

## **CHEEZITS**

by Fred Coppersmith

Two men dressed in suit and tie approach the door to a house. (This doesn't need to be a real door and would probably be better as a set.) These are TODD and FRANK, two travelling Jehovah's Witness-type preachers. TODD carries a small black book, presumably a Bible. He knocks at the door. After a moment, a woman, NANCY, answers.

TODD

Good afternoon, madam. Might we trouble you for just a moment of your time?

NANCY

(somewhat reluctantly,  
glancing at her watch)  
Well...okay, yeah, I guess so.

FRANK

Thank you, ma'am. We know it can be difficult to spare even a few minutes out of your busy and hectic schedule.

TODD

But we think you'll want to hear the wonderful and glad tidings we bring to you today.

NANCY

(unconvinced)  
Uh huh...

FRANK

Ma'am, let me ask you this: have you accepted Cheezits as your personal lord and savior?

NANCY

Have I--  
(beat)  
Have I what?

TODD

Cheezits, ma'am. Have you accepted them into your heart in these dark and troubled times?

NANCY

(over-enunciating)  
Cheezits? You mean like the snack?

FRANK  
(pulling out an open box)  
Only the most holiest and delicious of  
snacks, ma'am.

TODD  
For is it not written in the Bible,  
ma'am, that whomsoever shall believeth  
in them shall be redeemed?

FRANK  
Amen, brother.

NANCY  
Um, I don't *think* that's what it says...

TODD  
And God so loved the world that he gave  
them his only begotten snack.

FRANK  
Hallelujah.  
(handing the box to Nancy)  
And they're tasty, too!

NANCY  
Um, actually, I think that's supposed to  
be Jesus. With a J.

Long pause.

FRANK  
Jesus?

NANCY  
Yes.

FRANK  
With a J?

NANCY  
That's right. It doesn't say anything  
about snack crackers in my copy of the  
Bible.

TODD  
Ma'am, please.  
(opening the book)  
We have only to consult the good book to  
see that--

Long pause as TODD scans the pages of the book.

FRANK  
Well, Brother Todd?

TODD  
(to FRANK)  
She's right.

FRANK  
What?

TODD  
It is Jesus with a J.

NANCY  
I told you.

TODD  
(holding the book open for  
Frank to see)  
See? I can't believe we missed this.  
*Jesus* was born in a manger. *Jesus* turned  
water into wine. *Jesus* was nailed to a  
cross. It never even mentions the  
crackers.

FRANK  
Well that can't be right. Skip a bit.

TODD  
(flipping the pages)  
There's nothing here, Brother Frank. We-  
-we've been wrong all this time.

FRANK  
Well maybe it's just a bad translation.

NANCY  
It's definitely Jesus.

FRANK  
(to NANCY)  
Oh shut up.

TODD  
Frank!

FRANK  
I'm sorry. It's just--  
(sighing angrily)  
Damn. I knew something like this was  
going to happen.

TODD  
What do you mean?

FRANK

Oh come on, Todd. Preaching the gospel according to Cheezits? I can't believe I let you talk me into this.

NANCY

It *is* a little stupid.

TODD

Well, it seemed like a good idea at the time.

FRANK

What? No, it didn't! Todd, we even had to buy the crackers ourselves.

NANCY

(nibbling a cracker from the box)

Actually, they're kind of stale.

FRANK

You see that, Todd? They're kind of stale. What kind of religious figure gets stale? Does Jesus get stale? Did *Buddha* get stale, Frank? I don't think so.

TODD

You can't eat *Buddha* with chips and beer, Frank.

FRANK

You could try, Todd. You could try. And it certainly wouldn't be any dumber than worshipping a box of goddamn cheese crackers.

TODD

Well I'm sorry. I made a mistake. It happens, okay?

FRANK

It happens. Yeah, whatever.

TODD

But Frank--

BILL

(off-camera)

And cut!

BILL, the director, enters.

BILL (CONT'D)

Frank, Frank, that was good, but I don't think you're really getting across how angry your character is with Todd here.

FRANK

Really? Because, you know, I was wondering about that. To be honest, I'm not really sure about this whole sketch.

