

BAKER'S DOZEN (12 ANGRY PUPPETS)

by Adam Francis Proulx



SCRIPT SAMPLE

The Pucking Fuppet Co. 

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

CHARACTER REFERENCE



PLAY DESCRIPTION

A puppeteer uses a single blank-faced puppet and a briefcase full of facial features to create the twelve members of a jury. The case at hand? The Butcher, the Baker, and the Candlestick Maker. Each character has a unique personality and worldview and they struggle as a group with issues such as prejudice, preconceptions, homophobia, and our flawed judicial system. The metaphor here, if it's not hitting you over the head, is that we are all made of the same bits.

HISTORY OF PUBLIC PRESENTATION

- Resource Centre for the Arts, St. John's, NL, 2018
- Orlando Winter Mini Fest, 2018
- Orlando Fringe Festival, 2017 (Best Physical Theatre, Variety, or Specialty Show; Patron's Pick)
- Trail, BC, 2017
- Artspring, Salt Spring Island, BC, 2016
- Surrey Civic Centre, BC, 2016
- Collingwood, ON, 2016
- Vancouver Fringe Festival 2015 (Pick of the Fringe, BC Touring Council Award)
- Montreal Fringe Festival 2015 (Best Solo Show)
- Staircase Theatre, Hamilton, ON, 2015
- Welcome Friend's Association Gala Fundraiser 2015,(opener for Rick Mercer)
- Sault Pride Gala Performance 2014
- Television: Bell Media, 2014
- Toronto Fringe Festival, 2014 (Best Puppetry, NOW Magazine)
- Toronto Festival of Clowns, 2014

PRAISE FOR BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 ANGRY PUPPETS

“★★★★”

Torontoist

“Each character is brilliantly crafted and possessed of humour and insight as different from every other character as up is from down.”

Xtra Magazine

“Proulx gives a true tour-de-force performance.”

Crew Magazine

“With humour, wit, and incredibly strong characterization, Adam Francis Proulx brings each of the 12 jurors to life, in puppet form. With a gentle touch, he raises questions about our duty to the justice system, and to ideas of justice generally.”

Staged in Toronto

“...Proulx is a winning performer, and his puppets inventive and full of personality.”

NOW Magazine, Glenn Sumi

“[Proulx's] metamorphosis into each new character, male, female, young, old, and Russian alike, is wizardry.”

Montreal Rampage

“Proulx gives each character greater depth, toying with our expectations and tossing the stereotypes aside.”

Xtra Magazine

“This is not your children's puppet show.”

VanCity Buzz

“I laughed out loud - a lot.”

Georgia Straight

“Adam Francis Proulx is truly talented as he seamlessly transforms one puppet into 12 distinctive and fascinating characters. Funny! Thoughtful! Magnificent!”

Watermark Orlando

“His manipulation is expert, with unique postures and voices for each character. But more importantly, the puppeteering is in service of a smart script that blends nursery-rhyme puns with sincerely moving Capra-esque pleas for tolerance. No matter what color you are — black, white or turquoise — or how many men you like to rub-a-dub-dub in a tub with, there's a heartfelt message hiding here beneath the felt and foam.”

Orlando Weekly

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

SCRIPT

Note: An asterisk () indicates a line that can and should be changed to better reflect the city in which the play is being performed.*

(There is a large wooden table stage left and a matching wooden chair stage right. The lights dim. A siren blares as a police search light searches the empty stage. We hear the sound of a gavel hit as we catch a glimpse of a puppeteer holding a puppet and a briefcase.)

A VOICE

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the court is in session.

(Another gavel hit. The lights give us a better look at the puppeteer and his puppet. The puppet is light blue in colour and has no facial features.)

A VOICE

Today's deliberation is brought to you by Exhibit A and the number twelve.

(As we hear the door of the courtroom slam shut, the puppeteer turns the briefcase to the front. It reads 'Jury Box.' Henceforth, the puppet and the puppeteer act as one. As the music swells, they head to the table and open the briefcase. The puppet begins to pull out different facial features: noses, eyes, hair, and so on.)

(The first character is Gary, an old codger with white tufts of hair on the sides of his head, a bit white moustache, and a sort of wide-eyed frenzy seen in those who are afraid the person they are rambling away to might walk away.)

GARY

I've been to that bakery! The bakery they're talkin' about! The one where the Baker was killed. Well, he was killed in the apartment above it. The one he lived in with the Butcher. The murderin' Butcher. The one who's sitting right there!

Where's my chair?

(Gary pulls out a cane with four tennis balls on its feet. He begins to slowly and arduously cross the stage towards his chair.)

