

## **SNACK TREATS**

by Fred Coppersmith

BOB and PHIL, two old friends, meet up on the street. BOB is carrying what looks like a bag of chips, from which he periodically eats. They engage in witty banter while the audience watches spellbound.

BOB

Heyo, Phil.

PHIL

Oh, hey there, Bob. Say, what's that you're eating?

BOB

(indicates the bag)

You mean this?

PHIL

Yeah, that.

BOB

Oh, just a little severed head.

PHIL

Severed what?

BOB

Severed head. New nacho-flavored severed head.

PHIL

They make nacho-flavored severed heads?

BOB

They sure do, Phil. Nacho, picanté, pigeon testicle and cinnamon, lemon-lime.

PHIL

Well blow me down and take incriminating Polaroids, Bob. I never knew that. Do you know if they make squid-flavored ones?

BOB

(sighing)

C'mon, Phil, don't be stupid. They don't make squid-flavored snack treats.

PHIL  
Not even little crunchy ones?

BOB  
Not even little crunchy ones, Phil.  
Remember when you cooked up that  
tapioca squid-on-a-stick in your  
garage back in '82? Nabisco still  
has their restraining order in  
effect.

PHIL  
Friggin' elves.

BOB  
That's Keebler, Phil. They're the  
ones who said you were the anti-  
Christ, remember? Spawn of Satan.  
Beelzebub's sock puppet. There was a  
company memo.

PHIL  
Friggin' memo.

BOB  
And then didn't you get into all  
that trouble out west? Corruption of  
a miner and -- what was it again,  
Phil?

PHIL  
Obscene use of a Scrabble  
dictionary.

BOB  
Right. And then there was that  
chimpanzee --

PHIL  
I don't like to talk about the  
chimpanzee, Bob. It was performance  
art.

BOB  
Right. But you didn't get out of  
therapy for twelve years, Phil.

PHIL  
Like I said, Bob, friggin' elves.  
(beat)  
So there's a whole severed head in  
that bag, huh?

BOB

At least two. But they chop 'em up.

PHIL

What, like in little pieces?

BOB

Yeah, like in little pieces. Sometimes there's less brain and more skull, but y'know, you take your chances.

PHIL

Right. Like in Vegas.

BOB

No, Phil, not like in Vegas. In Vegas you've got blackjack, poker, craps, whores. They don't bet on how much brain or skull gets tossed into a little plastic bag and sold on a shelf.

PHIL

Oh. Must be Reno then. You know, I think maybe that's where I first found Jesus.

BOB

Gee, Phil, I didn't know you had found Jesus.

PHIL

Hell, bastard still owes me twenty bucks. I tell ya, Bob, never buy the son of god a chili dog.

BOB

Twenty bucks for a chili dog? Geez, Phil, that's pretty steep.

PHIL

Hey, you're preaching to the choir here, Bob. I know it's pretty steep. But you can't talk to Hey-Zeus about money. It's all "I died for your sins" this, and "they nailed me to a big block of wood" that. Sure, the man can turn water into wine and raise the dead, but can he balance a checkbook? It's pathetic.

BOB

Your devotion to the risen lord is truly admirable, Phil.

PHIL

Please. I would have ditched his sorry ass in Phoenix if he wasn't so smooth with the ladies. I tell ya, Bob, the Messiah's a friggin' babe magnet.

BOB

Really?

PHIL

Like you wouldn't believe. When he tells that story about the prodigal son and the fatted calf and all that crap -- I don't mind telling you, Bob, even I get a little moist.

BOB

I thought that was a medical condition, Phil.

PHIL

(angrily)

Hey, I'm wearin' the special pants, all right?

BOB

The ones with the magnetic crotch?

PHIL

And the scrotum-hugging pressure release valve, yeah. Sure, I can't pee straight and I stick to most metal objects, but if I jiggle it around a little I can usually pick up AM radio.

BOB

You jiggle your crotch around, Phil? In public?

PHIL

Well only on special occasions so far, Bob -- the 4th of July, Veterans Day, the first day of the ice hockey season -- but I'm thinking of loaning myself out for children's parties.

BOB  
Children's parties?

PHIL  
It's just a thought. They won't let me bring cookies anymore.

BOB  
Well that's because you used to use cow dung instead of cookie dough, remember, Phil?

PHIL  
Yeah, but I sold that cow to buy fetish pornography years ago, Bob. I mean, forgive and forget, right?

BOB  
Well, you poison a few hundred small children with bovine excrement, and you've got to expect somebody to hold a grudge.

PHIL  
I guess. But I'm really fun at parties.

