

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

TRANSLATED FOR MODERN PERFORMANCE BY

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WITH

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Stanford Classics in Theater

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Shortly after SCIT made its decision to produce Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, we set ourselves the goal of creating our own translation as well. No one now can recall whose suggestion this was, nor, in hindsight, why on earth anyone would have considered it a good idea. And yet many, many months later, with an adaptation that arguably – perhaps very arguably – combines topicality, visual gags, choral antics, absurdity, truculence, and of course, oversized phalluses in a form that Aristophanes could recognize.

Which is not to say we haven't fallen short in many places. One thing readers of the original Greek will miss is metrical verse throughout. Not one line of an Aristophanic comedy would have been spoken in prose, a poetic convention that strongly marked out dramatic performances from everyday speech. (There was thus no strict theatrical realism in the fashion we sometimes admire today.) Scarcely any translator attempts to recreate this effect in full, although the inimitable B.B. Rogers succeeded in his edition of 1910. Still, some parts, as you will see, are obviously in meter (and then some!), and we've tried to maintain a roughly iambic, "sing-songy" quality wherever possible.

And then there are the jokes. Aristophanes was a comedic genius, but there are times when his humor grates on a modern audience. (Repetition, in particular, was something the ancient Greeks apparently had a much greater tolerance for.) Old Comedy being expressly political, it also inevitably happens that many names and situations now appear to us as hopelessly arcane and parochial. Luckily for the adaptor of Aristophanes, our modern-day celebrities and political leaders remain, like their classical counterparts, scoundrels, hypocrites, and sexual reprobates, so only slight alterations are necessary to maintain the spirit of the original.

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Finally, there are hundreds of puns, sly references, snippets of gossip, and otherwise cheeky “knowing winks” which are impossible to capture in any language other than ancient Greek, but which we tried to find contemporary parallels for wherever we could.

Some specifics: Our starving Russian is based on Aristophanes’ Megarian, a man from a blockaded enemy town of Athens’. Aristophanes also had fun with his foreign characters’ accents and national peccadilloes. “Captain America” was originally “Amphitheos,” a man with “gods on both sides of his family tree.” America’s legendary figures are its gods, so Betsy Ross makes about as much sense as an ancestor as one of the mythical patrons of Athens, Demeter. “Mr. Talibaloney” derives from “Pseudartabas,” a Persian ambassador in the original whose name also suggests lying. He too speaks in mostly unintelligible gibberish (Orientalism has a long pedigree, unfortunately). And yes, we know Donald Rumsfeld never held a military position, but his reputation (and at Stanford, his proximity!) made him a perfect candidate for the role of Lamachus, the hyper-patriotic war enthusiast of the Acharnians.

“Cock songs,” on the other hand, would seem to have no modern equivalent.

Adapted from program notes written by

*Matt Simonton
April, 2009
Stanford, California*

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Original Setting

The Acharnians was staged in Athens at 425 BCE and won first prize at the dramatic competition of the Lenaia, a local annual festival of great importance for the production of comedy. Aristophanes was at the time an up-and-coming comic poet, who had already enjoyed first place the previous year at the major Athenian festival of the City Dionysia (which attracted visitors from all around Greece). As all previous comedies are now lost, the *Acharnians*, Aristophanes' third play, is the oldest preserved comedy in the world.

At the time of production the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) between Athens and Sparta (and their respective allies) was in its sixth year. The war had tremendous impact on the cities involved. It was not only about loss of life on the battlefield; sieges, destruction of the enemy's agricultural infrastructure (including the occupation of the Athenian countryside by the Spartans) and embargoes curtailed the production of even essential commodities and put a serious constraint on trade.

The Themes

The most prominent theme in the play is war and peace. However, this theme works alongside others, including political participation, tolerance of other people's views, freedom of speech, and freedom of trade. The protagonist, Dikaiopolis as he is called in the original (= "Just City"; he is called Justin Cittee in our play), makes a private peace-pact with the Spartans, because he sees the Athenian democracy as plagued by indifference and lack of participation. In the process of gaining the support of the Acharnians (residents of the region of Acharnai outside of Athens, which had been ravaged by the

SCIT TRANSLATION

Spartans) he has to overcome the obstacle of the unwillingness to listen to a speech with an unfamiliar point of view. However, he does get permission to speak, and gradually he convinces the Acharnians in favor of peace.

What follows is the *parabasis* (= “stepping aside”), a part of the comedy where the Chorus speaks to the audience out of character and claims to be transmitting the words of the poet himself. Aristophanes thus again puts forward another theme that is prominent in the play, i.e. the ability of comedy to tackle serious political issues.

After the *parabasis* the second part of the play commences, where we see the protagonist’s success materializing. His private peace has granted him the advantage of free trade, and he makes good use of it. In brief, as war for Justin Cittee ends, money-making starts.

The Interpretation

There is no consensus on how we should perceive Dikaiopolis’ individualistic attitude in the second part of the play. Some critics argue that there is no shadow cast over his triumph whereas others think that there his behavior provides a negative example.

According to our interpretation, both factors operate: Justin’s eventual triumph does function as a foil for the continuation of war by the rest of Athens; it shows the Athenians that they could have it so much better. At the same time, his triumph is a problematic one: he does not wish to offer anything back to the community. But it would just be too easy for Aristophanes to have his protagonist make private peace and then share it with everyone, so that all are happy in the end. What this play shows is that without collective action, without broad participation in the political process, this cannot be achieved. A private peace brings only private happiness. It places Dikaiopolis in an advantageous position from where he is able to exploit the misery of some and laugh at the troubles of others.

At the time of the Acharnians, the Greeks seem to have well formed the idea that they were one people—the idea of Panhellenism—despite the fact that they were still organized in independent city-states (*poleis*), each of which had its own identity and culture. It is to be expected that as Dikaiopolis abuses or exploits the poor Greeks from other cities who came to him, at least a part of the audience would have perceived this as an attack on the cruel stance of Athens against the city-states that were not part of the Athenian alliance.

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Aristophanes went on to express views in favor of Panhellenism in more plays, notably the Peace and the Lysistrata.

Our Production

We are presenting a performance that hopefully still manifested all the important themes of the original: war, political participation, freedom of speech, tolerance, free trade and exploitation. If the only theme that matters in the comedy were war, this comedy would not work as well today as it would have in, say, 2004. Fortunately, the Acharnians is concerned with themes that are always prominent in the life of our communities. It is in essence an angry comedy--much like its protagonist. In the original Greek, Dikaiopolis is willing to be beheaded if the Acharnians do not like his speech. In our version, Justin is attached to tortuous and potentially lethal electrodes. I think that we owed it to those fictional characters to take a risk ourselves as we translated and produced this play.

There is something in this play to offend everyone—but this is not gratuitous. The basic principle, and what Aristophanes claims explicitly twice in the play, is that comedy too can talk about right and wrong. Writing a comedy on human pain can drive the point home in a way that may strike the audience harder than tragedy. The scene where the Russian sells his daughters to Justin is a good example. It is not funny when people are so poor that they choose to prostitute their children. But as it is presented in comic way, this experience becomes much more unsettling for the audience. The same principle applies constantly and to see this play as a comedy that is sexist or xenophobic absolutely misses the point. To see it as comedy that invites the audience to free themselves of stereotypes and be able to trust and listen to a different point view is more effective. Nothing was off-limits for Aristophanes when he wrote comedy, but his provocations were part of a statement on the problems of human society. In the same spirit, we hope that this production employs humor to make a point on the effects of apathy, prejudice and individualism.