You know the bakery I mean? It's the one with the purple awning. Next to the place with the white door. To the left of it. Now, that's if you're lookin' at it, not if you're walkin' away from it. If you're lookin' at it. Yeah, I been there before. Not more than once though, no siree. Do you know that a single donut there cost me two dollars and 75 cents? Two 75! How he gets away with charging two dollars and 75 cents for a donut when they're only charging 80 cents down at the you-know-where. You know where? Agh, you know

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

where. Two 75! Imagine trying to buy a baker's dozen of those donuts. You'd have to... sell a kidney.

Now, when I was at the bakery, the Baker was there. He was. And he talked with a bit of a... a lissp. You see what I'm sayin'? Like a, "sss sss." Like, "how many S's in two ssseventy-five? Ssseveral!"

And the Butcher over there, when he walks into the courtroom, he walks with a bit of a swish. You see what I'm sayin'? Like a... (*demonstrates*). Like a swish. Like he's... Well, he's kind of a swish!

(He begins to push the chair towards centre stage.)

Now, I don't mean to jump to conclusions. I mean, maybe these men were just roommates. Maybe they just finished off their day with a nice glass of Drambuie together and then went to their separate beds like Ernie and Bert. But that's not what the lawyers are making it sound like. No, they're making it sound like they were sort of... "friends." You see what I'm sayin'? "Friiieeeeends?" And the eye witness from across the street, the little old lady who lived in the shoe store, well, she said the very night of the murder she saw the Butcher and the Baker in the tub together rub-a-dub-dubbin' each other! Now, I...

(He looks over at his cane, which he has left back where his chair had been.)

Shit.

(He tries to reach.)

Damn stroke.

(He lowers himself to the floor.)

Huh, I thought that would hurt more than it did, but, I guess... Depends!

(He scoots across the floor towards his cane.)

Now, I don't mean to sound like I'm passing judgement on men who are friends with other men. No. You know, back in the war, I had a friend named Wally and Wally was one of them swishes. Might have even made a pass at me once or twice. Always offering to polish my gun. But it didn't matter. Wally was a good soldier. Oh, you shoulda seen how the boys used to razz Wally. You shoulda seen how the sergeant treated him. Great soldier though. I once saw him land a burning chopper. When he came out... He was flaming.

Aaanyways...

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

(He reaches cane, finally, fans himself with his hat, goes to stand up, and puts his hat on the floor.)

We're all pretty sure that the Butcher killed the Baker. Well, everyone except that young jury foreman over there. The one in the red hat. Naw, he thinks he's innocent. Bah! Where does he get off anyhow? We've all heard the same information! What makes his opinion so special. Kids these days all think they're special snowflakes. I'll tell you what's to blame for that! It's that... Justin Bieber. Although I must say, she is one pretty lady.

(He sits.)

Anyways, my point is, I been to that bakery. Yep, I been there. And I'm pretty sure the Butcher killed the Baker. In fact, if he didn't I'll eat my...

(He touches his naked head, looks at his hat back where his cane had been...)

Fuck.

(The puppet returns to the table, takes off Gary's face and sets the cane aside. He puts on a pair of glasses with pupils and nothing else. This is Uri, a graduate student with a nasal voice and a penchant for the legal system.)

URI

So, here's what we know so far! The Baker was found dead in the tub. He had been stabbed to death with the Butcher's own cleaver. Strangely enough, there was almost no blood. Now, the cleaver was found right next to the tub and the only other thing around there was a candlestick but I'm sure *that's* a red herring. Now, we just found out that the Butcher's fingerprints were all over the cleaver!

Ugh! There goes the case! I tell ya, bring fingerprints into a trial, heck bring any forensic evidence into a trial and people lose all sense. Do you know what's to blame for that? CSI. The TV show. I'm serious. Ever since that program and its spinoffs became popular in the early 2000s, there has been a phenomenon in the legal world called... "The CSI Effect." That means, ipso facto, that when forensic evidence is introduced, people are used to taking that as the end of an episode; The resolution of a plot line. Cut to a pharmaceutical commercial: "Is your attention span shrinking?" But that is very problematic. First off, sometimes forensic evidence is incorrect; Sometimes it's inconclusive; And sometimes, like here, the Butcher has every right to have his *own* fingerprints all over his *own* cleaver in his *own* home.

A group of twelve randomly selected citizens is about as qualified to make legal decisions as certain heads of state are qualified to use Twitter*. I mean (*looking behind himself*), people are biased, confused, not invested, (*to the puppeteer*) terribly handsome... And that's just the row behind me.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

You know, in France, juries are made up of a few randomly selected citizens and a few professional judges. That does sound better but even then former French Minister of Justice Robert Badinter famously once said that trials by jury are so unpredictable that they're like riding a ship into a storm.

