

Really BAD Shakespeare – Season 1

By Weeb

Episode 11: Confusion Now Hath Made His Masterpiece!

About an hour after Beatrice's baffling disappearance, Aaron and I find ourselves sitting on the couch, somewhat speechless, and staring at the spot she once hung.

"I want my mommy back," Aaron finally snivels.

I laugh, the mean kind of laugh – an antichrist kind of laugh: "Oooohhhh, the new big, bad evil antichrist wants his mommy back. What? You gonna start crying now? Should I get you some tissues?"

He crosses his arms and pouts. "Plain and simple, Shakespeare, fuck you."

After this remark, we both drop the subject and continue to stare at the empty void. Millions of thoughts race through our heads. Sure, both of us have powers that most mortals could never comprehend, but making people vanish into thin air is treading more into David Blaine and Siegfried and Roy type parlor tricks... not antichrist, destroy the world kind of shit. No, what made Beatrice vanish was something totally different and new. her disappearance, was divine intervention kind of stuff. Whether good or bad, someone wanted her gone from that situation and just, kind of, took her.

Was it to save my life?

Was it for a greater purpose that only she could be of use in?

Was it simply spontaneous combustion...

without the combustion?

"So," Aaron speaks calmly and slowly, "What do you think we should do?"

I shrug. "We have one of two choices... First – we can get some sleep since the sun is coming up and then deal with this later with a totally fresh mind; or, we can give Shepherd a call and see what he has to say."

"You know my feelings about involving the other side, but..." he goes quiet, groans, and admits defeat, "Maybe we should give him a call."

Without hesitation, I stand up and walk over to the phone.

Meanwhile, back on the south side of Potter's Field...

Isis, Amaunet, and Manthu stand around a golden regency bed and stare down at Beatrice's sleeping form, which is covered in the finest red satin. She looks so comfortable – she even has a slight smile on her face – that none of them wants to wake her. In fact, they have no idea if they want to wake her at all at this point...

Isis's plan was to get her,
but what to do with her after that was still a mystery.

Finally, Amaunet breaks the silence. "Do you think the flying pigs have reached Shepherd yet?"

"Most likely not," Isis replies in a hushed tone. "You know how slow those pigs fly. They probably won't reach him for another couple of hours."

Immediately, Isis holds up her hands to signal for silence. She cocks her head slightly to the right, as if listening to something that only she can hear.

"Hey, Shepherd, how you doing this morning?" I say in a light, carefree voice. "Hope I didn't wake you."

"No, not at all. Besides, I've been having some really strange dreams all night. Is everything alright with you?"

"With me? Now why would you ask a question like that?"

"One of the dreams was that someone was trying to kill you. It's a little foggy, but I remember some woman sitting on top of you with a knife and a little boy telling her to kill you. Really strange and confusing..."

“Oh that... well, that’s why I’m calling you. See, last night I had a little incident that kind of happened just the way you described.”

“Are you alright?” He asks with worry in his voice.

“Oh, you know me,” I giggle like a school girl in love. Aaron clears his throat, making it clear that this is supposed to be strictly a business call and not some lover’s chat. I shoot him an angry look and turn my back on him. “No, I’m fine... I wouldn’t have been, but it seems that while I was passed out you kept yelling at me to wake up.”

“Yeah, I remember that... so it must have been a precognitive dream to save you. Strange, nothing like that’s ever happened to me before. Guess our bond is stronger than I thought.”

Again, another giggle, “I keep telling you that but you won’t listen to me. Anyway, I really need you to come over as soon as possible. There are some situations going on right now that I don’t understand and need your help with.”

“Well, I just got out of bed. I can be over there in an hour or so.”

“Please, forget the shower and stuff. Just throw on some clothes and get over here as fast as you can...”

this has something to do with...

Armageddon.”

Without a pause, he replies: “I’ll be right there.”

Then the phone goes dead in my hand.

“Shit,” Isis screams. “We moved too fucking fast! Shepherd is on his way over to Shakespeare’s place.”

At this outburst, Beatrice’s eyes snap open. Confused, she sits up in the bed and stares at the three Egyptian deities standing around her – one topless woman, another wearing a strap of the thinnest leather

to cover her intimate parts, and a very muscular man with a golden hawk faceplate concealing his identity. Her eyes widen in fear.