Adapted from program notes written by

*Foivos Karachalios
April 2009
Stanford, California*

THE ORIGINAL COMPANY

PLAYERS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Justin Cittee	James Kierstead
Herald (Younger Pussy, Messenger)	Maxine Holland
Captain America (Jay-Z)	Sarah Bradford
Ambassador (Frenchman)	Eleri Cousins
Mr. Talibaloney (Kazakh, Rumsfeld)	Matt Simonton
Justin's Wife (Kazakh, Messenger)	Bianca Carpeneti
Jay-Z's Assistant (Older Pussy)	Alice Hu
Russky	Al Duncan
Informer (Soldier)	John Sutherland
French Flutist	Zana Bass
Best Man (Soldier, Bodyguard)	Jose Armando Perez-Gea
Maid of Honor	Deborah Sohn
Thug, Rapper	C.J. Jameson

PRODUCTION

Director	Foivos Karachalios
Producer	Al Duncan
Costumes & Props	Zana Bass
Choreography	Nikita Vashi
Set Piece Construction	Brian Jones
Lighting	Andrew McClellan

THE ACHARNIANS

JUSTIN

I could bite myself, I'm so mad!

The things I've enjoyed in life I could count on one hand,
while the pains and frustrations are in the gazillions.

Hmm, let's see, what can I think of that's cheered me up?

I know: it made my day to see

Blagojevich coughing up that Senator seat.

Now that was sweet, and I love the Feds
for making it happen—that was all-American!

But then there was that Grammys disaster
when I was holding my breath

expecting Bruce Springsteen and the host announced,
"it's Britney Spears here to perform her new single!"

Ugh. I almost lost my lunch.

Oh—there was something else that warmed my heart:
when Jay-Z showed up unexpectedly to rap for Coldplay.

But this year it almost killed me to have to listen when Janet Jackson's tit
fell out in her malfunctioning wardrobe at the Super Bowl.

But never since I've been old enough to wash myself
have my eyes been stung by soap as much as they are now,
when with an official meeting of Congress supposed to be taking place
this very morning, Capitol Hill here, as you can see, is deserted.

Senators are out shopping downtown
and trying to avoid their political duties.

Heads of committees haven't even showed up, and when they do
it will be too late, and then how well do you think that will work?--

all of them arriving at the same time,
pushing and shoving to get to the first bench,
crowded and swarming together. Meanwhile, peace
goes by the wayside.

Oh, America!

I was always the first Representative to come
and find a seat in the House. I had so much time alone

SCIT TRANSLATION

I would groan, yawn, stretch, fart,
twiddle my thumbs, doodle on a napkin,
have a wank, pluck my nose-hairs,
count the spots in the carpet,
and daydream about peace,
hating the Washington bureaucracy
and longing for my own home district—
where people never talk about buying the latest fashions
or spending on lavish vacations,
who don't even know the concept of luxury items,
but are just worried about making ends meet with the way things are now.
So now as just your average citizen I'm here prepared to shout,
to interrupt, to cut through the fancy talk
if any of these suits tries to change the subject away from peace.
Oh, here we go: it's the bureaucrats, right on schedule,
bickering and sniping at each other, just like I said,
and all jockeying for the best seats.

HERALD

Come on down!
Come on down! Take your seats!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Did anybody speak already?

HERALD

Who would like to give their view?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

I—

HERALD

Name?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

America—

HERALD

American like the rest of us?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

No, America - Captain America.

For Paul Bunyan was the son of Betsy Ross and George Washington,
and their son was Johnny Appleseed, who married Aunt Jemima,
who were the parents of John Wayne.

And I'm John Wayne Jr. - Captain America.

And God granted to me alone to make peace with Iraq.

But I'm American, guys, so I don't have a passport.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

HERALD

Security!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

O George Washington and John Wayne, what kind of *laissez-faire* is this?

JUSTIN

Damn politicians! You're wronging the democracy
By taking away this man, who wanted to
Make peace for us and let us take our guns back home.

HERALD

Sit down and shut up!

JUSTIN

By God I will not,
Unless you let us talk about peace like I say!

HERALD

Our envoys, returning from their meetings with President Karzai.

JUSTIN

President my ass! I'm fed up with special envoys,
And all their heroin and bullshit.

HERALD

Shut up!

JUSTIN

Fuck me! Holy Mosul! What an outfit!

AMBASSADOR

You sent us to His Presidency
on a salary of ten thousand dollars a day back
when Colin Powell was Secretary of State.

JUSTIN

Oh shit, ten thousand bucks!

AMBASSADOR

Let me tell you, it was tough work flying over the Hindu Kush in an
air-conditioned private jet with complimentary drinks -- What a nightmare!

JUSTIN

And here I was pampering myself,
up to my neck in Katrina-shit with the National Guard!

AMBASSADOR

And at the official reception we were forced to smoke

SCIT TRANSLATION

only the best opium out of a golden
hookah -- it was practically torture!

JUSTIN

O shining city on a hill, can you hear the mockery of our diplomats?

AMBASSADOR

The only people the Arabs consider manly
are the ones who can eat and smoke the most.

JUSTIN

While we prefer cocksuckers and butt pirates.

AMBASSADOR

After four years we came to the President's Official Residence.
But he'd stepped out to take a shit with his bodyguards,
and took an eight-month crap on the UN compound.

JUSTIN

And when did he seal the deal?

AMBASSADOR

At the full moon; then he went home,
where he held a private reception for us,
and presented us with a statue made entirely
out of cocaine.

JUSTIN

Cocaine in Afghanistan? What a load of bullshit!

AMBASSADOR

And I swear to God,
he served us a bird three times as big as Kirstie Alley!
And they called her 'Foxy.'

JUSTIN

You're outfoxing us to the tune of millions of dollars.

AMBASSADOR

And we've brought with us Mr. Talibaloney, the President's right-hand man.

JUSTIN

Which one of you has given the President more hand *jobs*,
that's the real question.

AMBASSADOR

Come now, Mr. Talibaloney, tell the American people
what the President sent you here to say.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

MR. TALIBALONEY

Durka durka, Mohammed Jihad.

AMBASSADOR

Do you understand what he says?

JUSTIN

No fuckin' clue.

AMBASSADOR

He says the president will send you oil.
Tell us more about the oil, and speak more clearly.

MR. TALIBALONEY

No get oil, ass-fucked Yankees.

JUSTIN

Well fuck me, that's clear enough!

AMBASSADOR

What is he saying?

JUSTIN

What is he saying? He's saying that the Yankees are going to get shafted if they expect oil from the Afghans.

AMBASSADOR

No, he's talking about economic ASSistance for oil.

JUSTIN

What economic assistance? You're a great bullshitter!
So fuck off! I'll interrogate this guy myself.
Come on you, tell me clearly, by this baseball-bat,
so that I don't turn your face all poppy-red.
Will the President send us oil?

[MR. TALIBALONEY shakes his head]

Then are we being taken for a ride by the diplomats?

[MR. TALIBALONEY nods]

These guys are nodding in the American way,
I'm not convinced they're not from hereabouts.
I know who one of these two bundles is:
It's Michael Moore, Osama's adopted son!
You taker, you fat piece of shit,
how dare you come here dressed up as a chick
with such a sweaty beard?
And who's the other woman? Osama himself?

HERALD

Shut up and sit down!

SCIT TRANSLATION

The Senate asks the President's right-hand man to dinner
in the White House.

JUSTIN

That really makes my blood boil.
Here I am getting butt-fucked by the credit-crunch,
while the door is always open to these guys' partying.
But *now* I'll do something!
Where's Captain America?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Here I am!

JUSTIN

Take this thousand bucks and make a private pact with the Iraqis
for me and my wife and kids. But you all keep on filibustering and
bullshitting!

HERALD

Make way for the envoy from our allies in Kazakhstan!

ENVOY

I am here, yes?

JUSTIN

The quacks just keep on coming.

ENVOY

We are long time traveling to America –

JUSTIN

On the budget we gave you it shouldn't have taken *this* long!

ENVOY

--Because my boat is caught in hurricane while crossing great ocean.

JUSTIN

You must've been downwind of Michael Moore there.

