

really BAD Shakespeare – Season 3

By Weeb

Season 3, Episode 3: Give Me My Robe, Put On My Crown

I follow the stranger, keeping my distance.

When I reach the dead bodies, seeing, sensing Shepherd's exquisite corpse, I force myself not to look. These empty shells are my past. No matter how much I want to cry and cradle Shepherd's body in my arms, I have to stay strong. I hold my head high, keeping my eyes locked on the stranger who continues to lead me into the unknown world. There is no time to look back, to lament on people and situations I cannot change. I have to look forward, delve into the unknown and accept the mysteries of this new world.

As I slowly walk away from the only two people I know in this alternate reality, I examine the destruction around me. While many of the buildings seem to be in perfect condition, but there are those that appear to have collapsed in on themselves, other's nothing more than piles of brick and wood. Fires burn sporadically, filling the nighttime sky with smoke. Even in the cracked and bulging city streets, abandoned cars of every size and model litter the area - as if their drivers simple took to foot after the environmental destruction around them. Trees are scorched, patches of grass burnt... it almost appears as if a bomb exploded, leaving nothing but turmoil in its wake.

The other thing I instantly notice, even at such a late hour, is that there are no people wondering the streets. The streets are empty... except for me and the strange murderous Spanish man I follow.

I curse myself.

All of this destruction is because of me.

As I walk deeper into the city, moving further away from the convenience store, I begin to notice movement in the darkened windows of the buildings. Shadows of nondescript people fill the windows. They press their faces close to the glass, trying to see who is moving through the night. They watch me. Some begin to point, calling out to others in their domain to join them at the window. Their movements become excited. They begin waving, trying to catch my attention.

Are they trying to warn me of impending danger or are they worshipping me from afar?

As if reading my mind, comprehending my confusion, the Spanish man calls out over his shoulder, several blocks ahead of me: “Han esperado su venida, mi Dios. Están de aquí alabarle, le venera.”

“I don’t understand Spanish,” I yell back, “Especially really BAD Spanish.”

He laughs. “Caminata proudly Shakespeare, your niños have waited a lifetime for your return.”

“How do they know me? And, more to the point, where are you taking me?”

Before he answers, he turns a corner and vanishes from sight.

I quicken my step, my eyes darting from window to window. Silhouettes begin to wave at me, trying to catch my attention; others raise their fists high above their head in praise; while others quickly cross themselves in fear, their mouths silently moving in the recitation of the holy trinity.

*The Sign of the Cross is a religious ceremonial hand motion that traces the shape of a cross over one's chest. This movement can be done in a variety of different ways, depending on which Christian sect one belongs to. The oldest form, used mainly in Eastern Orthodox churches and the Eastern Rites of the Catholic Church, is to touch three fingers – the index, the middle, and the **THUMB** – to the forehead, then heart, and finishing by tapping the right and left shoulders; whereas, many Latin-Rite Catholic believers, including Anglicans, Lutherans and Oriental Orthodoxy worshippers, tap the shoulders in opposite order, from left to right. The Sign of the Cross may be used as a form of prayer, an act of blessing, and even a superstitious act to ward off evil.*

I laugh at their foolishness.

Simple hand gestures cannot ward off the coming of the Antichrist!

I start waving at my worshippers, nodding my head in acknowledgement, letting the true believers of Armageddon know that I too can see THEM. I smile, slowing my step so all can look upon me. It feels as if I am the marshal in some sick one-man parade and the adoring crowd is silently cheering me on. I can almost hear the silent cries of praise, of worship – at least, in my own mind, anyway.

With my attention fully on the adoring crowds, I step into something that makes my foot skid, slide across the cement sidewalk as if walking on ice. I stumble, catching my balance before falling to the

ground. Confused, I look down to see what has caused such a mishap. Before me, trailing off into the distance and around the same corner that the Spanish man turned, I notice small foot-sized pools of what can only be described as grease, puddles of congealed fat.

Puzzled, I turn and look behind me.

There are more puddles of the yellowish globs, spaced about three feet apart, leading from the direction of the convenience store, the direction I have come. I scratch my head in confusion. It seems as if I have been following this mess for quite some time, a greasy yellow brick road... one could say.

It is then that I notice the true oddity of the night.

My eyes lift from the sight on the ground to the heavens. Above what I can only assume is the 7-Eleven, is the largest, brightest star I have ever seen in my life...

The Star of Bethlehem: *Thanks to modern technology, we can now say with almost certainty that the star of Bethlehem was not an actual star but an astrological event the likes that man has ever seen. Based on computer generated simulations, astronomers believe that there were some extremely extraordinary events taking place in the heavens. For instance, three times in 7 B.C., Jupiter and Saturn moved past each other (occurrence that only happens once every 900 years); the following year, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn formed a near conjunction (occurring once every 800 years); and, in 5 B.C., Jupiter, instead of "wandering" eastward, seemed to stop and then go backward among the stars in what astronomers call a retrograde motion. It is during this time that Earth passed Jupiter (which was aligned with Saturn) and this anomaly created the illusion of one brightly lit star.*

The Spanish man senses that Shakespeare is not following him. He stops, waits, and notices the star hanging in the nighttime sky like a beacon. Anger fills him. Quickly, to ward off fear, he crosses himself... though in the reversed manner.

