARNING enters, holding a sign: “UNACCEPTABLE WORD!” and sits on a stone.)

TRIGGER WARNING

No point in leaving when I’ll just have to come back again.

(The rest turn to TRIGGER WARNING, stare, then attack her, yelling. TRIGGER WARNING drops the sign and dashes around the stage being pursued before running off.

(The rest tear the sign to pieces.)

LYUBITCHA

I’ve been wanting to do that all evening!

PRINCESS HILARIA

Ditto!

(They all shake hands, then go back to their previously frozen positions. UBU takes out the whistle he stole from Obomba and blows. They go back to fighting.)

UBU (taking a pause from the fray)

Boy, what a battle! Where were you guys when the empress of Mexico attacked me?

(Returns to the fight.)

LYUBITCHA

Look out, Princess! I’ll put that pretty face on the back of your head!

UBU

By my gold toilet (how I miss it! And I'll never sit my soft rump on platinum again!), when will all this endlessness end? Take that, Your Foulness! Take that, Your Weirdness! Where is my trusty steed when I need him?

(Sound of a donkey noisily braying outside the cave. All freeze.)

Voices of UBU's SOLDIERS

Long live King Ubu!

UBU

My troops! My steed! I'm in here! Onward! Attack! Charge! Help!

(KELLYANTS and VANDER PANTS enter, with SOLDIERS and donkey. The fight continues.)

UBU

I thought the bear ate you.

KELLYANTS

So did we!

(The bear suddenly revives and rises to his full height, roaring. General chaos.)

ALL

Oh no!

(They pile up at the cave entrance, trying to escape, as the bear threatens them and the donkey watches placidly. UBU hides behind a rock, LYUBITCHA behind another.)

UBU

I thought you said you killed him!

LYUBITCHA

I thought I did too.

(The rest escape as the bear roars after them. The donkey, who has been watching the fight placidly, goes over and nudges UBU.)

UBU

My steed, my charger, my burro of power! I can't tell you how happy I am to see you again!

(He hugs the donkey, then gets on him.)

UBU

Onward!

(The donkey brays and they leave the cave.)

LYUBITCHA

It's an ass on his ass on an ass on the grass. What's not to love?

(She follows after, in disgust.)

UBU (offstage)

I win! I win! I win!

(Blackout.)

Scene 2.

(A field outside the capital.

UBU, LYUBITCHA, KELLYANTS, VANDER PANTS, and SOLDIERS.)

UBU (waving plunger)

I'm finally back with my loyal army.

SOLDIERS

Ubu, Ubu!

UBU

The war was stolen! There's a fake queen on the throne! The kingdom is mine! Who's your daddy!

SOLDIERS

Ubu, Ubu!

UBU

I thought I'd never see my capital again, even though it's a smoking ruin. As we used to say when I was a kid in New York: where's a White Castle when you need one? One thing I have learned, by my gold toilet (*smiling at LYUBITCHA*): the best thing about a fight is making up. I just thought that up, Sweetie Buns. Aren't I smart?

LYUBITCHA (gesturing offstage)

You might want to tell it to Princess Hilaria.

(PRINCESS HILARIA enters with her SOLDIERS.)

PRINCESS HILARIA (waving her flashing sword)

Avaunt, traitor! Prepare to meet your maker!

(They attack.)

UBU

Kellyants! Vander Pants! Do your duty! Onward! Charge! Wipe the floor with them! Get me outta here!

KELLYANTS

I'll go for the right!

VANDER PANTS

I'll go for the left!

KELLYANTS and VANDER PANTS

Let's meet in the middle and blow everything up!

(UBU and LYUBITCHA pull back as everyone else fights with swords and knives.)

UBU

They're losing! They're winning! We're winning! We're losing! But I never lose!

(EEYORE MUSKRAT enters with his MUSKRATEERS.)

UBU

Eeyore! Big Dick! Brainy Hack! Asshole!

ASSWHOLE (offended)

Asswhole.

UBU

Boy, Gen Z is so *sensitive*! But I thought you guys were all dead.

EEYORE MUSKRAT

Don't believe everything you read on the internet.

(Everyone freezes.)

UBU (to the audience)

We have the internet but we're fighting with *swords*? Wait till I run into the writer of this thing!

(UBU slams his palm with his fist. The fighting resumes.)

UBU

You know who they are? Everybody in the government you forgot to fire.

EEYORE MUSKRAT

I never saw a pink slip I didn't love. Come on, guys! Let's purge!

(EEYORE MUSKRAT and his MUSKATEERS join the fray.)

UBU

Fight! Fight! Fight!

(SOLDIER attacks him.)

UBU

Not *me*, you loser! What's the matter with you?

SOLDIER

Oh, sorry!

PRINCESS HILARIA

Attack him on the right! Attack him on the left! Attack him in the center! Nothing's working! Curses! We're losing!

(Offstage a blast of trumpets and drums playing the classic flourish of the bullring.)

LYUBITCHA (sarcastically)

Saved by the cavalry.

(EMPRESS CLAUDIA, dressed in splendor, enters with HERMAN and her SOLDIERS.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Infamous adventurer, speculator, assassin! We join the forces of noble Princess Hilaria to take you to the perdition you so richly deserve!

UBU

I still say you're one hot babe.

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Patronizing *padrón* of the patriarchy!

UBU

Harpy!

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Murderer!

