A California Vacuum Cleaner Salesman In The BOG Court
or
Somewhere Over the Foul Line
or
The Twilight of the Gods

A Play by Baron Gerhardt von Nordflammen, OL

Cast (in order of appearance):
Manager
Leo the Shrieker
Old Woman
Ick
Ook
Announcer
Guard 1
Guard 2
Lord Alphonse the Pedant
Lord Wormwood Woodhead
Duchess Losttouch
Lord Tancred Tedium
Lady Priscilla de la Snotte
Duke Bull
Lord Reynard
Lady Rat
Lady Weasel
Lord Crush
King Guy de Falle
King of the Best
Attendants

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SCENE 1

(A major department store. Signs reading: "Pioneer Days Sale", and "Get a Cow of a Deal!!!".)

(The Manager is on stage. Enter Leo)

Manager: Hey Leo! How's the boy?
Leo: Hey, Boss! Put 'er there!
Manager: Sell me that hand boy! Sell me that hand!
Leo: It's a great hand, boss! It's the best hand!
Manager: Alright! You gonna sell today?
Leo: I'm gonna sell!
Manager: YOU'RE GONNA WHAT?!??!
Leo: I'M GONNA SELL!!!!
Manager: Awright! Get it ON!!!
(exit)
Leo: Dum de dum ...
(Enter Old Woman)

Old Woman: Por favor, señor ...
Leo: Good morning madam, can I interest you in the last word in fully automated home care vacuum cleaning systems?
Old Woman: Por qué?
(Leo grabs her purse)
Leo: Right you are, my good woman. No home can be without the autotonic duo-bivalve rotating suction action, the deep pile vibro beater bar and the sturdy plastic grip!!
Old Woman: Eh? Eh? Por qué?
Leo: A wise decision my dear, a wise decision. No, no ... no need to pay in cash. All you need is your handy credit card. Let's see, that's nineninenineninenininininitnine and low, low monthly payments just twelve years and thank you, come again.
Old Woman: Eh? Eh? Eh?

(Exit Old Woman, Enter Ick and Ook)

Ick: Observe Ook, a perfect specimen.

Ook: Yes Ick, the High Supreme Zontar will be pleased.

Ick: Yes. He will reward us greatly.

Ook: Perhaps he will give us a pizza.

Ick/Ook: ERRRRRRRRRRRR!

Ook: I will freeze him with the stun ray.

Leo: Good morning gen ... (Stun Ray) EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE.

Ick: Let us carry him to the saucer.

Ook: Oh my, observe, the specimen is defective.

Ick: Yes, yes. There is an ugly ten inch growth between its legs.

Ook: How sad. We must leave it behind.

Ick: Shall we wake it?

Ook: No. It will only be asleep three hundred years. It will find the nape restful.

(Exit Ick and Ook, Enter Manager)

Manager: He there, Leo, how's it goin'? OH MY GOD ... he's been frozen solid. Leo ... Leo ... it's no use ... what to do ... what to do ...

(Manager runs to phone)

Ed, Ed, this is Bill. Look, ask men's clothing if they need another mannikin, yeah, thanks ... oh, oh, say Ed ... before you do anything else, punch Leo off the clock.

(Exit Manager. Twilight Zone Theme plays ...)
Announcer: Item: Leo Blareman, salesman extraordinaire ... who has just lost his part as chief actor in his life only to be cast as a bit player in someone else's cosmic drama. Thrown forward into a strange and unknown world whose only reference point for a mind tenuously clinging to the shreds of sanity is membership in a rather obscure leisure time organization. Witness Leo the Shrieker ... thrown forward into the past ... into the Twilight Zone.

SCENE 2  

(A field in the Kingdom of the Best. Leo is frozen on stage.)

Leo: ... tlemen, can I interest you in ... what the ... where am I?

(Enter Guards and Lord Pedant)

Guard 1: Aughhh! What's that?!