(He removes his glasses, blowing on them and wiping them clean during the following.)

The reason this is all so important is that Canada is a common law system and common law is precedent law. That means that decisions we make today might affect future legal decisions. But, on one hand, what if we say the Butcher is innocent and he's actually guilty? Or, on the other hand, what if we say he's guilty and he's actually innocent. I mean, the jury foreman thinks he's innocent.

Precedent law is a way to keep a legal system in touch with the society it is meant to serve but when you get right down to it, it's just an official preconception much like the preconceptions a lot of these jurors have because the Butcher is of a lower socio-economic status, or a swarthy young male, or not heterosexual. Juries are, in fact, statistically more likely to give harsher sentences to people of different ethnicities than themselves and that affects me as a person of colour... periwinkle.

Preconceptions are useful, even necessary, for understanding the world around you. They help us understand a situation without needing every minute detail explained. But the fact that they allow us to take certain things for granted for ease of understanding also allows us to take certain things for granted when it's not fair to do so.

I understand the reason for juries. It's a check against the powers that be. I understand it, I believe in it, I study it. But now that I'm inside one, I can't help but wonder... Who am I to decide a man's fate?

(The puppet returns to the briefcase and takes off the glasses, rubbing his eyes. He takes a piece of bright pink gum and puts it in his mouth. He adds red lips, lively blonde hair, eyes and a nose and then returns to his seat. Now he is Sam, a young female millennial with a vocal fry for the ages.)

SAM

So...

(Gum chew.)

So...

(Gum chew.)

So, this is kind of like the board game Clue right? And I get to decide if it was the Butcher in the bathroom with the cleaver, or Colonel Ketchup in the study with the rope, or someone totally different in the bedroom with the candlestick. Sick.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

(She pulls the gum from her mouth and surprisingly, it stretches out for feet. She gobbles it back into her mouth and then blows a bubble and pops it.)

Spearmint.

Okay, do you know who I have a little crush on? The jury foreman. I know he's a little young for me but mom says I always go for the younger guys because we're more... Mentally compactable. And it's not just because he's cute in a dorky kind of way. No. He's also really smart. Like, look around: You've got all these old people saying one thing and do you know what he's saying? The opposite. I know right!? Standing up for the little guy. He's like Ellen except he doesn't wear a suit.

Do you know what's weird about this trial to me? All the pictures they've been showing us are, like, right from Instagram, and Facebook, and Grindr. You know, it must be nice for lawyers and media and stuff nowadays because when there's a murder or a trial they have whole Instagram accounts to get photos from. You know... A really sad one for the dead guy. A Movember one for the murderer. I guess it just goes to show you that you never know which selfie is going to be your missing person photo. Hashtag murder.

You know...

(Quickly and expertly.)

The prosecution's negative portrayal of the Butcher utilizing social media clearly exposes the constraints of social media in illustrating the variety of social beings we embody on a daily basis. By limiting us to one online constructed identity or avatar, social media essentially ignores alternate social behaviour and propagates a very two-dimensional representation of individuality.

Or whatever.

Okay, so do you know the most weirdest part about this trial for me? Okay, so when they were, like, choosing us to be jury-ers, they made us each take a turn spending like ninety seconds staring at the Butcher, right? Like just making really intense eye contact like in a made-for-TV Canadian movie or something. And you know what... I think our very respectable and handsome jury foreman is right. I don't think the Butcher did it. [Like, what happened to that Baker in the tub is like American Horror Story-style stuff.] Like, whoever did that to the Baker is a monster. And the Butcher is sitting right there and he doesn't look like a monster. Right?

(Gum chew.)

(The puppet heads back to the table where he removes the hair and gum. Adjusting the eyes slightly and changing the wig, we get Carol, a post-menopausal woman, who is having a few issues.)

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

CAROL

Ugh. Why? Why did I eat that cafeteria food? It must have been that Jell-O. I should know better than to eat anything Bill Cosby told me to eat. J-E-hell-hell-no. Ugh, here I am stuck in the middle of a row and I've got more gas than the PetroCan*.

Okay, maybe just a little one to take the edge off. Maybe a little cough first.

(A cough. A fart. She sniffs it. It is gross. She looks around.)

I think it was him. Pay attention.

Ugh this eyewitness is still talking. God, get on with it, old woman. We've been through this already. The Butcher and the Baker in the tub together. Yeah, yeah. Huh? The Butcher, the Baker... and the Candlestick Maker!? Rub-a-dub-dub *three* men in the tub. But wait! Wasn't there a candlestick found right next to the...