PERVERTS, her brain screams, **I have been drugged and sold on the black market to a bunch of... what are they... Egyptian PERVERTS!**

Her eyes dart left to right, searching for a place to run and hide from this obvious outtake from Stanley Kubrick's, *Eyes Wide Shut*. There is no escape. The only thing she can see past these strange individuals and the bed is an endless room filled with white fluffy clouds. Not knowing what to do or how to react, she pulls the satin sheets up to her chin to hide her already covered breasts.

"What the hell is going on here?" She rasps, finding her voice. "Where the hell am I? Where's my son?"

"Now, just calm down, Beatrice," the bare-chested woman says with a smile. "Everything's going to be fine."

"How do you know my name? Oh my God, was I drugged and sold into white slavery? Are you three going to rape me? Turn me into your own private sex slave?"

Even under his golden mask, one could tell that Menthu is smiling at the thought. "She does present an interesting solution to our problem."

"You want to sell her into white slavery?" Amaunet snaps with a snarl.

White Sexual slavery or forced sexual slavery is the organized coercion of unwilling people into different sexual practices. The incidence of sexual slavery by country has been studied and tabulated by UNESCO, with the cooperation of various international agencies. Sexual slavery may include single-owner sexual slavery, ritual slavery sometimes associated with traditional religious practices, slavery for primarily non-sexual purposes where sex is common, or forced prostitution. Sexual slavery is also argued by the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action relating to the women's rights and that of the girl-child.

Manthu laughs nervously. “No, not the slavery part... but the –“

“That will be enough, Manthu!” Isis stops him sternly. “Beatrice is our guest... not one of your playthings for your sick perverted rock-n-roll parties you’re always throwing in the basement of the heavens. You either get serious here, or leave!”

Menthu lowers his head and mumbles an apology.

Isis turns her attention back to Beatrice. “We’re your friends, Beatrice. We saved you from committing a very bad act on someone that matter’s very much to us. Do you recall anything before you went to sleep?”

Beatrice thinks long and hard before speaking: “I remember... Shakespeare... the young man, not the poet/playwright or the guy who invented the level-wind reel... we were having a few drinks, having a good time... then we were turning in for the night... That’s about it. The rest is a blank... Where’s Shakespeare? Where’s my son, Aaron? Have you freaks done anything bad to them? Why won’t you answer any of my questions?”

“In due time, Beatrice...” Isis walks cautiously over to the bed and gently sits down on the side. “We just have a lot to explain to you and we have to do it in a way that you understand. Perhaps you’d like a nice cup of passion flower, valerian root and ashwagandha root tea to start with. Calm you down some. Amaunet, bring Beatrice some tea...”

Right before Beatrice’s eyes, Amaunet vanishes in a white flash.

“Now,” Isis continues speaking, as if people vanish in a puff of smoke all the time, “While we wait for that tea... let’s just get some of the preliminaries out of the way first. Did you know that your son is the antichrist –“

Beatrice starts screaming at the top of her lungs.

Her fragile mind finally snapping.

Menthu chuckles, somewhat smugly:

“Oh wise, mother...”

maybe you should've waited for the tea."

When the doorbell rings I run to the door and open it.

Shepherd pushes past me in haste and slams the door behind him. He is frightened, acting like I have never seen him act before. Moving quickly, he locks the door and leans his back against it, as if preventing something from entering.

"What the hell's going on Shakespeare?" He demands.

Aaron enters the hallway behind me. He sneers. "So this is the famous Shepherd I've heard so much about."

Shepherd looks at Aaron, looks at me, and then back at Aaron... confusion swarms his face and eyes. "That's the boy from my dream," he finally says.

"Yes, it is," I acknowledge in the calmest voice I can muster. Something isn't right. I've never seen Shepherd this upset before. He is the epitome of calmness in any situation. One could say he is usually such an... Angel. "Shepherd, is everything alright?"

"Hell no everything's not alright!"

"What's the problem?"

"Pigs," he shouts, panting hard, "There are flying fucking pigs chasing me!"

After saying that, there is a loud thud against the door, and then another, and another...

Then... the demonic oinking starts.

Episode 12: Nothing Can Come Of Nothing

“I don’t see anything.”

I say with my left eye pressed tightly against the door’s peephole. I get a fish-eyed view of the apartment’s main hallway. Nothing is there. The hallway is empty.

Though the thuds against the door stopped after about five minutes, every now and then we can hear a demonic snort or two... as if letting us know that they are still there.

Waiting.

“You’re sure they were flying pigs,” I question Shepherd – my eye never leaving the peephole.