"Manténgalo juntos," he mumbles to himself, standing in a pool of wet fat, "Nosotros no podemos permitir que las divagaciones religiosas del segundo advenimiento destruya nuestro último plan."

Meanwhile,

another person notices the star...

HE sits on a pebble (pebble... pebble), that rests on a boulder (boulder... boulder), that was once part of Megiddo Mountain (mountain... mountain), the only mountain in Illinois (Illinois... Illinois), but now only a mountainous pile of pulverized earth and stone (stone... stone), deeply in thought (thought... thought), wondering (wondering... wondering), trying to figure out where **HE** is (is... is), how **HE** got there (there... there), why **HE** is there (there... there), staring out over the ruins of Potters Field (Field... Field), watching the reflection of fire dance on the slow (slow... slow), almost stagnant (stagnant... stagnant), flow of the Kikawa River (River... River), as parts of the largest corn producing city in southern mid-central Illinois burns (burns... burns), burns like the dull ache that clouds **HIS** mind (mind... mind)...

HE senses something and cocks **HIS** head (head... head), which is covered by a cracked and worn wooden face plate (plate... plate), two dark pits covering **HIS** once blue but now blood red eyes (eyes... eyes), with dark rouge painted on the masks cheeks (cheeks... cheeks), two circles of red (red... red), almost as if a clown had done the makeup (makeup... makeup), and (and... and), tied across the mask (mask... mask), with a piece of Shakespeare fishing line (line... line), where **HIS** nose should be (be... be), is a realistic looking plastic pig snout (snout... snout), which **HE** raises toward the nighttime sky and sniffs (sniffs... sniffs), snorts (snorts... snorts), trying to identify a scent that causes chills to run across every inch of **HIS** small (small... small), emancipated body (body... body)...

Memories crash against the psychopathic haze of **HIS** mind (mind... mind), faces of people **HE** once loved (loved... loved), once tried to kill (kill... kill), a woman's face (face... face), a man's face (face... face), her face (face... face), his face (face... face), his face flashes almost strobe-like (like... like), forcing out every thought in **HIS** sick and twisted mind (mind... mind), causing **HIS** heart to increase in speed (speed... speed), pound against **HIS** rib cage (cage... cage), anxiety making **HIS** throat go dry (dry... dry), **HIS** vision blurs (blurs... blurs), a tear rolls from **HIS** left eye (eye... eye), not from remorse (remorse... remorse), not because any feelings of guilt (guilt... guilt), but because of hate and anger (anger... anger), disgust (disgust... disgust), **HE** feels the primal need to kill (kill... kill), to feel this person's blood dripping from **HIS** hands (hands... hands), covering **HIS** body (body... body), washing away all of these feelings (feelings... feelings), cleansing **HIS** soul (soul... soul), ridding the Earth of this

man's very existence (existence... existence), **HE** knows this man (man... man), this man has a name (name... name), **HE** begins to hit **HIMSELF** in the face (face... face), the memory has to come (come... come), **HIS** little hands beat on the mask (mask... mask), **HE** has to remember (remember... remember), **HE** hits **HIMSELF** harder (harder... harder), splinters enter **HIS** hands and face from the brutal force of the beating (beating... beating), **HE** balls his hands into tight fists and begins to strike **HIMSELF** even more forceful (forceful... forceful), causing **HIS** dry (dry... dry), cracked lips to burst open (open... open), blood pours from the wounds (wounds... wounds), dripping down from under the mask (mask... mask), the name (name... name), **HE** has to remember (remember... remember), harder (harder... harder), the wood cracks (cracks... cracks), beating **HIMSELF** to death (death... death)...

And (and... and), when **HE** thinks all hope is lost (lost... lost), **HE** remembers who this person is (is... is)...

Shakespeare (Shakespeare... Shakespeare)...

HIS head snaps back and **HE** howls (howls... howls), a deep primal scream (scream... scream), **HIS** body shakes with uncontrollable emotion (emotion... emotion), rage (rage... rage), tearing **HIS** vocal cords (cords... cords), splitting them (them... them), blood sprays from **HIS** mouth (mouth... mouth), covers the inside of the mask (mask... mask), **HE** stands (stands... stands), the scream echoing across the landscape (landscape... landscape), **HIS** body trembling, (trembling... trembling), and (and... and), in one final act of fury (fury... fury), rips the mask from **HIS** face (face... face), revealing the madman beneath (beneath... beneath)...

When the scream reaches the convenient store, Beatrice instantly grabs Edris' hand and whispers in a frightened voice:

“It's HIM!”

The Spanish man turns toward the sound of the scream. He shakes his head and groans, placing a wet greasy hand to his forehead in disgust.

“Great,” he says in a woman's voice,

“HIM too...”

My head instantly whips around to face the direction of the scream. I notice that Megiddo Mountain is missing – a dark pile of rock in its place. I suddenly feel very frightened. The sound of such a haunting scream chills me to the very depths of my soul.

I know that scream...

I know to be afraid...

I know that my very life is at stake...

I know it is...

Aaron (Aaron... Aaron)

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