(A big fart. She is mortified. Head down.)

(The puppeteer removes his nose first and foremost. He crosses to the briefcase where he puts on two characters at once. The left side of the face is a blonde woman named Adele and the right side is a gruff man with black hair named Dazeem. They speak in a sort of Eastern European gibberish.)

ADELE AND [DAZEEM]

(Dazeem blows a puff of smoke and stamps out a cigarette on the floor.)

[Hey.]

Ugh.

[Hey!]

Hey.

[This is pretty easy, huh? We just get to say BUTCHER GUILTY and then go home.]

Wait. BUTCHER GUILTY?

[Yeah. Maybe we could go get a drink.]

Hold up. BUTCHER GUILTY?

[Or we could skip the drink and POM POM.]

... Sorry?

[Or POM POM POM.]

Ha. POM POM POM. Come here.

[Yeah?]

Yeah. Come here.

[Okay.]

If you ever say that to me again I will SLAP (She hits him) you so hard.

[VLADAMIR PUTIN! What the hell?]

By the way, you think BUTCHER GUILTY!? You're an ass. CANDLESTICK MAKER!

[CANDLESTICK MAKER? ...No, the butcher HACKSHNEE.]

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

THE BUTCHER may HACKSHNEE but the CANDLESTICK MAKER may CLONK!

[THE CANDLESTICK MAKER may CLONK? No...]

You're an ass. CANDLESTICK MAKER!

[BUTCHER!]

CANDLESTICK MAKER!

[BUTCHER!]

CANDLESTICK MAKER!

[BUTCHER!]

CANDLESTICK... UGH! MEN!

[So... one POM?]

(The puppet returns to the table where it removes the double face. He puts on a brown wig with a little flip at the bottom a la 1950s housewife, glasses, pursed lips, and a nose. Now he is Suzanne. She speaks with a thick Northern Ontarian accent.)

SUZANNE

Well, butter my muffin and call me breakfast. Sittin' in the presence of a murderer! I don't think I've ever sat in the presence of a murderer before! Well, there was the one time when I went to Parliament.* But other than that.

It's almost like the movies. Except if it were the movies there woulda been more blood in the tub. No muckin' about about that. But the rest of it: Lawyers, handcuffs, dust everywhere...

You know I really should be paying attention. Civic duty and whatnot. I already feel so naughty being away from work on a Wednesday.

(She pays attention for half a second.)

But really! Every time I try to pay attention all I can do is think that I'm sitting in the presence of a murderer! Look at him over there all dark and brooding! Isn't he trying to make us think he's innocent? Couldn't he pep it up a bit? Although, he is handsome in a frightening kind of way. Like Dr. Oz. Or Steve Buscemi.*

You know, I don't understand murderin'. I can't imagine a single situation in which there's no better way of goin' about it. Well, I'd be lying if I said I hadn't thought of giving my Harold a swift kick down the stairs from time to time but that's it... just a little fantasy. A therapeutic fantasy but a fantasy nonetheless. I would never actually... kill. Imagine... Murder. Like on Dateline.*

But the gays really do have a flare for the dramatic, don't they? No pity for those types from me, no sir. Not like that smooth talker of a jury foreman over there... thinks we should all go and vote 'not guilty!' Ha! If BS was music he'd be the whole brass band. Their dramatics is their own fault as far as I'm concerned. Always about sex with them too, isn't it!? But who's surprised here? Not I! You bring a third into a relationship and you think you're all gonna be snug as a bug in a rug? Ha! And you can bet it wasn't just

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

that one extra man they had over. No, I bet their bathtub had more traffic than a [Timmy's] drive-through at the crack of dawn on a Tuesday. Being a sexual deviant like that never ends well. I mean murder is a little extreme, whoever did it: The Butcher with the cleaver or the Candlestick Maker with the candlestick. But who cares. Lock 'em all up! Sexual deviants.

So, a coupla weeks ago while I was having sexual intercourse with Jeffrey Mills on the photocopier... I felt like such a harlot. But seeing this trial I feel much better. I mean, listen, I know what I did was wrong but there's no use throwin' away the entire matrimonial cake just because you have to blow off a little steam. And it's certainly better than murder!

And I do love Harold. I do. He's kind to me. And he's handsome. Not in a Robert Redford kind of way... More of a... Barney Rubble kind of way. But I do love him. And we're happy. And Jeffrey and I were happy too. In the copy room. Twice. I love a man who's good with his hands.

(She looks right at the puppeteer, then back out at the audience.)

