

# OGGETTO METALLICO

By A.J. Schaar



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Fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini, got his hands on a flying saucer after it crash landed on June 13, 1933.

Mussolini threatens the 'immediate arrest' and 'maximum penalties' for any journalists reporting news of an 'aircraft of unknown nature and origin.'

What was reported by observers was a cylindrical aircraft with portholes on the sides and white and red lights flying over Magenta, a satellite of Milan in Northern Italy.

The site of the crash miraculously avoided the regular bombing raids by Allied Forces during the Second World War, and 12 years later, in 1945, the region was secured by US and UK troops.

The crash site itself was secured at the same time by the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) a US intelligence agency formed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and designed to perform espionage behind enemy lines.



## THE PLAYERS

### VO:

Reporter

Dr. Flipping

Thug 1

Thug 2

Background voices in the studio

Vatican Radio Announcer

The Guard ("Special Agent Harvey Blackburn")

Voice at the ballpark (Lou Gehrig's)

2<sup>nd</sup> Voice at the ballpark

3<sup>rd</sup> Voice at the ballpark

Beautiful Woman ("Ivanna Gettov")

The President

Stalin

Pedro

### LIVE:

The Pope ("al Papa")

Mussolini ("Il Duce")

The Guard ("Special Agent Harvey Blackburn")

Pablo

(doubles with "The German," an  
uncredited role)

Pedro (Puppeteer and Voice)

Beautiful Woman ("Ivanna Gettov")

Pettybone

The Chef

(NO PRE-SHOW SPEECES, RECORDED OR LIVE.)



## ACT I

### Scene 1

*(Blackout. Huge flash like a ball of lightning. Blackout.)*

*Whistle of a large object falling fast.  
It does not crash.*

*Sound of radio dial tuning. Music and static.)*

**VO REPORTER:** *(sotto)* Mio Dio. *(voce)*  
Buonasera signore e signori, this may in fact be an historic day. An aircraft of unknown nature and origin has reportedly crash landed in Magenta outside of Milan in our own Italy. Perhaps today, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1933, we learn the answer to the question: are we alone in the universe?

Ladies and gentlemen, you may not believe this could be **serious** news; I know I didn't believe it myself, not when I was first told. After all, our modern military might is very much on display, and things that fly through our skies have never been more terrifying than they are today.

But the fact is, ladies and gentlemen, that I have with me here a scientist who

says he came here from England because he had reason to believe that something like this unidentified aircraft would land here-- today.

If this is a hoax, it is on a grand scale. And if it is true, this man sitting here beside me may be holding the answer to one of humanity's biggest and most **universally** shared, yes if I may say so, a **universally** shared question:

Doctor Flipping... are we alone?

**VO FLIPPING:** Apparently not.

**VO REPORTER:** What are we looking at here? Are we in danger? What should we know?

**VO FLIPPING:** Well, it's quite simple. If I'm correct, there's just one thing that will be *very* important to keep in mind. You see--

*(Sounds of thugs breaking into the studio.)*

**VO REPORTER:** What's going on here? You can't be in here! I'm sorry, but I'll have to ask you to leave!

**VO THUG 1:** Dire che era un oggetto metallico. *(say it was a metal object.)*

*(Sounds of desks and things being knocked over, panicked voices in the back.)*



**VO THUG 2:** Dire che era una meteora. (*say it was a meteor.*)

D'ordine personale del Duce. (*on the personal order of Il Duce.*)

**VO REPORTER:** Gentlemen, I am a reporter. I report only facts. Hundreds of people have already reported seeing this aircraft light up the skies—

**VO THUG 1:** Dire che era un oggetto metallico. (*say it was a metal object.*)

*(Sounds of gunshots. Screams.)*

**VO REPORTER:** You have shot Doctor Flipping! ...You have killed him! The one man who may have held some kind of explanation—

*(-Sound of gunshots in the air.)*

**VO THUG 2:** D'ordine personale del Duce.

**VO REPORTER:** Ladies and gentlemen, I'm being told that it was only a metal object you saw in the skies. Or possibly a meteor.

*(Sounds of muffled sobbing, a file cabinet knocked over, and the studio door closing.)*

**VO REPORTER:** Arrivederci per ora, signore e signori. And God help us all.

*(The radio switches to a tone and clicks off.)*

## Scene 2

*(A cigarette is lit in the dark. Lights up. The Pope is smoking inside a metal room. It is guarded by The Guard. A flying saucer is in the corner. Otherwise, the room is empty.)*

**THE POPE:** *(generally, to The Guard)* One of the proudest accomplishments of the Devil in our modern time: is the fact that we doubt a thing is True, for the reason that it has been said.

A thing is said, and we ask ourselves 'is that right.' But we do not ask this question when we seek the Truth. We ask this when we seek the Lie.

Cynics. Skeptics.

So many lost Souls in need of The Church.

The immediate point, however, is that I was told 'Il Duce' had come into possession of a ah... oggetto metallico... and I **believed** it.

And I see it.

**THE GUARD:** *(indicates the metal room)* Questo è l'oggetto metallico. *(this is the metal object.)*

*(He bangs on the metal door to make himself clear.)*

Questo.

*(He bangs the door again.*

*Mussolini comes through the door.*

*Outside is the Magenta countryside.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Buongiorno al Papa!

*(Mussolini gives a casual fascist salute.  
The Pope puts his hand to his face.)*

**THE POPE:** Benito, this man tells me that the room we're standing in is the metal object that we're not meant to know about.

**MUSSOLINI:** *(to The Guard)* You idiot! Imbecile! I will have you **shot** to lie to Il Papa in such a manner. You must tell him **this** *(the room)* is the metal object when he is **outside** of the room. It is imperative that **this** *(the saucer)* be kept secret.

**THE POPE:** *(sees it but lets it pass)*  
Don't you think that this metal structure **may** be nearly as conspicuous as the crash that it was built to conceal? Surely the... oggetto metallico... could be moved to a more discrete location, Benito?

**MUSSOLINI:** Surely not, al Papa. And please, call me Il Duce. As my friends do. We have no means of moving the oggetto metallico that would not draw even more attention to it.

*(Mussolini admires his reflection in the flying saucer.)*

**THE POPE:** Benito, what are we to make of this here? Can it really be alien do you think?...

**MUSSOLINI:** That is something I hoped you might tell me. That is why I allow you to be here. Although you know I am a famous atheist, in matters such as these, I cannot be too careful. Tell me. What does your God say about this to you? Does He not claim to know the truth that's behind everything?

**THE POPE:** He does, Benito. And He has sent me to investigate this for Him, and for The Church.

**MUSSOLINI:** Tell me what interest your God and the church have in this matter. Tell me now and use only 10 words.

**THE POPE:** *(no hesitation)* It is no secret that the Church holds universal aspirations.

*(Mussolini regards him seriously. Counts the 10 words inconspicuously on his fingers.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(scoffs)* A single oggetto metallico can never help the church convert the universe. But, to master this technology would be to master everyone in our world; here is the power to order the

people to do what's best for them for a lifetime, and more! This, I know, is not the church's style.

**THE POPE:** I am not as interested in this technology, as I am about the pilot who may be inside... But there is one interest you and I share. It is imperative that this be kept secret.

**MUSSOLINI:** Agreed. But unfortunately for you, we have not found our way inside... yet. It is smooth, you see? There is no way inside... There is no way out.

*(A hatch opens in the flying saucer.  
Lights twinkle inside.)*

*The Pope, Mussolini, and the Italian  
Guard all watch.*

*Nothing comes out.*

*None of them know what to do.)*

**THE POPE:** One of us should go over there and have a look inside. Of the hatch. Benito, this is your country, you're the Prime Minister here. You should have the honor. You should go over there and... have a look... inside. Of the hatch.

**MUSSOLINI:** I would not want to intimidate them. I have a very strong presence. Very strong. It intimidates people. I can't help it. You, guard. You go over there and have a look inside.

**THE GUARD:** Sono solo una guardia... (*I am just a guard...*)

*(The Guard indicates his clothes and his gun as not being fit to make the first introduction.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** (*to The Pope*) It will have to be you, al Papa.

**THE POPE:** Hm? Were you speaking to me?

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes. I was saying it will have to be you. You go over there and have a look inside.

**THE POPE:** Why not give them a chance to come out here to us? Here. I brought a small present for them. Just in case. Why don't I... leave it here, and then we... leave.

**MUSSOLINI:** Good idea. We will give them a chance to come out here to us. Where is the present.

**THE POPE:** Just a moment.

*(The Pope leaves the room. Silence. The Pope returns with a Volksempfänger radio. Nervously light conversation now.)*

**THE POPE:** Here it is. One of the latest and greatest inventions of mankind.

**MUSSOLINI:** But it's German.

**THE POPE:** The people's radio. The Volksempfänger. Goebbels calls this the eighth wonder of the world.

**MUSSOLINI:** He would. A propaganda machine.

**THE POPE:** It is not the propaganda but the machine that is wondrous. No one minds the propaganda when they can have music and dramas and news and the whole world, really, brought into their own living room. The Reich Radio is fantastically popular, Benito, for better or worse. But this one receives my own station. The Vatican Radio, HVJ. I created the station myself. With Mr. Marconi. Goebbels dislikes it, immensely, because we report many **facts**, and we beam to **4 continents**, not just to Europe. Listen.

*(The Pope clicks a dial on the radio.  
Silence.)*

Ah. It seems batteries were not included. Do you happen to have any on you? No? Well... Perhaps it is for the best. Mustn't overwhelm them with information... or give something away.

*(The Pope places the radio near the open hatch and quickly steps back.)*

**THE POPE:** There we are. Now, **why** don't we leave them in peace now. We may make them nervous.

**MUSSOLINI:** *(he is nervous)* I am not nervous.

**THE POPE:** I didn't say you were nervous.

**MUSSOLINI:** Let's go.

*(Mussolini backs out of the room first, followed by The Pope.)*

*Alone in the room for a moment, The Guard hesitates. His posture changes to one of stealth. He approaches the hatch and then paces away. He decides that now is not the time. He exits.)*



### Scene 3

*(The stage is empty. The radio clicks on and plays the end of 'Alo Alo' by Carmen Miranda.)*

**VO VATICAN RADIO ANNOUNCER:** And now, on HVJ Vatican Radio, this one's going out, not just to the Catholics, but to our separated brethren, to "the dissidents," to the non-believers, even to the governments! And of course, to the oppressed, the poor, the workers, the persecuted, and the suffering. We invite you one and all to share in the church's message of peace and love, and remember that when the Pope prays, he prays for the whole world except the Bolsheviks.

