

– a dialogue sample from –

BALDERDASH AND BANALYSIS
or
BANDY ABOUT THE BARD

A collection of Shake-spoofs

by

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THE GREAT WASH OFF
or
WHO KILT MCGINTY

CAST

MACGREEDY – unemployed, but ambitious
LADY MacGreedy – his wife
THE BOSS – the boss of The Political Machine of Plummet
MALCOLM – his oldest son
DONNY – his younger son
BANEFUL – a cog in The Political Machine of Plummet
FLEEALONE – his son
MACDOUBT – a cog in The Political Machine of Plummet
WHICHONE – a witch
WHICHEVER – a witch
ROSS Jarvis – a cog in The Political Machine of Plummet
LENNY – a cog in The Political Machine of Plummet
POLICEMAN
Precinct CAPTAIN – with The Political Machine of Plummet
2 LADIES – wives of Ross and Lenny
DOCTOR
MESSENGER

SETTING

The city of Plummet in Medieval Scotland

ACT IScene 1THE GREAT WASH OFF
or
WHO KILT MCGINTY

Enter WHICHONE and WHICHEVER

WHICHONE

When next again, shall we two meet? In the sunny-dark of winter's heat?

WHICHEVER

In the rain-shine of summer's frost. After the battle's been won and lost.

WHICHONE

Hurly-burly, shake it all around. When down is up and up is down.

WHICHEVER

In a soup line, though it may be seedy, on election day, we'll meet MacGreedy.

Exit WHICHONE and WHICHEVER. Enter THE BOSS, MALCOLM and DONNY. Enter Precinct CAPTAIN, wounded

THE BOSS

Grab him, he's hurt!

MALCOLM and DONNY help Captain

THE BOSS (cont'd)

Can you talk? What's wrong?

CAPTAIN

A brutal day in the trenches. Rebellion at the polls all over Plummet. The merciless MacDoubleFace in the western precinct. Thankfully, some extra votes came in.

THE BOSS

Who did that?

CAPTAIN

His name is MacGreedy. He must have voted nine times.

THE BOSS

Why didn't I think of that! How did he get away with it?

CAPTAIN

He has guts. He dressed like a bum. No one knew who he was.

THE BOSS

I'll make him Alderman, The Thane of Gluttony's district is open. Put him to work there.

Enter ROSS Jarvis, leader of the Reform Party

MALCOLM

Do you have any news?

THE BOSS

(To Malcolm)

No, Son. If your going to be the boss, you have to be more direct.

MALCOLM

How about: what news do you have?!

THE BOSS

Better, much better.

(To Ross)

Well, do you have any news?

ROSS

Tillinghast was defeated. The Thane of Casualty turned against us. He's a traitor.

THE BOSS

What happened to The Thane of Causality?

ROSS

He's through. He'll never eat another meal in this town.

THE BOSS

He was the Reform Party's candidate for mayor.

ROSS

I hear a fellow named MacGreedy –

THE BOSS

More votes? Wow! He's good. He's been all over town and no one knows who he is.

ROSS

Who is he?

THE BOSS

I just made him an Alderman, in The Thane of Gluttony district. He should be the Reform Party candidate for Mayor.

ROSS

I'll go tell him! Where is he?

THE BOSS

He'll have to collect. He'll be with Baneful.

Exit THE BOSS, ROSS, MALCOLM, DONNY and CAPTAIN. Enter WHICHONE and WHICHEVER

WHICHONE

Sister Dear, shall we wait here.

WHICHEVER

A drum, a drum, here comes MacGreedy.

Enter MACGREEDY and BANEFUL

MACGREEDY

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANEFUL

No kidding. I don't know which end is down.

MACGREEDY

How much further until we get to headquarters?

BANEFUL

Don't worry, you'll get your sixty-four bucks.

MACGREEDY

Seventy-four bucks. Thirty-seven votes at two bucks a vote is seventy-four bucks.

BANEFUL

Whatever, you'll get your money. Hey check her out.

MACGREEDY

Which one?

WHICHONE

I'm WhichOne, at your service.

BANEFUL

Whichever.

WHICHEVER

And I'm WhichEver, at your service.

MACGREEDY

I'd like to introduce myself and my friend.

WHICHEVER

We know who you are.

WHICHONE

You're MacGreedy, the Alderman from The Thane of Gluttony district.

WHICHEVER

You're MacGreedy, The Thane of Casualty, the Reform Party's candidate for Mayor.

