

# SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

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# All the King's Women

5 ONE ACT COMEDIES &  
3 MONOLOGUES

by Luigi Jannuzzi

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



**SAMUEL  
FRENCH**

FOUNDED 1830

NEW YORK HOLLYWOOD LONDON TORONTO

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**SET**

Bare Stage

**TIME**

1946 – Today

**ACT ONE**

**Scene:**

1. One Tupelo Saleswoman (Monologue) . . . . . 1 Female  
January 1946, Tupelo, Mississippi
2. The Censor And The King . . . . . 3 Females  
June 1956, New York, New York
3. 3 A.M. In The Garden With A God (Monologue) . . . . . 1 Female  
January 1967, Memphis, Tennessee
4. When Nixon Met Elvis . . . . . 3 Females  
December 1970, Washington, DC

**INTERMISSION**

**ACT TWO**

**Scene:**

5. Warhol Explains Art To Elvis . . . . . 3 Females  
April 1963, New York, New York
6. Pink Cadillacs and God . . . . . 2 Females, 1 M or F  
November 1976, Memphis, Tennessee
7. One Private Guard . . . . . 1 Female or Male  
August 1977, Memphis, Tennessee
8. Leaving Graceland . . . . . 2 Females, 1 Male  
Present Day, Memphis, Tennessee

## PRODUCTION NOTES

*Casting:* Casting is extremely flexible. And since this play is 5 one act and 3 monologue comedies, there are many ways this play may be presented. It can be performed with as few as 3 females and 1 male or as many as 17 females and 1 male or many female/male variations between. Feel free to change genders for salespeople, secretaries, guards, etc.

*Single Set:* This is all that is needed. Set pieces should be kept to a minimum. The first production used only three black squares and minimum props. Rely on the audience and their imagination to bring the rest. They will reward you for that opportunity.

*Costumes, Props and Projections:* Costumes can be as simple as all wearing black and using suggested props. Projections can be used if you have the technology. A suggestion would be to show appropriate photos of the time period between scenes. See my website: [www.LuigiJannuzzi.com](http://www.LuigiJannuzzi.com) for ideas.

*Transitions and Music Use:* Between scenes we used recorded radio addresses that include news from that date. Find them enclosed. If you can use music due to ASCAP sampling rule for High School, College, University and Community Theatre, (find link on my website) perhaps you can use both. (From NYTheatre.com:) "Transitions between scenes are not, as one would assume, with Elvis's music, but anchored by recorded radio addresses that reinforce the appropriate historical flavor of the current events of the times." Be creative!

*Order of Scenes:* I feel that this is the order that the show runs best. It ends in the present and it will be your perfect ending. Directing this play you will find that since this is divided into separate vignettes, the entire cast doesn't have to be there all the time, which is a lot easier on the cast and director.

*Tone of the play:* Warm, lively and fast. Please stay away from anger. There is none of that emotion written in this play. Anger is just not funny. Frustration is, but not anger. Yet amateur actors always go right for anger, which is the easiest emotion to act, and it ruins comedies all the time. Please show this paragraph to any who try. After playing anger, amateurs love to add curse words. Please do not allow that either. There are none in this play for a reason. It doesn't need any. It's a comedy.

Please go to my website and email me any comments, questions or pictures. I'd love to post them on my site to brag about your production and creativity. So if you are using a scene for forensics, a one act competition or in a collection of one acts, I'd love to hear how it went.

NOTE: *One Tupelo Saleswoman, The Censor and the King, When Nixon met Elvis, Warhol Explains Art to Elvis* and *One Private Guard* are all based on actual events in the life of Elvis Presley.

Links about Elvis, such as the Billboard Top Singles statistics by their years, are listed on my website: [www.LuigiJannuzzi.com](http://www.LuigiJannuzzi.com)

Have fun. It was fun writing these plays. Audiences love them and applaud often.

Break a guitar string!

Note on cover: One guitar string is missing, the E string for Elvis.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Alleen Hussung, the late William (Bill) Talbot, and all at Samuel French, Inc., Brandon Whitehead, co-producer., Ralph Sevush & David Faux at The Dramatist Guild, The Author's Guild, Nancy E. Wolff, Esq. at Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard, LLP., Luis Angulo of La\_Designs, Joe DeVito III, Weist-Barron Studios, 35 w 45 Street & Manager Charles F. Wagner IV, Roberta E. Zlokower: RobertaontheArts.com, Nancy Kim at NYTheatre.com, Pete Ernst & The Waterfront Ensemble/NJ Dramatists for supporting new works. Leecia Manning who directed the first reading at The DeBaun, Hoboken, NJ. Karen Greatti, Terri Campion, Jeff Baskin, Jeff Biehl, Lisa Rudin, Marcia Finn, Cynthia Granville, Michael Giorgio, Alice Connorton, Tim Barrett, Jennifer Kotrba, Judy Bard, David Tyson, David Walters, Joan Saporta, Michael Cleeff, Gabor & Susanne Barabas for presenting a reading of the plays at NJREP in Long Branch, NJ. Michael R. Duran, Arlene Schulman (directors) with Diana Devlin, Stacie Lee Lents, Brenton Popolizio, Cindy Carver and Alice Connorton. Mark Dunn and Joel Stone.

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John Chatterton, Emileena Pedigo, Bob Ost, Glory Sims Bowen, Judd Hollander and the Midtown International Theatre Festival Staff.

Elvis Presley and his dedicated fans everywhere!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*All The King's Women* played to spectacular reviews at the Midtown International Festival in New York City and are Luigi Jannuzzi's twentieth to twenty-eighth published plays. You can find set ideas as well as reviews from the original production at Luigi's website: [www.LuigiJannuzzi.com](http://www.LuigiJannuzzi.com)

The author's other published comedies include:

Full lengths: *Night of The Foolish Moon*, *For The Love of Juliet* and *Exhibit This! -The Museum Comedies*.

One Acts: *A Bench At The Edge*, *The Appointment*, *The Barbarians Are Coming*, and *With or Without You*.