ENVOY

I come from great friend of United States, Kazakh President Nazarbayev.
He so love America, he would gladly buy her as wife.
And he put pin-up
picture of Statue of Liberty on his bedroom wall with note,
"I love green vagine."
And he has son who studies at Stanford University,
and he loves to eat 'starving student burrito' from 'Treehouse,
shaped like a man's *ham*,
so he beg father to help America in 'War of Terror'.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

So great President, he swear to be friend of United States,
and he will provide world-famous Kazakh army,
army so big you would say,
"Who let the goats out," yes?

JUSTIN

I'll be damned if I believe anything you say—except for that goat bit.

ENVOY

And now, presenting, from great President – army of Kazakhstan, fiercest and most technically advanced in whole world!

JUSTIN

That's obvious.

HERALD

Hey Kazakhs, the ones the envoy brought with him, come on out!

JUSTIN

What the fuck is this?

ENVOY

This army of Turks.

JUSTIN

What kind of Turks are these? And tell me, what is this?
Who peeled their dicks?

ENVOY

If you pay them wage of a thousand dollars a day,
they'll scimitar the whole of Armenia to bits.

JUSTIN

A thousand bucks for these one-eyed bishops in a turtleneck?
The navy seals, the bulwark of our nation, would moan over this one.
Ay yai yai, I've been screwed! I'm done for, I've been robbed of my
Cheez-Its by the Turks!
Put down my Cheez-Its!
Will the Senators watch me suffering these things
on home soil at the hands of terrorists?
But I warn you: don't have a meeting
about pay for the Kazakhs! Because...I bet there's
a terrorist attack coming up...I think I smell anthrax!

HERALD

The Kazakhs are to go away, and come back after two days.
The President has dissolved congress.

SCIT TRANSLATION

JUSTIN

I'm screwed! The snacks I've lost today!
But here's Captain America, back from Iraq.
What's up, Captain America?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

A lot, at least until I can get away -
the Acharnians are chasing me!

JUSTIN

THE ACHARNIANS!!! What the fuck does that mean?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

I was hurrying here bringing the "six-pact" of peace.
But some old guys sniffed me out, the "Acharnians" --
they're a special interest group, but nothing like the others:
a bunch of Old Hickories, Vietnam War vets, strong as oak.
They drive massive American cars
and they will drill, baby, drill every chance they get.

So they all started hooting and hollering:

"You traitor!

You're making peace at a time when the Islamofascists are out to get us?"
And they got out their pistols from their old uniforms.
I turned tail, but they're after me, raising a ruckus.

JUSTIN

So they're upset. But you've brought the six-pact?

CAPTAIN AMERICA

I certainly have, three varieties, in fact.
This is the five-year blend. Have a taste test.

JUSTIN

Ugh!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

What's wrong?

JUSTIN

It's skunky -- smells like tank oil and fighter jets.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Try this one -- a ten-year vintage.

JUSTIN

This one smells like *Shiite!*

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

CAPTAIN AMERICA

This one's the thirty year anniversary edition, with no embargoes or no-fly zones!

JUSTIN

Oh holy Woodstock!
This tastes like cannabis and intercourse
and says to your brain:
“Fuck the militia and do what you want!”
I'll take this one and shotgun it
and old-time veterans can kiss my ass,
cause I am free of wars and injuries
and I'm throwing a party over at my house!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

And I'm running away from the Acharnians.

[*Enter chorus of Acharnians, one by one*]

FIRST ACHARNIAN

This way, folks—let's hunt down that bastard and get information
from everyone we see along the way. It's worth spending billions on homeland
security
if we can track this guy down. You there! [*Turns to audience*]
do *you* know where on earth he went with those peace treaties?

SECOND ACHARNIAN

He got away—disappeared without a trace!
Damn my old-age!
It wouldn't be this way if I was still young...
those were the days when I could give that Jesse Owens a run for his money,
even with a tool-belt around my waist...
back then I would have brought down this hippie in a flash--
tracked him down and showed him where he could put his peace treaties.
[*Illustrative gesture*]

THIRD ACHARNIAN

But now that my bones are brittle
and the legs on General MacArthur here are like dead weights,
he's getting away. But we have to find a way to go after him:
we can't have him crowing about how he escaped us war veterans, old as we
are.

FIRST ACHARNIAN

I swear to god, whoever so much as *thinks*
about making peace with them Iraqis,
—who I hold responsible for 9/11 and the high gas prices

SCIT TRANSLATION

and the economic crisis and my wife leaving me—
whoever even *thinks* about ending this war
will feel the pain from my shotgun,
and that's the last they'll mess in my business.

SECOND ACHARNIAN

We gotta keep looking for that hippie bastard,
from Minneapolis to Plano,
from Baltimore to Bakersfield, until we get him.
I don't think I'll ever get tired of pumping him full of lead.

JUSTIN

Show some respect, now, show some respect!

THIRD ACHARNIAN

Shut up, everyone. Do you hear him asking for respect?
This is our guy. Come 'ere, fellows, give him some space--
he's having some kind of ceremony.

JUSTIN

Show some respect, now, show some respect!
A little farther forward, honey.
Goldie, set up the phallus, as the Greeks did before us in ancient times. Ooh
yeah, that's nice. O Bill Clinton, Mr. President,
I hope you like this song and dance -- I'm going to
celebrate my good fortune with this Slick Willy parade,
Me and my family, since I've been relieved of military service.
And may the thirty-year six-pact treaty turn out all right for me!

WIFE

C'mon girl, carry this basket all sexy-like,
looking like a lemon-sucker. The guy's a lucky bastard
who marries you and gets himself a litter of kids who
are as farty as you are in the morning!

JUSTIN

Goldie, get that cock up in the rear!
And I'll sing the cock-song. Let's go!
[singing]

O cock, friend of Dionysus,
my comrade after hours,
you are my friend at parties,
you want to get these panties,
you look like a torpedo,
you are a known paedo.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

O cock it's been so long,
since I last sang this song,
but now I've come back home,
made a peace of my own,
I'm done with guns and shit,
and, Rumsfeld, eat a dick.

O how much sweeter, my cock, is this thong,
that girl that's shaking her booty to my song,
I know there's a thing or two
we have to tell her, me and you.

O cock drink with me tonight,
you won't be hungover when morning comes bright,
cause I'll give you a potion called peace,
all guns will be useless, we'll dance on the streets. [*Song ends*]

FIRST ACHARNIAN

This is the guy here!
Fire fire fire!
Shoot the bastard!
Why won't you fire?

JUSTIN

Shit, what's going on? You'll put a hole in the six-pact!

THIRD ACHARNIAN

We'll put a hole in you, you filthy hippie!

JUSTIN

But why, good servants of our nation?

FIRST ACHARNIAN

You ask us that? You shameless young rascal!
You terrorist, negotiating with the enemy,
Have the gall to look me in the eye?

JUSTIN

But you don't know why I made peace - so listen.

SECOND ACHARNIAN

Never! You must die! Torn apart by our bullets!

JUSTIN

Not until you've let me speak! Worthy citizens, wait!

SECOND ACHARNIAN

We won't wait! Don't speak to us!
We hate you more than Barack Obama,

SCIT TRANSLATION

Who we'll cut into shoes for our officers!
And as for you, who compromised with Al-Qaeda,
I don't want to understand, but just punish you!

JUSTIN

Let's leave Al-Qaeda out of this.
Focus on this: was I right to make a deal?

FIRST ACHARNIAN

How can you say that you're right to make deals
With people who cheat and lie and torture?

JUSTIN

In any case, these Iraqis you're upset about,
Are they really to blame for everything?

SECOND ACHARNIAN

Not to blame? You bastard, how dare you
Say these things publicly to my face?
Give me one reason not to shoot you down!

JUSTIN

Not to blame for everything! I can explain to you
Ways in which we've actually done wrong to them!

THIRD ACHARNIAN

This is a terrifying and perplexing thing,
This understanding your enemies!

JUSTIN

If I'm not right in what I say, or the crowd doesn't think so,
attach electrodes to my body while I speak.