BOB  
I'm sure you are, Phil. But tell me, I'm curious: just how much fetish pornography is a cow worth nowadays?

PHIL  
Well it depends on the fetish, Bob. And it depends on the cow. But if we're talking about the real obscene, ultra-violent, only semi-legal stuff they're not even allowed to mail out anymore --

BOB  
And we are, right?

PHIL  
-- Oh yeah, big time -- well then that can cost you a pretty penny. A shiny nickel. A well-polished, and perhaps even spit-shined half dollar. And pretty soon that can start to add up.

BOB  
I can imagine.

PHIL

But still, with a good heifer like Bessie and the right salesmanship, you can easily be on your way to a good sixty or seventy large bushels of porn. Then it's just a question of mopping up afterwards and notifying the police.

BOB

You've really got the world on a string there, Phil.

PHIL

Well, okay, it's no bag of severed head, but I like it.

BOB

Hey, don't knock the bag of severed head, Phil. It's the only thing that gets me up in the morning sometimes.

PHIL

Really? I'm always up in the morning.

BOB

Yeah, well, with those special pants I'm not surprised.

PHIL

Hey, I don't appreciate that, Bob. It's a medical condition.

BOB

I thought it was performance art.

PHIL

Well...okay, yeah, it's a little of both. I've been doubly blessed.

BOB

Your parents must be so proud.

PHIL

Not really, Bob. I was raised by wolves.

BOB

Oh yeah, that's right, I forgot.

(beat)

They were Amish wolves, weren't they?

PHIL  
(nods sadly)  
Shot by disgruntled rodeo clowns,  
yeah. To this day, white facepaint  
still gives me goosebumps.

BOB  
Makes me break out in hives, Phil.  
But then, so do strawberries, so I  
don't know *what's* up with that.

PHIL  
Good thing they don't make  
strawberry severed head then, huh?  
You'd puff up like a balloon if they  
did.

BOB  
Are you suggesting that I eat too  
much, Phil?

PHIL  
Well I mean, c'mon, Bob, if the fat-  
ass's shoe fits... We've been here  
maybe ten or fifteen minutes and  
you've finished, what, half the bag  
already?

BOB  
I missed lunch.

PHIL  
You missed lunch. Is that your  
excuse for not sharing?

BOB  
No, Phil. Your syphilis is my excuse  
for not sharing. Missing lunch was  
just a happy coincidence. What can I  
say? I was hungry.

PHIL  
You were hungry.

BOB  
I think we've established that, yes.  
And as Cervantes once wrote, hunger  
makes the best sauce.

PHIL  
Really. Well personally I think  
Worcester makes the best sauce,

Bob. I could smear that shit on anything.

BOB  
Not on ice cream, I hope.

PHIL  
Ooh, especially on ice cream.

BOB  
You know, maybe that's why they fired you from the Tasty-Freeze, Phil. You're a sick, sad man.

PHIL  
If I'm not, I'm wearing his underwear, Bob. Which reminds me of a story...

BOB  
Somebody else's underwear reminds you of a story, Phil?

PHIL  
What can I say? I've led a rich and interesting life.

BOB  
That *would* explain the syphilis.

PHIL  
No, Bob, the chimpanzee would explain the syphilis. But like I said, I don't talk about the chimpanzee.

BOB  
That's probably a good idea, Phil. You can still get arrested for things like that in most countries. But about this story of yours -- ?

PHIL  
Oh, yeah, it's not important, Bob. Something about an ostrich, an enema and a bottle of gin, I forget. Let's just say I won't be invited back to the White House anytime soon.

BOB  
I'm surprised they invited you there at all, Phil. You did threaten to burn it down.



PHIL

Just once! And, well, I *do* have these special pants, Bob. And it *was* ice hockey season. But I swear, you projectile vomit over just one marble bust of Martin van Buren and you might as well kiss those gala dinners goodbye.

BOB

Ye gods and little fishes, Phil. Are you trying to say you ralphed all over the "Red Fox of Kinderhook"?

PHIL

You say that like it's a bad thing, Bob. We all celebrate in different ways. Me, I get drunk and throw up on people.

BOB

That's disgusting, Phil.

PHIL

Yeah, but you go with what you know, Bob. And me, I know barf. Hell, I could teach a college course.

Long pause.

BOB

You *have*, haven't you, Phil?

PHIL

Well...just once. Through the mail. I mean, you've got to keep yourself occupied in prison, right, Bob? I mean, sure, gang rape and sodomy are fun for awhile, but --

(beat)

Hey, stop trying to cloud the issue here: what gives with this newfangled severed head you've got there in that bag?

BOB

I told you, Phil. It's nacho-flavored.