“Shakespeare, I think I’d know what a flying pig looks like.”

Aaron clears his throat, “And how would you know that?”

“Well, I meant metaphorically, of course.” Shepherd snaps. “Of course I wouldn’t know what a ‘real’ flying pig looks like. A monkey, yes, but not a flying pig... wait, why am I even acknowledging you. Who the heck are you? Why are you even here? Shouldn’t you be in bed or something?”

“You really need to catch-up, God-lover.

I’m the antichrist.”

I pull myself from the door and turn to confront the little shit: “Possible antichrist! I’m still here and going to proceed exactly as planned until someone tells me different.”

“Well” he retorts with a sneer, “If that bitch would have done her job before pulling a Siegfried and Roy on us, I would be THE antichrist right now.”

“Pardon the language, Lord,” Shepherd directs the comment to the ceiling before he turns to us. “What the holy hell is going on here? There can’t be TWO antichrists!”

Aaron places his head in his hands and shakes it in disbelief.

“After eleven episodes, you’d think he’d know what’s going on. Catch up, God-lover... read the script... I think it’s in YOUR book... what’s it called? Oh yeah, THE BIBLE. And, if I had to guess, it’d say it’s listed under... What? Maybe... Revelations... you think?”

The Book of Revelation is the final book of the New Testament corpus. The title came into usage from the first word of the book in Koine Greek: apokalupsis, meaning "unveiling" or "revelation" (the author himself not having provided a title). It is also known as the Book of Revelation of St John the Divine or the Apocalypse of John, (both in reference to its author) or the Book of Revelation of Jesus Christ (in reference to its opening line) or simply Revelation, (often dubbed "Revelations" in contrast to the singular in the original Koine) or the Apocalypse. The word "apocalypse" is also used for other works of a similar nature, and the genre is known as apocalyptic literature. Such literature is "marked by distinctive literary features, particularly prediction of future events and accounts of visionary experiences or journeys to heaven, often involving vivid symbolism." The Book of Revelation is the only apocalyptic document in the New Testament canon, though there are short apocalyptic passages in various places in the Gospels and the Epistles.

Revelation brings together the worlds of heaven, earth, and hell in a final confrontation between the forces of good and evil. Its characters and images are both real and symbolic, spiritual and material. Revelation's cryptic nature makes the book a source of controversy among scholars who try to interpret its meaning and its message. Nevertheless, it has not only endured, but captured the imagination of generations of Bible students, both professional and lay readers alike.

The author, named John, has traditionally been identified with John the Apostle, to whom the Gospel of John is also attributed. Historical-critical scholars, however, conclude that the author did not also write the Gospel of John. Most scholars think that Revelation was written near the end of the 1st century.

“I don’t think I like you very much.” Shepherd say.

“I would strangle him to death,” I said in all seriousness, “If I only had...”

And all of us say it at once

“... thumbs.”

After drinking the cup of tea that Amaunet gave her, Beatrice takes the information that Aaron is possibly the backup antichrist with a little more ease. She settles back on the bed with a smile, her eyes barely open and just keeps saying, “Ooooooh yeah,” to everything Isis tells her. Her body hums merrily... everything around her breathed seductively;

in and out...

colors are vibrant,
almost living...

Menthu leans over to Isis and whispers: “I think she’s tripping.”

“Ya think?” Amaunet giggles, running her finger inside the coffee cup in an attempt to get the very last few drops for herself.

“Beatrice,” Isis says, snapping her fingers inches from her face, “Beatrice, are you in there?”

“Ooooooh yeah,” Beatrice repeats.

“Useless, totally fucking useless,” Isis shouts. “Why in the name of all that’s holy would passion flower, valerian root and ashwagandha root tea make someone trip. She’s supposed to be relaxed, subdued, not following Alice down some fucking rabbit hole.”

Amaunet thinks for a moment, a smile slowly grows from ear to ear. “Let’s see... passion flower... valerian root... psilocybin... now why would that make –”

“Oh no you didn’t,” Menthu mumbles from behind his mask.

Isis freezes.

“Ooooooh yeah,” Beatrice says one last time before falling into a deep sleep.

“Only the Jew can see the pigs,” Aaron points out. “Jeez, you’d think that I’m working with a couple of amateurs here. Someone, or thing, is working against us here. Don’t either of you understand that? More have joined this game than we know about.”

“Well, they can’t get in here unless someone lets them,” I point out and then quickly turn to Aaron, “And YOU will not be opening any doors behind our backs.”