*Exhibit This! -The Museum Comedies*, was the #1 Pick of *New York Magazine*, winner of the Perry Award for the best play in New Jersey Theater, played to tremendous reviews, awards and sold out performances in New York City. These 13 one acts won 3 Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival Finalist Awards and two Off Off Broadway Awards (OBR.com).

Luigi's play *A Bench At The Edge* won best one act in Ireland in 1999 and best one act in Scotland and The United Kingdom in 2001. He is a recipient of two New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowships, two Geraldine R. Dodge Grants, three National Endowments for the Humanities (2000 at Rutgers U., 1998 at Columbia U., and 1995 at The U Of Vermont) the 1986 Goshen Peace Prize, a 2000 and 1998 Finalist in the Eugene O'Neill National Playwriting conference, and is a 2007 - 2009 James Madison seminar participant at Princeton University.

He is a member of the Dramatist Guild, Author's Guild, NJTEC, NJ REP, the Metropolitan Theatre Company, and NJDramatist/Waterfront Ensemble. Mr. Jannuzzi born in Bound Brook, N J, educated at Raritan Valley Community College, received a B.A. from Salem College, West Virginia, and a M.A. from the University of Notre Dame. He is a full-time Creative Writing and Drama teacher in New Jersey. For more information see *Contemporary Authors & Who's Who In America* online in your local library.

“The mind cannot absorb what the rear end cannot endure.”  
– Moliere

## ACT I

### *INTRO TO SCENE ONE: "ONE TUPELO SALESWOMAN"*

*(Lights fade in theatre, and the following is heard:)*

**RADIO VOICE.** Good Morning Mississippi. It is a chilly January 8th, 1946.

In World News, representatives from many nations have great hope for a new organization called The United Nations that is set to hold its first session in London in two more days.

In National News, a new invention called an Electronic Numerical Intergrator and Computer which takes up a room 30 feet by 50 feet at the University of Pennsylvania will begin calculations this week.

And President Truman today,...*(trailing off)*...will meet with Congress...

*(Pause. Lights up on Scene One.)*

# ONE TUPELO SALESWOMAN

## SET

Bare stage

## TIME

January 8th, 1946

## PLACE

Tupelo, Mississippi

## CAST

Saleswoman

*ONE TUPELO SALESWOMAN* was first produced by the Metropolitan Theatre Company in New York City as a selection of the Midtown International Theatre Festival, at the Where Eagles Dare Theatre, 347 West 36th Street, on July 18, 2007. Executive producer, John Chatterton; managing director, Emileena Pedigo; artistic director, Glory Sims Bowen; marketing director, Bob Ost. The play was directed by Branán Whitehead; stage managed by Lloyd Fass; produced by Luigi Jannuzzi/Branán Whitehead; lighting and sound design by Lloyd Fass and Branán Whitehead. The cast was as follows:

**SALESWOMAN\*** . . . . . JESSICA ASCH

\*Also appeared as **SALESWOMAN** . . . . . JENNIFER BLEVINS

*(Lights rise on SALESWOMAN who is standing center stage.)*

**SALESWOMAN.** *(to offstage left)* Yes, Sir. Light bulbs? Aisle four, half way. You're welcome.

*(to audience)*

When I first saw the little boy enter this hardware store, I said to myself, "My God, there is something wrong with that child," which is a heck of a thing to say about a eleven year-old holding his Mother's hand, entering a hardware store. But that's what I felt.

*(to offstage left)*

Yes, Miss? Ax handles, 7th aisle, all the way down.

*(to audience)*

'Cause I had this odd feeling. And I remember thinking, "I don't want anything to do with this kid, I'm going to go to the bathroom, won't be my customer." I turned, a paper fell off a shelf, I stooped to pick it up... phone rang, my manager took it. The other salesman in the center, I heard his name being yelled from the back cause some rakes were falling. And when I came back up...the little boy, his mom and that odd feeling were standing right in front of me. *(to off right)* Sir? Candy is aisle one, boxed chocolates half way down, loose stuff in front of the register. You're welcome.

*(to audience)*

And the odd little boy's Mother says to me, "It's his Eleventh birthday, we're here for a present." So I say, "Isn't that wonderful, how old are you, son?" And the boy says, "Old enough for a 22 Rifle!" I look at the mother, and the mother's going like, *(shaking head no)* giving me the universal silent Mother sign for "over my dead body." So, like an idiot, I say, "So son, what would you like?" And, of course, the son says, "A 22 Rifle, please, with 6 cartridges boxes." The Mother is now staring at me, eyes buggin' out of her head, as if to say, "What is wrong with you woman, do you not understand the universal silent Mother sign for, 'No?'"

*(to off right)*

The bathroom? All the way back past the garden supplies. Women left, Men right.

*(to Audience)*

So I stoop, get down, right to the level of the boy's face barely reaching over the counter and I say, "Son, instead of a 22 rifle...how about if I show you...a brand new,... guitar?" Now...this child, this eleven year-old child, is looking at me with the same expression that a cow has when watching a train going by. You know what I'm talking about? You ever watch a cow watch a train go by? You know that "I don't know what it is... but I don't want any part of it" look? Well, that's what this kid's giving me.

*(to off left)*

Yes, Sir? Asbestos insulation? Aisle five, Plumbing.

*(to audience)*

So, of course, I say it again, "A guitar's wonderful. You can learn how to play and read music, be cultured, I took piano lessons and I have never regretted it." I now notice the mother is smiling, but the kid is giving me the silent, "No," thing. So I say, "How'd you like to just look at one of these guitars, huh?" Now the kid's eyes are starting to swell up with tears. He looks up at his Mom and says, "Mom, you said." "But son," she comes back with, "They are just too dangerous." Then all hell broke loose. The kid started screaming. I mean this little boy had a temper tantrum, he fell on the floor. I took off to get the guitar.

*(to off right)*

What? No, your car is safe there. This is Tupelo. In fact, I'll keep an eye on it.