WHICHONE

You're MacGreedy, soon to be Governor.

BANEFUL

MacGreedy, are you okay? Don't worry, I told you you'd get your sixty-four bucks.

MACGREEDY

Seventy-four bucks.

BANEFUL

Whatever.

WHICHEVER

No, it's WhichEver.

WHICHONE

And I'm WhichOne.

BANEFUL

What are you two talking about?

WHICHONE

We're talking about you, Baneful.

WHICHEVER

You're less than MacGreedy, but more.

WHICHONE

You're not as happy, yet happier.

WHICHEVER

You'll not be Governor yourself, but you'll sire Governors for generations.

Exit WHICHEVER and WHICHONE

MACGREEDY

That was weird.

BANEFUL

Which one?

MACGREEDY

Which ever.

BANEFUL

Do you think they know what they're talking about?

MACGREEDY

(To Self)

I heard the Alderman's job was open in The Thane of Gluttony district and I am unemployed, but The Reform Party's candidate for Mayor? That's not possible. The current Thane of Casualty is alive, well and in good standing with the Reform Party.

(To Baneful)

Your children will be Governor one day.

BANEFUL

And so will you.

BOTH laugh. Enter ROSS

ROSS

Baneful, there you are.

BANEFUL

Ross Jarvis, what are you doing here?

ROSS

Looking for you. Is this MacGreedy?

BANEFUL

Thirty-seven votes, in one day. Can you believe it!

ROSS

He turned the election! The Boss says you're Alderman in The Thane of Gluttony district.

MACGREEDY

I'm not really sure about --

BANEFUL

If The Boss says it, it's true.

MACGREEDY

Then I'm an Alderman.

ROSS

The Boss thinks you ought to be The Reform Party's candidate for mayor.

MACGREEDY

Hey that means --

BANEFUL

He thinks, isn't the same as, he says.

MACGREEDY

Oh.

ROSS

I've got a question for you. Are you married?

MACGREEDY

Yeah, I am. What's it to you!

ROSS

The Boss says a guys gotta be married to run for Mayor or you lose the women's vote.

BANEFUL

Congratulations! You're The Thane of Casualty!

MACGREEDY

Then I'm going to be a candidate for Mayor?

ROSS

What do you mean candidate? The election's over.

BANEFUL

The Boss doesn't say who the Thane is until after the election. You're the new Mayor!

MACGREEDY

If I'm going to be Mayor, I should get some different clothes.

BANEFUL

Get something new this time. No more of those borrowed clothes for you.

Exit BANEFUL, MACGREEDY and ROSS. Enter
LADY MacGreedy, with Letter

LADY

(Reads)

And no sooner had they said I'd be The Thane of Casualty, The Reform Party's candidate for Mayor, when Ross Jarvis showed up and said I'd won the election. I don't know what this means, my dearest partner in greatness, but I thought I'd whet your appetite for what the future holds.

(To Self)

First, an Alderman, now Mayor, soon Governor! Oh, I can't wait.

MESSENGER

(Enter)

I have a message for you Lady MacGreedy.

LADY

What is it?

MESSENGER

It's from The Boss, he's coming here tonight. I hope you have enough room to put him up. This is the Middle Ages after all and there isn't a hotel on every corner.

LADY

Of course we have enough room and our hospitality is second to none.

Exit MESSENGER

LADY (cont'd)

(To Self)

At least we're usually hospitable.

MACGREEDY

(Enter)

I'm home, Dear. Hey, guess who's coming for a visit?

Exit LADY and MACGREEDY. Enter THE BOSS,
MALCOLM, DONNY and BALEFUL

THE BOSS

The air is so gentle here. It's beautiful.

BALEFUL

They keep a lot birds here. That's always a good sign of fresh air.

LADY

(Enter)

Gentlemen, welcome to our home.

THE BOSS

Ah, the lady of the castle. It looks beautiful. I love a castle with that feminine touch.

LADY

Why, thank you. We do our best.

THE BOSS

Where is that husband of yours?

LADY

He'll be out as soon as dinner's ready. Shall we go in?

Exit LADY, THE BOSS, BALEFUL, MALCOLM
and DONNY. Enter MACGREEDY

MACGREEDY
(To Self)

Quick is better, no doubt, but what if we get caught?

LADY
(Enter)

Now what?

MACGREEDY
Why can't we leave well enough alone?

LADY
You're the one who whetted my appetite.

MACGREEDY
No man is strong enough to buck the party?

LADY
Your strong enough. Did you finish the dishes?