*(Music plays: 'Love is The Sweetest Thing' by Ray Noble.)*

*The door opens and Mussolini enters with a maintenance man, Pablo, at gunpoint. Mussolini is speaking to The Pope, who follows him on. The Guard stands guard outside the door.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** ...no reason for us to endanger ourselves when mechanics are not our chief area of expertise. This man has devoted his life to it. *(to Pablo)* What is your name?

**PABLO:** I am Pablo.

**MUSSOLINI:** Paco...

**PABLO:** (*gently corrects*) Pablo.

**MUSSOLINI:** Pablo, I need you to get inside that hatch. Wait a minute. Papa, how is it that the radio is playing? Did you not say the batteries were removed?

**THE POPE:** I did...

**MUSSOLINI:** Paco...

**PABLO:** I am Pablo.

**MUSSOLINI:** Pablo, look for batteries in the radio. See if someone put batteries in.

*(Pablo checks the radio.)*

**PABLO:** There are no batteries, Duce. The radio is playing with some unseen power.

**THE POPE:** The pilot's alive.

**MUSSOLINI:** Put the radio down.

*(Pablo puts the radio down.)*

Get away from the radio.

*(Pablo takes a step away.)*

*Mussolini shoots the radio.*

*The radio continues to play.*

*Mussolini shoots the radio again.*

*The radio continues to play.*

*Then, to Pablo:)*

Get in the hatch. Get inside the oggetto metallico.

*(Pablo approaches the hatch but he is held away from the entrance by an invisible force.)*

**PABLO:** It is like magnets repelling each other. I can get no closer, Duce.

**THE POPE:** *(tense)* Turn around. Turn your back to the hatch.

*(Pablo does so. Nothing happens. Then, relieved:)*

It works for magnets. It was worth a try.

*(Pablo is suddenly pulled backwards into the hatch.)*

*Silence apart from the radio which scrambles and then:)*

**VO VATICAN RADIO ANNOUNCER:** And now a little scientific controversy in the news today. *German* scientists claim to have found evidence that links smoking cigarettes to certain 'health harms.' Meanwhile, The *American Medical Association* recommends *Chesterfields*. Just one more reminder that science doesn't have **all** the answers.

*(Music starts to play: 'Getting to be a Habit' by Bing Crosby.)*

*The Pope lights a cigarette.)*

**THE POPE:** I'm going to try it.

*(He reaches out with his hands to find the invisible force field. Finds it.)*

This is remarkable. And a message for the non-believers that seeing something should not be necessary to proving its existence.

**MUSSOLINI:** Please. I have never seen the pyramids. Why should I believe that they are there. Why would anyone build them in the first place. Why should anyone care.

**THE POPE:** It is canny that you should think of the pyramids at this moment. There is something in the Vatican catacombs which relates to this oggetto here and to them. But that is ancient history, very literally, and we have this matter here before us— here and now.

**MUSSOLINI:** Have you seen the pyramids?

**THE POPE:** I have not had that pleasure.

**MUSSOLINI:** Turn around if that is how to get in.

**THE POPE:** I may do that... when Pablo comes out.

#### SCENE 4

*(Beat. Mussolini shoots the radio again. Pablo materializes elsewhere in the room. He now falls habitually into Errol Flynn-type postures.*

*Beat.)*

**PABLO:** I have heard of being absorbed in one's work. But this is ridiculous.

**THE POPE:** Pablo!

**MUSSOLINI:** Pablo!

**PABLO:** *(gently corrects)* I am Pedro.

**MUSSOLINI:** Just a minute. Just a minute. Just a minute, now... *(he does not clock 'Pedro')* You said 'when' Pablo comes out. Not if.

**THE POPE:** Well done Pablo.

*(Pablo smiles; with a wave of his hand, the radio gets softer.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** You told him to turn around and put his back to that hatch very quickly. Amazing, that the *first* idea you had worked just like *that* to get him inside of there, no?

**THE POPE:** Whatever do you mean.

**MUSSOLINI:** You forgot the batteries for the radio— on purpose.

**THE POPE:** Why would I do that.

**MUSSOLINI:** The oggetto in the Vatican catacombs...

**PABLO:** ...Is mine.

**MUSSOLINI:** Exactly. Is his. Is his??

**PABLO:** Is mine. If one believes in such concepts as 'ownership.'

**THE POPE:** Mio Dio. (*crosses himself*) It *is* you.

**PABLO:** It is me.

**MUSSOLINI:** It's only Pablo.

**PABLO:** I am Pedro.

**THE POPE:** Pedro. It can't be.

**PABLO:** And yet it is.

**THE POPE:** In all the Universe... How can it be that the two of us come to meet each other- twice?

**PABLO:** Not many like me come to Earth. If you look up your solar system in the restaurant guide, you'll see it has only one star.

*(The radio plays a drum's rimshot and a crowd laughing.)*

**THE POPE:** Why have you come back?

**MUSSOLINI:** Have you come to destroy us?

**Pablo:** Well, you're so close to destroying yourselves.

*(The crowd on the radio applauds and then goes quiet.)*

Why do you suppose you shot the *radio*, I wonder. A thing that was created by so many human beings. A thing that Was Created. And *you* just *destroyed* it. Why do you suppose you did that... I don't think you know why.

*(Beat.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Pablo, you are not well. Al Papa, you are both unwell. Some illness or vapor has come from out of that hatch and you're delirious.

**PABLO:** *(lightly)* But I am Pedro, Benito.

**THE POPE:** *(grim)* And I am well, my son.

**MUSSOLINI:** *(unsure)* Please, just call me Il Duce. As my friends do.

*(Beat.)*

WHO ARE YOU?

**THE POPE:** Please Pedro, allow me.

**PABLO:** I'm happy and intrigued to hear what you will say!

**THE POPE:** Our friend here *says* that he's had a hand in many of mankind's proudest achievements. Be that as it may, *I say*,

nothing sets him above The Catholic Church.

**PABLO:** But I am The Catholic Church. And very much more. And so are you.

**THE POPE:** Blasphemy. Mother Mary, give us strength.

**PABLO:** You need more strength from the sweet Mother Mary because you two are so weak? A Pope in Rome, the first to ever sit as Pope *and* as the Sovereign of Vatican City. And you, a Fascist Dictator. The other people of this planet need the strength of Mother Mary to protect *themselves* from *you two*.

**THE POPE:** You sound like a demon to deny us our strength.

**PABLO:** (*smiles*) I come in peace. But you don't want that, do you.

**MUSSOLINI:** (*agrees*) Peace would ruin us. Ruin us totally. Wars are what give people power.

**PABLO:** The power to do what.

**MUSSOLINI:** ...Anything! Anything we are capable of.

**PABLO:** Yes yes. Throughout the history of man, you have always been so proud of your accomplishments in war and *weaponry*. That's why a little more than a year ago, by your calendar, I helped two English



scientists split an atom. April 14, 1932. They wanted to *disintegrate* the *nucleus* of an *atom*— *that's how completely they wanted to destroy something.*

Now, if I'm honest with you, I wanted to see the experiment succeed as much as they did, but, I didn't fully appreciate their endgame at the time. It wasn't until last week, as I was flying around the stunning sights of Proxima Centauri, that it occurred to me how much better it would be to just go ahead and END EVERYTHING FOR EARTH RIGHT NOW. *That's* what you're *really* after. Because you *can't* just stop with the nucleus of one atom. You'll *have* to see how much more damage you can do from there, and it won't stop 'til you've disintegrated everything including yourselves.

So I contacted those English scientists and said, let's help the people of Earth jump the whole learning curve and just destroy them all at once. Let's get it over and done with. No butterflies, no cold feet, no anxiety about the children, about posterity, about death and what happens afterwards... What an accomplishment!

**THE POPE:** Blasphemy! Let Pablo go this instant. Leave his body. We wish to speak with Pablo.

**PABLO:** As you wish.

**THE POPE:** Who are you?

**MUSSOLINI:** Are you Pablo?

**PABLO:** I am Pablo.

### SCENE 5

*(Door opens. The Guard enters. Armed. The door closes behind him.)*

**THE GUARD:** I am Pedro.

**MUSSOLINI:** Out! Out! Everybody out! Open the door, open the door.

*(Pablo and The Pope scabble past The Guard to open the door. One is pushing one is pulling. It's a split-second frantic beat.)*

**THE POPE:** DAMN this damn oggetto metallico. *(meaning the door)*

*(The door is opened.)*

This is in no way *safe!* There's no *protection* for us here! We're on the side of a god damned *mountain* here!

**MUSSOLINI:** Out, out, out! Everybody out!

*(The Pope, Pablo, and Mussolini slam the door behind them.)*

**THE GUARD:** I will release you now, and we can talk. You. And me. *Special Agent Blackburn.*

Aha. Alone at last. Just you, me, and Uncle Sam. Say, I brought this just in case we had a chance to meet. That is, in case you existed. A kind of a welcome present. Here.

*(He produces a hotdog wrapped in foil.)*

It's been in my pocket for a while. But still. It's the thought that counts. And hell. Hotdogs, you can do anything to 'em. Ketchup. Pockets. That's part of the *beauty* of the hotdog. Freedom. This is as American as it gets.

*(Pablo gets pushed back through the door. He now has a gun.)*

PABLO: *(a deadly warning)* I am Pablo.

THE GUARD: *(playing dumb)* Lo so. *(I know.)*

PABLO: Where is he.

THE GUARD: Non lo so. *(I don't know.)*

PABLO: *(the hotdog)* What is that.

THE GUARD: Non lo so. *(I don't know.)*

THE POPE: *(entering with a gold cross)* A hotdog.

MUSSOLINI: *(entering with a beautiful woman as a shield)* Take this, take her instead! *(he exits, shutting the door, and leaving her)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** What's going on?

**PABLO:** *(to the Beautiful Woman)* Who are you?

I AM PEDRO.

*(Pablo elevates into the air and starts to make histrionic, daemonic sounds.)*

**THE POPE:** Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus, Pray for Us! Give us strength!

*(Pedro hisses.)*

**THE GUARD:** Should I shoot him?

**THE POPE:** Don't--

*(The Guard shoots Pablo.*

*Beautiful Woman screams.*

*Pablo falls to the ground.)*

--Shoot.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Is he dead?

**THE GUARD:** *(strikes an Errol Flynn pose)* He better be. Seven years of training, you know. Takes a lot of strength. Not just here, but here, and here. Feel.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** That was so frightening.