*(to audience)*

And I remember thinking to myself, "Whatever I do, I can't let this kid touch it, cause he's going to smash it,

and I'm going to pay for it. Here it's payday, I'm getting my check in an hour, and the last thing I need is to have money deducted 'cause of this eleven year-old." So I come back, place the guitar on the countertop, and the mother is poking at him. You know that dagger of morality, index finger, poking that mother's do. And she's saying, "Son, take this now." And the kid's saying, "No." And she's saying, "This is it, or nothing." And the kid's taking these deep breaths, you can see his nostrils flaring. 'Cause the kid's thinking, "I don't want nothing, but I don't want this either." So then I hop in with my big sales line. I use this a lot cause everyone wants to be a country western singer. Especially around Tupelo, Mississippi cause everybody wants to be like Mississippi Slim. Who's a local boy, so famous and all. And I know this kid knows who Slim is, every kid his age is a fan. So I say, "You know who Mississippi Slim is, don't you?" The boy says, "Yes, Ma'am." And I said, "Well, you take this and learn how to play it, you may be famous someday like Mississippi Slim."

*(to off right)*

Yes, Miss? Harmonicas? Yes, right inside that glass case, if you see something you want, I'll get it out.

*(to audience)*

And it was just at that point that I could just see the defeat in this boy's face. The anger just right there. He was just looking at that guitar. And I just knew this guitar ain't going nowhere but a closet. But I pushed it, I pushed 'cause I knew his mother wanted me to push it. I said, "Son, what is your name?" "Elvis," the kid says. And I said, "Elvis, what's your last name?" "Presley," he adds. "Elvis Presley, I'm going to remember that name," I said, "'Cause someday I might hear about you and I'm going say that I was the lady who sold him his first guitar when he wanted a rifle." Of course, the kid's having nothing of the humor here. And the mother's nodding, "That's right you may be another Mississippi

Slim, Elvis." Elvis just standing there stunned. I took the twelve dollars, ninety-five cents. The mother took the guitar, tried to hand it to the little boy, he looked down. I reached over the counter, gave him a bag of pics, a tuning pipe, a handful of lollipops. Said, "Happy eleventh birthday!" The little boy said, "Thank you, Ma'am." Walked out.

*(to off right)*

Which Miss? The blue guitar? Twelve dollars, ninety-five cents. Would you like to see it? I'll be right there.

*(to audience)*

But why I bring this up, is cause my mother would always say she would get these odd feelings when she was around something that was going to happen. And I never knew what she was talking about till that little boy walked into this hardware store. 'Cause I'm telling you...I have a very odd feeling about that little boy. Like something's going to happen with that little boy. And I fear, 'cause I don't know how to interpret these feelings. And I hope I'm wrong. But I just pray that that little boy doesn't do something really crazy someday...with a gun.

*(as an afterthought...)*

Or with that guitar.

*(Lights fade. Blackout.)*

*INTRO TO SCENE TWO: "THE CENSOR AND THE KING"*

*(Lights fade in theatre, the following is heard:)*

**RADIO VOICE.** In national news, President Eisenhower was released from Walter Reed Hospital following intestinal surgery, and will be traveling to recuperate at his home in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

In show news, Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist Arthur Miller married film actress Marilyn Monroe in White Plains, New York. The service lasted less than five minutes. Mr. and Mrs. Miller then got into their sports car and disappeared into traffic.

And tonight on The Steve Allen Show, the new Elvis Presley will sing his controversial rock and roll hit song and also appear in a comedy sketch with Allen and guests Imogene Coca and Andy Griffith.

In sports, Casey Stengel and the league leading...*(trailing off)*...New York Yankees defeated

*(Pause. Lights up on Scene Two.)*

# THE CENSOR AND THE KING

## SET

Bare Stage with desk, 2 dog carriers & phone

## TIME

June, 1956

## PLACE

New York City

## CAST

Abby

Barbara

Cynthia

\*(Two Dogs bark at certain times, but are not seen.)

*THE CENSOR AND THE KING* was first produced by the Metropolitan Theatre Company in New York City as a selection of the Midtown International Theatre Festival, at the Where Eagles Dare Theatre, 347 West 36th Street, on July 18th 2007. Executive producer, John Chatterton; managing director, Emileena Pedigo; artistic director, Glory Sims Bowen; marketing director, Bob Ost. The play was directed by Branán Whitehead; stage managed by Lloyd Fass; produced by Luigi Jannuzzi/ Branán Whitehead; lighting and sound design by Lloyd Fass and Branán Whitehead. The cast was as follows:

**ABBY** ..... REBECCA BATEMAN

**BARBARA** ..... ALISHA CAMPBELL

**CYNTHIA** ..... JESSICA ASCH

\*Also appeared as **CYNTHIA**. ..... JENNIFER BLEVINS

*(Lights rise on bare stage with desk and chair. Upon desk is a phone and two large dog carriers. The dog carriers are facing away from the audience, and on the back of each is the sticker: "Live Animal." A tuxedo is draped over the chair.)*

*(ABBY is on hard wired phone, pacing in front of desk.)*

**ABBY.** Steve...Mr. Allen, calm down, you're getting yourself bent out of shape about this. It's going to go fine.

*(pause)*

No, I am not taking this lightly. I think we have Presley over a barrel and he knows it.

*(pause)*

Steve...Steve? *(taking phone away from ear)*

Go on hang up. Great.

*(Hangs up phone. BARBARA enters.)*

**BARBARA.** He's coming down the hall.

**ABBY.** Great.

**BARBARA.** Do you think he's going to back out of all this?

**ABBY.** He can't.

**BARBARA.** And if they argue, do we negotiate?

**ABBY.** No! Mr. Allen does not want to negotiate. Presley wants to be on television, this is how he's going to do it. This is only a final meeting to pick up the tux and pick a dog.

**BARBARA.** *(to HOUND ONE)* Hello. Woof, woof, woof, woof. Oh, they are cute.

**ABBY.** Aren't they?

**BARBARA.** *(to HOUND TWO)* And so are you. You think one of them is going to stand still for this?

**ABBY.** Dogs love music.

*(Knocks are heard.)*

**ABBY.** Come in.

**BARBARA.** *(to HOUND ONE)* Give me paw. Ohhhh.

*(to HOUND TWO)* Give me paw. Ohhhh.