PHIL

And so, what, you can just walk into any feedstore and pick up a bag?

BOB

Oh no, Phil, not yet. It's not really fit for human consumption. They're still testing it on monkeys and lab rats.

PHIL

Well that would explain the twitching.

BOB

What twitching?

PHIL

I don't know. But if there was twitching, that would explain it. And the nosebleeds, too. God I hate the nosebleeds.

(sighing)

But frankly, Bob, I think I've lost interest in this whole sorry charade of a conversation.

BOB

Well that's not surprising, Phil. You do have a brain the size of a gnat.

PHIL

At least I'm not the one getting head from an old wrinkled bag, Bob.

BOB

Well I don't know, Phil. Have you seen your wife lately? The woman's a cow.

PHIL

*Chimpanzee*, Bob! And I told you I don't want to talk about it.

BOB

Well it's going come up in court tomorrow, Phil. And you'll be under oath.

PHIL

And I'll also be under the influence, Bob. I should be okay as long as they don't ask me to operate heavy machinery.

BOB

Phil, you consider crayons to be heavy machinery.

PHIL

Hey, I lost a buddy to crayons in Cambodia, so you just watch it there, Bob!

BOB

What were you doing in Cambodia, Phil?

PHIL

Keeping tabs on the Crayola Company for old Uncle Sam, that's what I was doing, Bob. I mean c'mon! Burnt sienna? Burnt sienna my ass! It's friggin' brown, Bob. Brown. But they don't want Jojo Q. Public to know that, do they? No sir.

BOB

I had no idea, Phil.

PHIL

(laughs derisively)

No. No, I wouldn't expect you to, Bob. You just stand there, contentedly munching on your experimental snack foods while out in the jungle those damn crazy, penny-for-a-fuck crayon whores do whatever they damn well please. I tell you, it's enough to make a grown man weep.

BOB

Yes, but then so is getting kicked in the testicles, Phil, and I don't see you getting all worked up over that.

PHIL

Well of course I'd get worked up over that, Bob. Now who's being stupid? It'd screw up the polarity in my pants. I mean, urinating due north is bad enough without having a short circuit in my trousers every ten minutes.

BOB

Didn't that happen to you a lot back in college?

PHIL

(thinks)

Y'know, Bob, I really couldn't tell you. I went through most of college high on horse tranquilizers and methamphetamines. Sophomore year I was convinced that god was cheese and that I was in fact the Brazilian soccer player Pelé.

BOB

Ooh. He was good.

PHIL

Yes, yes he was, Bob, but that's the point. You see, the rest of college is just a blur, like the rumor of that frat party where I lost my pants and a pint of blood. A few exams, a winning goal, that night in June I urinated all over the dean. I don't remember much of anything else.

BOB

Well I remember that night, Phil. It made all the papers.

PHIL

Yes, yes it did, Bob, and the nightly news, too. There was talk even of a weekly series starring Marilu Henner and a talking dog. But that's not the point either. College isn't about who peed on who. It's about opening yourself up to new experience, about letting go of the past -- your inhibitions, your fear, that string of bodies you left in south Wyoming because you were drunk and thought you knew how to use a belt sander. It's like the book says, Bob: "When I was a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

BOB

Well, yeah, except for the crayons,  
Phil.

PHIL

(sighing)

Yes, Bob, and the occasional bout  
with diaper rash, I know. But in  
these pants, that's inevitable, and  
I've learned to cope.

BOB

Well I've got to say, Phil, that's a  
pretty mature attitude for such an  
unstable little man. Growing up can  
be a bitter pill to swallow.

PHIL

Just like cyanide, Bob. Or like  
those happy little green ones the  
doctors say I have to take as part  
of my parole.

(beat)

At least I *think* they were doctors.

BOB

Oh, I hope they weren't the same  
quacks who said you could cure your  
athlete's foot by shooting yourself  
out of a cannon, Phil. I mean,  
c'mon. They thought the spleen was a  
character from "Laverne and Shirley"  
and that tongue depressors were a  
CIA plot against Castro.

PHIL

Hey, you can't disprove that, Bob!  
Tonsillitis would've stopped Fidel  
in his tracks and you know it!

BOB

Phil, they thought the vagina was a  
river in Europe where the Germans  
breed salmon, perch and long-  
whiskered catfish.

PHIL

Y'know, I think it was grouper  
actually, Bob. Which is kinda weird  
when you think about it, right?  
'cause the grouper is a salt water  
fish. But then, I guess that's why

they're the doctors and I'm not,  
huh?

BOB

Yeah, well the prison record and your tendency to disrobe in public might also have something to do with that, Phil. And let's not forget what happened the last time you tried to play doctor, okay? I mean, I still can't figure out how an entire ward dies from cancer of the *Chihuahua*, can you?