**THE GUARD:** Frightening? That was frightening? Tell me: is that something important? Are you injured in some way? Are you in pain?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** This, this man is dead. And, and he flew in the air? Like, elevating?

**THE GUARD:** And this damages *you* somehow? You know how frightened the average person is when they see a rabid raccoon suddenly lunge at their unlocked screen door out of the darkness of the night? Prying with its little hands and making rabid little snarling sounds like tiny little dogs with deep little voices?

*(Sounds of a rabid raccoon underscores.)*

The *same* amount of frightened as *you* are right *now*. And that average person is just fine. And so are you.

**THE POPE:** Since when do you speak English?

**THE GUARD:** *(drops the pose)* Non lo so. No English.

**THE POPE:** Lord, what kind of tragic farce is this...

*(Western orchestral music plays on the radio.)*

Where is he now...

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Who?

<TOGETHER>

**THE POPE:** Pedro.

**THE GUARD:** Pedro.

*(Beat. Music swells a la a cavalry charge.)*

**THE POPE:** I'm going inside. Of the hatch.

*(He takes a moment to gather himself; takes a drag from a cigarette, tosses it aside. Then he charges in, backwards. Music stops.)*

*Beat.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** What... *(she clears her throat)* What...

**VO BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** *(on the radio)* What in hell was that.

*(The Guard and Beautiful Woman turn to look with horror at the radio.)*

*The Guard takes her by her shoulders.)*

**THE GUARD:** *(hesitates to use his voice, then)...*

**VO THE GUARD:** It's nothing...

*(Static. He brushes hair from her forehead, and gently shakes her as he says:)*

If anyone ever asks you about this, you must say: all you saw here was a metal object. Just an ordinary, unidentifiable metal object. You must say this... If you want to live.

**VO BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Say it's only a *what?*

*(The hatch closes. The Pope is still inside.)*

*Beautiful Woman grabs a hold of The Guard in a melodramatically romantic pose.)*

**VO THE GUARD:** Shh now. It's only an oggetto metallico.

*(Static rises in volume to a frenzied noise that includes music from many different time periods. Lights.)*

### Scene 6

*(The stage is empty apart from the flying saucer. The hatch is closed. The radio is gone.)*

*The Pope and Mussolini enter. It is as if nothing has happened, but they do glance at the saucer from time to time.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(as he enters)* '...the truth is that society wants to be led, and the people grow stronger, I feel, when they have no friends upon which to lean, or to look to for moral answers, or intelligent advices<sup>1</sup>.'

*(Beat as they briefly take in the flying saucer, an unpleasant task before them.)*

Do you ever think to yourself that what you're saying should be quoted somewhere?

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<sup>1</sup> Paraphrased direct quote.

**THE POPE:** Constantly. *(beat)* 'When once men recognize, both in private and in public life, that Christ is King, society will at last receive the great blessings of real liberty, well-ordered discipline, peace and harmony.'<sup>2</sup>

**MUSSOLINI:** Who said that?

**THE POPE:** I did.

**MUSSOLINI:** Well. As you know, I am I famous atheist, so I cannot agree with you there. *(beat)* Do you ever *worry* sometimes that what you said *will* be quoted somewhere?

**THE POPE:** From time to time.

**MUSSOLINI:** What was it that you said... in there?

*(They look at the flying saucer again.*

*A knock.*

*The door opens. It is The Guard admitting Pettybone. The Guard and The Pope regard each other suspiciously and the door closes again with The Guard remaining outside.*

*Pettybone offers a timid, fascist salute.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Ah, Pablo, welcome back.

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<sup>2</sup> Paraphrased direct quote.



**THE POPE:** This man is not Pablo.

**MUSSOLINI:** Of course he is. What is your name?

**PETTYBONE:** My name is Pettybone, Duce.

**THE POPE:** There, you see!

**MUSSOLINI:** Come now, no jokes please. This man is obviously Pablo.

**THE POPE:** But Pablo is— (*cont. thought is 'dead.'*)

**MUSSOLINI:** Still alive and well, as you can see.

**PETTYBONE:** I'm glad to hear it, Duce, but my name is

**<TOGETHER>**

**PETTYBONE:** Pettybone **MUSSOLINI:** Pablo, I know.

**MUSSOLINI:** I know I called you Paco yesterday by mistake and I apologize.

**THE POPE:** Several times.

**PETTYBONE:** You called me Paco yesterday? But I've never had the honor of meeting you until now, Duce.

**MUSSOLINI:** You've forgotten already? Tsk. But Pablo, Pablo, Pablo... (*grabbing Pettybone where the shoulder meets the neck*) it was the only remarkable thing that happened yesterday! Nothing happened

at all in here yesterday. Let's hope we have more luck today. Now, back to work, Pablo.

**PETTYBONE:** Of course, Duce! What, ah, what would you like me to do?

**MUSSOLINI:** (*points at the flying saucer*) Figure it out.

**PETTYBONE:** I'm sorry?

**MUSSOLINI:** Figure out how it works, and then come tell me. What could be simpler.

**PETTYBONE:** But what is it?

**MUSSOLINI:** It's just an oggetto metallico. Just an ordinary, unidentifiable metal object. But it may hold a secret to defeating the Russians.

**PETTYBONE:** (*impressed!*) I see!

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes, now get to work and don't ask questions or I'll have you **shot**.

**PETTYBONE:** Of course, Duce!

**MUSSOLINI:** (*to The Pope*) Now tell me what you discussed in there alone with Pedro.

**PETTYBONE:** But my name is Pettybone...

**MUSSOLINI:** Your name is Pablo.

**PETTYBONE:** It's just that I don't think my wife will like that, Duce... She has a cousin named Pablo who she doesn't get on with you see and...

**THE POPE:** Should we be talking in front of... Pablo?

**PETTYBONE:** The name's Pettybone, your holiness.

*(Mussolini shoots Pettybone in the leg. He falls to the ground.)*

*The Guard opens the door, gun ready.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(to The Guard)* Pablo hurt himself on the oggetto metallico. It is nothing. Get out. *(to The Pope)* Now tell me what was said.

**THE POPE:** *(crosses himself)* Well, Pedro is an unbelievably empathetic... 'man.' He is so empathetic that, well, it's almost as if he can *become* other people, or entire institutions, even societies! And he told me that based on this empathy of his, he's convinced that the people of Earth *want* to be completely destroyed.

**MUSSOLINI:** What did you say to him?

**THE POPE:** I told him that people of Earth did NOT want to be destroyed.

**MUSSOLINI:** Good. What did he say to that?

**THE POPE:** He said oh yes they did.

**MUSSOLINI:** So what did you say?

**THE POPE:** I said no we didn't.

**MUSSOLINI:** So what did he say?

**THE POPE:** It went on like that for a while. And finally he said, 'you're only postponing the inevitable, you know.' And I said, 'yes I know, but that is what Life is.' And he laughed. And I said that it would be easier to talk moving forward if he would stay inside of his *own* body from now on.

*(Pettybone looks, horrified.)*

And he said that's fine, but if he's going to be using up his own energy, his body will need to be... fed.

**MUSSOLINI:** What does he... eat?

**THE POPE:** He is fond of spaghetti.

*(Beat.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Good. A spaghetti-eater could never conquer our Roman civilization<sup>3</sup>.

**THE POPE:** *(squints at him)*

**MUSSOLINI:** How is it coming along, Pablo? Are you making progress?

*(They look at Pettybone. He is unconscious on the floor.)*

**THE POPE:** He is unconscious.

**MUSSOLINI:** I can see that.

---

<sup>3</sup> Paraphrased direct quote.

*(Mussolini opens the door and hails in  
The Guard.)*

Remove him and bring him back when he is  
conscious.

*(The Guard salutes and drags Pettybone  
off leaving a trail of blood. Once the  
door is shut...)*

## SCENE 7

**THE POPE:** You should station a different guard.

**MUSSOLINI:** Oh should I.

**THE POPE:** Something about him. After you left yesterday--

**MUSSOLINI:** --Yes after I led us bravely out of danger--

**THE POPE:** That guard spoke very good English and something about seven years of training. It was Pedro talking through him of course, but he would know everything about the guard. He would know everything about anyone he comes in contact with, for that matter.

**MUSSOLINI:** What is it you suspect the guard of?

**THE POPE:** I'm not sure. But if I'm not mistaken, most of your guard isn't trained so much as unleashed?

**MUSSOLINI:** Much more efficient and compelling.

**THE POPE:** If anyone else would have the intelligence and resources to be here already, I would guess that he is from the United States. (*grim*) An American spy.

**MUSSOLINI:** (*scoffs*) Al Papa, you worry too much. The Americans could not possibly know about any of this. No one can. We have taken every precaution. And you may not know this, but of all the people in the world, the Americans are very stupid.

**THE POPE:** Yes, that is true... (*beat*) Where is the woman who was here yesterday?

**MUSSOLINI:** How should I know?

**THE POPE:** You don't think that she poses a risk?

**MUSSOLINI:** A risk? To who? I could knock her down with one hand and with the other I could do anything else. She must know this for I am Il Duce.

**THE POPE:** You do have a reputation...

**MUSSOLINI:** And it is all true.

**THE POPE:** Still, with what she knows, with what she has seen, she should be contained.

**MUSSOLINI:** (*smiles*) The Pope wishes to imprison an innocent woman.

**THE POPE:** The Pope wishes to see this kept secret.

**MUSSOLINI:** Al Papa, give me your answer for this. I understand my own reasons for keeping this secret. But what are yours?

**THE POPE:** (*puts his hand on his face*)  
Benito, I will give you this answer since  
you ask. A creature comes from the skies...

**MUSSOLINI:** From the literal heavens, yes...

**THE POPE:** It can know everything about  
the people. It can do anything with them.

**MUSSOLINI:** Omniscient and all-powerful,  
yes...

**THE POPE:** Well it's obvious isn't it?  
(*beat*) The people will want to know why  
there's nothing about this in The Bible!

**MUSSOLINI:** (*squints at him*)

**THE POPE:** And if there's nothing about  
*this* in The Bible, they'll wonder what  
else has been left out. It calls the  
Church's teachings into question. And The  
Church cannot be questioned.

**MUSSOLINI:** There's nothing in the bible  
about pyramids either, but people do not  
question the church because of that.