MACGREEDY
Of course.

LADY
Did you put them away. With visitors in the house, I don't want anyone to --

Dishes "Crash", offstage

MACGREEDY
You see I never do anything right!

LADY
You're a tough guy, but you're not a wrong guy. Remember what WhichEver said?

MACGREEDY
Which one?

LADY
You see. You get things right. And now's your chance to make some real changes. To deal with the sweatshops, with the tenements, with child labor.

MACGREEDY
What if I fail?

LADY

You won't fail! Scotch tape your courage to the sticking place!

MACGREEDY

I'll do it! No more graft. No more bridges the people don't need. We're going for a better class of crook in this city, in this state! I'm taking over The Political Machine of Plummet!

Exit LADY and MACGREEDY. Enter LADY

LADY

(To MacGreedy, o.s.)

You go wash up and be careful. That's a clean floor!

(To Self)

Hum, I wonder. Is it too late to have second thoughts about all of this? Oh, well.

A "Knock"

MACGREEDY

(Enter, with PAIL and MOP)

Did you hear something?

LADY

Just a screeching owl and a crying cricket.

A "Knock"

MACGREEDY

Someone's here. Where's the porter?

LADY

I had to let him go. He was drinking again.

A "Knock"

LADY (cont'd)

That's three times. I'd better answer it. You go to bed.

Exit MACGREEDY, with Pail and Mop. LADY gets door, enter MACDOUBT

LADY (cont'd)

MacDoubt? Is it morning already?

MACDOUBT

Bright and early. I need to talk to The Boss.

LADY

I think he's still asleep. How's your wife doing?

MACDOUBT

Oh, she's doing just fine.

LADY

I'm glad to hear it. I don't know if I've ever told you, but your wedding was beautiful.

MACDOUBT

It was nice. I haven't thought about that in years. We had a great time. Everyone did.

LADY

I couldn't even tell you when I last saw your wife. Tell her I said "hello". Good night.

MACDOUBT

Good night.

(Goes to leave)

It's not night, it's morning and I need to see The Boss.

LADY

Oh that's right. He's right through there.

MACDOUBT exits, "SCREAMS", enters

MACDOUBT

I can't believe it! It's incredible! That's the cleanest floor I've ever seen!

MACGREEDY

(Enter)

Is something wrong?

MACDOUBT

No, The Boss is asleep. Why do you ask? Should something be wrong? Do you expect there to be something wrong?

MACGREEDY

No, not at all. I thought I heard a scream.

MACDOUBT

I didn't hear anyone scream.

Enter POLICEMAN and THE BOSS

POLICEMAN

Is this the guy that tried to assassinate you, Mr Mayor.

MACGREEDY

Yes, that's him.

POLICEMAN

You're going to the hoosegow, buddy.

THE BOSS

I was sleeping! How could I assassinate anyone? It's a frame up. It's her fault! He never crossed The Political Machine of Plummet before. Help the poor, he says. Deal with the tenements and child labor. Put the sweatshops out of business. Those were her ideas!

POLICEMAN

Quit your yammering! You can tell it to the Judge!

Exit POLICEMAN and THE BOSS. Enter
MALCOLM and DONNY

MALCOLM

What's all the noise in here. Where's Dad?

MACDOUBT

The police just took him away. He's going to the hoosegow.

MALCOLM

(To Donny)

Remember what Dad always said, if they ever got him --

DONNY

(To Malcolm)

Get out of town, before they get us too!

Exit MALCOLM. Exit DONNY

MACDOUBT

I'd better go tell Baneful. He'll want to know about this.

MACGREEDY

Oh MacDoubt, before you go? In case he forgot, please remind Baneful I'm fricasseeing a flank of fodder in his honor tomorrow night. And his son, FleeAlone, is expected too.

MACDOUBT

I'll remind him.

(Exit)

MACGREEDY

(To Self)

There -- the ambush is set for Baneful and FleeAlone. That should take care of everyone.

(To Lady)

Everything is set Dear. Dear? Are you alright, Dear?

(Exit)

LADY

Umm, did you say something? I think something may ...

LADY faints. Exit MACGREEDY, with LADY.

Enter BANEFUL and FLEEALONE, Shoe Untied

BANEFUL

You could be Governor yourself one day, so make a good impression. Be polite. Say "please" and "thank you". And remember to bow when you meet Lady MacGreedy. Hurry, we're running late.

(Exit)

FLEEALONE

(To Self)

Oh, my shoe is untied.