**CYNTHIA.** (*from off*) Hi.

**ABBY.** Hello.

**CYNTHIA.** (*entering stage*) Hi.

**ABBY.** You are?

**CYNTHIA.** Cynthia, Colonel Tom Parker's secretary.

**ABBY.** I'm Abby. Steve Allen's secretary. Nice to meet you.

**CYNTHIA.** Same here.

**ABBY.** But where are Colonel Parker and Mr. Presley?

**CYNTHIA.** I'm here for both. And they have three questions and a request.

**ABBY.** Great. Oh, this is Barbara.

**CYNTHIA.** Hi.

**BARBARA.** Hello.

**ABBY.** Barbara is the secretary for our network censors. She'll be taking the minutes.

**CYNTHIA.** Nice to meet you.

**BARBARA.** Nice to meet you.

**CYNTHIA.** Oh...the Basset Hounds?

**ABBY.** Yes.

(*CYNTHIA over to carrier.*)

**CYNTHIA.** I love Basset Hounds. (*pause*) "Meow." (*Pause, CYNTHIA smiles.*) Look at those eyes. Hello. And hello to you too. (*pause*) This looks like a female.

**ABBY.** It is.

**CYNTHIA.** And this looks like a male.

**ABBY.** Female, too.

**CYNTHIA.** Two females. Elvis gets along best with them.

**ABBY.** I'll say. We're trying to pick one. So if you have any preference.

**CYNTHIA.** Lucky dogs.

**ABBY.** Now, very quickly, Cynthia. And I'm sure you received our memo on this.

**CYNTHIA.** We did.

**ABBY.** The Colonel and Mr. Presley are aware that there will be a Hound Dog on a pedestal?

CYNTHIA. They are.

ABBY. It's going to have a short leash so he can't move around. (*pause*) The hound dog that is, not Mr. Presley. (*All laugh, ABBY and BARBARA a bit more.*)

CYNTHIA. Which is Colonel Tom's first question: "Whose idea is this?"

ABBY. Fair question. Mr. Allen's.

CYNTHIA. Second question: "Can Mr. Presley move around the pedestal?"

ABBY. No.

CYNTHIA. (*while writing*) No moving around pedestal.

ABBY. Because the dog's there. He's not going to gyrate around the dog. (*to HOUND ONE*) You don't want Elvis Presley gyrating around you, do you?

HOUND ONE. Woof.

CYNTHIA. Oh my.

HOUND TWO. Woof.

ABBY. I think they understand.

CYNTHIA. I think they disagree. Last question: "Can he ignore the dog..."

ABBY. He can't ignore the dog.

CYNTHIA. "...And sing to the audience?"

ABBY. He has to sing to the Hound Dog.

CYNTHIA. "Must sing to dog."

ABBY. He has to sing to the Hound Dog.

CYNTHIA. Okay.

ABBY. Cynthia, this was clearly stated in the memo.

CYNTHIA. Don't shoot, I'm the messenger.

ABBY. He's singing "You Ain't Nothing But A Hound Dog" to the Hound Dog. That's the deal.

CYNTHIA. Seems humorous on some level.

ABBY. Cynthia, this is the solution we've come up with so we don't have a replay of the June 5th, Milton Berle show. I'm sure you saw that.

CYNTHIA. I was there.

**ABBY.** Consensus is that he performed “You Ain’t Nothing But a Hound Dog” with more bumps and grinds than a stripper.

**CYNTHIA.** It was...an event.

**ABBY.** NBC received so much mail and telephone on that, they’re petrified. And correct me if I’m wrong, that was only his third TV appearance?

**CYNTHIA.** First on Jackie Gleason, second on Milton Berle.

**ABBY.** (*taking small envelope from pocket*) Oh...let’s see how they respond to treats. I brought some. Would you like to give them some?

**CYNTHIA.** I’d love to. Thanks.

(*ABBY give envelope to CYNTHIA.*)

**ABBY.** So it seems, Mr. Presley has become very comfortable on TV.

**CYNTHIA.** He’s very relaxed.

(*to HOUND ONE*)

Here you go. Lay down.

**ABBY.** Well, I don’t know if the word “relaxed” is the correct word.

**CYNTHIA.** (*to HOUND ONE*) Sit.

(*to ABBY*) And you have the tuxedo?

**ABBY.** The tux is right here.

**CYNTHIA.** (*to HOUND ONE*) Beg.

**ABBY.** There will be Chandeliers in the background.

**CYNTHIA.** Oh, that’s nice.

(*to HOUND ONE*) Good girl.

(*gives treat*)

**ABBY.** The dog picked will also have on a top hat, as will Mr. Presley.

**CYNTHIA.** (*writes*) Plus top hat.

**ABBY.** We’re sure the audience will be tapping their feet, snapping their fingers, swaying with Mr. Presley.

**CYNTHIA.** The problem is that Mr. Presley does all of those things together.

(to **HOUND TWO**)

Now your turn.

**ABBY.** Well, he's going to have to contain himself for this formal occasion where he is introduced to millions throughout the nation.

**CYNTHIA.** (to **HOUND TWO**) Lay down.

**ABBY.** Cynthia, this is a tremendous opportunity, you must admit?

**CYNTHIA.** (to **HOUND TWO**) Sit.

(to **ABBY**) Well, everything that's been happening in the past year has been tremendous. In fact, Elvis' career has taken off so that no one can keep up with it. Especially since his first album just went Gold. Which is why I'm leaving. Actually, this is my last day.

**ABBY.** Oh, I'm sorry.

**CYNTHIA.** I'm not.

(to **HOUND TWO**) Beg.

(to **ABBY**) I have two children, I haven't seen in two months. I just want to go home. And I am tomorrow.