PHIL

It's baffling, Bob, I know. But getting back to your original point for a moment --

BOB

Which was what again, Phil? Refresh my memory.

PHIL

Growing up. There's really not much we can do about it, is there, Bob? I mean, once our voices crack and we grow hair on our balls, it's pretty much a foregone conclusion, now isn't it?

BOB

(sighing)

Is everything about testicles with you, Phil? I mean, who's got them, where they've put them, how low they hang to the ground --

PHIL

It's a topic of conversation, yeah.

BOB

It's an obsession, Phil. An unhealthy and unnatural obsession. I hope you weren't like this in college.

PHIL

I told you, Bob, I don't remember much about college. It flew by like a young stripper's g-string in the wind. Or like...

(beat)

No, wait, what are those things with feathers and wings called again?

BOB

Bea Arthur, I think. No wait, you mean birds, don't you?

PHIL

Yeah, that's it. Birds. College flew by like a big...

(as if searching for the word)

Bird. Maybe wrapped up in a g-string or something, I don't know. It's not important. But my point is --

BOB

You don't really *have* a point, do you, Phil?

PHIL

Well...no, Bob, not really. Syphilis yes, but point no. I was sort of hoping you wouldn't notice.

BOB

Tell me, Phil, do you think before you speak or just let the words spill out and hope for the best?

PHIL

It's a pretty complicated process, Bob. I find it's best not to question how it works. Sort of like Teflon. That stuff freaks me out.

BOB

It's moments like this that I'm glad you're heavily medicated, Phil.

PHIL

You and me both, Bob. I mean, the hallucinations alone are worth the price of admission.

(beat)

But tell me, Bob...was there pie in college? For some reason I seem to remember that there was pie.

BOB

Was there -- ?  
(thinks)

Well, there *could* have been pie,  
Phil. College was a pretty radical  
time.

PHIL  
(nods and laughs to  
himself)  
Yeah, okay, that makes sense then.  
Good stuff, pie.

BOB  
Yeah, Phil, pie's some good shit.  
But getting back again...you were in  
Cambodia?

PHIL  
Well somebody had to be, Bob.  
Cambodia, Laos, this little strip of  
land just outside of Scarsdale in  
upstate New York where they sell  
some absolutely divine antiques by  
the roadside -- I mean simply divine  
-- you know the spot I'm talking  
about? -- I was everywhere. But  
that's not the issue. The fact is,  
Bob, you're just standing there,  
nibbling away at somebody else's  
severed head and it doesn't seem to  
bother you at all.

BOB  
(indicates the bag)  
What, this? Well yeah, it used to  
bother me, Phil. But then I  
discovered that I don't care. Apathy  
can be very liberating. And, y'know,  
even if I did give two shits -- and  
I don't -- they lace this stuff with  
a pretty hefty dose of black tar  
heroin, and...well, let's face it, I  
am a real fiend for the smack, daddy  
mack.

PHIL  
It *is* why they kicked you out of  
clown college, Bob.

BOB  
Well yeah, Phil, that and the nine  
or so dead rockhopper penguins  
stuffed into the trunk of my car  
that last semester. I mean, sure,  
they were on ice and I was just



watching them for a friend, but I guess circus folk and taxidermy just don't mix.

PHIL

Like oil and water, Bob. Like Bonnie and Clyde.

BOB

I don't know, Phil. Bonnie and Clyde mixed pretty well, didn't they? I mean, yeah, they died a terrible and bloody death, gunned down in the prime of their lives like rabid dogs slaughtered in the street, but...well, we should all be so lucky, right?

PHIL

You know, that's exactly what my grandmother always used to say, Bob. Of course, we had *her* dragged into the street and shot like a rabid dog, too, so it's kind of ironic when you think about it.

BOB

You had your grandmother shot, Phil?

PHIL

Well just for kicks, Bob, yeah. You never get good with a rifle if you don't practice. And you have to understand, Gramma was pretty wily for a seventy-eight year old. You would not have expected a gut wound to slow her down as much as it did.

(beat)

I guess throwing her overboard into the East River in a burlap sack later on didn't help much either, but, well, she was usually such a decent swimmer. She won a blue ribbon from the Y.

BOB

In a burlap sack?

PHIL

No, I think she kept it in a hat box in the attic with some old clothes. Next to Grandpa's geisha costume and

bestiality porn. She didn't like to brag, y'know?

BOB

So is she dead now, Phil?

