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Isaac And the Lamb

A Short 3-Character Comedy

by

Harold Kimmel

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CHARACTERS

ABRAHAM: *107 years old. (Can be played by a woman with a false beard)*

ISAAC: *7 years old. (Can be played by a man or woman)*

SENOCH: *110 years old. (Can be played by a woman in a false beard)*

SETTING

In the desert; outside Senoch's tent

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SETTING: *In the desert; outside SENOCH's tent.*

AT RISE: *SENOCH sits at the entrance to his tent. ABRAHAM and ISAAC approach. ISAAC is carrying a document. (A stone tablet).*

ISAAC

Is that Senoch, the lawyer, Dad?

ABRAHAM

The Bedouin's own barrister. It's him. Try to get acquainted. It's a good career.

ISAAC

As shifty as the desert sand.

ABRAHAM

I need advice, Isaac. I need advice.

ISAAC

Don't you trust the Lord then, Dad?

ABRAHAM

I never met him face to face. But you might have.

ISAAC

I saw him peering over your shoulder when you raised that knife to give me the chop.

ABRAHAM

"Abraham!" spake the Lord, "I was only putting you on." Then he took a sheep instead along with a full-bodied red.

ISAAC

I could have ended up among the roast potatoes. I had to leave a little bit of myself like a Hebrew must, and it still aches down there.

SENOCH

(Calling) Hi! Abraham and little Isaac. What can I do for you? Sit down.

(ABRAHAM and ISAAC sit.)

ABRAHAM

How are you?

SENOCH

What you see is what you get.

ABRAHAM

So, Senoch, you handle property or not?

SENOCH

I'm into everything. How much of it is there?

ABRAHAM

Give him the document, Isaac.

ISAAC

(Handing over document) The Land of Canaan itself. Nothing else.

ABRAHAM

(Annoyed) Leave it to me, Isaac!

SENOCH

(Studying document) You've done good for an asylum-seeker. Who's parting with the merchandise?

ABRAHAM

The Lord.

SENOCH

(Thinking) The Lord? The Lord? He's the guy that did the Flood? Is that right?

ABRAHAM

You heard of the Flood then?

SENOCH

It's well known. As a disaster it lacked a little imagination.

ABRAHAM

What do you mean?

SENOCH

Well, you take those other gods, like Baal and Molloch. Yeah? They would have piled on the agony more! Let's face it, the Flood was a little dull! And the dialogue? Nobody talks like that anymore!

ISAAC

The rainbow was good.

SENOCH

The Flood had promise. But what do we get? We get lots of cute little creatures in pairs. No panic. Nothing. The wild animals should have been prowling the ark, snarling and crapping on the deck.

ISAAC

I like the tigers the best. They're vicious.

SENOCH

And where's the romance and intrigue! Baal now, would have had them all fighting and cursing, with the tough guy Noah, and his three bully-boy sons grilling the stowaways and tossing them overboard.

ISAAC

And tigers don't get sea-sick.

ABRAHAM

Is this a lawyer's tent or a literary agency or what! Just tell me if I've come to the wrong place!

SENOCH

OK so I'm only a part-time lawyer. I always wanted to be an entertainer. A singer or tight-rope walker. Something like that. I actually go busking at the various oases when I can.

ISAAC

Next time there's a mirage, I'll watch out for you.

SENOCH

Philistines!

ABRAHAM

Who?

SENOCH

Philistines. Immigrants. They get all the best jobs managing oases.

ABRAHAM

(Irritated) I'm an immigrant myself! From Ur of the Chaldeas!

SENOCH

You're different, Abraham. You're a professional person, like me.

ABRAHAM

(Mollified) I am?

SENOCH

(Pointing at document) It says here at the behest of the Lord, you carried out some ritual surgery on yourself and your son.

ISAAC

At my dad's age his hand is not too steady.

ABRAHAM

(Annoyed) You'll feel it at the back of your head!

SENOCH

(Pruriently) What is it exactly? This ritual surgery? I can only guess. *(Scratching his head)* It don't sound right.