**ABBY.** That's understandable.

**CYNTHIA.** (to **HOUND TWO**) Good girl.

(gives treat)

**ABBY.** Now Cynthia, we've heard Elvis may be going on the Ed Sullivan Show.

**CYNTHIA.** Tentative for September ninth.

**ABBY.** Well, congratulations on the tentative.

**CYNTHIA.** Thank you.

**ABBY.** And I've heard Ed Sullivan's not going to allow Mr. Presley to be filmed below the waist.

**CYNTHIA.** Well, that's why tonight's show is so important. If things go well here, The Sullivan show, which has a higher family draw, may allow filming of Presley completely.

ABBY. Our thoughts exactly.

CYNTHIA. And that's why you could probably ask Elvis to sing suspended from a rope, and the Colonel would go along with it.

ABBY. Well, I thank you and the Colonel for your honesty on this.

CYNTHIA. And that's also why, I think, they sent me. Cause they realize this is something they have to do, and they just want to do it and move on.

ABBY. Oh, and white gloves. He has to wear white gloves. They're in the tuxedo.

CYNTHIA. (*writes*) Plus white gloves.

(*pause*)

Okay. (*pause*) Presley will go out there with one of these Hound Dogs, sing to her, wear the tuxedo, but there is one thing that *we* request.

ABBY. And remember to tell the Colonel that we are agreeing to film Mr. Presley fully.

CYNTHIA. Yes. But there is one small thing Mr. Presley requests.

ABBY. Okay.

CYNTHIA. Mr. Presley would like to request that with his tuxedo...to be allowed to wear his...Blue Suede Shoes.

ABBY. (*long pause*) Perhaps we can work that in. (*thinks*) Consider it done.

CYNTHIA. Well, thank you. Let me take the tuxedo...leave the shoes.

ABBY. And do you care to cast a vote as to which dog to use?

CYNTHIA. No. They are both beautiful.

ABBY. Nice meeting you.

CYNTHIA. Nice meeting you.

BARBARA. Nice to meet you too, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA. Nice to meet you.

(*CYNTHIA exits with tuxedo.*)

**BARBARA.** Don't you have to run it by Mr. Allen about the blue suede shoes?

**ABBY.** Who cares?

**BARBARA.** It breaks formality.

**ABBY.** It's no big deal.

*(ABBY picks up phone, dials.)*

**BARBARA.** It may be just the opening that Presley needs to go nuts.

**ABBY.** It's a little thing.

*(into phone)*

Mr. Allen...Colonel Tom Parker's secretary was here. Not Elvis or Parker. And Elvis is going to be up there with the Hound dog, sing to it, wear the tuxedo, top hat, and all they had was one request. They requested that Elvis be allowed to wear his blue suede shoes. So I said okay.

*(Smiles, long pause, smile drops.)*

They are only Blue Suede Shoes! *(pause)* No, it's not an opening to go wild. *(pause)* No, he's not going. *(Stops suddenly. Pause.)* Steve?

*(to BARBARA)*

He hung up.

*(hangs up phone)*

But not before he said Presley can wear 'em...as long as they're nailed to the floor.

*(pause)*

**BARBARA.** Okay. Then let's work on this other problem. What's this other guest's name?

**ABBY.** The other guest's name is: Jerry Lee Lewis. And the song he wants to sing is: "Great Balls Of Fire?"

**BARBARA.** "Great Balls of Fire?"

**ABBY.** Do you know what I think, Barbara? I think that Elvis Presley opened a very dangerous door on the Milton Berle show last month.

**BARBARA.** You can't *sing* "Great Balls Of Fire," on television.  
You can't *even say*, "Great balls of fire," on television.

**ABBY.** And I really don't think tuxedos or Hound Dogs are going to be able to close it.

**HOUND DOG ONE.** Woof.

**HOUND DOG TWO.** Woof.

**ABBY.** Yea, you tell them.

(**ABBY** *nods*, "Yes," **BARBARA** *shakes head*, "No.")

(*Lights fade, End of Play.*)

*INTRO TO SCENE THREE: "3 A.M. IN THE GARDEN WITH  
A GOD"*

*(Lights fade in theatre, the following is heard.:)*

**RADIO VOICE.** In sports, the AFL versus the NFL World Championship game at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum is only a few days away or as some are calling it: The Super Bowl. This is the first ever meeting between the two leagues and expectations of inequality are running high. The University of Arizona and the University of Michigan marching bands will be performing at halftime and even President Lyndon Johnson has an opinion on the game.

*(trailing off)* ...Most news media and fans believe that the long established National Football league...

*(Pause. Lights up on Scene Three.)*

**THREE A.M. IN THE GARDEN WITH A  
GOD**

**SET**

Bare stage

**TIME**

January, 1967

**PLACE**

Memphis, Tennessee

**CAST**

Eve

*3 A.M. IN THE GARDEN WITH A GOD* was first produced by the Metropolitan Theatre Company in New York City as a selection of the Midtown International Theatre Festival, at the Where Eagles Dare Theatre, 347 West 36th Street on July 18th 2007. Executive producer, John Chatterton; managing director, Emileena Pedigo; artistic director, Glory Sims Bowen; marketing director, Bob Ost. The play was directed by Branan Whitehead; stage managed by Lloyd Fass; produced by Luigi Jannuzzi/ Branan Whitehead; lighting and sound design by Lloyd Fass and Branan Whitehead. The cast was as follows:

**EVE** ..... ALISHA CAMPBELL

*(Lights rise on WOMAN.)*

**WOMAN.** I have this recurring dream that I am in the Garden of Paradise. *(pause)* And I am Eve. *(pause)* And Elvis Presley is Adam. *(pause)* And one day, he offered me an apple.

*(pause)*

AND I DOVE ON IT!

*(pause, laughs)*

But this dream is not in my imagination.

*(pause)*

Oh no.

*(pause, nods)*

It really did happen.

*(pause)*

Let me set the scene.