FIRST ACHARNIAN

Why aren't we firing our guns, vets?
Shouldn't we pump him full of lead 'til he's as red as
the Commie he is?

JUSTIN

What's stuck up your ass?
Will you not hear me, not at all, sons of the American Revolution?

SECOND ACHARNIAN

We certainly will not!

JUSTIN

Such terrible things I'll suffer!

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

SECOND ACHARNIAN

May the Lord strike me dead if I listen to you!

JUSTIN

No, no! Good veterans!

THIRD ACHARNIAN

Face up to it: you're going to die right now.

JUSTIN

Then I'll wound you too.

I'll take it out on your nearest and dearest!

I've taken some of your people captives:

Now I'll bring them out and slit their throats.

FIRST ACHARNIAN

Tell me, what's this threat of his against us veterans?

Surely he doesn't have one of our children with him?

Why is he so uppity?

JUSTIN

Shoot if you want -- but I'll kill him, I'll do it!

I'll soon learn which one of you cares about the price of oil!

[Reveals an oil barrel]

SECOND ACHARNIAN

We're doomed! That barrel's one of us!

Don't do what you have in mind! No! Don't do it!

JUSTIN *[holding a lighter]*

I'm going to kill him, shout all you want -- now it's my turn not to listen.

THIRD ACHARNIAN

You'll kill me too, then -- all the years I've spent lobbying for off-shore drilling!

JUSTIN

You didn't listen when I was talking just now.

FIRST ACHARNIAN

But tell us now, if you want, why it is that you love al-Qaeda?

I'm not ready to give up my oil addiction.

JUSTIN

First, put your guns down on the ground for me.

FIRST ACHARNIAN

There you go, they're on the ground - now put away the lighter.

SCIT TRANSLATION

JUSTIN

But I bet you're still packing heat.

SECOND ACHARNIAN

[Loads of weapons fall to the ground from their clothes]

They're all on the ground now. Come on, pat us down if you want.

But no excuses, now, put away the lighter --

We gave up our heat, now you give up yours.

JUSTIN

You were all about to shoot at me

and this black gold, Texas tea would have gone up in flames

all for the looniness of its citizens.

That was so scary that this barrel of oil

shat its ink on me like an octopus.

I think it's terrible that men have hearts so sour

that they prefer to shout than hear a speech that's even-handed,

even though I'm willing to hook myself up to electrodes

while saying what I have to say about the people of Iraq,

all even though I cherish my dear life.

FIRST ACHARNIAN

So why don't you say it, then, clamping the electrodes

on your nipples while you're at it, you pervert,

if you have some big thing to tell us?

I really want to hear the way you think.

So in the way you wanted to yourself

hook up them nipples and let's hear your speech.

JUSTIN

Look here, I've got the wires. And don't worry --

I swear to God I won't cut and run, but I'll speak my mind

about the Iraqis.

...But I am still pretty scared, 'cause I know how these country

bumpkins are, how they giggle with glee whenever some

silver-tongued charlatan who doesn't care about right or wrong

gives them sermons about God and country.

They don't know it but they're being bought and sold.

And I know how spirited old timers get, too --

They're always peering around for an opportunity to take a bite

out of a young punk with their dentures.

I know firsthand, thanks to what I suffered at the hands of

Bill O'Reilly when he got wind of my anti-war antics.

He dragged me onto Fox News and spread lies about me,

really tongue-lashed me, with a great stream of verbal diarrhea,

and he hosed me so much I almost choked to death from all the mudslinging.

So now that I think about it, I can't do this in a suit.

This is not politics as usual.

I need that street quality before I give my speech—

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

and I need the flow.

SECOND ACHARNIAN

You are twisting,
manipulating, deferring.

I don't care if you'd like to grow the beard of Joaquin Phoenix--
there is no postponing this match.

JUSTIN

It's time to pluck up courage
and go find Jay-Z in his crib.
Son! Son!

JAY-Z'S ASSISTANT

Who dat?

JUSTIN

Is Jay-Z in?

JAY-Z'S ASSISTANT

Yo he's not *inside* inside man, d'ya know what I'm sayin.

JUSTIN [*puzzled*]

You're not black.

JAY-Z'S ASSISTANT

Yo man the fuckz you sayin?

JUSTIN (resuming)

What does that mean, inside, but at the same time not?

JAY-Z'S ASSISTANT

Dat's right, old man.

You know hiz mind be wandering y'all, collecting verses and shit.
Himself though, he be putting some work in fo his next record.

JUSTIN

Oh blessed is Jay-Z, when his assistant can respond in such a philosophical
manner.

Please tell him to come.

JAY-Z'S ASSISTANT

Can't do dat y'all.

JUSTIN

Sure you can,

if you want me to go away. Otherwise, I'll just keep knock knock knocking on
his door.

Hova! Hov! Hovito!

SCIT TRANSLATION

Listen to me, if you've ever listened to anyone!
It's Justin Cittee, House Representative from the district of Main Street.

JAY-Z
Sorry son, got no time for dat.

JUSTIN
Use the mechanical platform from your illustrious concerts!

JAY-Z
Nah.

JUSTIN
Please!

JAY-Z.
A'ight, I'll come on the platform. For I got no time to walk. [*Jay-Z dramatically enters on platform, head on the ground*]

JUSTIN
Hova--

JAY-Z
What?

JUSTIN
You're composing with your head to the ground,
instead of sitting down like a normal person?
No wonder your beatz is so sick.
I beseech thee, o J-Hova,
Lend me your clothes from the old days, for I need your swagger.
I need to give a concert to harsh critics.
And a thumbs-down from them would put me on my back.
Do you feel me?

JAY-Z
What clothes? My C.E.O. outfit?

JUSTIN
No, not that. I need to dress street.

JAY-Z
So you don't want my Grammys tux or notin' like that?

JUSTIN
No no--remember the old days when you were singing songs
about your... *problems*.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

JAY-Z

I see what's you sayin' son.

"Fuck critics you can kiss my whole ass-hole

If you don't like my lyrics you can press fast-forward."

JUSTIN

Yes, that's it, that's the attitude I need!

JAY-Z

Son, give him that old jacket.

Next to the gold chains from last year.

JUSTIN

Oh Hova, since your shit is so right,

please also give me that ultimate accessory,

a pair of your sunglasses.

For I have to be quite fly,

and be who I am, but not look like it.

And the spectators will know who I am,

but the Acharnians will stand by like morons.

As I bone them, yours is going to be the soundtrack.

JAY-Z

I'll give 'em to you. Seeing as you respect my fresh.

JUSTIN

I appreciate it.

I have learned how to dress just by checking your fresh.

I already feel ready to get that dirt off my shoulder.

But I need more swagger. Tell me, are these Nikes?

JAY-Z

Take it and go.

JUSTIN

Oh my heart see, see how they are pushing me away

although I still need much to keep all eyes on me.

I have to bust some balls to get paid.

Hova, please give me one of your thousand gold chains

JAY-Z

Yo what'd you need *that* fo dawg?

JUSTIN

I don't really need it. It's just so fine.

JAY-Z

You're not all that son, you better move.

SCIT TRANSLATION

JUSTIN

Please, I wish you every happiness--and to yo mama too!

JAY-Z

Move son.

JUSTIN

Only one thing, only give me a big-ass cigar.

JAY-Z

Take this and run, motherfucker.

JUSTIN

Be easy boss, don't be hating like that--
one more thing and we're done,
your all-blue Yankee cap!

JAY-Z

Yo, I'm giving away all my game here!

JUSTIN

I know. I'm done.
But there is just one more thing--
If I ain't got this, I ain't got shit.
I need your ring.

JAY-Z

You're killing me man! You taking away all my show!

JUSTIN

I'm going now Hovito! I know I'm annoying.
Oh shit! I just realize, I'm fucked!
I forgot the thing that's everything to me!
My dear, dear Jay-Z,
may you shoot both my kneecaps if I ask you for anything else
except for this one, this wee thing:
Can you tell Beyoncé to come talk with me?