Leo: Hi there.

Guard 2: 'Tis a man methinks, yet 'tis like no man I have ever seen. Mark well its raiment: Smooth and unwrinkled, with the dull luster of a fish belly wrought in it ... oh strange ...

Leo: Hello. Is there a tourney around here? Are you in the SCA?

Guard 1: Who are you?

Guard 2: Are you in a play?

Leo: No, it;'s my work suit. Where am I? How'd I get here?

Guard 1: Well strange, you are in the Kingdom of the Best, but as to how ... you would know better than we.

Leo: Oh, wow. Where's the Westermurk pavilion?

Guard 2: Westermurk? Is that where you're from?

Leo: Sure is.

Lord Pedant: Run for it!

Guard 1: Seize him!

Leo: Hey, what's going on?

Guard 2: What's going on? Your doom, you filthy spy. You'll not see the Kingdom of Westermurk again.

Leo: What? Kingdom? It's a Barony!
Lord Pedant: It's been a Kingdom since A.S. Forty.

Guard 1: A rebel province, calling itself such!

Leo: Wait! Wait! Wait a minute, what your is this?

Guard 2: Why A.S. 319 of course.

Leo: My God! I've been asleep for three hundred years!

Guard 1: Silence dog! Wait here with the prisoners. I shall go and inform the Bee Oh Gee that we bring two miscreants to judgement.

Guard 2: Alright you two, no funny business.

Lord Pedant: Hello.

Leo: Hi.

Lord Pedant: I'm Lord Alphonse the Pedant.

Leo: Leo the Shreiker.

Lord Pedant: Pardon me, you said you'd been asleep three hundred years.

Leo: That's right. Last thing I knew, it was A.S. nineteen. What happened?

Lord Pedant: To you? Ah well, I don't know. But to the world ... in A.S. 33 there was this junior high school computer class, broke into the fire control system of something called SAC ... thought it was a new video game.

Leo: Oh my god.

Lord Pedant: Afterwards, the SCA took over what was left. Now the world is ruled by the BOG's mailed fist.

Leo: What? The Bee Oh Gee? The Board of Guidance? What happened to the power of the Kings?

Lord Pedant: Gone. They are mere appointees who've amassed enough King points and passed all the exams. Then they're crowned by the Board of Gods.

Leo: The WHAT?

Lord Pedant: Aye, the Board of Gods, that's their title now. That's why I'm in chains. A scholar, I searched for truth, but there's so little left of olden times. Eyeglasses, condoms, duct tape ... then I found the forbidden records of the olden days, and learned the BOG weren't Gods, but usurpers.
Guard 2: Silence, swine! BOG save us.

Lord Pedant: You see, my friend. I am arrested as a heretic, soon to be condemned to death just like you.

Leo: Just like me? Why me?

Lord Pedant: You're from Westermurk. That land and a few other far off realms welded into the PPFUF, dispute the laws of the almighty BOG, and have been at war with the BOG's kingdoms for over two hundred years. You, my friend, are their mortal foe.

Leo: Oh Jeez, what a mess.

(Enter Guard 1)

Guard 1: Alright, let's go, the BOG will judge you now.

Lord Pedant: Wait, just a minute, your name rings a bell. Leo the Shreiker, right?

Leo: Yeah, that's right. Why? Does it appear in the hist'ry books?

Lord Pedant: No, the heralds passed your device last week.

Guard 2: Get a move on.

(Exit All)

SCENE 3

(The Meeting Place of the BOG. The members are on stage. The King of the Best is also on stage as janitor.)

Lady Snotte: Next.

Lord Tancred: Um, let's see ... old business.


Lady Snotte: Wait, Duke Bull, we haven't gotten that far yet. Go on, Lord Tancred.

Lord Tancred: I still vote no.

Lord Tancred: Old business! The shire of Seaspray would like to change the spelling of its name.