*(pause)*

It was around three a.m. A Sunday night. Raining. Windy. Terrible night. My hair under a hat, I'm wearing sweat pants, sneakers, sweat shirt that says "Sinatra." And I'm standing in line at this Memphis supermarket. I ran out to get milk, cereal, diapers... and I just got carried away. No one was there, my two kids sleeping, I couldn't sleep, I told my husband, "We need so much stuff, I'm going out." So I went wild,... up and down the aisles, even checking out stuff I neer look at cause, who cares, I have time. Finally, I'm at the checkout. I have a cart full. I mean, a gigantic cart full. And I remember, "Bananas, I forgot Bananas." And my kids have to have bananas. I, myself, have a potassium deficiency and try to eat one every day...so does my husband...we're basically big banana eaters. So I turn, and pushing my cart, head to the fruit aisle. And did you ever notice that the bananas are always way at the end of the fruit aisle? They put them there 'cause they want you to walk by all the fruit to get to the bananas. It's like the milk.

Ever notice they always put the milk at the furthest corner of any store so you have to walk past everything to get to the milk?

Well anyway, there they are, the bananas. And I reach, and I take a bunch, actually the last bunch, and I hear this voice say, "Miss, do you know...do you know, if there are anymore ba...ba..nanas?" I turn, there's a man there. A little frightening in this big empty store. And he's pointing to this now empty shelf of bananas, of which I am holding the last bunch of, about eight. A man with a black hat, black leather jacket, black pants, leather boots, and dark, can't see through, shades. And he's looking at my bananas. And I'm thinking, "I got here first, they're for my family, my potassium deficient family. And I really don't want to come back to the store tomorrow just for bananas. Which is what I'll have to do, if I give half to this man." Who, I notice, has no wedding ring on the hand with which he is pointing. So I figure, he's single. He can go out and get as many bananas as he wants, anytime he wants. Not like me who has, middle of the night, shopping sprees just to keep even with life as it's chasing me down. Or maybe...he's cheating a lot, and he forgot to put his wedding ring back on, having just come from his mistress' house, here at three a.m., wanting to have some bananas. Anyway, without making any judgments I say, "I don't know if there are anymore." And I casually start looking around, as if a banana bunch may be hiding in the mangos, or avocados. And I'm bobbing my head, clutching my banana bunch, lifting my neck, peering into, and over some pineapple, and I'm thinking, "Suppose he's a motorcycle freak, some wacko, and needs these for some initiation rite, and he's about to leave me stuck and bleeding in the fruit aisle, mumbling, "Help me, help me," as nectarines are bouncing off my head, and my life force is coursing out of me?" (*pause*)

So I quickly decide, that I am going to conclude with, "No, I don't see any," and then throw out a big... "BUT

SIR...why don't you take half of mine, is that fair, or do you need more?" 'Cause I am now thinking, "A contest over this bunch may get downright mean, I will not win, and I am not going down for a bunch of bananas and not very pleasant looking ones at that." And suddenly I notice this huge smile breaks on his face. And he says, "That's very kind of you, Miss, if I may have half." So I break the bunch. He says, "Thanks." I turn my cart around. And heading no more than a few steps, thinking, "I am out of here." "I am going where there is at least another person, like the check-out counter, where things are safe." Thinking, "Why do I even come out at three o'clock? And this is why there are no people out at three o'clock." Thinking, "How stupid am I?" (*pause*) When I hear behind me the words, "Excuse me though, Miss, may I ask you one more thing?" I stop. "May I ask you one more thing, Miss?" I freeze. My back still to the scary man. I scan the fruit dept in front of me, that is connected to the Deli department, that is connected to the Flower and Bakery department and there is no one, not a soul for aisles. And I turn and say, "Excuse me, Sir, what?" And he very politely says, "You seem to have the last jar of peanut butter, the kind I love...and I was wondering if." I look down. There it is...right on top. I grab the peanut butter, hold it out to him. "It's yours...take it, it's yours," I say. "I just took one, it doesn't matter to my 6 children," I say. And now I'm lying. I only have 2 children. But I figure, if he's thinking of killing me, right here,...right now, in front of the grapefruit, I want as much guilt as possible riding his dammed to hell soul into the eternal flames. "It doesn't matter to my 6 children," I say, "If they eat chunky or creamy." And he says, "Well, there are all types left, cause I was just over there, except...this kind.

So, if it doesn't matter? "It doesn't matter," I say, "It really doesn't matter. No, no, it doesn't matter." "I so appreciate it, I really do," he says. "Fine," I say, "Fine, and I am repeating: fine, fine." And he says, "Please

don't be nervous, please don't...I don't mean to frighten you, Miss." And I'm saying, "Fine, I'm fine," as I'm clutching my cart now and I'm lying, 'cause I don't know what else to say cause I'm so nervous, and he's approaching me, he takes a step nearer to me and I'm on automatic response now, repeating over and over, just as unconvincing as I can, "Oh no, I'm really fine, very fine." So fine I could just cry, I'm fine." And then I start to cry. "I'm fine," I cry, "I'm fine, take the peanut butter, is there anything else you want, Mister, is there anything else you want?" And now I see this big lump forming in his throat. "Miss," he says, "Please, please calm down, I do not mean to frighten you. Here, why don't you take the bananas and the peanut butter." "I'm fine," I am crying, "I'm fine!"

And he says, "Please, please, Miss," as he backs away. And I cry louder, "Fine, I am fine." He puts the peanut butter and the bananas down, says, "Miss, please don't scream, please don't." "Fine, I'm fine, I'm fine," I'm saying. And he starts to say, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry." And now I'm saying, "I'm fine," and he's saying, "I'm sorry." And we are repeating, "I'm fine, I'm sorry, I'm fine, I'm sorry...I'm fine, fine, fine...I'm sorry, sorry, sorry." And he has his hands out. His hands are out, above his shoulders, as if he's just robbed a bank, been caught and someone has a gun in his back. He is profusely apologizing with his fingers spread wide open, I am clutching my cart. *(pause)* And then... it happens. *(pause)* He takes off his hat, he takes off his glasses, and he says, "Miss, my name is Elvis Presley, please do not scream or be frightened, and I wish you would accept my apology from the bottom of my heart." *(pause)* Now I'm looking at him. Now I realize it is Elvis Presley. And now, I let out the most blood curdling scream that has ever been heard in the state of Tennessee, let alone the Memphis Metropolitan area. AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! *(pause)* Elvis rocks backwards on his heels. Elvis drops his hat. Elvis drops his glasses. An avalanche of apples, set off by the