ABRAHAM

Why not?

SENOCH

There's something wrong. There should have been more suffering and conflict. Ennobled by your torment you could have received the title deeds. I would have gone along with that.

ABRAHAM

I'll ask again. Is this a lawyer's tent or a literary agency or what! Just tell me if I've come to the wrong place!

SENOCH

(Pruriently) As your lawyer I'd better see exactly what happened to you. In that area, I mean.

ABRAHAM

(Embarrassed) Where's your secretary? She can walk in at any time.

SENOCH

She's doing a translating course. After that Babel Tower thing came tumbling down you know, there's going to be a lot more work. Now everybody speaks a foreign language.

ISAAC

(Trying to be funny, adopting foreign accent) Everybody should speak like me!

ABRAHAM

They vexed the Lord poking up into the sky like that to get to heaven.

SENOCH

But what sort of episode is that! You wanted a gruesome punishment to make an impact. Making them all talk in different languages just isn't good enough and the tower should have fallen on top them because of cheap Chaldean stone.

ABRAHAM

(Incensed) There you go again, Senoch! Leave Ur of the Chaldees out of it!

SENOCH

O.K. O.K. I understand. But you got to agree that Tower of Babel business could have been better. You needed crooked contracts and bribery. That kind of thing. Perhaps even a little hanky-panky. Let's see now. *(Thinking)* Yeah, the chief engineer couldn't concentrate on his work because of it. Some little cutie drawing water at the well perhaps.

ISAAC

(Leering) A pitcher on a bare shoulder. You should see the pair on Rebecca!

ABRAHAM

(Smacking ISAAC over the head) Stop looking so crazy! And who has ever heard a name like Rebecca!

ISAAC

Nobody. She's the first.

ABRAHAM

You're only seven years old.

SENOCH

Relax, now Abe. You're a hundred and seven. That's a lot of sand through an hour-glass.

ABRAHAM

We're all getting older.

SENOCH

Yeah, even Methuselah finally snuffed it.

ABRAHAM

I heard.

SENOCH

They say he went downhill quite fast over the last hundred years.

ABRAHAM

Sad.

SENOCH

You been on the camel too long. Get more exercise.

ABRAHAM

(Placated) I brought a souvenir. I'll slip back to the camel. You two must get acquainted.

(SENOCH grimaces; exit ABRAHAM.)

ISAAC

I know what you're going to say.

SENOCH

What?

ISAAC

You're going to say, "You're a big boy now."

SENOCH

I wouldn't say that.

ISAAC

Why not?

SENOCH

Because you're nothing but a little squirt!

ISAAC

I'm bigger than when I was born.

SENOCH

When you were born, your dad was a hundred years old. Did he give a party! I'd not seen anything as wild since Sodom and Gammorah!

ISAAC

I heard what went on there.

SENOCH

It kind of ended abruptly.

ISAAC

With fire and brimstone.

SENOCH

That wasn't too bad but that old lady turning into a pillar of salt, that was a good touch. I hadn't heard it done before.

ISAAC

The Lord has his moments.

SENOCH

I still prefer Zeus. At a fancy dress party he'd dress up like a bull or a swan and go prowling for pussy. *(Pause)* What do you think of all this land you and your dad are getting?

ISAAC

I'm not the fresh air type myself.

SENOCH

I hope you don't prefer the indoor abominations.

ISAAC

I'm listening.

SENOCH

You don't want to hear too much.

ISAAC

No?

SENOCH

I know you got one or two bad habits.

ISAAC

(Guiltily) I've just been up the mountain with my dad. Give me a break!

SENOCH

What! In those sandals!

ISAAC

All the kids are wearing them.

SENOCH

Up the mountain, hey? Your dad, too!

ISAAC

It was all sweaty and hot. The Lord told him to collect firewood. Me for a kebab! Just imagine that!

SENOCH

(Wisely) I can believe it, Issy. These days a lot of business is actually done at barbecues.

ISAAC

Anyway, in the end the Lord was willing to take the roast lamb instead.