JAY-Z

Yo fuck you mothafucka! [*Dragged dramatically off-stage on platform*]

JUSTIN

Alas, poor me, I'll have to do this without
the hottest chick in the game.
My poor soul, do you know what kind of fight you're about to fight?
Speaking in favor of the Iraqis?
Take courage my heart. This is the line you walk.
You hesitate? But didn't you just become one with the best rapper alive?
Well done! Go forth, my poor heart,

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

go there, and lend your body to them
speaking what you think is right.
Dare. Go. Walk. --Respect.

ACHARNIANS [*Song*]

What are you going to do? What are you going to say?
You ought to know that you are shameless but you have balls of steel,
You've clamped up both your nipples
The nation is-a-watching,
And you're about to go it alone in front of everyone,
saying things that no one wants to hear.
This man is not afraid.
So go ahead and speak.

JUSTIN

Don't be angry at me, prime-time viewers,
If, though a gangsta, I'm about to speak
to the American people about the state of the nation
in a comedy. Because comedy also knows what is right.
I'll tell you things that are unsettling but true.
And Bill O'Reilly can't abuse me now
for emboldening the terrorists
by trash-talking America.
We're here at Stanford University
with no foreigners: there are no wealthy
donors being toured around,
no - but we've all had our applications accepted
(and grads I count as part of us).
See, I really hate the terrorists,
and may Our Lady of the stealth bombers
bust all their bunkers with predator drones.
The terrorists have cost me dear, like everyone.
But come on - my friends -
why should we blame the Iraqis for this?
Some of our men - though not the whole nation,
keep this in mind, I'm not talking about the nation -
men of worthless stock,
every bit as worthless as Lehman Brothers
and sub-prime mortgages,
some frat-boys after a few rounds of beer-pong
stole from the Russians fair Anna Kournikova,
and the Russkies, liquored up on vodka,
stole back the two daughters of Laura Bush.
This was the cause from which the war broke out
in the Middle East --
It just goes to show, you can't have slaughter without sluts.
And then our President, George Dubya,
thundering away, made up laws like you'd swear
he hadn't quit drinking,

SCIT TRANSLATION

that the Russians should be banned
from the arms trade,
and then the Russkies, really pissed,
urged their Arab friends to help them frame
a resolution against the law of the skank sanctions.
But we vetoed, even though the motion came up many times.
It was all shock and awe from there.
Someone will say 'they shouldn't have got involved';
but what should they have done, then?
If anyone had threatened our national interests,
the place would have been full of soldiers' shouting
admirals ululating, and pay disputes,
thronged mega-churches blessing our troops,
flag-waving families in all the ports,
and rations being measured out,
and water-bottles, camo-gear, and sunglasses,
mess-hall grub and power-bars and beef jerky,
of final flings with karaoke, whores and fisticuffs.
And all the Pentagon would have sung
with engines tuned and missiles fitted,
of orders barked and co-ordinates typed in,
Colin Powell presenting and WMD absenting.
You know you would have done this.
And why shouldn't a gangsta then do this?
We've really got no brains.

EXTREME FACTION ACHARNIAN #1

Seriously, you traitorous piece of shit?
You have the balls to speak to us this way, scumbag nobody that you are,
and you criticize us, just because there happened to be a couple of war-
mongers around?

MODERATE FACTION ACHARNIANS #1

Yes, by Al Gore's Oscar, and he's right about everything he says—
not one of his points is off-base.

EXTREME FACTION ACHARNIAN #2

Well if he's right, did he have to say it?
We won't let him get away with making such outrageous claims!

MODERATE FACTION ACHARNIAN #2

Hey, where are you going? Check yo'self before you wreck yo'self!
Because if you hurt him, you'll be on the ground before you know what hit you.

EXTREME FACTION ACHARNIAN #3

O General Rumsfeld, raining hellfire and brimstone on our enemies,
please show up and help us, with guns-a-blazing!
O General Rumsfeld, our man-crush, an all-American hero!
If there is any squadron leader or general or

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

take-no-prisoners manly man around here,
he'd better step up to the plate and help us!
'Cause I'm being grabbed around the waist!

RUMSFELD

Where did that call to arms come from?
Where do I need to step in? How can I get involved in the conflict?
Who has awoken the fighter jets from their slumber?

JUSTIN

It's Rumsfeld, the hero of the hour!

EXTREME FACTION ACHARNIAN #3

Rummy, this man's been slandering our great nation!

RUMSFELD

Hey you, how dare you speak this way, you gangster!

JUSTIN

Rumsfeld, my hero -- please forgive me,
if, being but a mere gangster, I prattled on a little more than I should.

RUMSFELD

What did you say about me? Will you not speak?!

JUSTIN

Oh, I'm not sure I know... Your scary helmet made my head spin!
Take it off, take off that monstrous thing!

RUMSFELD

There.

JUSTIN

Do me a favor, turn it upside down.

RUMSFELD

It's down.

JUSTIN

Now give me one of your many medals there.

RUMSFELD [*pleased*]

This one's from George W. himself.

JUSTIN

Ok, now hold my hair so I can gag myself and puke.
Your medals make me nauseous.

SCIT TRANSLATION

RUMSFELD

Hey, what are you doing? You're going to vomit using my medal?

JUSTIN

Oh, this is a *real* medal?

I thought you were just being a pompous dick.

RUMSFELD

You are so dead.

JUSTIN

Don't do it, Donny! It's not about who's the strongest.

Although, if you're such a manly man, I wonder why you haven't spanked me yet... You seem to be well-equipped...

RUMSFELD

You, a gangsta, dare talk to a general like that?

JUSTIN

Me? A gangsta?

RUMSFELD

What else are you?

JUSTIN?

What? A law-abiding citizen, no nosy Ned, but ever since the war started, I'm fighting Fred, and you, since the war started, Big-money-feld.

RUMSFELD

I have been appointed!

JUSTIN

By three suits.

That's what fucks me up so badly, that I made peace, since I saw old men fighting the war and youngsters, such as you, trotting the globe; enjoying generous salaries as envoys and supervisors and heads of committees.

RUMSFELD

They were appointed!

JUSTIN

So for what reason are y'all sent all around as envoys, but we're not? Representative Bob Upstanding, have you ever been sent on a diplomatic mission in your thirty years on Capitol Hill? No says he.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

But he's been honest and tireless.
How about the rest of you people?
Who has seen the exotic capitals of the East
or shopped in Paris? None.
But you and your clique, you've had a fair share.

RUMSFELD

This is a democracy sir!

JUSTIN

It's not, so long as you are in office.

RUMSFELD

I'll fight the Iraqis
and I'll bomb and crash them all over--
I'll order airstrikes and unleash our tanks
and let all hell break loose. [*Exit, followed by Acharnian extremists*]

JUSTIN

I declare peace! Iraqis, Russians,
Cubans and Venezuelans can buy and sell here.
Rumsfeld can't. [*Exit all. Enter solo Acharnian for the parabasis*]

ACHARNIAN

This man is the winner, the Acharnians have changed views
They are lobbying for peace but I bring you some more news
As I take off my hat and my costume I put down
It's the words of our poet that I bring to the foreground

The Stanford community is politically correct
Our students are sensitive, academically adept
Our faculty is expected to discourage suspicious statements,
Be balanced and do not offend the common sentiment.

But who sticks his neck out and tells only jokes that hurt
Who is not afraid to instruct you and cause alert?
As people die in war or in poverty
Our poet wishes to say what is just in a comedy

If you think that this comedy's crossed the line all in vain
Pay attention cause the scene that comes next brings the pain
If you feel what you're watching is disturbing but real
Then you're closer to getting our comic appeal

We are not afraid of being inappropriate
What's coming up is so far from utopian

SCIT TRANSLATION

We are bringing you drama, instigating great ardor
As we turn it to comedy it'll hit you that much harder.