reverberation of this, comes caroming down on him, dominoing into the melons, that come rolling down. Elvis is knocked a little bit to the left and as he puts his hands out. Crouching a bit, he is pushed down by the mere weight of the fruit descending. Apples are now bounding off of his chest. He is on the ground and I am standing over top of him, screaming again, not because he frightened me, because I am no longer frightened at all, and not because he is Elvis, but rather because of what I have now done to this man, this king of Memphis, who has helped so many people, and children, who has given so much to so many, and here I have pelted him with apples and melons and notice that now the plums have begun a fresh assault upon his head. So I throw my body in front of the apples, trying to protect him. 'Cause he is down on the ground now, he is helpless. "Back," I say, "Back fruit, do you not know who this is?" I am trying to command them like God. "Stay away from him, apples," I shout, as if I am now Eve protecting the King from the forbidden fruit here in the garden at three am. And he is saying, "Miss, It's all right, I'm all right." And then I fall. And I'm falling backwards, falling and I feel these hands. These big hands. "I have you," I hear. At that point, I just let my body go. *(pause)* I let everything go. *(pause)* I could feel the plums, the apples, melons hitting my legs. And I fell...and I fell. And I looked up, and there was his face. Oh...I bet Eve never saw a face so sweet. His beautiful face, laughing, looking at me. And I'm thinking, "This is it. *(pause)* This is the highlight of my life." *(pause)* Three a.m., nobody sees it, nobody's going to believe it." And I looked up and he had an apple in his hand and he took a bite of it and handing it to me, said, "Would you like a taste?" *(pause)* And I did. *(pause)* Oh yes, I did! And the next thing I remember, we were at the checkout, which he insisted on paying for. He put the bags in my trunk. And then he said, "I'm very sorry once again." To which I replied, "I'm fine, I'm fine. To which he said, "Don't start that again,

now!" And I didn't. Then he said, "Get in your car." And I did. And he said, "Start your car." And I did. And he said, "Now drive away." And I did. (*pause*) And the funny thing is...sometimes I ride by that store...but I have never gone back in that store. I can no longer go back in that store.

'Cause it is no longer a store...it is a holy shrine, a sacred grotto of fruits and vegetables. It is an oracle where once a God visited. Where inside, nothing will ever look the same...where inside, nothing could ever be the same...and where inside that garden...no apple will ever again...taste as sweet.

*(Blackout. End of Play.)*

*INTRO TO SCENE FOUR: "WHEN NIXON MET ELVIS"*

*(Lights fade in theatre, the following is heard.)*

**RADIO VOICE.** Army officials and President Nixon attempted today to refute critics in Congress who have charged that military intelligence operations aimed at citizens in the U.S. have become a threat to political liberty.

Both the Senate and the House of Representatives have passed legislation on a clean air bill that will require all automobiles to be 90 per cent free of pollution by 1976.

And the Supreme Court has ruled 5 to 4 in favor of lowering the voting age to 18 in Presidential...

*(trailing off)* ...and Congressional elections.

*(Pause. Lights up on Scene Four.)*

# WHEN NIXON MET ELVIS

## SET

Bare Stage, 3 chairs, 3 phone headsets

## TIME

December 21, 1970

## PLACE

The White House, Washington, DC

## CAST

Alice

Beth

Cathy

*WHEN NIXON MET ELVIS* was first produced by the Metropolitan Theatre Company in New York City as a selection of the Midtown International Theatre Festival, at the Where Eagles Dare Theatre, 347 West 36th Street, on July 18th 2007. Executive producer, John Chatterton; managing director, Emileena Pedigo; artistic director, Glory Sims Bowen; marketing director, Bob Ost. The play was directed by Branan Whitehead; stage managed by Lloyd Fass; produced by Luigi Jannuzzi/ Branan Whitehead; lighting and sound design by Lloyd Fass and Branan Whitehead. The cast was as follows:

**ALICE**.....REBECCA BATEMAN.

**BETH**.....ALICHA CAMPBELL

**CATHY**.....JESSICA ASCH\*

Also appeared as **CATHY**.....JENNIFER BLEVINS

*(Lights rise on THREE SECRETARIES at three chairs: CATHY down right, ALICE down left, BETH center.)*

*(Phone rings or buzzes on down left desk.)*

ALICE. Morning, White House?

*(pause)*

It's December 21st, 1970. That's why you called the White House, to find out the date?

*(pause)*

Oh, I see. *(pause)* Well, let me tell you something about the northwest gate: document everything, who, the time, date, even a synopsis of your conversation. And good luck on your first day.

*(pause)*

Okay...aside from the date, what's the other problem?

*(pause)*

Elvis...Presley? *(pause)* Could you hold on for a moment?

*(hits phone button)*

*(Lights rise on BETH as center desk's phone rings.)*

BETH. Presidential Appointment Secretary, Dwight Chapin's office, can I help you?

ALICE. Beth?

BETH. What's up?

ALICE. Elvis....Presley's here. *(pause)* Did you hear me?

BETH. AHHHHH! Hold on.

*(CATHY hits phone button. Lights rise on CATHY as down right desk phone rings.)*

CATHY. President Richard Nixon's office, how may I help you?

BETH. Cathy?

CATHY. Beth, can I call you right back? I have to get an aspirin.

**BETH.** Elvis...Presley is here.

*(pause)*

Are you there?

**CATHY.** *(pause)* AHHHHH!

**BETH.** Hold on?

*(CATHY hits button, back to ALICE.)*

Alice, are you still there?

**ALICE.** Where'd you go?

**BETH.** I told Cathy. What's he want? Why's he here?

**ALICE.** I have no idea. I just thought I'd tell you since you have a bigger picture of him on your desk than your husband.

**BETH.** And right now, where is he?

**ALICE.** Northwest gate.

**BETH.** You left him standing at the northwest gate?

**ALICE.** I'll call you back.

*(BETH back to CATHY.)*

**BETH.** She just left him standing at the northwest gate.

**CATHY.** What? Is she nuts?

**BETH.** I'll call you back.

*(ALICE hits button.)*

**ALICE.** Northwest gate?

*(pause)*

Tell Mr. Presley that.