**THE POPE:** ...I am not sure how you, a  
famous atheist, know that the pyramids  
are not mentioned in The Bible. This is  
true, and it is not a mistake that The  
Bible speaks only of the slave labor of  
the Israelites for Pharaoh— a human. As I  
believe I mentioned before, our friend  
had a hand in the engineering of the  
pyramids— already ancient by the time of  
Noah's flood--



**MUSSOLINI:** (*waves this away*) --The solution seems obvious, al Papa. Include Pedro in the bible and there will no longer be reason to question the universality of the church's understanding.

**THE POPE:** (*shakes his head no*) For The Church, there is only God and man.

**MUSSOLINI:** But this is not true.

**THE POPE:** And why **THIS must** be kept secret...

## SCENE 8

*(The door opens. The Guard admits The Chef with a plate of spaghetti. The Guard and The Pope regard each other suspiciously. The door closes again with The Guard still outside.)*

**THE CHEF:** *(already nervous)* Greetings, excellencies. I hope I have entered at a natural pause in your important conversations. I have brought your spaghetti. *(he sees the blood)*

**THE POPE:** The sauce the last chef brought was not up to Il Duce's high standards.

**THE CHEF:** *(laughs nervously, stops, then)* A macaroni, a bucatini and a linguine were drinking at a bar when they saw a noodle sitting all by itself. They invited it over because they agreed that it looked cannelloni.

*(He smiles hopefully? They do not laugh.)*

**THE POPE:** *(dry)* I hope you brought extra parmesan; this pasta is for the *grater* good.

*(The Chef laughs nervously.)*

**THE POPE:** Just give it to me.

**THE CHEF:** *(does so)* Eminence, it is a bit heavy, please don't *strain* yourself.

**MUSSOLINI:** (*flat and loud*) What do you call a chef who whores for laughs a pastatute.

<TOGETHER>

**THE CHEF:** That's very good, Duce!

**MUSSOLINI:** Now get out.

**THE POPE:** One moment. Did you bring the straw?

**THE CHEF:** (*taking one from his apron pocket*) I did, yes. But I'm afraid that it may have a hole in it.

**THE POPE:** I hope it has two.

<TOGETHER>

**THE CHEF:** What wit, your Eminence!

**THE POPE:** You may go.

(*The Chef leaves, gratefully.*)

**MUSSOLINI:** What are you going to do with that straw?

**THE POPE:** Pedro requested it. I suppose it is how he eats spaghetti.

(*Beat.*)

**MUSSOLINI:** That is not right.

**THE POPE:** It is not. (*beat*) If you tell me the name of the woman, I will have her found.

**MUSSOLINI:** Her name? I have no idea.

**THE POPE:** Where did you find her?

**MUSSOLINI:** Where do you think? Here on the mountainside!

**THE POPE:** What was she doing up here?

**MUSSOLINI:** How should I know? I wanted to do something. I saw her. I grabbed her. I threw her inside. I did something. I am a man of swift thought and bold action.

**THE POPE:** And you don't know where she could be now? You don't know who she was?

**MUSSOLINI:** She is nobody. All of the people are.

**THE POPE:** She could have been a spy!

**MUSSOLINI:** Respectfully, I think you are being a little paranoid, al Papa. No one can know what we have here. It is perfectly secret.

**THE POPE:** Apart from the people you keep bringing in here.

**MUSSOLINI:** I have brought no one in here.

**THE POPE:** Pablo, the woman, Pettybone, I mean the miraculously resurrected Pablo.

**MUSSOLINI:** You invited the chef here.

**THE POPE:** I had a reason to.

**MUSSOLINI:** Well so did I.

**THE POPE:** Fine. From now on, no one else will be allowed in here. And no one will be allowed to leave.

**MUSSOLINI:** Fine. *(beat)* He split the atom. He built the pyramids. He eats spaghetti with a straw.

**THE POPE:** Now you know what I know.

### SCENE 9

*(The hatch opens. Lights twinkle inside.)*

**PEDRO:** *(unseen)* Please set the spaghetti right here.

**THE POPE:** Where?

*(A puppet alien hand emerges from the hatch, waves coyly to them, pats the floor by the hatch where he wants the plate, and then withdraws.)*

*The Pope cautiously puts the plate there and rapidly steps away.)*

**PEDRO:** Ah ah ah! The straw?

*(The Pope offers the straw keeping it as far from himself as possible. The alien hand takes it.)*

*The hand puts the straw into the spaghetti and sucks a noodle through it.*

*The Pope and Mussolini look at each other.)*

**PEDRO:** You look as though this is... alienating you?

<TOGETHER>

**MUSSOLINI:** Not at all.

**THE POPE:** No, no.

**PEDRO:** *(setting down the straw on the plate)* I love spaghetti you know. I love It-alien food.

*(Beat.)*

Bring the radio back.

**THE POPE:** Now really Pedro, I don't know if that is such a good idea.

**MUSSOLINI:** It has been shot.

**PEDRO:** Yes yes. But bring it anyway. I like to listen to music while I feed.

*(The hand puts the straw into the spaghetti and sucks another noodle through it.)*

*The Pope and Mussolini look at each other.)*

**THE POPE:** I had hoped that we might use this time to continue our conversation together.

*(The alien hand puts down the straw.)*

**PEDRO:** Very well. I shall ask you an question, and you will then leave me

until I have fed. And you will bring the radio back until then.

**THE POPE:** Fine. Benito, would you please make sure that this is done?

*(Mussolini opens the door. To The Guard:)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Bring the radio back in here now or I will have you shot.

*(The Guard salutes and Mussolini closes the door, remaining inside.)*

**PEDRO:** Good. Now the question. If I say I am your God, will you believe me?

**THE POPE:** *(no hesitation)* No.

**PEDRO:** Ah. Just think then, if I *were* your God, how you have treated me. I think, you would have treated me the same.

**THE POPE:** Is that right.

**PEDRO:** ...When you ask that question, do you ask it and seek the truth? Or do you ask it and seek the lie?

**THE POPE:** ...I will not tolerate such disrespect for my position. I am the Pope.

**MUSSOLINI:** He *is* The Pope.

**THE POPE:** I am. And the *Devil* cannot fool me so easily.

**PEDRO:** Ambrogio, if you meet the Devil, tolerate him. He is a part of your God, too.

*(The Pope leaves, just as The Guard is entering with the shot radio ('scusi')).*

*The Guard sets down the radio.*

*Another noodle is sucked through the straw.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(about the straw)* That is not right. *(to the Guard)* Wait here and let me know when *this* is finished.

*(Mussolini leaves.)*



## SCENE 10

*(The Guard is now alone with Pedro.)*

**PEDRO:** Special Agent Blackburn, how pleasant to see you again.

**THE GUARD:** That's very kind of you to say.

**PEDRO:** Not at all, not at all. *(beat)* I understand that as a child you were very fond of baseball.

**THE GUARD:** As a matter of fact, I was... Well, what of it?

**PEDRO:** Allow me to provide you with some wholesome entertainment as I feed on this spaghetti. Afterwards, if you have questions, we can talk.

*(The radio switches on. Sounds of a ball being knocked out of the park. The crowd goes wild.)*

**VO REPORTER:** Mio Dio. Buongiorno signore e signori, today, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1923, may in fact be an historic day. Rookie player, Harvey Blackburn, has just batted four home runs a single game! This makes him the third player, ever, in the history of the game, to achieve this record. And ladies and gentlemen, wouldn't you know it, I have him right here beside me as we speak.

Mr. Blackburn, may I congratulate you on this momentous accomplishment!

VO THE GUARD: Thank you very much.

VO REPORTER: You're so new to the major league to be having this level of success. Can you tell us your secret?

VO THE GUARD: No secret really. I just don't think about what's going to happen, or how the game's going so far.

VO BACKGROUND VOICE "Lou": Hey great game, great game...

VO THE GUARD: Thanks Lou, yeah--

VO 2<sup>ND</sup> BACKGROUND VOICE: We need you over here, Mr. Blackburn...

VO THE GUARD: Sure thing, just a minute.

VO 3<sup>RD</sup> BACKGROUND VOICE: It's the *President* Harv, he wants to congratulate you, come on.

VO REPORTER: So you're not really doing anything while you're out there, have I got that right?

VO THE GUARD: I guess that's right.

VO REPORTER: Well, that sounds easy enough! I'll try not doing anything the next time my *wife* tells me to--

*(The radio makes scrambling sounds then clicks off.)*

**THE GUARD:** *(staggered and quiet)* That was me, wasn't it?

**PEDRO:** Yes.

**THE GUARD:** *(pleased)* I batted four homers in a game... Major league... Who was I playing for? What team?

**PEDRO:** You just heard yourself bat for the Yankees.

**THE GUARD:** *(total dismay)* Oh hell... not the Yankees!

**PEDRO:** *(understandably annoyed that The Guard doesn't want this)* It's incredible. Human feelings change as fast as their fantasies do: constantly. Watch this. How do you feel about **this**.

*(The alien sucks the rest of the spaghetti through the straw as one long noodle. Then the puppet alien hand flings the straw at The Guard, then flings the plate at The Guard.)*

How do you feel about that.

**THE GUARD:** I don't feel too good about it, if I'm being honest with you.

**PEDRO:** Now how do you feel about this. Watch this.

*(The hand withdraws. The Beautiful Woman emerges from the hatch. She is holding the puppet hand. The hand waves coyly.)*

**THE GUARD:** It's You!

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** It's Me!

**THE GUARD:** You mean that was you all along? Inside? Of the hatch?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Yes!

*(She walks towards him; a seductive, sideways grapevine step.)*

How do you feel about this now?

**THE GUARD:** I feel much better now, thanks... Gee.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** I have to *hand* it to you, Special Agent Blackburn. You're a real cool customer.

**THE GUARD:** Yeah?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Yeah. You handle all this so well, I almost wish I could take you with me when I go.

**THE GUARD:** Where would we go?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Anywhere you like. Only trouble is, I tried taking a sweet boy like you from Earth with me before. And you'll never guess what happened.

**THE GUARD:** Tell me, then.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** He died. But he died happy. I know he did.

**THE GUARD:** Yes I... I'm sure he did. Who was the lucky fellow?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Jesus Christ.

**THE GUARD:** (*looks at her with some horror now and backs away*)

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Oh Special Agent Blackburn, if only you knew how hard I try to lend your fellow man a helping *hand*. But they don't really *want* me to help. (*tossing away the hand*) You don't really know *what* you want.

**THE GUARD:** Try me.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Alright. Tell me. What *is it* you want?

**THE GUARD:** If I'm honest with you, I wouldn't mind learning how you do that trick with the radio. Was that really *me* talking on there?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** (*disappointed*) You want to see how the 'trick' is done, and you want it to be about you.