Lord Woodhead: To what? 'E' spray? 'F' spray?

Duchess Losttouch: This proposal has been before us eight-seven years ... let's not be hasty.
Lord Tancred: Say, that reminds me of a story.

All: Ha, ha, ha, ha.

(Enter Guards, Lord Pedant, and Leo)

Guard 1: Alright you, remember: When you talk to the BOG, *(high, squeaky voice)* you talk like this.

Leo: Like this?

Guard 1: That's right.

Leo: But that's ridiculous. No one talks like that.

Guard 2: Of course, that's the point. By ancient custom, those chosen to serve as Gods upon the BOG must nevermore have any contact with reality.

Leo: Right.

Guard 1: Let's go. *Ahem* Let's go. Oh, exalted ones!

Lady Snotte: Yes, what is it?

Lord Tancred: We're still on old business.


Guard 2: Pardon the interruption, but we bring Lord Pedant the heretic and a Westermurk spy for your judgement.

Lord Woodhead: Ah, Lord Pedant, still say we're not Gods, eh?

Lord Pedant: That’s right.

Lord Woodhead: A pity. It means you must die.

Lord Pedant: So be it!

Leo: Wait a minute. How in *hell* did you nurds get yourselves made into Gods?

(Lord Tancred slaps Leo)

Lord Tancred: Silence you dog!

(Léo hits Lord Tancred)
Guard 1: Unhand him!

Guard 2: Let him go!

Lord Tancred: Kill him!

Lord Pedant: Wait! Do not be hasty my Lord. For this man is Leo the Shrieker, just awakened after three hundred years ... you see, everything was different then. In his day, Westermurk was merely a Barony, and the BOG were not Gods.

Duchess Losttouch: Lies! Westermurk lies!

Lord Tancred: That's right! I'm a God. See, it says so on my membership card.


Lord Tancred: Told you.

Leo: Nitwit! That doesn't prove a thing!

Lord Tancred: It does to me.

Leo: What? That you're a vapid geek?

Lord Tancred: That's enough! Kill him!

Lord Pedant: Wait! Wait! Please do not. Think, here is a man from our distant past. A time of which we know so little, brought by a miracle to our own day. Don't kill him, please, think of what he can tell us of our past. Think of the truth, the facts.

Lady Snotte: Truth? Facts? Truth?! Facts!? We don't got no truth, facts. We don't gotta know no truth, facts.

Leo: It's no use old pal. Not with these morons. Wait. Look, before I die, tell me one thing. How did this God stuff get started, anyway?

Lord Woodhead: I'll tell you. Guards, you may leave us. Duke Bull shall watch the prisoners. Good, we're alone. Just you and us, and your lips will be sealed soon enough.

Leo: And who are you?

Lord Woodhead: I'm Lord Wormwood Woodhead. These are Lady Snotte, and Lord Tedium, Duchess Losttouch, and Duke Bull, and we are the Board of Gods. It was my ancestor who made us so. For in your day Leo, the BOG was human and high rank and award were given to those whose efforts and talents were shown in measure great enough to earn them. Yet my grandsire, many times o'er said, "What of the lazy, the talentless, the mediocre. What of these poor souls? Surely time serving and just turning up deserve some reward. Let's make peerage points so that each plodding non-entity might in due course,
be Knighted, Pelicaned, or Laureled simply by showing up at events." The Kings and peers, elitists that they were, objected, so their power was broken and these high titles are now open to all, not on the basis of something as unfair as merit, but rather for anyone who has the points and passes the written tests.

Duchess Losttouch: And the pop quizzes.

Lord Woodhead: Yes, well anyway, soon the lands were filled with Knights, Pelicans, Laurels, Kings, Queens, Dukes, Duchesses, etc. The new democratic Peerage! And then my mighty ancestor looked at what he'd wrought, and in his infinite wisdom he thought: "Gosh, awards are cheap." And it came to him there should be some award above the crown, above all else, to be given those brave souls who broke the power of royalty and nobility, and then instituted rule by the BOG and the boobocracy in its place. For this deed, only Godhood was fit!