UBU

Virago!

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Oppressor!

UBU

Termagant! (*aside*) (I've got such a vocabulary!)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

Chingado! Attack!

(They join the fray. HERMAN flips over both KELLYANTS and VANDER PANTS.)

HERMAN

I see England, I see France! I see someone's underpants!

UBU

Now that's funny! I can see the underpants of Kellyants and Vander Pants!

(His SOLDIERS stop, look at each other, and starting rolling about the stage, laughing at UBU's joke. While laughing, they are overwhelmed by their antagonists.)

SOLDIERS

Hey! Stop! No!

(EEYORE MUSKRAT and his MUSKRATEERS, KELLYANTS, VANDER PANTS and UBU'S SOLDIERS are tied up with a huge rope wrapped around them.)

(UBU and LYUBITCHA, hiding behind their SOLDIERS, are captured and dragged forward by HERMAN.)

HERMAN

Here are the criminals, Your Excellencies! They were trying to hide behind the skinny behinds of their sedulous lackeys and scurrilous henchmen Kellyants and Vander Pants!

UBU (aside)

“Sedulous,” I like that! (*aloud*) You can’t do this! It’s fake news! It isn’t in the script! He’s making it up as he goes along!

PRINCESS HILARIA

That’s okee-dokee with me. Take them away!

(HERMAN seizes UBU’s crown.)

HERMAN

This is for the nobles!

(He throws the crown to the ground, then seizes the plunger.)

HERMAN

And this is for the peasants!

(He throws the plunger to the ground.)

UBU

Oh woe is me! Misericordia!

(He and LYUBITCHA are dragged off by HERMAN.

(PRINCESS HILARIA points disdainfully at the fallen plunger; it is picked up and given to her; she breaks it in half. Cheers.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Victory is ours! King Obomba is avenged! The queen looks down upon us from the shining towers of heaven! The Kingdom of America is saved!

SOLDIERS

Long live Princess Hilaria! Long live Princess Hilaria! Long live Princess Hilaria!

(UBU and LYUBITCHA are brought out, shackled and in orange prison jumpsuits.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Bring the traitor here.

(UBU is brought to her.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

I hereby crown you king – of Sing Sing!

(She puts on his head an orange mop wig.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

We do not defy the laws of America. We will not slay you as mercilessly as you did everyone who stood between you and the throne. We will give you a fair trial before the highest court of the land, and let justice claim for you the deserts you have so richly merited.

UBU (to LYUBITCHA)

I think the princess forgot something. When I killed all the judges, I packed the Supreme Pigpen with my own appointees. Now, that was forward thinking, wasn't it, Sweetie Buns?

LYUBITCHA

I'll believe it when I get out of this orange suit. It clashes with my complexion.

PRINCESS HILARIA

Bring out the noble steed of our ignoble prisoner.

(The donkey is brought in.)

UBU

My stallion! My burro of power!

(He kisses the donkey, who brays, and is put on its back.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Away with him!

UBU

You'll so miss me when I'm gone. I made America laugh again!

(UBU and donkey leave.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

Today we celebrate the liberation of our country from tyranny and civil war. We could not have done it without the Empress Claudia and all our friends and allies of Mexico! All thanks to them!

(The empress joins her.)

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

We hereby announce the eternal alliance of our countries! We are neighbors and allies, helpmates and friends!

(They embrace.)

SOLDIERS

Long live the empress! Long live Princess Hilaria! Long live Mexico! Long live America!

(The sound of UBU singing off stage. Everyone stops to listen.)

UBU

I'm off to the Supreme Pigpen! I'm off to the Supreme Pigpen! I'm off to the Supreme Pigpen! I win! I win! I win!

(The sound of the donkey giving a loud, long bray.)

PRINCESS HILARIA

In your dreams! (*to the audience*) Let the future bring what it dares. We will protect our land ...

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

... from the mountains to the plains...

PRINCESS HILARIA

... from the rivers to the valleys...

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

... from the Atlantic to the Pacific...

PRINCESS HILARIA

...from the Great Lakes to the Gulf ...

EMPRESS CLAUDIA

... of México!

(Offstage, UBU blows his whistle as loud and long as he can. Everyone turns to the audience, as though the sound is coming from that direction. The sound of the whistle continues while LYUBITCHA turns to the audience with a smirk, and gives it a big wink; the sound is cut off by:

(Blackout.)

END OF PLAY

Christopher Bernard is an award-winning poet, novelist and essayist and a co-editor, as well as the original founder, of *Caveat Lector*. His third collection of poems, *The Socialist's Garden of Verses*, won a PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Award and was named one of the "Top 100 Indie Books of 2021" by *Kirkus Reviews*. He is also recipient of an Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award (2019). His novels include *A Spy in the Ruins* ("one of the best American novels since Thomas Pynchon and William Gass," Miguel de Cervantes–award winning novelist Juan Goytisolo), *Voyage to a Phantom City* ("an enormous achievement," award-winning translator Peter Bush), and *Meditations on Love and Catastrophe at The Liars' Cafe* ("puts one in mind of *Ulysses* as much as *Naked Lunch*," award-winning poet Ernest Hilbert). His most recent books are the middle-grade stories, the first in the "Otherwise" series, *If You Ride A Crooked Trolley . . .* and *The Judgment Of Biestia*, which won an Independent Press Award in Preteen Fiction in 2025.