**THE GUARD:** Gee, when you put it like that, I guess that's not what I really want. Now that I think about it, I guess I don't know what I really want. Now that I think about it, I guess I'm sort of scared to *know* what it is I *really* want... I mean, scared of what it may say about me... But if it's the truth, then it's the truth, and I might as well face it.

Can you tell me what it is I really want?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** A better question. I will answer you. Wait without expectation, hope, or fear.

*(Beat. She stands close to him and concentrates. He watches her.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Oh, beautiful for patriot dream

That sees beyond the years (da da da da...)

*(She encourages him to join her.)*

**TOGETHER:** Thine alabaster cities gleam,  
Undimmed by human tears!

**THE GUARD:** *(continues singing softly under her speech, feelingly)*

America! America!

God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood,  
From sea to shining sea.

Oh, beautiful for heroes proved  
In liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved,  
And mercy more than life!

America! America!

May God thy gold refine,

Till all success be nobleness,

And ev'ry gain divine.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** *(says over his singing)*

Sixteen hours ago, an **American** airplane dropped a single bomb that had more power than 20,000 tons of T.N.T. It had more than two thousand times the blast power of the British "Grand Slam" which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

**TOGETHER with THE GUARD'S VOICE ON THE RADIO:** *(faintly echoing under her)*

This bomb is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. With the force from which the sun draws its power, we are now prepared to obliterate, rapidly and completely, every productive enterprise our enemies have above ground, in any city of the world.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** *(no voice under her)*

Many have worked on this project for two and a half years. Few know what they have been producing. We have spent two billion

dollars on the greatest scientific gamble in history- and won.

But the greatest marvel is not the size of the enterprise, its secrecy, nor its cost, but the achievement of scientific brains in putting together infinitely complex pieces of knowledge.

**TOGETHER with THE GUARD'S VOICE ON THE RADIO** (*faintly echoing under her*)

This battle of the laboratories has held fateful risks for us all. We have prevailed. And we must be grateful to Providence that the **Germans**, who have worked feverishly to add atomic power to their arsenal of weapons, with which they have hoped to enslave the world, have failed.<sup>4</sup>

*(The Guard's singing ends.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** (*no voice under her*)  
...That's what you would say if you, Harvey Blackburn, were the 33<sup>rd</sup> president of the United States, just twelve years from now, on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1945.

**THE GUARD:** My God.

**Beautiful Woman:** You don't have to think about it. You know that when it comes to

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<sup>4</sup> August 6, 1945: Statement by the President Announcing the Use of the A-Bomb at Hiroshima (paraphrased excerpts)



it, you will do the thing that you most want to do, without thinking.

**THE GUARD:** (*genuinely moved*) I love you.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Me?...

From the stars to the dust, a mere matter of when

We have met once before, we will meet once again

From the east to the west, and quite out of the blue

There is always this, always suddenly you

How many times, did we almost just meet

Stepping out of the line, into different box seats

Riding here beside you, I feel somehow more real

From the stars to the dust, On The Grand Ferris Wheel

*(She embraces him, beautifully and sadly.)*

**THE GUARD:** (*brushing hair from her forehead*) Who are you? Really?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** (*a confession*) That's on a need to know basis.

**THE GUARD:** (*a bit taken aback*) Then I need to know.

*(The door is flung open. The Pope enters, sees them and points a finger in melodramatic accusation at the Beautiful Woman.)*

**THE POPE:** You. Speak of the Devil and she shall appear.

**THE GUARD:** *(stepping between them to protect the Beautiful Woman)* Careful now. Tell me who you think she is.

**THE POPE:** I don't have to think, I *know* who she is. I've had her investigated by the Gendarmerie. She is a Russian spy. Her name is Ivanna Gettov.

**THE GUARD:** A Bolshevik!?

*(The Guard springs away from her. Points his gun at her as a matter of instinct. This dismays the Beautiful Woman, in a bitterly funny way.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** *(winks at The Pope)* You've got me all wrong, you big pious man, you. I just *look* like Ivanna Gettov.

*(An a-ooga horn on The Radio.)*

I am Pedro, of course. And I have changed my mind. I will not destroy you now. I will let you destroy yourselves.

*(She takes a deep breath and disappears!*

*The Pope and The Guard gasp. They look all around; she can't be seen.)*

**VO REPORTER:** Mio Dio. Buonasera signore e signori, today may in fact be an historic day! Today!...

*(LIGHTS, flicker and go out.*

*Radio scrambles into Intermission music  
and sounds.)*

**END OF ACT I**

**ACT II**

**Scene 1**

*(A card table and chairs has been added to the room. Another table with a pot of coffee and cups.*

*The radio has been shot several more times.*

*Pettybone, his leg wrapped, is propped in a chair by the flying saucer. He has a screwdriver but can't find any screws on the flying saucer to use it on. The Guard leans against the flying saucer casually, drinking coffee.)*

**THE GUARD:** *(meaning the flying saucer)* So what do you make of this oggetto metallico?

**PETTYBONE:** Well, I've never seen anything like it before.

*(Beat.)*

I once saw a chicken play America the Beautiful on a piano. It played the keys with its beak, you know.

**THE GUARD:** Oh did it really?

**PETTYBONE:** Yes.

**THE GUARD:** I've never seen anything like *that!*

**PETTYBONE:** Yes, I saw it with my own eyes! It was incredible.

*(Beat.)*

**THE GUARD:** I once saw a dog save a woman's life.

*(Pettybone looks.)*

I did. A man went to attack her in a field by the road. The dog flung itself at the man's chest. And you knew when you saw it, that the dog knew it could easily be killed by the man, but the dog didn't care, it was there to do its best, and that's what the dog did. ...And then the dog *was* killed by the man. But it gave the woman time to get away. And she did.

**PETTYBONE:** Was the man captured?

**THE GUARD:** No, he was killed. *(The Guard killed him)*

*(Beat.)*

**PETTYBONE:** I've never seen anything like *that*. No, sir.

*(Beat.)*

*(forced cheerfulness)* I've ah, I've *heard* that you're really a spy.

**THE GUARD:** Wherever did you hear a thing like that?

**PETTYBONE:** I *overheard* it, actually, if I'm being honest. Il Duce was shouting about it in here while I was waiting just out there.

**THE GUARD:** Mussolini was shouting about it in here?

**PETTYBONE:** While I was waiting just out there.

**THE GUARD:** Well, where would Mussolini get the idea that I'm really a spy?

**PETTYBONE:** Because the Pope was shouting about it to Il Duce. How he had you investigated by his Gendarmarie, and how important it was not to let you know that they know.

**THE GUARD:** Damn the Pope... Look, do you know what you're dealing with here? I mean with this... metal object?

**PETTYBONE:** Oh goodness me, no. No, I have no idea.

**THE GUARD:** What's your profession anyway?

**PETTYBONE:** I'm an engineer.

**THE GUARD:** As in physics?

**PETTYBONE:** As in trains.

**THE GUARD:** ...It wouldn't seem like those skills would apply here...

**PETTYBONE:** No, they wouldn't seem to apply here, would they... not in theory or in practice now, no...

**THE GUARD:** Well! I guess it's for the best. If you knew what you were doing, you could do something about it! Tell somebody something, or something. Screw something up...

**PETTYBONE:** *(looking at the screwdriver)* I can't screw anything...

**THE GUARD:** *(not listening)* ...If you don't know what you're doing, you pose less risk.

**PETTYBONE:** Gee, I never thought about it that way.

**The Guard:** Well, that's military thinking. Strategy, see? To really control a situation, you want totally empty minds. That's one thing you can say for Mussolini. That man's got an empty mind... You know it's the official opinion of the United States that Mussolini is *good* for Italy? They approve of that thug, in front of the world...

**PETTYBONE:** Is that right. I mean... *(soto)* so you really are a spy?

**THE GUARD:** *(voce)* Say more about this piano-playing chicken.

## Scene 2

*(Mussolini enters.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(nonchalantly taking in The Guard, then to Pettybone)* Well Pablo, have you made any progress?

**PETTYBONE:** No, Duce. I am afraid that I'm still in the dark.

*(The lights go out. Beat.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes, I can see that... You!

*(A crash, off, at an adjoining structure.)*

**PETTYBONE:** ...Who me, Duce?

**MUSSOLINI:** No, you. I'm *pointing* at you.

**THE GUARD:** Intende me? *(you mean me?)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Sì. Get the lights back on this very instant or I will have you shot.

**PETTYBONE:** He'll do it.

**MUSSOLINI:** Of course I will do it. Without *discipline*, an army is just a bunch of people wearing the same color clothes. Now go.

*(The Guard goes and opens the door. Sunlight streams in. The Guard returns to where he was standing.)*



**MUSSOLINI:** I do not see that you have fixed the lights.

**THE GUARD:** Il sole. Ora è luce. (*The sun. Now it is light.*)

(*Mussolini walks slowly over to The Guard until he is standing uncomfortably close.*)

**MUSSOLINI:** You should not play games with me.

(*The Chef appears at the open door.*)

**THE CHEF:** Knock, knock?

**MUSSOLINI:** Who's there.

**THE CHEF:** The Chef.

**MUSSOLINI:** The Chef, who.

**THE CHEF:** ...Oh I see!... ah, I just meant because the door is open, but *knock knock*.

<TOGETHER>

**PETTYBONE:** Who's there?

**MUSSOLINI:** This better be good.

**THE CHEF:** Pecan.

<TOGETHER>

**PETTYBONE AND MUSSOLINI:** Pecan, who.

**THE CHEF:** Pecan someone your own size.

*(The Chef smiles hopefully? Beat.  
Mussolini laughs despite himself.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** That is a good one. That is funny. Excuse me a moment, chef, I was just about to shoot this man.

*(Mussolini goes to pull his gun on The Guard, but he cannot find it on his person?!)*

**THE GUARD:** Looking for this? I cleaned it for you.

*(The Guard produces Mussolini's gun. Mussolini grabs the gun and points it at The Guard. Beat. Mussolini pulls the trigger. Beat. He pulls the trigger again.)*

It won't do you much good. You see, I had to clean the bullets, too.

*(The Guard takes the bullets out of his pocket and intentionally spills some on the floor.)*

*The Guard steps towards Mussolini now, making him take a step back.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Bah!

**THE GUARD:** Now lookit, friend. You think you know something I don't know, but what you don't know is that I know that you know, and, that you don't want me to know that you know.