(The puppet returns to the table and discards Suzanne's face. He puts in some buck teeth as the music switches to banjo. By adding a pair of larger ears, a loveable face, and a red ball cap that says 'Make Puppet Shows Great Again,' we get Billy the hillbilly.)

BILLY

So, Mama says, "what on earth's a jury summons" and I says, "well, obviously, Mama, it's when they's makin' a jury and they need summons to be in it." And she said, "be in a jury!? That sounds drier than the Stephen Harper* comedy hour!" But you know I don't mind this so much. I mean, there's free lunch; Air conditionin'; Good story! Heck, better than the television, in fact. I tell ya, stuff like this just doesn't happen back in the township. I mean, if you tried to pull something like this back there, by the time you was done everyone would know that you killed him and which pair of undershorts you was wearin'. Yep, everyone would just know that you did it, just like all these other jurors seem to know the Butcher did it... Everyone except the jury foreman.

Can't imagine killin' a person. I mean, even when I gotta kill one of the pigs on the farm, I make sure they're good and dead before I get to the cuttin'. Less pain that way, a little more humane, and less blood. It looks like, you know... Kinda like the way the Baker looked in the tub. Looks like he was hit over the head with something hard like, oh I don't know, that candlestick they found next to the tub, and then he was stabbed later. You know? No blood. But anyways, people is different from animals.

All due respect but I can't say I'm surprised this happened. We got a couple of three-way relationships down on the farm too... Just as natural as any other kinda matin' but when things go sour in a ménage-a-trois as the Spanish say, they go sour fast. I had a few ducks just last year nearly meet a premature 'a l'orange', if you know what I'm sayin'.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

And I ain't just sayin' this because these men were queers either. No, we got a couple of gay animals down on the farm too. Couple of gay pigs. Wilbur and Clyde is their names. Yeah, I never seen a couple of pigs taking such good care of each other. The other pigs, they's always oinkin' and kickin' mud but not Wilbur and Clyde. Oh, hey! Did you know a male pig's orgasm lasts thirty minutes!? Think of all the things you could do in thirty minutes! And he stays in there the whole time. Sometimes the pig in the front gets so bored he just starts grazing to pass the time. Sounds nice.

I know some queer humans too. Yeah, I'm a little more cultured than you'd think. The township has a little theatre, professional and everything, and actors from the big city come in. Now, they like to hang out at the local watering hole, Anna's, it's called. And I've been known to frequent there as well. It's only about a two beer drive away from the farm. Well, I get to talkin' to all the folks, the queer folks and the normal folks. We talk about all kinds of stuff. I tell them about farm things like duck sex and pig orgasms and they tell me about queer stuff like the Stonewall riots... and exfoliation. Oh! They even taught me about tops and bottoms... You know, 'cause men have the same bits, one has to be on the top like a regular man and the other has to be on the bottom kinda like a lady. Now, that don't mean that a top can't be on the bottom or a bottom can't be on the top, 'cause they can. Oh and some people say you can tell tops and bottoms apart by the way they act but other people don't like when you say that. Oh, listen to me goin' on. But anyways, I learned all about that. I'm a bottom.

(The puppet returns to the briefcase, discards Billy and quickly slaps on a toupee. This is Sal. He is very much asleep.)

SAL

(Sal snores three times. He rubs his eyes and yawns. He snuggles onto the lap of the puppeteer. He shivers. Takes the toupee off of his head and snuggles with it like a blanket. He snore three more times. Blackout.)

(The puppet is cranky to have been woken up. He returns to the briefcase where he meticulously builds Muffy. Asymmetrical blue hair, a grey fur scarf, an earring, snarling lips, and a well-fixed nose. Her eyes are the same as Sam and Carol's however with a tilt inwards, they become very, very angry.)

MUFFY

Jesus Christ. These people smell. This building smells like mothballs and soup. Goulash.

Ugh, I'm not meant to be here. Do you know what driver had to drive me by on the drive here? A Coffee Time.* Whenever there's a murder on the news the police officer being interviewed is always standing in front of a Coffee Time. It's remarkable I haven't been shot yet.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

You know, I'd have been happy to pay someone to take my place here. In fact, by requiring me to be here, the government is essentially taking away a paying job from some needy immigrant from Argensuela or somewhere. Someone more suitable than I. I mean look at me! I tried to dress down for the occasion but even in my frumpiest of clothing I still feel like a chandelier in a haunted house. Even these lawyers. I thought they were supposed to make relatively good money. I know my divorce lawyer sure did. So, why are these men dressed like they're managing a Red Lobster? Ha. A Red Lobster uniform is like a visual indicator to the world that you've never had sexual intercourse.