Cause who sticks his neck out and tells only jokes that hurt
Who is not afraid to instruct you and rouse alert?
As people die in war or in poverty
Our poet wishes to say what is just in a comedy

JUSTIN

These are the boundaries of my free market,
and here all Russians, Iraqis and Cubans
can buy and sell just as they please,
except for Rumsfeld. And I will set these hand-grenades
from Intervention-ville as market regulators,
duly elected by the populace.
No lawyers or informers better come,
or any one from Jargonsville.
I'll just go get my six-pact,
and put it in the fridge to chill.

RUSSKY [*with strong Russian accent*]

Hillo, American free-market, very popular in Russia!
I've longed for you just like the mother-land.
(to children) You little brats, go run and look for bread if you can find any.
But listen up, kids, give me your full digestion - uhh, attention.
What do you prefer - to be sold or to miserably starve to death?

KIDS

Sold sold!

RUSSKY

I knew it! But who'd be brainless enough
to buy you two, an obvious waste of money?
But I will dress you up and sell you as pussies!
(This is in fact a typical Russian trick).
Put on these cat-suits - that way everyone
will see immediately you're pussies.
But by Putin, if I have to take you home
unsold, you'll get your taste of famine.
Come on, put on your leather cat-suits
and get into these cat-carriers,
and meow and purr and hiss
just like the pussies in the movies.
And I will call on Mr. J. Citee.
Mr. Citee, you like to buy some pussies?

JUSTIN

What's this? A Russky?

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

RUSSKY

We've come to freely trade.

JUSTIN

Oh - and how are you? [*They shake hands*]

RUSSKY

Wasted away.

JUSTIN

Getting wasted - awesome, if there's good music.
What else do you guys do in Russia?

RUSSKY

Same old stuff. When I left there
our politicians were working very hard
to find ways for us to die ASAP.

JUSTIN

Your troubles'll soon be over, then.

RUSSKY

Damn right!

JUSTIN

What other news from Russia?
What's the price of a loaf of bread?

RUSSKY

About as high as a sputnik.

JUSTIN

Do you have any industry?

RUSSKY

You got it all.

JUSTIN

What about services?

RUSSKY

You buy them all up every time you get a chance.

JUSTIN

Well, what have you got?

RUSSKY

Pussies, like in the movies.

SCIT TRANSLATION

JUSTIN

Great! Well, put them on display!

RUSSKY

Oh they're beautiful.

Grab a hold of them, if you want.

They're plump and gorgeous.

JUSTIN

What the hell is this?

RUSSKY

Pussies, I swear!

JUSTIN

What are you talking about? What sort of pussies?

RUSSKY

Russian.

What? Isn't this a pussy?

JUSTIN

Not in my book.

RUSSKY

Isn't this terrible? Look at the mistrust between nations!

He says these are not pussies!

OK, if you want I'll bet you half a bailout

that these are pussies, in the international sense.

JUSTIN

You mean a person's pussy...

RUSSKY

Of course, by Gagarin, this is MY pussy!

Whose pussy did you think it was?

Would you like to hear them meowing?

JUSTIN

Damn right I would!

RUSSKY

Meow away, and hurry, my pussies!

Not a squeak? You are silent, bastard whore pussies?

By Putin I'll take you home again!

KIDS

Meow, meow!

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

RUSSKY

Ain't that a pussy?

JUSTIN

Oh, now I see you must be right.
But they'll be Siberian beaver in a couple of years.

RUSSKY

No, they'll be like their mother - you can trust me on that.

JUSTIN

But they're no good for families.

RUSSKY

And why not?

JUSTIN

She's got no tail!

RUSSKY

But she's just young - but wait till she is older,
then you'll get some tail, and big and bushy too.
[turning to the other kid]
But if you want a trained one, here's a lovely pussy.

JUSTIN

This one's exactly like the other!

RUSSKY

She from the same mother and from the same father.
If you stick it out, she'll get a lot more furry,
and be a beautiful pussy for shish-kebab.

JUSTIN

But you don't shish-kebab a pussy!

RUSSKY

You don't? Then she's the only thing you don't.
But there is nothing like a good pussy
when you can roast one on your spit.

JUSTIN

But can they feed without their mother yet?

RUSSKY

Oh sure they can—without their father too.

SCIT TRANSLATION

JUSTIN

What do they like to eat?

RUSSKY

Whatever you want to give to them.

See for yourself.

JUSTIN

Pussy, pussy.

KIDS

Meow, meow, meow.

JUSTIN

Do you like long green beans?

KIDS

Meow, meow. [*Becoming increasingly orgasmic*]

JUSTIN

How about Jamaican bananas?

KID A

OH OH OH!

JUSTIN

And what about you, would you like some?

KID B

OH OH OH!

JUSTIN

They're really moaning for bananas?

Someone bring out some bananas

for these little pussies!

Will they eat them?

Good god, they're really gobbling!

Looks like they're both from Hungary.

RUSSKY

But they haven't finished all of them -

I wanted to get my hands on one myself.

JUSTIN

What well-trained little creatures!

How much can I buy these pussies for? Tell me.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

RUSSKY

Give me for one a raw potato
and for the other a shot of vodka.

JUSTIN

I'll take them. Hold them for me, please.

RUSSKY

OK, by Federov, if only I could sell
my wife and mother for an equal price!

INFORMANT

Ah, sir, you're visiting us from...?

RUSSIAN

From Russia, for to sell my pussies.

INFORMANT

Well then, I'll report you and your pussies as un-American contraband!

RUSSIAN

There you go again -- we are back to square zero, how you say,
Making for us mutually assured destruction.

INFORMANT

You'll rue the day you came here, Russky! Aren't you going to
give up the bag?

RUSSIAN

Justin, help, I'm being indicted!

JUSTIN

By who? Who's the informant? Security, isn't it your job to keep
these McCarthyites out of here? And you, even if you've made
a little discovery, how're you going to be a whistleblower
without a proper trumpet? [*Shakes his phallos at him*]

INFORMANT

Shouldn't I squeal on him?

JUSTIN

Oh, you'll squeal, all right, unless you run off and
do your red-baiting somewhere else!

RUSSIAN

You have very bad problem with this in Yoo-Es-Ay.

JUSTIN

Cheer up, my Slavic friend. And in exchange for the

SCIT TRANSLATION

pussies you gave me, take this vodka and potato
Before you leave on that midnight train to Georgia.

RUSSIAN

This is perhaps not best thing to say to Russian.

JUSTIN

Hey, if I manage to find it on a map I *will* invade it for you.

RUSSIAN

Pussies of mine, even though your papa won't be around,
promise me you'll try to get your daily dose of protein,
if anyone offers.

CHORUS [*Song*]

I never saw a smarter man --
You heard the substance of his plan?
He'll make a fortune from his cargo,
Sneaking past the trade embargo.
And if we catch a snitch around,
With difficulty he will sit down!

No one can ever underbid you,
Nor the government forbid,
You can't suffer from your trade--
of course, there was old Bernie Madoff...
Give yourself a Christmas bonus,
Uncle Sam will never know!

As for crooked Wall Street bankers,
Keep away, you tribe of wankers!
Freddie Mac -- you must be joking!
You seen the crack that he's been smoking?
And Fannie Mae has hit hard times,
The tricks she's turning -- all sub prime.

Henry Paulson's balding dome
will never taint your market home.
Nor poor hapless Ben Bernanke --
Someone get the man a hanky!
If falling stocks are any clue,
he's got some crying left to do.

FRENCHMAN

Sacrebleu! Zees shoulder, it pains me.
Yvonne, place down Roquefort with zee utmost gentleness.
Et vous, flûte-men, coming with me all zee way from Par-ee,
with your flûtes play me now zee song "Ass of Puppy."

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

JUSTIN

Hey--get away from here.
Where did all of you dreadful pipers come from?
Get the hell out of my face, you jerks!