**MUSSOLINI:** I don't know what you're talking about.

**THE GUARD:** Are you sure about that?

**MUSSOLINI:** Sure, I am sure.

**THE GUARD:** Sure, alright, play it that way if you want to. It won't do you any good. Take the fight to the enemy, that's my motto, chum.

**MUSSOLINI:** Loose lips sink ships, that's mine.

**THE GUARD:** Is that right.

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes, that is right. Dead men tell no tales.

**THE GUARD:** What are you, a pirate?

**THE CHEF:** Do you know any good pirate jokes?

*(They look at The Chef.)*

No? ...Neither do ayyyyyye.

*(They look away from The Chef and back at each other.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Let's just say that I know what I know.

**THE GUARD:** That makes two of us, pal-o.

*(Beat. Pettybone throws his screwdriver out of the open door.)*

What did you do that for?

**PETTYBONE:** I just figured why not...

**THE CHEF:** It feels good to throw things.

<TOGETHER>

**MUSSOLINI:** That is true.

**THE GUARD:** It does.

**PETTYBONE:** My wife throws things all the time.

**THE GUARD:** Welladay.

**MUSSOLINI:** Why are you here, chef? Who let you out of your little, adjoining, hastily-erected detainment camp?

**THE CHEF:** His eminence sent me to tell you that the lights have gone out.

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes yes. I am aware. I have ordered that man there to turn the lights back on and he will not do it. He refuses me. Il Duce. And the fact that the lights are still out, is completely and utterly *his* fault. You tell al Papa that. And tell him that I still think this man should be **shot**.

**THE CHEF:** Right you are, Duce. I will tell his eminence now.

*(The Chef turns to go. Then he stops. He adopts an Errol Flynn-like attitude. He turns to Mussolini.)*

Benito, I understand that as a child you wanted to be a concert *pianist*. ...But you could *Handel* it.

*(The Guard and Pettybone groan. Mussolini does not think it is funny.)*

I see I've struck a *chord*.

*(for The Guard and Pettybone)* Did you hear about the *dog* who played *piano*? Turns out his *Bach* was worse than his bite...

*(They look at each other, pleasantly surprised at this nod to their conversation.)*

*(for Mussolini, devilishly)* How does a pianist like yourself eat his spaghetti? With a tuning fork.

*(This upsets Mussolini who takes off his jacket. The Chef laughs.)*

You know, I wanted to be a comedian, but nobody took me seriously.

*(Mussolini decks The Chef. The Chef is knocked unconscious. The lights flicker, but stay off.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(to no one in particular)* No spaghetti jokes, *Pedro*. That's the last *straw*.

*(to The Chef, nudging him with a toe)*  
Chef? You go now. You go tell al Papa  
what I have said.

*(The Chef nods, a bit dazed but not  
alarmed, this has happened before. He  
goes, shutting the door, so they are in  
the dark again. Beat.)*

**PETTYBONE:** I know it's not my place to  
say so, but it really seems like we  
should be recording this, you know,  
documenting it in some way.

<TOGETHER>

**MUSSOLINI:** This is too secret to be  
documented.

**THE GUARD:** Are you crazy? You want  
to document this?

*(The door opens again. It is The Chef in  
an Errol-Flynn entrance.)*

**THE CHEF:** *(he enters nonchalantly and  
pours himself a cup of coffee)* Before I  
go, I want to say, I've been meaning to  
thank you, Benito.

**MUSSOLINI:** Thank me? Why.

**THE CHEF:** Why? Because the coffee's on  
you.

*(He throws the coffee on Mussolini, but  
the cup is now empty. The Chef smiles,*

*hands the cut to Pettybone, and turns to go.*

*Mussolini pulls his gun on The Chef. Pulls the trigger. Click click click... Mussolini throws the gun at The Chef, but it misses him.)*

It feels good to throw things.

*(Door closes behind The Chef. Beat.*

*The lights in the room buzz, flicker, and turn back on.)*

**PETTYBONE:** Also, and again I know it's not my place to say, but it also seems like it would be, just, incredibly helpful really, to bring in some people who are more *qualified* to know what we're dealing with here.

**<TOGETHER>**

**MUSSOLINI:** Don't be preposterous, Paco, I have every confidence in you.

**THE GUARD:** The last thing we want is someone who would *know* what to do with this!

**PETTYBONE:** 'Paco.'

**MUSSOLINI:** *(a brilliant idea)* ...Someone who would *know* what to do with this... Yes yes... That would be dangerous for us, now wouldn't it... Unless of course... We were on the same side.

**THE GUARD:** Now wait a minute, amigo, what 'side' are we talking about?

**MUSSOLINI:** We are talking about the side of fascism of course!

**THE GUARD:** I was afraid you'd say that. Now lookit, buster. Number 1: 'the side of fascism' is an oxymoron. It's a contradiction in terms. No fascist leader can be on any other fascist leader's side, because if they're a real fascist leader, there can be no other fascist leaders except for themselves. Because they're fascists. They're like leeches that devour their own children and kind. It's disgusting.

Number 2: no upstart like, say, the new Chancellor in Germany, is going to have the time or the inclination to help you with a damn 'oggetto metallico' in the middle of everything he has going on with his own fascist little plans right now.

**MUSSOLINI:** He wanted me to sign a photograph for him.

**THE GUARD:** How sweet. Now Number 3:

**MUSSOLINI:** I did not sign the photograph for him. I just decided that I wouldn't.

**THE GUARD:** That seems pretty needlessly insulting, *guy*. It's a small and flattering request. And, that doesn't help your case any if you're even *thinking* of



bringing that *German* into all this... Now  
Number 3:

**MUSSOLINI:** You do not know what I am  
*thinking.*

**THE GUARD:** Your mind is a blank, and  
credit where credit's due, I do  
appreciate that about you in a situation  
like this. Now Number 3: no one, and I  
mean no one, is going to be better able  
to help you with what you've got here,  
than Uncle Sam. He's got the most  
resources, the best scientists, the best  
coordination. Hell. Uncle Sam is the one  
who's on your side here! **Not that German.**  
*(grabs Mussolini by the shirt front)* I  
**mean that.** *(releases him and smooths the  
shirt, cooly)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(smirks)* Your mind is not a  
blank, *guy.* I know something about you.  
Not about you and 'Uncle Sam,' I know  
that you know that I know about that. No.  
I know something else about you now. *(he  
smiles)* And I cannot agree with you on  
one point: *America* does not have the best  
*scientists.*

*(They stand-off. Beat.)*

**PETTYBONE:** Why do you suppose the lights  
came back on?

*(Beat.)*

Why do you suppose they went out?

**MUSSOLINI:** Go get your screwdriver.

*(Mussolini turns to leave the room, but then turns back to The Guard on his heel—a quotable line.)*

Fanatics always have that gleam in their eye.

**THE GUARD:** *(a better quotable line)* It's the certain knowledge of what they'll die for.

*(Beat. Mussolini exits. When he shuts the door behind him the lights flicker, flicker, flicker and then go out again.)*

**THE GUARD:** Will Pettybone go get the screwdriver when there is no point to it. Let's see.

*(Beat.)*

**PETTYBONE:** I will go get the screwdriver. It may be pointless, but it's something to do.

**THE GUARD:** *(laughs)* Such is Life.

**PETTYBONE:** You know, when Pedro possesses people, he reminds me of Errol Flynn. I always like Errol Flynn.

**THE GUARD:** Everyone does. A man who's in love with life, always flirting with self-destruction. He plays men who put their good lives on the line. He's a hero.

**PETTYBONE:** I wish I was that brave... My wife must be going crazy wondering what's become of me... I guess, ah, I guess *you* wouldn't be married, would you? A fellow in your kind of profession?

**THE GUARD:** What profession is that.

*(The lights turn on.)*

*Pettybone limps to get the screwdriver.  
He opens the door.*

*The Guard stops Pettybone before he'll  
let him just 'go outside.'*)

Lookit: you can't be saying things like that. Okay? Not to anybody. Ever. Do we understand each other?

*(Pettybone nods, leaves, shutting the  
door behind him.)*

*The lights go out.*

*Leaving The Guard alone in the room, in  
the dark.)*

### SCENE 3

*(The Guard lights a cigarette and smokes  
it.)*

**THE GUARD:** He is alone, in a room, in the dark. He is speaking aloud. To himself. In third-person.

*(Beat. Smokes.)*

Chesterfields. 'They satisfy.'

*(Beat. Smokes.)*

He decides to call the President.

*(The Guard opens the door. Light comes streaming through the door. He strikes a jolly Errol Flynn pose, steps into the daylight, and gaily closes the door behind him.)*

*As he leaves, the lights turn back on and stay on.)*

#### SCENE 4

*(Pettybone enters, holding the gun that Mussolini threw. He picks up some of the bullets dropped by The Guard. He loads the gun and hides it behind the flying saucer. He exits.)*

*The hatch opens. Lights twinkle inside.*

*The Chef enters with a black eye, a plate of spaghetti, and a straw. He sets it down by the hatch. He exits.*

*The Pope enters and waits beside the hatch. He paces. He knocks. Nothing comes out of the hatch. He kicks the flying saucer. He exits.*

*The plate of spaghetti is pulled inside the hatch by an invisible force.*

*As this action happens onstage, the following phone calls are being broadcast on the radio.*

*Phone rings. Is picked up. Some static under the conversation.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** *(he needs but refuses translators; we can occasionally hear him flipping through a German dictionary)*  
Guten Tag. Guten Tag, Chancellor Hitler.  
Das ist 'Il Duce.'

**THE GERMAN:** *(distant and muffled)*  
Deutschland?

**MUSSOLINI:** Benito! ...Benito Mussolini?

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland!

**MUSSOLINI:** Ja.

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland, Deutschland,  
Deutschland?

**MUSSOLINI:** Nien. Kien foto!

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland.

**MUSSOLINI:** I just decided I would not!  
*(whispers)* Listen closely now. I must  
whisper. What I have to say is very top  
secret.

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland?

**MUSSOLINI:** I must whisper. Ah... (*flipping pages*) Mund, mündlich, Mönch<sup>5</sup>? Mönch. To whisper.

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland?

**MUSSOLINI:** No not 'monks,' why would I call you about monks? I mean munkeln. Munkeln.

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland?

**MUSSOLINI:** (*louder*) Munkeln. To whisper. Munkeln.

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland?

**MUSSOLINI:** (*shouts angrily*) Munkeln! Munkeln! To whisper!

**THE GERMAN:** (*understands*) Deutschland.

**MUSSOLINI:** We mustn't speak over the phone. We must meet. Come to Magenta. I am engaged in a top-secret project with the Pope.