Aaron scrunches up his face. “You know, for an antichrist, you’re just not very fun Shakespeare. I’m gonna leave the two of you alone to work this out... I’ve got to take a shit.”

With that, Aaron turns and locks himself in the bathroom.

“I have to keep reminding myself that I am God’s emissary,” Shepherd says with a groan. “Some of the old passages from the Good Book are still as valuable today as they were then.”

If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear. –

Deuteronomy 21:18-21

“Don’t let him get to you. It’s been a long night and I’m sure all of us are a little on edge with all this mumble-jumble going on.” I turn and start for the kitchen. “Come inside. I’ll make us some coffee and bagels while we try and figure this out.”

Shepherd follows with a good natured laugh. “Bagels... is that another slam at me for being Jewish?”

Contrary to common legend, the bagel was not created in the shape of a stirrup to commemorate the victory of Poland’s King Jan Sobieski over the Ottoman Turks in 1683. It was actually invented much earlier in Kraków, Poland, as a competitor to the bublik, a lean bread of wheat flour designed for Lent. In the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries, the bajgiel became a staple of the Polish national diet.

There was a tradition among many observant Jewish families to make bagels on Saturday evenings at the conclusion of the Sabbath. Due to Jewish Sabbath restrictions, they were not permitted to cook during the period of the Sabbath and, compared with other types of bread, bagels could be baked very quickly as soon as it ended.

That the name originated from beugal (old spelling of Bügel, meaning bail/bow or bale) is considered plausible by many, both from the similarities of the word and because traditional handmade bagels are not perfectly circular but rather slightly stirrup-shaped. (This, however, may be due to the way the boiled bagels are pressed together on the baking sheet before baking.) Also, variants of the word beugal are used in Yiddish and Austrian German to refer to a somewhat similar form of sweet filled pastry (Mohnbeugel (with poppy seeds) and Nussbeugel (with ground nuts)), or in southern German dialects (where beuge refers to a pile, e.g., holzbeuge, or woodpile). According to the Merriam-Webster's dictionary, 'bagel' derives from the transliteration of the Yiddish 'beygl', which came from the Middle High German 'böugel' or ring, which itself came from 'bouc' (ring) in Old High German, similar to the Old English 'bēag' '(ring), and 'būgan' (to bend or bow).[6] Similarly another etymology in the Webster's New World College Dictionary says that the Middle High German form was derived from the Austrian German 'beugel', a kind of croissant, and was similar to the German 'bügel', a stirrup or ring. In the Brick Lane district and surrounding area of London, England, bagels, or as locally spelled "beigels" have been sold since the middle of the 19th century. They were often displayed in the windows of bakeries on vertical wooden dowels, up to a metre in length, on racks.

Bagels were brought to the United States by immigrant Jews, with a thriving business developing in New York City that was controlled for decades by Bagel Bakers Local 338, which had contracts with nearly all bagel bakeries in and around the city for its workers, who prepared all the bagels by hand. The bagel came into more general use throughout North America in the last quarter of the 20th century, at least partly due to the efforts of bagel baker Harry Lender and Florence Sender, who pioneered automated production and distribution of frozen bagels in the 1960s.

In modern times, Canadian-born astronaut Gregory Chamitoff is the first person known to have taken a batch of bagels into space on his 2008 Space Shuttle mission to the International Space Station. His shipment consisted of 18 sesame seed bagels.

We enter the kitchen and Shepherd sits at the table. He frowns at the empty beer cans but doesn't acknowledge them verbally to me – for once. Yes, he is a teetotaler and doesn't agree in partaking in anything alcoholic or narcotic (even if it is a naturally grown plant that HIS God placed on this Earth for our enjoyment).

“Not at all,” I laugh merrily, opening a drawer and bringing out a large serrated edged knife. “People in Hell love a good bagel just as much as anyone else. So what would you like? I have salt, blueberry, or everything bagels?”

“Everything would be fine.”

I reach into a brown paper bag sitting on the counter and pull out a day old everything bagel, lay it on the granite counter, and cut it in two.

“Toasted?”

“Of course, and with a little smear of cream cheese if you have it.”

I pop the bagel halves into the toaster and go to the refrigerator to retrieve the cream cheese. With that in hand I sit it on the counter, next to the toaster, so it can soften.