Leo: You've wrecked the SCA, you twit!

Lord Woodhead: I see you Westermurkers haven't changed one little bit in all these three hundred years. Ah well, no matter, now you must die!


Lord Tancred: Reminds me of a story ...

(Enter Guards)

Guard 1: Your worships! Flee! The Westermurk army is here!

Lady Snotte: Oh horrors, and we are defenseless! Our army is at war on the south border 'gainst the Kingdom of Carrud.

Duchess Losttouch: Flee!

Westermurkers: Hooyah!

Lord Tancred: Too late!

Lady Snotte: We're trapped!

Westermurkers: All right you mothers, the Westermurk is here!

BOG: EEEEEEEEEEEKKKKKKKK!!

(Enter Westermurkers)

Lord Reynard: Hahahahahahahahahaha! Scrotum!
BOG: Oh! Oh! Oh!

Lord Reynard: Aren't we clever? Aren't we cute?

Lord Woodhead: You, you beasts!

Lady Weasel: Shut up, Blockhead!

Lord Woodhead: That's Woodhead!

Lady Weasel: I said, shut up Pinebrain!

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em.

Guards 1/2: Leave them alone!

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em! I'll kill 'em!

(Lord Crush knocks guards unconscious)

King Guy: Alright you guys, where's the Westermurker? We heard you're holding one of our people.

Leo: That's me! That's me! Leo the Shreiker.

King Guy: Hi there. I'm the King, Guy de Falle. These are: Lord Reynard, Lady Weasel, Lady Rat, and Lord Crush, my chief advisors, glad to see you.

Leo: That goes double for me.

Lady Weasel: Your Majesty, we've got Leo. 'Ere we split ...

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

Lady Snotte: Quick, Duke Bull shall save us!

Lord Reynard: You don't scare me.

(Duke Bull crushes Lord Reynard's shield with his bare hands.)

Well, maybe you scare me a little bit.

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

(Lord Crush pounds on Duke Bull with no effect)

Duke Bull: Ha! Gods don't have to count light.
Lord Reynard: Um, knock, knock.

Duke Bull: Who's there?

Lord Reynard: Atenveldt.

Duke Bull: Atenveldt, who?

Lord Reynard: A-ten-veldt get 'cha twenty if you bet on Horseradish in the fifth.

Duke Bull: A funny man, eh?

Lord Reynard: Where? Take a card, any card.

Duke Bull: Why you ...

(\textit{Westermurkers smash table over Duke Bull's head})

Light.

(\textit{Duke Bull falls})

Lady Rat: Thus falls another slavering weasel of burgherite combinationalism!

Lady Snotte: Huh? What?

Lady Rat: And soon you shall meet the same fate! You flatulent parcel of rabid squids!

Lord Woodhead: What the hell are you talking about?

Lady Weasel: Your doom, Balsa-noggin.

Lord Woodhead: That's Wood ...

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

King Guy: Wait, you guys, do we gotta kill them?

Lady Rat: Comrade King! Allow this leprous fungus, this diseased excrescence, this fetid pus, this malignant slime, this oozing ocelot ...

Lady Weasel: Oh, get on with it.

King Guy: Oozing ocelot?
Lady Rat: Anyway, allow them to live and then they'll continue to poison the Knowne World until the SCA is nothing more than mundanes dressed up in funny costumes.

Lord Tancred: Wait a minute, isn't that what we are?

Lady Rat: You may be, reeking hyena! Not us!!

Lady Weasel: Right, they gotta go, they're not period.

Duchess Losttouch: Not period! It's you that aren't period. Everyone says so.

Lord Reynard: And who's everyone?

Duchess Losttouch: Well, we say so.

Lord Woodhead: Yes, we've researched it.