(Ties Shoe)

BALEFUL (o.s.)

Don't dawdle -- auuuugh! It's an ambush! Run FleeAlone, run!

FLEEALONE

Yes, Father. I will. Thank You.

(Bows)

FLEEALONE Runs, exit. Enter MACGREEDY, LADY, ROSS, LENNY, 2 LADIES, with Drinks

ROSS

You're Governor and The Boss of The Political Machine of Plummet, at the same time.

Enter POLICEMAN

LENNY

You're all the talk, MacGreedy.

MACGREEDY

Speaking of talk, there's someone I need to talk to.

(To Policeman)

Did you get them?

POLICEMAN

(To MacGreedy)

We got Baneful locked up -- on polling fraud. He'll never see daylight again.

MACGREEDY

What about FleeAlone?

POLICEMAN

Polling fraud didn't work. The little sneak snuck out.

(Exit)

MACGREEDY

(To All)

Has anyone seen Baneful? He's late.

Enter BANEFUL, in Prison Suit, Drinks on Tray

MACGREEDY (cont'd)

Ah, can I get a refresher for anyone? Ladies, fresh drinks are here.

LADY 2

I can wait until your servant brings a new tray.

MACGREEDY

But my servant's right here.

(Takes Glass, but it's empty)

What nonsense is this, an empty glass for my guests!

(Recognizes Baneful)

Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee! Hence, horrible shadow, hence!

Exit BANEFUL

LADY 1

Is something wrong?

LENNY

He looks as if he's seen a ghost!

LADY

Think of this friends, as if it were ... typical of MacGreedy's nature. It's nothing else.

ROSS

We'd better leave. Come dear.

LADY 2

Yes, I have a splitting headache.

Exit ROSS, LENNY and 2 LADIES

LADY

Does the word "guilt" mean anything to you?

LADY chases MACGREEDY to exit. Enter
WHICHONE and WHICHEVER

WHICHONE

Thrice the brindled cat has mewed. Thrice and once, does that make two?

WHICHEVER

Double double, toil and drool, fire burn the cauldron's gruel.

WHICHONE

Eye of Knute, and toe of Rockne, wool of bat, and tongue of Cockney.

MACGREEDY

(Enter)

How now, there you are.

WHICHONE

Speak. Demand. We'll answer!

MACGREEDY

What happens next?

WHICHEVER

Beware of MacDoubt, he doesn't trust you.

WHICHONE

But fear no man of woman born.

WHICHEVER

You'll be Governor and The Boss of The Political Machine of Plummet until the trees dance in the streets.

MACGREEDY

Great news! My worries are over!

WHICHONE and WHICHEVER dance and exit.
Enter DOCTOR and MACGREEDY

DOCTOR

Bad news, MacDoubt has joined Malcolm. They want The Political Machine of Plummet back in their hands.

MACGREEDY

I'm so tired, Doctor. I wish I could wash my hands of this whole business.

DOCTOR

Oh, yes. You might want to check on your wife too.

Enter LADY, with Pail and Mop

LADY

Out, out, gosh darn spot! Hello Bill, can I vote again. Wash your hands! Hello Bill, go vote again, let's go vote again.

MACGREEDY

This is a problem.

Exit LADY and DOCTOR. Enter POLICEMAN,
with Binoculars

POLICEMAN

Trouble's a brewing, MacDoubt is on his way!

MACGREEDY

I don't care about MacDoubt.

POLICEMAN

You may want to look through these first.
(Gives Binoculars)

MACGREEDY

(Looks Binoculars)
Is this neat! Look how far I can see ... the trees are dancing. The trees are -- oh, no!

POLICEMAN

It's MacDoubt. I also have some bad news about your wife.

MACGREEDY

I know what it is. Out out drip-free candle. Life's but a walking soliloquy, a poor guitar player that struts his frets upon the stage. It's a tale told by an -- who's telling this story?

POLICEMAN

It's your story, Governor MacGreedy.

MACDOUBT

(Enter)
So, MacGreedy, we meet at last!

MACGREEDY

It's about time MacDoubt, isn't it? I'm not afraid of you. I knew your Mother. The woman who gave birth to you.

MACDOUBT

She was my mother, but she didn't give birth to me. I was untimely ripped from her womb!

MACGREEDY

Oh no! You mean?

POLICEMAN

That's right Governor. That bridge you built in Plummet, fell down. Corruption, greed and graft, we know all about it. Save it for the judge! You're going to the hoosegow!

END OF SCENE