This is all just so pedestrian. These two badgering a little old woman who lives in a shoe store because she's accused someone of murder. Did the Butcher kill the Baker? Who knows. But that's not what's really on trial here. What's on trial is that these men, this situation, makes people feel uncomfortable. And people don't like to feel uncomfortable. If this old woman accused me of murder, who'd believe her? Unless they knew I was a big old lesbian of course. Shh.

You know, as a woman, didn't much matter if I was a lesbian or not. I wasn't going to get a fair shake at things anyways but I am just so tired of attractive, white males othering themselves. Like... Ugh, like my Tyler. For nine months I ate broccoli and wore stretchy pants and then he goes and pursues a career in the arts. A puppeteer. How tragic. And these men, the Butcher, the Baker, the Candlestick Maker... these are all attractive white men. There's no need for them to end up as two tradesmen caught in a sexual indiscretion with a third tradesman. I mean, realistically, even if the Baker toned it down a bit, would he have ended up dead in a tub? No. Straight white men do not end up dead in bathtubs. You know, we think we live in a very liberal, forward thinking society but that's while we're keeping our subversive sex hidden in our respective bathtubs. As soon as you start presenting that subversive sex to the community as a whole, like a jury, say, that's when you start to realize how bigoted and intolerant we really are. This system of citizens deciding the fate of other citizens in just a much more time-consuming, expensive, and PC way of locking up everyone who's not like you.

And by the way, what kind of career is Candlestick Maker? And where the hell is he? If you ask me, it's just as likely that he killed the Baker. But no one asked me, did they? Who'd believe a little woman, anyhow? Ugh, where are mommy's happy pills? I'm feeling blue.

(The puppeteer returns to the table where he disassembles Muffy except for her grey, fur scarf. He puts Gary's face and hair back on, grabs his quad cane and heads back to the chair. Halfway there, he notices the scarf and puts it on the back of his head. This becomes the back of Grant's head. When the puppet is facing forward in his chair, he is Gary; when he is turned around, he is Grant, a hard old man with a gruff voice and a temper that could wilt a cactus.)

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

GARY

So, when you've eaten one of those two dollar and 75 cent donuts, you know you've eaten.

GRANT

Would you shut up back there!?

GARY

What?

GRANT

Hey!

GARY

I just...

GRANT

Ip! I've been listening to you yammer on for days now! You're talkin' in the lunch room, you're talkin' in the hallway, you're talkin' when we have to go out for a smoke with Boris and Natasha over there. My hearing aid ran out of batteries at 10.30AM yesterday and you know what? I loved it!

GARY

Well, part of our job is to talk about our feelings about the case.

GRANT

No, not feelings! Facts ! We're here to talk about facts. Those three fags in a tub is enough feelings for me.

GARY

Things aren't so back and white though!

GRANT

They are! An eyewitness said she saw the whole thing and that's enough for me.

GARY

So you think the Butcher is definitely, without question, guilty?

GRANT

Yeah.

GARY

Huh. Do you have any kids?

GRANT

What the hell business is it of yours if...

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

GARY

Do you have any kids!?

GRANT

Yeah. I daughter. Why?

GARY

Well, if someone accused your daughter of something so... so heinous. Would you think she was definitely, without question, guilty?

GRANT

Of course not!

GARY

Well, see there it is. When it's someone you love, someone you understand, you're willing to put in the time. But with the Butcher it's different.

GRANT

Yeah, you're right! I don't understand him. He's not like me or my daughter and I don't owe him anything.

GARY

So, that's what it is about, isn't it? You don't much like swishes, do you? Nah, not swishes, not friends, not "fags" as you called them. Homo sapiens. You don't much like homo sapiens, do you?

GRANT

Yeah, what of it?

GARY

Well, that's ugly. I mean he's not that different from you or from me. He's got a family too. You know, back in the war I had a friend. Wally. Wally was his name. And he was one of them homo sapiens. And he was a good soldier; terrific soldier. And you know... it wasn't right how the boys treated Wally. And it was right how the sergeant treated him. And it wasn't right how I didn't do anything. That wasn't right and this isn't right!

GARY

An eye witness!

(He stands.)

A man's freedom! A man's freedom. Listen, I don't know if the Butcher killed the Baker... maybe he did. I'm not sure. But there is one thing I do know for sure: your head needs a shake!

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

(He crosses towards his hat, still there from the first scene. He is moving more quickly this time.)

We're here to do a job. And if I have anything to say about it, we're gonna do it right. And if that means we need to listen, we're gonna listen, and if that means we need to talk, we're gonna talk.