FRENCHMAN

Sacrerouge! Merci for zees command.
All zee way from Par-ee zey spit on my fine cheezes with zeir flûtes.
Now I cannot zell zese cheezes.
But perhaps it pleazes you to buy my other marchandises?
I have zee mineral water, vey fine Bourdeaux wines,
and zee vey exquisite chocolate.

JUSTIN

Well then all right. Welcome, my dear Gallish gourmet.
Keep talking. What else've you got?

FRENCHMAN

I have only the vey many fine zeengs we Franchmen have:
vey nice Châteauneuf-du-Pape et Château Margaux,
for cheese you see I have Brie et Camembert.
You like zee profiteroles, et crème brûlée?

JUSTIN

You've arrived at this market like a perfect storm of delicacies.

FRENCHMAN

I bring to you also for your pleasure:
Chèvre, Morchella et Chanterelle champignons,
real French Champagne--(not like your American "sparkler" wines)--
oh, and do not ever forget fois gras et escargots.

JUSTIN

I want some of that foy grass!

FRENCHMAN

And so how much you pay zees very nice foie gras?

JUSTIN

Well, that'll serve nicely as a tariff.
But if you want to sell some of the other stuff, let me know.

FRENCHMAN

I am businessman. Everyzeeng is for zale, all of it.

SCIT TRANSLATION

JUSTIN

All right, name your price.

Or are you going to take back just as much merchandise with you?

FRENCHMAN

Yez, yez. Things I can purchase here, oui, but at home, non.

JUSTIN

So, you'll want some baseball caps, or maybe some souvenir snow-globes?

FRENCHMAN

What I want with zees bezbal kips and snew-globs?

Zese things we have at the home.

No. Somezing we have non, but you, oui.

JUSTIN

Right, I've got it! Take home a Homeland security informant.

Let's pack him up like a snow-globe and export *him*.

FRENCHMAN

Eh bien! Mon Dieu! How much of zee money as I import zis man!

He is full with tricks like zee shimpanz-ee.

JUSTIN

Well here he is: This mawnk-ee is coming to rat on us.

FRENCHMAN [*Noticing his stature and phallos*]

Huah! But zees is but tiny man.

JUSTIN

But every bit of him evil.

INFORMANT

This stuff--this stuff, whose stuff is this?

FRENCHMAN

Zeese is mine, yes, from Par-ee.

INFORMANT

OK, they are hereby declared contraband.

FRENCHMAN

What is le problème with vous?

You draw sword in face of my delicacies? En garde!

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

INFORMANT

Furthermore, I shall make known your being non-American....err, un-American.

FRENCHMAN

What have I done to vous? Sarkozy is *friend* to USA--and me also!

INFORMANT [*to audience*]

Well, for the sake of those looking on, allow me to explain.
You're importing stinky cheese from an un-American country.

JUSTIN

So--let me get this straight--you're indicting him because of stinky cheese?

INFORMANT

This cheese could take down our entire emergency response network.

JUSTIN

A cheese take down an entire emergency response network?

INFORMANT

Sure.

JUSTIN

How is that?

INFORMANT

A man from Paris could drop a tiny piece as he serves a customer.
That cheese could be eaten by mouse.
The mouse could be made delirious by its...umm...pungent odor.
Said mouse could race into any one of our many server rooms
and gnaw a wire critical to the surveillance of our citizens.

JUSTIN

You fucking idiot. The response network would go down
because of some *French* cheese?

INFORMANT

We prevent just such disasters all the time.

JUSTIN

Someone put a cork in it.
Give me some packing peanuts so I can ship him back to Par-ee
like a snow-globe without him breaking on the way.

SCIT TRANSLATION

ACHARNIAN #1

Good man, nicely pack the “marchandises”
for his long trip home.

Protect our American franchises,
here where the buffalo roam.

JUSTIN

No problem. Look how, when I shake him now,
his head swirls with flakes and white powder!

ACHARNIAN #1

And what in the world will he use it for?

JUSTIN

It'll be a snow-globe that's good all year round.
You can read public policy from its swirling flakes.
You can beat a hostage with it 'til one of them breaks.
If you bug it you can spy on your closest friends.
You can even burn ants, like a magnifying lens!

ACHARNIAN #1

But who'd want to buy such a piece of trash?
Especially one so conniving and brash?

JUSTIN

This is one dense hunk of glass.
It'll last forever,
no matter how badly you beat its ass.

ACHARNIAN #1 (*to FRENCHMAN*)

Well, there you go. All settled.

FRENCHMAN

I will be amassing in heaps of riches!

ACHARNIAN #1

Amass away, my foreign peep,
and toss this guy into your heap.
Take him everywhere, this tiny, evil créature,
anywhere you might need an informateur.

JUSTIN

That was rough, packing up this snow-globe for you.
Take this kitschy 'souvenir' and load it up, Frenchie.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

FRENCHMAN

Ici, Francois, come here! Carry this paquet.

JUSTIN

Be careful with him. You're not carrying something of "sound constitution," but whatever. If you turn a buck on this shipment, you're going to be flush in informant traffic.

[*FRENCHIES exeunt*]

ACHARNIAN #2 [*Very loudly*]

Justin!

JUSTIN

What's up? Why're you shouting at me?

ACHARNIAN #2

Rumsfeld is calling for you.

He's got this ten dollar bill and wants to buy some of your escargots for his anniversary dinner. And he's got twenty dollars for some foie gras.

JUSTIN

What sort is this Rumsfeld who wants the foie gras?

ACHARNIAN #2

He's just like any other man, only more so:
mean, with a big-ass black SUV,
tinted windows and an American flag.

JUSTIN

No deal, not a chance, not even for the truck.

Let him rev its engine and do burnouts for some beef jerky.

And if he makes a big deal out of it, I'll call in the trade commissioners.

[*ACHARNIAN #2 runs out*]

I'll take this load inside, or let the French snails drag it in for me.

[*JUSTIN goes inside*]

ACHARNIANS [*Song*]

Tell me, people, have you seen this mack daddy? –

A wise guy, a regular Superman of savvy.

And all the spectacular merchandise

SCIT TRANSLATION

He's got to sell, since he sued for peace?
From household gadgets to French *haute cuisine*,
He's living the life, the American dream!
He's got all the finest things, so rich and ample,
Gonna take my cue from him, gonna follow his example.

Mr. War, Mr. War, stay away from my house,
Don't you join in my song, don't you sit on my couch!
'Cause he's a rowdy, drunken frat boy, through and through,
Who busts down the door when I'm hangin' with you.
He's a walking disaster, the party foul king,
All he does is pick fights, and break everything!
And when I play the host, and go out of my way,
I say, "Puff on this shit, this is medical grade!"
But he ganks my stash, that's the name of the game,
Cause the War on Terror and Drugs is the same!

[*Justin runs by with bucket of KFC, drops a chicken wing*]

His heart's all a-flutter for his fabulous feast,
He's livin' so large, he's droppin' wings in the street!

[*Song continues to the tune of the Rolling Stones' "Sweet Lady Jane"*]

My sweet lady Peace,
May your power increase,
You servant of love
And beautiful grace...

[*Break in mood. Song changes to 2 Live Crew's "Me So Horny" with much gyrating and phallos-stroking*]

Peace, I forgot, how much ass you got,
Call up Cupid 'cuz I'm stupid, wanna freak you on the spot.
Cupid came around with his bow and crown of roses,
Gonna bring us both together gonna make us shed our clotheses.
But you think I'm too old, for a roll in the hay?
Girl I'll nail that ass three times before the night turns to day!
I'm an Acharnian man, a freak without warning,
Got an appetite for Peace, 'cause Peace so horny!

[*"Me So Horny" chorus*]

First I'll lay down a nice, long root in your rut,
Make you tingle while I sprinkle in some seeds from my nuts,
Then third a grape vine, not much longer could be mine,
I know I may be old, but baby, I can jump your bones!
Then we'll lay in this garden, in a circle of trees,
Rub ourselves in Geritol, and then just do what we please!