BILL

(concerned)

Really?

TODD

Yeah, Bill, I've gotta say, I think I share some of Frank's concerns. Frankly, the whole thing seems a little commercial to me.

NANCY

Yeah, the boys do kind of have a point, Bill. I mean, really. How much are these cracker people paying us?

BILL

(surprised)

Well...nothing. It's student television, Nancy.

TODD

Oh sure. And I suppose *that* explains the size of our dressing rooms.

NANCY

They are kind of small, Bill.

As they're talking, FRANK has picked up a bottle of water from which he drinks. He suddenly does a spit-take and glares at the bottle.

FRANK

Ugh! This isn't Evian! I specifically asked for the refreshing taste of *mountain spring* water!

TODD

(shaking his head sadly)

Barbaric.

NANCY

Did you know I had to pay for my own limo to the set today?

FRANK

No!

NANCY

I did.

BILL

Limo? What limo? What're you talking about? What set? This is just a free room on campus we're borrowing for a couple of hours.

Long pause.

NANCY

Yeah... We sort of wanted to talk with you about that, Bill.

TODD

It's kind of *unseemly*, you know, Bill? I mean, actors of our calibre, treated like this. It's like my agent says, Bill. You've gotta --

BILL

You're what? You have an agent?

FRANK

You've gotta have an agent, Bill.

NANCY

I have three.

BILL

But you guys haven't even graduated from college yet. This is just student television. I mean, it's great you take it so seriously, but--

FRANK

We're beginning to think maybe you don't, Bill.

BILL

What?

TODD

Well, you are the one who okayed this whole Cheezits sketch in the first place, Bill.

FRANK and NANCY nod sadly.

TODD (CONT'D)

And, honestly, Bill, the writing is a little weak.

NANCY

We just assumed that was because somebody was paying for it.

BILL

Well, gee, I didn't know. I'm sorry you guys feel this way.

TODD

It had to be said, Bill.

BILL

I had no idea you guys even *had* dressing rooms.

NANCY

*Small* dressing rooms, Bill.

BILL

(nodding)

Yeah. Well, I'm sorry about that, but I don't think there's anything I can do. Nobody's paying for the sketch. We don't have any money. The cracker thing was just a silly pun.

FRANK

Well then, couldn't we change it?

BILL

What do you mean? Change it how?

FRANK

Well, surely something *else* must rhyme with Jesus.

TODD

Freezes.

NANCY

Teases.

TODD

Wheezes. Or--hey! *Weasels!*

FRANK

Hmm. Interesting. "Have you accepted weasels as your personal lord and savior?" I like it. It's not perfect, but I like it.

NANCY

It does have a certain something.

BILL

Guys, that's not going to work. I mean, we have Cheezits. We don't have weasels.

FRANK

(sighing)

More budget limitations? You know, Bill, when Olivier wanted weasels, they gave him weasels.

TODD

(to NANCY)

Who's Olivier?

NANCY

(to TODD)

I dunno, some dead guy.

TODD

Oh.

FRANK

And he didn't have to rent his own limo, Bill. He didn't have to eat stale crackers, or drink flat water, or change his costume in the broom closet because the writers were too busy thinking up puns when they should have been out there getting big endorsements from giant corporations. I mean, what's the use of shilling for these cracker people if they're not going to give us big bundles of money for it?

BILL

We are not shilling for any cracker people!

FRANK

Exactly. And why not? What do you have against big bundles of money, Bill?

NANCY

Are you some kind of Communist?

BILL

What? No! I'm just a college student like you. I'm just trying to put together half an hour of comedy every week!



They just stare at him and he sighs.

BILL (CONT'D)

But you know what? If it's going to take  
Evian and limos and *weasels* to make you  
guys happy, then I just can't do it,  
okay?! I'm sorry, but I -- I quit!

BILL exits angrily. Long pause.

TODD

Well that was uncalled for.

NANCY

It's just a ploy for more money.

TODD and FRANK nod knowingly. Long pause.

FRANK

(to NANCY)

So, three agents, huh?

Nancy nods.

FADE OUT