Lady Rat: Ha! We've researched it too, you pitiful stooge of the burgherite warmongering clique! We're the ones who are period!

Lady Snotte: You're not!

Lady Weasel: Are so!

Lady Snotte: Are not.

Lady Weasel: Are so.

Lady Snotte: Are not.

Lady Weasel: Are so.

Lady Snotte: Not.

Lady Weasel: So.

Lady Snotte: Not.

Lady Weasel: So.

Lady Snotte: Not.

Lady Weasel: So.

Lady Snotte: Not.
Lord Tancred: That reminds me of an amusing little tale. Seems that back in A.S. 169, there was this Duke, or was it a Duchess, from Atenveldt, or was it the Middle ... hohoho, who won, no, no, who lost ...

Lord Reynard: If you don't shut up, I'm going to kill you.

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

Lord Reynard: Hold on. We're not period, eh? So c'mon, where did you do your research?


Lady Rat: Lies! All Lies!!

King Guy: (Looking at the Big Golden Book) Look, big tits!

Lord Reynard: (Throwing it down) Ha! Worthless drivel!

King Guy: Hey! Aw, gee, you guys ...

Lady Weasel: Enough, lets ...

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

Leo: Wait! Hold on! I can't believe this. You're all SCA, what has happened? How did this come to pass? How'd things come down to killing each other?

Lord Reynard: Listen Leo, it's a war to the death. Long ago, in your day, the Bee Oh Gee was a body with little real power. Real authority rested in Kingdoms, with the Kings, councils of state and the peers. But it came to pass that these groups fell out, squabbling for the petty prize of command. Instead of cultivating tolerance and cooperation, they battled like spoiled children for that passing bauble; Worldly Might, until, at last, in each realm strife and stalemate and bitterness held sway. Unable to settle their differences, they appealed to the BOG, investing it with supreme authority by their default of their responsibility to rule. They surrendered the right to order their lives and gave it to this tiny group whose members, becoming drunk with power, overlaid their concept of the SCA upon all others. 'Twas not the BOG's fault, but that of those too blind to live with any conception of reality other than their own. E'en so, at this time, 'tis the BOG, bloated with unnatural might; arrogant, corrupt, swollen with false grandeur, posturing as gods ... believing it and forcing others to believe. 'Tis the BOG which is the source of all the poison killing the spirit of the SCA. Thus we deem it no great loss that they perish.

Duchess Losttouch: Blasphemy! You'll go to hell for this!

Lord Tancred: Or worse, you could go to Ansteorra.

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!
BOG: No, no, no!

Westermurkers: Get 'em! Kill 'em!

King Guy: You guys ...

Leo: Wait a minute! Hold on! Look ... GIVE ME A BREAK! There's got to be some way to work this out ... Can I interest you in a compromise?

Lady Snotte: Compromise with this vermin, never! Besides, we don't have to listen to you. You ... you mortal!

Lady Weasel: See, you can't talk to them.

Lady Rat: Death to the running dogs of Burgherdom!

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

Leo: Wait a minute, you see this? A membership card from A.S. 19. You latecomers. You won't listen to me! I'm the SCA's oldest member! You think you've got status? Ha! You're NOTHING! I've so much seniority ... shit, I am God!

Lord Woodhead: He's right! Think of it! Three hundred years worth of peer points!

Lady Snotte: Oh! I'm coming! I'm coming!

Leo: Me, too, the second time!

Lady Weasel: Give us a break.

Leo: Alright! Listen up! All of you! You're right, but you can't just kill them! You talk about tolerance and cooperation, well show a little yourselves! Understand, the people in the lands that the BOG rules are dependant upon word from on high for order and direction. Kill the BOG and you give them not freedom, but mere chaos. Think, 'tis better that you hold them captive, keep them for show, but from behind the scenes make them use their great authority to undo their works and wither their powers by their own hands, till by increments Glorious Feudalism is restored.