(He bends over to get his hat and when he goes to put it on his head, he feels the grey hair on the back of his head. He rips it off and tosses it into the audience.)

What the fuck is that?

(He begins to cross back to his chair.)

You think I talk too much? Well, maybe you're the one who should think a little more before you open your yapper. And in the meantime, why don't we both shut up!?

(He sits. A beat.)

So, anyways, as I was saying, the donut cost me two 75!

(The puppet takes off Gary's face but before he can rebuild, he is thrust into the next scene. A backlight shows the following in silhouette as the naked puppet portrays all twelve members of the jury at once.)

YANNICK

Okay, why don't we do a quick role call before we get started? I'll go first. I'm Yannick Fingerling. I'm the jury foreman. I work in food service and I live about three kilometres away from the courthouse. With my mom. And I'm present. Okay, who wants to go n...

GARY

Oh! I'll go! Okay. I'm Gary Garbanzo. I'm a veteran. It's about two kilometres from my house to the courthouse. Now that's the quickest way. There's a prettier way but it is a little bit farther but... anyways. I'm present.

URI

Uri Kumlada. Graduate student. It's a ten minute bike ride from my apartment to the courthouse and I'm present.

SAM

Samanda EnFlique. Underemployed millennial. It's a seven dollar Uber* ride from my house to the courthouse and I'm present.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

CAROL

Carol Colitisopolis. Retired school teacher. It's 2 kilometres from my house to the courthouse and... Um, is there time for a quick bathroom break?

ADELE

Adele (*gibberish*) perogl (*gibberish*) present.

DAZZEEM

Dazeem (*gibberish*) sputnik (*gibberish*) present.

SUZANNE

Suzanne Winters. Administrative assistant and virgo. It's about a ten minute drive from mine to the courthouse. Oh! And I'm present.

BILLY

Billy Hillstrom here. I'm an agricultural... a horticultural... farmer. I'm a farmer. It's about a three beer drive from the farm to the courthouse and I'm present.

SAL

(*Snores.*)

MUFFY

Muffy Divée. Benefactress, philanthropist, and dipsomaniac. It is precisely five kilometres from my estate to the courthouse and I'm present. Obviously.

GRANT

Grant Blustersqual. I work as a PROCTOLOGIST! It's two kilometres from my place to the courthouse and I'm present. Unfortunately.

YANNICK

Okay, that was really good! Why don't we do a quick vote before we get going just to see where we're all at. Go ahead.

URI

Guilty.

SAM

Guilty.

CAROL

Guilty.

DAZZEEM

Guilty.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

SUZANNE

Guilty.

BILLY

Guilty.

SAL

(Snores.)

Grant - That was a guilty. Me too. Guilty.

MUFFY

Guilty.

YANNICK

Oh, come on! How are you all still saying guilty? We're here to talk about reasonable doubt.

SUZANNE

I don't know. His fingerprints were all over the cleaver.

GARY

It's true, his fingerprints were all over the cleaver.

URI

Well, in his defence, he did have every right to have his own fingerprints all over his own cleaver in his own home!

SUZANNE

I don't feel right letting him go on some willy nilly technicality. I mean, I seen him and he looks pretty dark and brooding to me.

SAM

Maybe our very respectable and admirable jury foreman is right. Maybe he didn't do it. I mean the he's sitting right there and he doesn't look so bad, right?

CAROL

I don't know! Three men in a tub sounds pretty deviant to me, young lady.

DAZEEM

Butcher.

ADELE

Candlestick Maker!

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

DAZEEM

Butcher.

ADELE

Candlestick Maker!

BILLY

Did anyone ask these two if they spoke any English before the trial got started? And is anyone ever gonna wake that guy up?

SAL

(Snore.)

MUFFY

Can we please just get on with it? Lock him up or don't lock him up. What does it matter.

GRANT

Yeah! Do you want people like him wandering the streets.

GARY

You can't talk that way! What are you some kind of county clerk from Kentucky.*

GRANT

What? Are you going to be a pain in the ass now too? It used to be just that kid we had to worry about. We were just one vote away from saying guilty!

DAZEEM

Yes! Guilty!

SUZANNE

Still has my vote.

BILLY

Guilty!

GARY

Not guilty!

BILLY

Okay, not guilty!

ADELE

Not guilty!

URI

Oh, you're right, I can't. Sorry! Not guilty!