*(pause)*

What do you mean, "He's gone?"

*(pause)*

Where'd he go?

*(pause)*

You send that letter right in to me. I am right inside the main door, My name is Alice, I am head of operators. You tell that Marine to sprint! Do you hear me?

*(Buzzer)*

**BETH.** Alice?

**ALICE.** Beth, he's gone.

**BETH.** What?

**ALICE.** He left. I don't know.

**BETH.** I am holding you personally responsible.

**ALICE.** But he left a letter. The marine's bringing it in.

**BETH.** When you get it...call. I gotta call Cathy.

*(Hits button. Cathy's phone rings. ALICE rises, exits stage left.)*

**CATHY.** President Richard Nixon's Office.

**BETH.** Cath?

**CATHY.** I have no record. The Presidents' schedule's full.  
I'm looking at it.

**BETH.** I don't either, and Chapin would know, he's the  
appointment secretary, there's nothing on the calendar.

**CATHY.** It's exciting though.

**BETH.** But he's gone.

**CATHY.** Who?

**BETH.** Elvis.

**CATHY.** NOOOO.

**BETH.** He was there, now he's gone!

**CATHY.** Oh no, don't say that.

**BETH.** But he left a letter. It's on the way in.

**CATHY.** Beth?

**BETH.** Yea.

**CATHY.** Do you think this might not be Elvis?

**BETH.** I was thinking that.

**CATHY.** I mean, Elvis Presley, middle of winter, comes to  
Washington DC, walks to the northwest gate, leaves a  
letter?

**BETH.** It doesn't make sense, does it?

**CATHY.** No, it doesn't.

BETH. Oh well.

CATHY. Imagine if it was though?

BETH. Yea, imagine. Elvis just out of the blue.

*(ALICE runs in with letter. Hits phone buttons, BETH's phone rings.)*

BETH. Hold on.

ALICE. I got the letter!

BETH. Cath and I think it's an imposter. Here, let me put Cath on.

*(pause)*

Cath?

CATHY. Yea.

ALICE. Hi Cathy.

CATHY. Hi Alice.

BETH. I mean, Alice, it's the middle of winter.

ALICE. It was Elvis.

BETH. Alice?

ALICE. I have the letter.

BETH. Anyone can write a letter.

ALICE. The guard's certain, he's a big fan.

CATHY. Hey, I hope you're right, maybe it was Elvis.

ALICE. Thank you Cathy.

BETH. All right, let's say it was Elvis.

CATHY. Elvis had nothing to do.

BETH. So he came here from Memphis...in the middle of winter.

CATHY. With a velvet cape.

BETH. Just to drop off a letter at the gate. Yea, let's say he did that.

ALICE. I'm going to laugh at both of you when this turns out to be true.

CATHY. Read the letter.

ALICE. First of all it's written on American Airlines stationery.

**BETH.** Excuse me?

**CATHY.** Did you say, American Airlines stationary?

**ALICE.** In fact, on top there's a space to write the in flight:  
altitude and location.

**CATHY.** Alice, I think you should send that to security.

**ALICE.** Do you want me to read it, or not?

**BETH.** Go ahead.

**CATHY.** Then send it to security.

*(BETH and CATHY laugh.)*

**ALICE.** "Dear Mr. President. First I would like to introduce myself. I am Elvis Presley.

**BETH.** That's enough proof for me.

**CATHY.** Yea, anything scribbled on official airline stationary.

**ALICE.** "I admire you and have great respect for you,...  
uh,...have great respect for your office." I'm sorry, it's  
scribbled, it's hard to read. "I talked to Vice President  
Agnew in Palm Springs three weeks ago."

**BETH.** Spiro *was* there, three weeks ago.

**ALICE.** See.

**BETH.** And he did meet Elvis, he told me.

**ALICE.** And how would this kook have known that?

**BETH.** It was in the paper.

**CATHY.** Wow, this is strange.

**BETH.** All weirdo's are strange. That's why they're called  
weirdo's.

**ALICE.** "I talked to Vice President Agnew and expressed my  
concern for our country."

**BETH.** What's he talking about?

**ALICE.** "The drug culture, the hippie elements, the S.D.S.,  
Black Panthers, etc. do not," And "*NOT*" is underlined,  
"do *NOT* consider me as their enemy or as they call it  
The Establishment."

**BETH.** Elvis did not write this.

**CATHY.** He writes things like, "You ain't nothin' but a  
Hound dog," right?

**ALICE.** "Sir, I can and will be of any service that I can to help the country out. I have no concern or motives other than helping the country out."

**BETH.** He wants to battle hippies?

**CATHY.** I think of him almost like a hippy, I mean, he has long hair.

**BETH.** He is not a hippy.

**CATHY.** Does he have a crew cut?

**ALICE.** Will you two stop it? "So...I wish not to be given a title or an appointed position. I can and will do more good if I were made a Federal Agent at Large."

**BETH.** I'm lost. What does he want?

**ALICE.** He wants to be a Federal Agent.

**CATHY.** Elvis has appeared at the Northwest gate and wants to be a Federal Agent. That's what you want me to tell President Nixon?

*(CATHY laughs.)*

*(BETH laughs.)*

**ALICE.** "I am on this plane with Senator George Murphy and we have been discussing the problems that our country is faced with. Sir, I am staying at the Washington Hotel, Room 505, 506, 507."

**CATHY.** What's he need three rooms for?

**BETH.** Maybe he brought a lot of guitars.

**CATHY.** I think it's for whoever this is and his multiple personalities.

**ALICE.** "I have two men who work with me by the name of Jerry Schilling and Sonny West. I am registered under the name of Jon Burrows."

**CATHY.** You know what I think. I don't think it's Elvis, it's Jon Burrows. And I think this guy Jon Burrows thinks he's Elvis. That's what I think.

**ALICE.** "I will be here for as long as it takes to get the credentials of a Federal Agent. I have done an in-depth study of drug abuse."

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