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

I'm an Acharnian man, a freak without warning,
Got an appetite for Peace, 'cause Peace so horny!

[*The Derketes scene, lines 1000-1047, is cut*]

BEST MAN #1

Oh, Justin!

JUSTIN

Who is it? Who?

BEST MAN #1

A newly married man sends you this food from the wedding reception.

JUSTIN

Very nice, whoever he is!

BEST MAN #2

But he asks if you'll pour out a little peace in return for the food,
just one drop into this bottle of lube,
so he won't have to go back into active duty—
He'd rather stick around and get some booty!

JUSTIN

Take it all back then, take back the food and don't try to give it to me.
I wouldn't pour any of this out for a million bucks!
Oh -- who's she?

BEST MAN #1

This is the maid of honor -- she needs to speak to you alone on the bride's
behalf.

JUSTIN

Come on then, whatdya say? [*She whispers*]

Ha! What a funny thing for her to ask --

She needs a leave of absence -- for her husband's cock!

All right, bring me the six-pact, I'll give some just to her:

War is tough on a housewife.

Hold the bottle under here now...

Ok, do you know how this works?

Tell this to the bride: whenever they're calling up the reserves,
she should rub this on her husband's dick at night.

ACHARNIAN

I do declare, someone's coming! And he's got furrowed brows,
like he has something terrible to report.

GUY WITH LOUDSPEAKER

O wars and war-crimes, Rumsfeld come out!

SCIT TRANSLATION

RUMSFELD

Who's this now partying near the Pentagon?

GUY WITH LOUDSPEAKER

The joint chiefs of staff have ordered you today
preemptively to take your shock and awe
and go and guard Alaska against al-Qaeda types.
We have intelligence that terrorists
are plotting to bomb our barbecue.

RUMSFELD

These chiefs of staff don't know the known unknowns!
But do I really have to fight myself?

JUSTIN

Rumsfeld, get ready to rumble!

RUMSFELD

And who the hell do you think you are
to dare to mock and criticize me?

JUSTIN [*brandishing his phallos*]

You want to mess with *this* nuclear missile?!

RUMSFELD

Oh shit!
Oh what news that has just come!

JUSTIN

Oh what news is coming now?

MESENTER

Justin Citee!

JUSTIN

What?

MESENTER

Come on, and bring your hot-dogs and your beer-cooler!
Puff Daddy sends you this invitation.
But hurry up - you're holding all his homies up.
Everything is all laid out:
the leather couches, divans, and the mega hot-tub,
the bling, the coke, the bitches and hos,
the weed and vodka and the caviar
and booty selected by 50 Cent.
So come on, motherfucker!

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

RUMSFELD

Oh holy shit.

JUSTIN

Well, you're the one who wanted war.
Now close the cooler and pack up the meat.

RUMSFELD

Bring me rations of water and Gatorade.

JUSTIN

Bring out my boxes of Budweiser light.

RUMSFELD

Bring me my rations of rice and beef-jerky.

JUSTIN

Bring me my grilled quarter-pounder with cheese.

RUMSFELD

Bring me my tinned kippers and sardines with mustard.

JUSTIN

Bring me my hot-dogs with onions and relish.

RUMSFELD

Bring me my camo-gear, warm and resilient.

JUSTIN

Bring me my patio-warming-equipment.

RUMSFELD

What a beautiful sight, an American private.

JUSTIN

What a beautiful night that we'll have here in private.

RUMSFELD

Please do not jeer at our nation's servants.

JUSTIN

Please do not peer at my household servants.

RUMSFELD

How can you talk to me in such a way?

JUSTIN

My friend and I, we just can't make up our minds.
So we'll make you, General Rumsfeld, decider:

SCIT TRANSLATION

Which do you think are best, hot-dogs or hamburgers?

RUMSFELD

You've gone too far now.

JUSTIN

I guess that means hot dogs.

RUMSFELD

Fill up those cartridges, load up my rifle.

JUSTIN

Fill up those hash-pipes and load up the bong.

RUMSFELD

Get me my pistol fit snug in its holster.

JUSTIN

Turn on the TV, give me the controller.

RUMSFELD

This is an outrage that all men can see.

JUSTIN

This is a party where all drinks are free.

RUMSFELD

Bring me binoculars - not far off I see
a young man being tried and convicted of treason.

JUSTIN

Put on that TV - and there you will see
an old man convicted of war-crimes this season.

RUMSFELD

Bring me my bullet-proof vest for protection.

JUSTIN

Buy me some boxes of latex protection.

RUMSFELD [*brandishing knife*]

This is what I'll give to the enemies of our nation.

JUSTIN [*brandishing phallos*]

This is what I'll give to female population.

RUMSFELD

The forecast is grim. I'll expect heavy weather.

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

JUSTIN

The forecast is good. I'll expect lace and leather.

ACHARNIAN

Fare thee well, on your ways!
Yet your paths -- how they stray!
For the one: wine n' booty,
as for him: army duty!
And he'll lay down to nap,
with a girl in his lap,
and she'll stroke nice and quick,
with her hand on his -- beard!

[The choral song, 1150-1173, are replaced by alternating sound effects of Justin's party and Rumsfeld's battle front]

MESSENGER

O ye underlings of General Rumsfeld who serve his every need,
Water -- heat up some water in a tub!
Get some bandages ready, some Neosporin, some cotton balls
with ointment, a band-aid for his ankle!
He was wounded in the course of duty;
as he was making a leap over a trench,

a stake pierced him through and he twisted his ankle
and his foot just turned backwards
and falling down he smashed his head on a rock,
such a mess that Halliburton cannot reconstruct.
And as he saw his great medal of honor
fallen between the rocks he sang a song of mourning:
"O brilliant sight, I gaze at you for the last time,
my light--I am no longer who I am."
Singing this song, he falls into a muddy ditch
and then stands up again only to see his troops in flight.
But there he comes--open the door.

RUMSFELD *[not seeing Justin following behind him]*

OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD

What terrible pain! How miserable I am!
We've been destroyed by scud missiles from the enemy!
The only thing that could possibly be worse
would be if Justin Citee saw me wounded
and mocked me for my misfortunes.

JUSTIN

OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD

What tits! How firm and like quinces!

[1142-1150; 1174-1205]

SCIT TRANSLATION

Kiss me softly, you pair of bombshells,
your tongiest, slobberiest french kisses!
Who's the man who holds the fishbowl record?

RUMSFELD
O what terrible disasters and catastrophes!
Oh oh oh what painful wounds!

JUSTIN
Hey Donald Duck!

RUMSFELD
I am despised!

JUSTIN
I am not surprised!

RUMSFELD
Why would you kiss me?

JUSTIN
Why won't you kiss me?

RUMSFELD
Oh what a terrible year!

JUSTIN
Who wants another beer?

RUMSFELD
Oh Jesus, let -

JUSTIN
It's not Christmas yet.

RUMSFELD
Hold me up, my brothers in arms,
hold me up, my comrades!

JUSTIN
Hold me close, my loves, in your arms,
hold me, my darlings!

RUMSFELD
I'm dizzy with from falling bombs;
I founder in darkness.

JUSTIN
I'm dizzy from smoking bong;

THE ACHARNIANS OF ARISTOPHANES

I'll pound her in darkness.

RUMSFELD

Now take me to my private hospital,
take me in your helping hands.

JUSTIN

And I'll stay here having a ball!
So help me out - hand me that fishbowl!

RUMSFELD

Some shrapnel's pierced me to the bone!

JUSTIN

I've drunk the fishbowl to the bottom!
Victory! Victory!

ACHARNIANS

Victory! Victory!

JUSTIN

I filled it up with PBR
and drunk it all, drunk the whole jar!

ACHARNIANS

Hail the great champion!
And bring the fishbowl!

JUSTIN

Yeah, you guys come with me
and sing my victory, my victory!

ACHARNIANS

We'll come along for Justin's sake
and bringing the fishbowl,
sing victory!

THE END