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

What the hell? **GRANT**

Oh, Christ. **MUFFY**

Finally! **YANNICK**

Listen up! You're a cute kid but you need to grow up! **MUFFY**

Yeah, do you want this trial to go on forever? Just say guilty! Guilty! **GRANT**

Guilty! **DAZEEM**

Guilty. **SUZANNE**

Guilty! **BILLY**

What the hell? **YANNICK**

Not guilty! **GARY**

Oh, right! Not guilty. **BILLY**

Not guilty! **ADELE**

Not guilty! **URI**

Guilty! **GRANT**

Wee! **BILLY**

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

SUZANNE

Guilty.

CAROL

Guilty.

SAM

Purple!

YANNICK

Shut up!

Ugh! Why do we get to decide anything!? We're not just a dozen random citizens. We're a dozen random idiots. And why do I get to be in charge here? You think this is fun for me? Like... I'm 18! And just 18! Like literally three months ago I couldn't ride a bike without a helmet on. I couldn't buy a lotto ticket.* I couldn't watch porn... legally.

Ugh, you're all so sure that he's guilty. Sure, the Butcher could have done it, but he just as easily might not have. Just because he's the one on trial, and he's sitting right there, and you don't like him, it doesn't mean he definitely did it. And hey, what about the Candlestick Maker, huh? Looks like the Baker was hit over the head with the candlestick before he was even stabbed with the Butcher's cleaver. Maybe he could shed some light on the situation. Maybe he was an old flame. Maybe he was waxing maniacal. Burning the candle at both ends. At his wick's end. Okay, that's enough.

(Sits.)

Listen. I wanna get out of here as much as the next puppet. You're all so ready to say guilty and leave but don't you think we should be treating this with at least a little bit of seriousness? Like, for the Baker? I mean can you picture him in that tub for that last half a second right before he was killed? 'Cause I'm always like, "oh, I'll work on this" or, "maybe one day" or, "in the future." But what about that last half a second right before you're killed when you're like, "well, that's it. Get off the train."

It's like if it were me, right, sitting at my dad's dinner table with stupid Sharolanne and Sharolanne's stupid ri-so-tto! And I'm sitting in there, still in my braces, wearing my Red Lobster uniform. And it's like someone came up to me and just *(killing sound)*. That's it. Eating that shitty ri-so-tto is the last thing you're ever gonna do.

I mean, I have nothing to gain here. I'm just trying to watch my own snap judgements. Like... like you, Sam. When I met you because you're blonde, and pretty, and talk like a Kardashian, I thought you weren't that smart. But you are! And Gary... We don't expect old white guys to stand up for people who aren't like them. But you did. You're more than just stereotypes; My snap judgements were wrong. I mean, don't get me wrong, these old gay guys are weird to me too. I mean, I totally don't get it: These guys are muscular. They could get girls! But I get feeling helpless. Like, back in my high school

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

'fag' didn't mean gay. Fag meant, loser, I guess. Like there were three gay guys in that tub that night and the Baker was definitely the fag. In this courtroom in his jumpsuit and handcuffs, the Butcher's the fag. And I guess, in this jury, because I'm being a pain in the ass, I'm the fag.

But, you know, historically speaking, the word fag didn't even have anything to do with being gay. I mean, if we're going down that path, the word homosexual is only like a hundred years old ...

(Just a voice from the briefcase.)

GARY

I think he means homo sapiens.

YANNICK

That's enough, Gary. But, no, the word faggot literally meant a bundle of sticks that was used to start a fire. Used to start a fire. Kind of morbid but I like how poetic that is, right? Starting fires.

So, I guess that's all I'm saying. I guess that's what I'm doing. Being the annoying one who starts a fire. Because sometimes people are totally happy keeping you down: Killing you in a tub, throwing you in jail without a fair trial, dunking your head in a fucking toilet. And sometimes you just need one person who's willing to be the fag in the room and start a fire for you even though it might make some people feel uncomfortable and even though it might not work!

Uh, yes, we have your honour. But first, I should say that it wasn't a very easy decision. I mean, even to the last minute we weren't really agreed. But, I mean, that's probably normal. When are you gonna find twelve people with the exact same opinion? That's people. And that's good, right? I mean it's like going to buy a dozen donuts from the Baker's bakery. Who wants twelve chocolate dip. Or thirteen for a baker's dozen.

(Beat.)

Uh, yes, sorry. We find the defendant... But actually, do you know where the term baker's dozen came from? Well, back in medieval England, King Henry the third wanted to regulate the weight of bread so to make sure they met the minimum weight and avoid and punishment, bakers would throw in an extra loaf. So, that's why...

(Beat.)

Yes, sorry. We find the defendant...

(He digs down into his pocket, pulls out a coin, and flips it. Blackout. It clinks onto the stage.)

BAKER'S DOZEN: 12 Angry Puppets

End.