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland?

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes, the Pope. Al Papa, Der Papst, the Pope.

**THE GERMAN:** Deutschland!

**MUSSOLINI:** Come tomorrow. Ah (*flips*) mörder. Tomorrow. Mörder<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Mouth' 'Oral' 'Monk'

<sup>6</sup> 'Morgen' is tomorrow.

**THE GERMAN:** (*sinister little laugh*)  
Mörder! Den Papst ermorden... Deutschland.

(*They hang up. Phone rings. Is picked up.*)

**THE GUARD:** Hello sir, hello Mr. President Roosevelt, and God bless the United States of America.

**THE PRESIDENT:** (*distant and muffled*)  
Legislation?

**THE GUARD:** This is Special Agent Blackburn, reporting from behind enemy lines in Italy.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Legislation.

**THE GUARD:** Yes, I realize we're not currently *opposed* to Italy. But it's only a matter of time.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Legislation?

**THE GUARD:** Yes sir, it's lovely here this time of year, sir.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Legislation. New Deal.

**THE GUARD:** Of course. Mr. President. You need to know that Mussolini has got his hands on a flying saucer.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Legislation?!

**THE GUARD:** That's right, sir. Little green men. A real UFO<sup>7</sup>. And I have reason to believe that Mussolini is planning to involve his fascist little friend from Germany.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Legislation, legislation...

**THE GUARD:** I know sir, we're not *opposed* to the new German Chancellor either. But that's not all, sir. The Russians are here, too. There's a lady spy.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Legislation?

**THE GUARD:** Ivanna Gettov.

**THE PRESIDENT:** (*surprised laugh*)  
Legislation?

**THE GUARD:** I said, Ivanna Gettov.

**THE PRESIDENT:** (*naughty little laugh*)  
Legislation...

**THE GUARD:** Not me sir, that's her name.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Legislation, legislation.

**THE GUARD:** That's just it, Mr. President. I'm not sure where she is right now. She's disappeared.

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<sup>7</sup> 'UFO' doesn't come into popular usage until the 1950s, but seems to have been a common acronym in the US Military (in the Navy, specifically) throughout the 1940s, with its origin in US Intelligence likely earlier.



**THE PRESIDENT:** (*unconcerned*) Legislation, New Deal, legislation.

**THE GUARD:** I'll do that, sir. Thank you, Mr. President. And God bless America.

*(They hang up. Phone rings. Is picked up.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Zvat<sup>8</sup>, Leader Stalin.

**STALIN:** (*distant and muffled*) Smert<sup>9</sup>, death doom demise doom.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** This is code name Ivanna Gettov, reporting on an encrypted line from Italy.

**STALIN:** Smert?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** I said, Ivanna Gettov.

**STALIN:** (*naughty little laugh*) Tsk tsk tsk.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** The report we received of the crash was accurate. I have seen the alien aircraft, and the alien pilot, sir.

**STALIN:** Smert.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** They invited me in. They literally threw me at it.

**STALIN:** Smert death doom!

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<sup>8</sup> Hail, hallo.

<sup>9</sup> Death, demise, end, doom.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** But I am blown, Leader Stalin. The Pope discovered that I am a spy. This means the Italians and the Americans most likely know as well. The USA also has a man here.

**STALIN:** Doom doom doom.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** With respect, I am sure they will not continue to admit me to the crash site now that they know who I am.

**STALIN:** Smert?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** No sir, they have not made any progress with the aircraft or the alien. Not to my knowledge.

**STALIN:** (*sinister little laugh*) Ubivat<sup>10</sup>... Kill, slay, ubivat...

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Of course you are right, sir, they most likely will call on the German scientists to help them. And if they do, I will do as you say.

**STALIN:** Smert. ...death doom?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Spaghetti.

**STALIN:** Slaughter slay?

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** With a straw.

**STALIN:** (*static crackles*) Ubivat...

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<sup>10</sup> Kill, slay, slaughter, assassinate, do in.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Nyet, Leader Stalin. It is *not* right.

**STALIN:** Do svidaniya.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Do svidaniya, sir.

*(They hang up.)*

## SCENE 5

*(The door opens, and Mussolini shows in The German.*

*The German is holding a bouquet of flowers.*

*Mussolini closes the door. Proud to show off 'his' flying saucer.)*

**THE GERMAN:** A very strange coffin. Leave it to the Vatican to take an ordinary thing and make it outlandish.

**MUSSOLINI:** *(a little surprised)* This is not a coffin.

**THE GERMAN:** No?

**MUSSOLINI:** No. ...This came from outer space.

**THE GERMAN:** No...

**MUSSOLINI:** *(grins)* ...Yes.

**THE GERMAN:** Just what do you mean?

**MUSSOLINI:** I mean that this is a *ship* that came from *space*.

**THE GERMAN:** A real *space-ship*?

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes!

**THE GERMAN:** No!

**MUSSOLINI:** Yes!

**THE GERMAN:** ...No!-

**MUSSOLINI:** -Yes!

*(Beat!)*

**THE GERMAN:** To master this technology would be to master the world!

**MUSSOLINI:** Precisely! This is why I allow you to be here. You have the best scientists in the world. All this power is ours!

**THE GERMAN:** What do I need you for?

*(The German shoots Mussolini.)*

You would not even sign a photograph for me.

*(The Pope enters.)*

**THE POPE:** What is it now? What's going on?

**THE GERMAN:** Aha. Of course you are here. I thought he said he'd killed you. I had come to pay my respects.

**THE POPE:** Kill me? Who? How?

**THE GERMAN:** Why else would he be seeing the daughter of your physician?

**MUSSOLINI:** (*from the floor*) Mussolini does not 'see women'... Mussolini *seizes-*

(*-The German shoots Mussolini again.*)

**THE POPE:** (*just now seeing Mussolini*) My God, you have shot him! You have killed Mussolini!

**MUSSOLINI:** Please... call me Il Duce, as my friends-

(*-The German shoots Mussolini again.*)

**THE GERMAN:** (*turning to the Pope*) Now the question is: what I do with you. I am more powerful with your support- and while you could be a little more enthusiastic, you have not spoken against my new policies.

**THE POPE:** (*eyeing the gun*) I do not share your view of other faiths.

**THE GERMAN:** This is your right. If only the Russians were here. Although we are enemies, and they are famous atheists, they may come to agree with me.

## SCENE 6

*(The Beautiful Woman materializes.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** I am here.

*(The Pope and The German turn.)*

**THE POPE:** Ivanna Gettov.

**THE GERMAN:** *(glances)* You pious man, you.

**THE POPE:** She is a spy for her Mother  
Russia.

**THE GERMAN:** *(smiles at The Pope, beat, looks at the Beautiful Woman)* Good. Very good. Permit me to see if I can convince you both to 'share my view' of other faiths.

This is my right hand. I use it for everything. I am right-handed.

**THE POPE:** Most people are.

**THE GERMAN:** And why?

*(The Pope goes to speak.)*

I will tell you why. Because. When we write, we write from the left to the right. And if you are right-handed, your hand flows across the page, away from the ink. And if you are left-handed, your hand drags through it.

Why does this matter.

*(The Pope goes to speak.)*

Because. Today we have fountain pens with plastic seals and quick-dry ink, and it is not such a problem. But not long ago we used quills and inkpots. And if you were left-handed, the wet ink would smear over your hand.

And if you were a child who was lucky enough to go to a school and learn how to write, that ink would get all over your good clothes. And on the expensive furnishings. And things were not so easy to come by then.

And so, you are this child's parent, or nurse, or teacher, and what do you do?

*(The Pope pointedly has nothing to say.)*

You **beat** them for using the left. And if that does not work, what do you do?...

You tell them it is a sign of Satan, a sign of the Devil. You tell them they are deviants who must conform to the side of the RIGHT. And what is the result of this? Most people, as you say, are right-handed.

But, these days we are making things to **help** the left-handed. We are actively **encouraging** their deviance. This is why a few years ago, two percent of people were left-handed, and today, it is nearly ten.

That means there's *one* of them for *nine* of us. And STILL, we, the superior

majority, we, who are still on the side of the RIGHT, *we* are supposed to help *them* to continue to multiply, this insubordinate and sinister MINORITY??

*(The German grabs the Beautiful Woman's left hand, slams it on the card table, grabs his knife.)*

*(he grabs her left pinky and shakes it)*  
The *one* is weakening the *nine*!

*(he slams it on the table again and cuts off her pinky finger)* Nein!

*(The Beautiful Woman does not flinch or cry out.)*

They say, 'it's so hard to use scissors.'

*(He cuts off another finger.)*

'The door handle is on the *wrong* side.'

*(Cuts off another finger.)*

'It's so hard to use scissors.'

*(The Pope stops The German.)*

**THE POPE:** Stop! For God's sake man, what do you think you're doing? You'll have a war with Russia now!

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** No, I don't think so. You see, I am Pedro.

**THE POPE:** Pedro! It can't be.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** You say that so often.



*(The Beautiful Woman pushes off the fake hand with missing fingers and reveals 'her own' hand.*

*The German stares.)*

**THE POPE:** My God.

**THE GERMAN:** I don't believe it. It seemed so real. The hand was real.

**THE POPE:** *(elated)* This proves that you cannot be God. If you were God, you would not let have let your hand be maimed.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Oh yes I would.

**THE GERMAN:** If she were God?! *(scoffs)*  
Excuse me—

**THE POPE:** No you wouldn't! Why would you allow it to happen, if you can do anything that you want.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Having free will is one of my favorites. I wouldn't want to be without it. Seems unfair to deny it to you.

**THE GERMAN:** *(irritated)* Excuse me—

**THE POPE:** A convenient answer.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** If you want, I will show you what your life would be like without free will. If you want.

**THE POPE:** I want!

## SCENE 7

*(Shifts. The Blue Danube by Strauss plays on the radio.)*

**THE GERMAN:** Excuse me!! May I have this dance?

*(The Pope and The German dance a pas de deux, balletic and beautiful, totally against their will.*

*They do not dance as if they had always been dancers, but they do well.*

*The music ends and they return to 'normal.'*)

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Would you rather live like that, or rather see somebody maimed or killed?

<TOGETHER>

**THE POPE:** Maimed.

**THE GERMAN:** Killed!

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** You see? You don't need to fear an alien invasion, or even God Herself, coming here to destroy you. You do it perfectly well on your own! *(She beams at them.)*

**THE GERMAN:** We want to destroy other people, it's not the same thing at all. *(Beat.)* WHO ARE YOU??

**THE POPE:** She is Pedro.

*(The Beautiful Woman shifts, she is no longer Pedro.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** No. No, my name is Ivanna Gettov. Chancellor Hitler, I presume? Leader Stalin sends his best.