PHIL

(laughs)

Well for her sake I hope so, Bob. And anyway, taking a bullet in the stomach and getting swept out to sea -- that's probably gonna get me kicked off her Christmas list even if she does float by sooner or later. So, I don't know...out of sight, out of mind, right? Let sleeping dogs lie.

BOB

That's a pretty callous attitude, Phil.

PHIL

I'm a pretty callous man, Bob. I compensate with what doctors tell me is an exceptionally large penis. That, my love of Japanese kabuki theater, and the occasional jolt from a small cattle prod I keep in my back pocket are really all that keep me sane and off the street.

Long pause.

BOB

This is usually where there's a long and uncomfortable silence, am I right?

PHIL

Well yeah, Bob, usually, but, um, I think that's stage direction more than anything else. And you're really not supposed to talk about that. You see, you're supposed to keel over dead now and...

Pause as PHIL pulls out a script.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Well according to the script, I steal the bag of head, make some lame joke at your expense -- I

brought a list -- and scamper away like a deer high on angel dust. The curtain falls, we fade to black, there's a movie deal in the works. But first, you have to fall over and die.

BOB

Sounds like my wedding night. But I don't know, Phil. I don't really do physical comedy.

PHIL

I thought that's all your wedding night was, Bob.

BOB

Hey, my wife's the one who wanted the trapeze artist there, not me. I was perfectly happy just to have the petting zoo.

PHIL

Well what about the magic act, Bob, or the twenty-one gun salute with every orgasm? Whose idea was that?

BOB

Okay, okay, I admit, I like a little fanfare, a little romance. A moonlit stroll along the beach. A candlelit dinner for two. A balloon animal strategically placed in my gym shorts. But I've never been good with death scenes.

PHIL

Well y'know, Bob, I wouldn't really sweat it too much. Nobody's gonna laugh anyway. Everybody's tired and bored, and that bit about Jesus in Reno went on way too long. By this point, the huddled masses are really just yearning to breathe free.

(gestures toward the audience)

I mean, look at 'em. They're barely awake as it is. They're wondering why they gave up drinking heavily and fornicating in broom closets for this crap. So, y'know, if you could speed things up that would be really swell.

BOB

In rehearsal you said you liked the bit about Jesus, Phil.

PHIL

No, Bob, in rehearsal I said I thought I was Jesus. As it turns out, I just like wearing open-toed shoes.

BOB

And the stigmata?

PHIL

That was ketchup.

BOB

In your palms?

PHIL

I was out of baby oil. But you're missing the point, Bob. It doesn't take the right hand of god to realize that this sketch has run its course.

BOB

You were using *ketchup*?

PHIL

Look, Bob, just drop it, it's not important. The daycare center isn't pressing charges and I returned the elephant to its rightful owner, so let's just end the sketch and be done with it, okay? What I did or did not slather in tomato paste isn't the issue.

BOB

Well don't we need a punchline to end the sketch, Phil? Y'know, something to tie up all the loose ends?

PHIL

Oh please, Bob, don't be such an ignorant fuck. Do you know what Charlie Chaplin said about comedy? He said, "All I need to make a comedy is a park, a policeman, and a pretty girl."

BOB

Well now that sounds like *your* wedding night, Phil. You know, minus, of course, the pretty girl. Didn't they kick you two out of Yosemite when you tried to get the chimpanzee to fight a grizzly bear?

PHIL

(sighing)

Again with the chimpanzee! You just can't let some things drop, can you, Bob?

BOB

Well sometimes I can, Phil, sure. I dropped acid just an hour ago.

(beat)

You ever listen to Yellow Submarine, Phil? I mean, *really* listen to it? That is some freaky shit, let me tell you -- and I'm pretty sure it's not just about a boat if you know what I mean.

PHIL

I meant about the chimpanzee, Bob. Can't you just drop it and move on? They would have kicked us out of the state park anyway once they remembered the restraining order, so the monkey's not really the problem now is it?

BOB

You have a restraining order out against you, Phil?

PHIL

(sighing)

My wife does, Bob. To tell you the truth...well, she's not allowed within shooting distance of a sequoia tree or a giant redwood. It's a long story -- and it involves some interpretive dance -- so please, don't ask me to go into it now. I just want to get the sketch over with and go home.

BOB

Well I think I know how to do that, Phil.

PHIL  
You do?

BOB  
Yeah. Here, let me show you.

Dropping the bag of chips, BOB walks out the door, or off-stage as the case may be. This time there really *is* a long and uncomfortable silence.

PHIL  
Shit. I wish I'd thought of that.

PHIL picks up the bag and tastes a chip.

PHIL (CONT'D)  
Mmm...that is some damn fine head...

He walks off, carrying the bag. The audience, as is their nature, applauds.