“So, what do you think all this means?” I ask, sitting across from Shepherd. “I've been racking my brain all night and can't come up with anything. Nothing prepared me for anything like this... Nuclear explosion, no problem; pandemic, again, chapter 43 paragraph 4... but two antichrists existing at the same time, flying pigs, unknown 'whatever's' sticking their noses in where it doesn't belong. None of it makes sense.”

“Can't you just call someone and find out what the heck is going on?”

I shake my head, “Doesn't work that way in OUR world. The only way I can speak to Father is if I offer him something of mine that I value... another little piece of myself, one could say.”

“More fingers?”

Sacrifice: the offering of animal, plant, or human life or of some material possession to a deity, as in propitiation or homage; the surrender or destruction

of something prized or desirable for the sake of something considered as having a higher or more pressing claim.

“No, something more than just fingers this time.”

The smell of bagels toasting fill the room. I stare at Shepherd. He continues to talk but I don't hear a word he says. My mind is elsewhere... searching through all my lessons on how I can do this without involving Father. Nothing – no footnotes or cross-references can be found. With all the knowledge passed down to me from antichrist to antichrist, there isn't an easy answer for this one.

This is a test, I say to myself.

I am being tested and my response will either further our cause or destroy me.

“Shakespeare,” Shepherd says loudly, “Are you there? The bagels are ready.”

I snap out of my reverie and shake my head. “Yes, sorry, the bagel...”

Beatrice dreams that she is on a large lake, at sunset, in a small aluminum V hull boat, dressed as a well-to-do woman of the sixteenth century. Her hair is parted in the center, fluffed around the temples, with most of it pinned under a caul of silk lined net-working. Even though she stands in the boat, she wears a loose sky-blue gown of light-weight silk over a bodice and skirt that has an open-necked partlet, showcasing her ample breasts.

In her hands, she holds a Shakespeare crafted two-piece medium fishing rod with a stainless steel spinning reel...

“STOP,” she screams at the top of her lungs. “I'm not playing this game again. It's very redundant and unnecessary. If you want to talk to me, then fucking talk to me!”

In a heartbeat, everything vanishes and she is floating in a bright nothingness.

“Sorry about that,” the ominous man’s voice echoes around her. “My bad...”

“My bad? My bad? Listen, this is getting to be too much for me. Stop trying to be hip, stop with all the bullshit and just tell me what you want. It’s bad enough that in reality – if any of this can be considered reality – a bunch of fucking weirdo’s are holding me hostage and telling me that I’m the mother of the antichrist.”

“Aaron is not the antichrist... not yet. Shakespeare must die before Aaron can take his place. That is why I have brought you before me. Decisions that are out of my hands have been made... the Great War is about to begin. We have to plan your escape if WE are to succeed in obtaining peace throughout the universe and the heavens. Many Gods must be appeased, and quickly.”

“And how do you plan on me escaping? I don’t even know where I am or what the fuck is going on.”

“Beatrice, listen closely, there are those who are working against the ones who hold you. Speak with, Edris...”

“Who the fuck is Edris?”

“The primordial dwarf... Edris is our spy. He will help you. You must shake off this narcotic spell that they placed on you and escape back to your own reality. It may be too late... but you have to try.”

“Fine, I have to trust you on this one. Now send me back so I can get the fuck out of this nightmare.”

In a flash, Beatrice finds herself back on the bed with Isis, Amaunet and Menthu standing around her. She raises her aching head and moans at the sight of them.

Everyone smiles.

Behind Amaunet,

Edris looks from behind her legs

and winks...

I take the hot bagel out of the toaster and place it on a plate. I stare at it... my brain going into overdrive. I have to do something. This isn’t about me anymore; this is about the destruction of the entire thumbed tribe. I can’t allow my feelings – feelings that I should never have developed in the first place – to

overshadow why I was born, why I was tortured. Sometimes an antichrist has to do things that he doesn't always agree with...

Sometimes, he has to sacrifice a little piece of himself...

In one hand I pick up the plate and in the other the knife. I turn toward Shepherd, who sits with his back to me. He continues to talk, words pouring from his mouth that I do not understand or comprehend. I take a hesitant step toward him,

then another,

and another...

until I was behind him.

Without allowing myself to think any further than my current action, the plate drops from my hand... I grab the back of Shepherd's head and pull it back as fast and hard as I can... bring the knife up to his throat...

And slice it

From behind I hear Aaron whisper with a slight quiver of fear in his voice:

“You're really bad, Shakespeare...”

End of Season One

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