**THE GERMAN:** His best... what.

### SCENE 8

*(The Beautiful Woman and The German pull guns on each other. Beat. They both shoot and are both shot down.)*

*The Pope stands horrified amid the bodies.  
Beat.*

*The Radio begins to play a cavalry charge with horse hooves galloping.*

*The Guard makes a dashing entrance through the door. Sees the corpses.)*

**THE GUARD:** I've heard of running a 'Heil Mary,' but this is ridiculous. President Roosevelt was right. Just wait, and good things will come. That's the American way. Mussolini's dead! Hitler's dead! *(regretfully)* A Bolshi...

*(He pulls an American flag out of his pocket.)*

Well, now that you're all *kaput*, I claim this for the US of A.

*(He puts the flag on the flying saucer.*

*The radio begins to play, 'you're a grand old flag,' then static, then the announcement from the beginning.)*

**VO Reporter:** ...humanity's biggest and most universally shared, yes if I may say so, a universally shared question:

Doctor Flipping... are we alone?

**VO Doctor Flipping on The Radio:**  
Apparently not.

**VO Reporter:** What are we looking at here? Are we in danger? What should we know?

**VO Doctor Flipping:** Well, it's quite simple. If I'm correct, there's just one thing that will be *very* important to keep in mind. You see—

*(Sounds of thugs breaking into the studio.)*

**VO Reporter:** What's going on here? You can't be in here! I'm sorry, but...

*(echoes on the radio)*

...one thing that will be *very* important to keep in mind... very important to keep in mind... one thing...

*(The radio clicks off)*

**THE GUARD:** I heard that broadcast before. Before I came here. I didn't believe

there'd be a darn thing to see. *(beat)* So what's the one thing?

**VO PEDRO MOVING AROUND THE HOUSE:** The one thing..

**THE GUARD:** Yes. What is it.

**VO PEDRO MOVING AROUND THE HOUSE:** Be careful what UFO wish for.

*(Mussolini, the Beautiful Woman, and Hitler all stir, alive and well. They come to their feet, in a daze.)*

I told you I would not destroy you.

You people are capable of anything. You will never stop till you've destroyed yourselves. You must prove to yourselves that you can. You want to do this more than anything.

You are going to destroy yourselves.

YOU ARE GOING TO DESTROY YOURSELVES.

You don't even have to think about it. You know that when it comes to it, you will do the thing that you most want to do, without thinking.

I wish you good luck.

## SCENE 9

*(Pettybone and The Chef storm in, armored in pots and pans.)*

*Pettybone dives for the gun hidden behind  
the flying saucer.*

*The Chef bars the exit.*

*Pettybone aims the gun all around, and  
then above the house towards the Voice of  
Pedro. Beat.*

*He shoots.*

*All scream.*

*Beat. They all look towards the unseen  
fallen Pedro.)*

**PETTYBONE:** *(gasping)* When there's an alien, there's a problem. When there's no alien, there's no more problem.

**THE CHEF:** *(shouting)* There's nothing to worry about now. Alright? Now let us leave! We'll be silent! Let us go!

**THE GERMAN:** I... I just can't take all of this... it's too much!

*(The German faints.)*

**THE POPE:** My God, look at yourselves! Look at what we have become! The alien wasn't our problem. For millennia, the aliens have *never* been our problem.

Our problem is recognizing *every* being's *inalienable right to Peace and Dignity!*

Perhaps, millennia from now, when we master our understanding of this, we will

be civilized enough to become free citizens, not of nations, or even of Earth, but free citizens of the Universe!

*(Beat.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** What you just said should be quoted somewhere.

**THE POPE:** Thank you.

**THE GUARD:** But it *won't* be quoted somewhere, or anywhere else. And that goes for all of you.

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** You can rely on me. After being killed by a world leader and resurrected by an omnipotent alien, I've had enough. Ivanna Gettov of this crazy ride...

**THE GUARD:** Lookit: we may move on with our lives, if we can, but we can never tell another soul on Earth about THIS. Ever. The only thing you can ever say you saw here was an *oggetto metallico*.

*(Echoes on the radio) Oggetto metallico, a metal object, possibly a meteor...*

*(They all look at the radio, astonished that it should still play.)*

*Lights flicker off and then on again.)*

## CODA

*(Music comes to life, like an Italian commercial jingle with an alien/theremin melody.)*

*(As the Beautiful Woman bows.)*

**THE GUARD:** Ivanna Gettov retired from the secret police. She married, raised 6 children, and died peacefully, surrounded by her family. She stopped shooting at people, and they stopped shooting at her.

*(As The Guard bows.)*

**BEAUTIFUL WOMAN:** Shortly after these events, Harvey Blackburn formed a secret spy ring with Russia to share "advanced technological" intelligence. As a part of their reconnaissance work, 2 UFOs were shot down in Los Angeles in 1942 to be recovered and studied by scientists; Harvey Blackburn went MIA during this mission and his body was never found. He looked at the other side of the mirror, and the other side of the mirror looked right back at him.

*(Parenthetically.)*

**THE CHEF:** The 'Battle of Los Angeles' as it came to be known was predicted by Mussolini who made this *strange* remark during an actual speech in 1941, one year prior. Il Duce said, "It is likely that



the United States will be invaded by inhabitants from starry space next year..."

*(As The Pope bows.)*

**MUSSOLINI:** Criticized for being 'too friendly' with fascists, the end of Pope Pius the Eleventh's legacy is marked by his condemnation of them. Mere months after this condemnation, he suffered **two** heart attacks in a matter of hours. Several leaders within the Vatican suspected that he was murdered by his physician, the father of Mussolini's mistress. Mussolini and Hitler were both present at his funeral. He lived and died by the company he kept.

*(Parenthetically.)*

**THE CHEF:** As this Pope's burial plot was excavated, the bones of St. Peter were discovered. Peter is of course the Anglican of **Pedro**.

*(As Mussolini bows.)*

**THE GERMAN:** Mussolini took his army to WWII on the side of Germany, but they only succeeded in wearing the same color clothes. Mussolini became a puppet who ruled Italy as a pseudo-German state. So, one afternoon in 1945, Benito Mussolini, and his mistress, were summarily executed by the **Italians**, hung by their heels in a public square, cut down and thrown in the gutter to be ridiculed, and buried in an

unmarked grave. He turned his back on his countrymen, and they turned their backs on him.

*(As The German bows.)*

**PETTYBONE:** The day after Hitler learned that his 'friend' Mussolini had been killed, and he was already beset by both the allies and Russia's Red Army, Hitler tested a cyanide capsule on his dog, Blondi, found that it killed the dog, gave another capsule to his new bride, and shot himself in the **right** temple with a Walther PPK. His body was rolled in a rug, carried outside, and burned with petrol for several hours. He had no respect for human life, including his family's and his own.

*(As Pettybone and The Chef bow.)*

**THE POPE:** Pettybone and The Chef anonymously published *The Uratia Book*, otherwise known as *The Earth Book*, a 2,000-page transcript of physic communiques with alien beings in our "local universe." Central to this book is the idea of God as every being's invisible twin. This is *remarkably* like the *Egyptian's* concept of *Ka*.

**PEDRO:** *(actor emerges from the hatch)* The book was authored in part by Pedro, who of course *did not die!*

And while he continues to wish you good luck in destroying yourselves, he left one final word of **warning** for the good people of Earth:

*(Reads from a piece of stationery.)*

"It's a *small matter*, but don't believe everything you hear about *atoms*. They *make up Everything*."

*(Beat to force the groan.)*

"Seriously folks, don't take things too seriously; most things aren't Important."

Thank you so much signore e signori,  
you're very beautiful, good night!

*(The radio scrambles, echoes, 'night,  
night, night.'*

*A huge flash like a ball of lightning.*

*Black out.*


*Music plays a creepy little: "twinkle  
twinkle little star..."*

*Sounds of a rabid raccoon snarling.)*

**THE END.**

Actual telegram.

Mod. 1081



**UFFICIO TELEGRAFICO DI MILANO**  
TELEGRAMMA

Indicazioni di urgenza		Circuito nel quale si deve fare l'invio del telegramma	
P. 1. 1. 1. SU TUTTE LE PRIORITÀ		"RISORVATISSIMO"	
<p>Il Circuito con annesso ufficio responsabile della esecuzione del servizio delle telegrafiche.</p> <p>La voce deve essere in grado per essere a la rapida e efficace trasmissione del messaggio.</p> <p>Le voci di servizio ed i messaggi concernenti al servizio postale (P. 1. 1. 1.) sono riservati e non si possono trasmettere.</p>			
Spazio per il numero di invio		Spazio per il numero N.	
Data della presentazione			
Orario	Destinazione	Precedenza	Di
Data e ora		Di e ora	02

NO  
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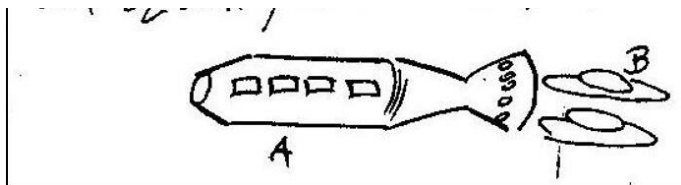
2412

Milano: Agenzia Stefani - Milano

Stampato in Italia

A 'highly confidential' Italian Government telegram dating back to June 1933 from the Director of Special Affairs: 'On the personal order of *Il Duce*, absolutely no mention is to be made of the alleged landing of an unknown aircraft on national soil – the same applies to today's news due for publication by the Stefani Agency [and] individual journalists – Maximum penalty for non-compliance will be enforced by the Tribunal for State Security.' (*Roberto Pinotti/Alfredo Lissoni*)

Sketch of the 1933 aircraft sent in 1936 by a secret agent, code name "Andrea," to another code name "Valiberghi."



Location of the crash site.



The illustration of an 'enormous and brilliant flash of lightning' (a sort of ball lightning) which according to *Domenica del Corriere* injured five pedestrians on the road between Magenta and Novara.



*Sullo stradale fra Novara e Magenta, cinque operai che rincasavano in bicicletta durante un temporale sono stati investiti dal fulmine e gettati violentemente a terra. Uno di essi è rimasto gravemente ferito.*  
(Disegno di A. Belloni)

Artist rendering of the 1933 crash.

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# OGGETTO METALLICO



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