King Guy: What a nice idea.

Lady Rat: Bullshit! It's stupid.

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

King Guy: No, wait, I'm your lawful King, 'tis my will Lord Leo's plan be fulfilled.

Lord Reynard: Your Majesty, we hear and obey.
Lady Rat: Oh, okay.

Leo: Great, now first, we should restore the King's power. Who's King here?

King: I am.

Leo: You're the King?

Lady Weasel: How shameful.

Leo: Where's your crown?

King: Eight points and three boxtops ...

Leo: Never mind, how'd you like to rule, my friend?

King: What's that?

Leo: Stick with me, you'll learn soon enough. Now then, I'll stay here and supervise things. Leave me some troops and Lord Crush to back me up.

King Guy: Of course.

Leo: Okay you clowns, one false move and ...

Lord Crush: I'll kill 'em!

Lord Woodhead: Alright, you win.

Leo: Don't take it too hard guys. You might learn something.

Duchess Losttouch: Never!

Lady Weasel: Victory!

Lady Rat: 'Tis true! At last out long toil finds reward! The fair flower of feudalism has been snatched from the slavering maw of the Burghers and all their craven lickspittle lackeys! Now, Progressive workers, peasants, and nobles shall march forward, united as one man, into the glorious feudalist future. And the odious plots ... *(Lady Rat is smothered)*

King Guy: Oh, we fought the usurpations of the Burgher Bee Oh Gee, With their democratic nonsense and their mediocrity, Now we have restored the monarchs and the true nobility,
All: Feudalism makes us strong!
PPFUF forever. PPFUF forever. PPFUF forever.
Feudalism makes us strong!

King Guy: Everybody!

All: PPFUF forever. PPFUF forever. PPFUF forever.
Feudalism makes us strong!

\textit{Finis}
Gerhardt's notes:

This play was originally conceived as a simple minded extrapolation of certain sociological idiosyncracies in the SCA to a time in the future where some sort of breakdown in the social order made them dominant. Let me make it clear that I am not one of those peculiar types one runs across in the SCA who thinks a nuclear war would be just peachy because it would leave all of us medievalists around to pick up the pieces. To my way of thinking, this is, at best, an amusing sophomoric fantasy which can only be indulged in by the sleek and fatuous scions of middle-class America who have never had any real contact with the impact of a real disaster.

Anyway, what the play turned into was an attack on the Hobbyist/Re-creationist wing of the SCA, prompted by me reading of an interesting little tome called: Trends of Change. I've got to admit that I was pretty worked up by some of the ideas contained in this document and even more over some of the psychological "trends" in the SCA that I felt they represented.

This play, therefore, should be viewed in this light. It does not represent a reasoned consideration of the views contained in Trends of Change, it is not even satire on those views; satire to my mind is not quite so heavy-handed. Rather, it is a burlesque or a lampoon, akin not so much to slicing at these ideas with a scalpel, as to hacking at them with a meat cleaver. It was meant to chop up the reeking carcass of burgherite combinationalism and toss it into the garbage can where I felt it belonged ... it was a rabble rouser.

In rousing the rabble it certainly succeeded. In the Kingdom of the West, which as everyone in the SCA knows, is the mighty fortress of old-fashioned "King's Word is Law"ism, it was received with wild enthusiasm. I am not so sure it would have been received as well in the parliamentary autocracies that lie to the east of our fair realm.

Notwithstanding these limitations, I like the play and it was a hell of a lot of fun to do. It was the opening salvo in an exposition of ideas that I continued on a more serious level in; "In Defense of Feudalism" and will continue in another series of articles and arguments I intend to unleash at the 20 year gathering of the SCA; the gist of which is "I don't give a rat's ass if you want to have peerage points, elected kings, parliaments, whatever, in your kingdom, just cut the crap about 'national policy guidelines' and keep your fuckin' hands off areas that don't want to put up with your shit".

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