SENOCH

(Enthusiastically) The suspense must have been terrific! Imagine that! A father haggling over his son's life. Out there on the cliff top. Exposed to all the elements with the gleaming blade and crackling blaze. I like it! And all this land falls into your dad's lap.

ISAAC

And I'm sprung from those loins.

SENOCH

My nose says there might be something for me too.

ISAAC

You got to have more than the nose. There's another qualification.

SENOCH

And what's that?

ISAAC

There's another qualification and I can't show you out here.

SENOCH

Why not?

ISAAC

(Looking upwards) There are too many hungry birds up there with good eyesight. They swoop and peck, and I've lost enough already.

(SENOCH and ISAAC enter the tent and disappear from view. Their VOICES can still be heard.)

SENOCH (*Off*)

My word!

ISAAC

You should see my old man!

(Pause.)

SENOCH

So? Here's a knife. I want membership.

ISAAC

Keep still!

(Pause.)

SENOCH

Ouch! You going blind or something! You cut off my toe!

ISAAC

I lost my way. I'm only seven.

SENOCH

(Angrily) Your old man should have left you up there and taken the sheep!

(Enter ABRAHAM sounding ram's horn.)

ABRAHAM

(Looking around) Where's everybody?

(He sounds ram's horn again. SENOCH and ISAAC reappear. SENOCH is limping.)

ABRAHAM (*Cont.*)

Say, what is going on, Senoch? Why are you limping?

SENOCH

(Pointing to relevant area) Your little Issy was giving me that new Hebrew look but lost his way.

ABRAHAM

(Proudly) I wanted him to do law but surgery is just as good.

SENOCH

I want a piece of all this real estate. It's got a lot of potential.

ABRAHAM

What sort of lawyer are you, Senoch? If you read the contract, it says the offer is only open to me and my seed.

SENOCH

Your seed? What's with the farmyard jargon?

ABRAHAM

My descendants, you fool!

ISAAC

(Smiling) And I'm one of them.

SENOCH

Can't you adopt me as your son?

ABRAHAM

Are you crazy! You're older than I am. Besides Sarah and I were trying for a daughter.

ISAAC

What about me!

ABRAHAM

Well, what about you?

ISAAC

(Pointing to SENOCH) I don't want a brother who hops.

SENOCH

Come on, Abe. Let me draw up the adoption materials. It will be on the house.

ABRAHAM

(Amused) We'll see.

SENOCH

(Gesticulating) I can just see it. Yeah. The making of a great Nation. The triumphs. The disappointments. The glory of it all and the shame. Tough guys and screwballs. Fistfights and sword-play! *(Feeling inspired)* I got a vision coming on. I see a hero!

ISAAC

The one that gets the girl. Like Rebecca.

SENOCH

Let's see. This musical shepherd-kid, now, let's call him Dave. He develops a skill slinging stones at the sheep. When this great big bruiser comes muscling in on the territory, he lets him have it real good with one of his best lumps of rock. With his music, good looks and opportunism Dave is quickly promoted to leader.

ISAAC

Of the band?

SENOCH

That too. But it's only a prophecy. Someone will have to work on it.

ABRAHAM

We'll find someone.

SENOCH

(Prophetically) I see another of your tribe emerging. But he should have come earlier than the first. Prophets are never predictable.

ISAAC

Let's hear.

ABRAHAM

Yes.

SENOCH

Let's call him Mose. They're in Egypt or somewhere. Exploited real bad. He's an agitator with a privileged background but gets his followers to bust out in a hurry. They dodge the tsunami that douses the hordes of the Pharaoh. It's all so quick the Hebrews don't have time to bake a couple of loaves properly. There's nothing worse than flat bread.

ISAAC

You should try flat beer.

SENOCH

That's not all. He goes up this mountain to meet the Big Guy in the sky.

ABRAHAM

You mean the Lord?

SENOCH

Someone like that. He gives our Mose a list of stuff you must not do too much of. You know the kind of thing? Don't do this and don't do that. Always just make sure you get a good lawyer like me.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes