

## Characters

- Theo (M/F)** - An average man/woman
- Prophet 1 (M/F)** - A seeker of sacred truth.
- Prophet 2 (M/F)** - Another seeker of sacred truth.
- Prophet 3 (M/F)** - Yet another seeker of sacred truth.

## Scene 1

**(An empty stage possibly with a single spot on center stage. At rise, the stage is dimly lit and empty except for a single chair center stage. A single spot opens on the chair. On the chair is a box with something inside. Theo enters. Upon reaching center stage, Theo picks up the box, turns, and addresses the audience.)**

**Theo:** It finally came. **(indicates the box)** It's my birthday. Actually, it's three days *after* my birthday but my birthday present finally came. Every year my sister calls me on my birthday. She never talks to me any other time of the year. We get along fine, it's just that she has her life and I have mine and we don't really have much to say to each other. Except on my birthday. She calls in the morning and tries to sing Happy Birthday to me though singing was never one of her talents then she says 'your present is going to be late this year.' It's late every year because she just ordered it minutes before she called me. I don't mind, though. At least she remembers my birthday.

**(Prophet 1, Prophet 2, and Prophet 3 enter at the back of the house and move toward the stage as they talk to the audience.)**

**Prophet 1:** **(to the audience on the house left side)** Have you seen him?

**Prophet 2:** **(to the audience in the centre aisle)** Have you seen her?

**Prophet 3:** **(to the audience on the house right side)** Have you seen it?

**Theo:** **(not noticing the Prophets)** She never asks me what I want so I never know what I'm going to get. Not that I don't mind surprises but sometimes I get the most hideous things. I mean, really. Who needs yet another shaving kit or a magazine about big game hunting? There's only so many ugly sweaters a person can tolerate. One year she gave me a pair of socks that looked like they had been through every battle of World War Two. **(notices the Prophets then ignores them)** I guess I should be happy she even remembers at all. Anyways, **(opens the box)** I can't wait to see what I got this year. **(looks in the box)** Oh! She's outdone herself this time. **(looks at the audience)** A goddamn eyesore!

**(Prophet 1, Prophet 2, and Prophet 3 gasp at the sound of Theo's last words. They immediately stop and stare at him. After a moment, they look at each other then slowly come on stage. They bow before Theo.)**

**Prophet 1:** **(repeatedly)** You are him!

**Prophet 2:** (repeatedly) You are her!

**Prophet 3:** (repeatedly) You are it!

**Theo:** (interrupting) Hey, hey! What's going on here?

**Prophet 1:** You are he whom we seek!

**Prophet 2:** You are she!

**Prophet 3:** You are the great one!

**Theo:** What? Oh, no, no, no. I'm just some average person. I don't know what you're talking about.

**Prophet 2:** But you said...

**Prophet 1:** Yes, I heard it!

**Prophet 3:** You spoke the words.

**Theo:** What words?

**Prophet 3:** You said 'God Am I.'

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**Prophet 1:** And then you said something else but I couldn't understand it.

**Prophet 2:** I think it was: 'Be sore afraid.'

**Prophet 3:** Or maybe: 'surely, it is so.'

**Theo:** I didn't say any of those things.

**Prophet 2:** Yes you did.

**Prophet 3:** You stood right there and shouted 'God Am I.'

**Prophet 1:** We heard it.

**Theo:** (**remembers**) Oh, no. You mistook what I said. I didn't say "God Am I", I said "goddamn eyesore."

**Prophet 1:** (**together**) What?

**Prophet 2:** (**together**) Blasphemer!

**Prophet 3:** (**together**) Kill him!

**(The Prophets rise up and move to attack Theo.)**

**Theo:** Wait, wait! I can help you find what you are looking for.

**(The Prophets stop attacking Theo.)**

**Prophet 1:** You can?

**Prophet 2:** Can you?

**Prophet 3:** Can you really?

**Theo:** (**unsure**) Um, well, sure. You seek a great omnipotent power of the universe, the supreme oneness, the unmoved mover, is that right?

**Prophet 1:** (**together**) Yes!

**Prophet 2:** (**together**) Yes!

**Prophet 3:** (**together**) Yes!

**Theo:** What makes you so sure that **(to Prophet 1)** He, **(to Prophet 2)** She, **(to Prophet 3)** or It is actually here?

**Prophet 3:** We have been given signs.

**Prophet 2:** Prophecies that have been fulfilled.

**Prophet 3:** Portents that have been revealed.

**Theo:** Signs? What signs?

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**Prophet 1:** I was walking on the street and came to a corner and suddenly—for no apparent reason—the lights went out (**snaps fingers**) just like that.

**Theo:** The streetlights?

**Prophet 1:** The stoplights.

**Theo:** The stoplights went out, so what?

**Prophet 1:** It is a sign given to us in scripture.

**Theo:** A broken stoplight is just a light, not a sign.

**Prophet 1:** It is written: 'Behold for the light shall be taken, and all colours erased, and the flock shall be left to wander.' So sayeth the Great One.

**Theo:** But...

**Prophet 2:** I was called to eat at a local inn when I received a strange message.

**Theo:** What local inn?

**Prophet 2:** Marty's on 25th.

**Theo:** That's not an inn, that's a dive.

**Prophet 2:** When I was given a menu there were the words, 'A great mystery shall be revealed to you' scrawled within.

**Theo:** Well, if you had ever eaten at Marty's before you'd know what that means.

**Prophet 2:** It is written: "He who eats at the house of the wicked in pure heart shall be blessed." So sayeth the Mighty One.

**Theo:** I've eaten there plenty of times and never...

**Prophet 3:** I was marked as a messenger of the holy. In the street, I was attacked by an agent of the wicked. Branded an enemy of all that is evil, I was made a martyr through the suffering of pain and torture and the loss of my livelihood for it is written, 'The just shall suffer at the hands of the unrighteous and shall be given a sign of their reward.' So sayeth the Great One.

**Theo:** You were mugged.

**Prophet 3:** You are not convinced.

**Theo:** All those things may have simple explanations.

**Prophet 1:** Yes, of course, but what is important is that they all occurred to each of us near the same time and each fulfilled prophecy.

**Theo:** And all of those things have brought you here to me?

**Prophet 2:** That is right.

**Theo:** Well, I hate to break it to you but you've got the wrong guy.

**Prophet 3:** Are you saying that all our sacred and ancient signs were wrong?

**Prophet 2:** That our holy inspiration has misled us?

**Prophet 1:** That we have been guided to a historic revelation of our master by mistake?

**Theo:** Well... yes.

**Prophet 1:** **(Together)** What? Blasphemer! Infidel! Liar! Kill him!

**Prophet 2:** **(Together)** What? Blasphemer! Infidel! Liar! Kill him!

**Prophet 3:** **(Together)** What? Blasphemer! Infidel! Liar! Kill him!

**(Prophets charge)**

**Theo:** Wait! I have what you are looking for. **(holds up the box)** Here! It is here.

**(Prophets 1, 2, and 3 fall to their knees.)**

**Theo:** The Great One is in here and has made me its poor and unworthy guardian.

**Prophet 3:** How did you come by such a thing?

**Theo:** Prime Membership!

**Prophet 2:** Surely, you are blessed.

**Prophet 1:** May we see him?

**Prophet 2:** Her?

**Prophet 3:** It?

**Theo:** No! Its magnificence would be too much for mere mortals like you or I. It is written: “Never look at the sun without proper eye protection.” You are, however, allowed to touch.

**(The Prophets gasp.)**

**Prophet 1:** But we are not worthy.

**Theo:** No you are not. Nonetheless, as you have already made clear, you have been chosen. Who wants to go first?

**Prophet 1:** **(Together)** Me! Me! Me!

**Prophet 2:** **(Together)** Me! Me! Me!

**Prophet 3:** **(Together)** Me! Me! Me!

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**Theo:** OK. You!

**(Theo points to Prophet 1 who gets up and stands next to Theo.)**

**Theo:** Very carefully, reach into the box but do not look! Understand?

**Prophet 1:** **(nods, turns head, slowly puts hand in box, gasps, removes hand, then moves downstage right to address the audience.)** I have touched the master. He is like a snake. Long and thin he glides along the surface of the earth and spreads wisdom to those who will listen. His followers he protects but beware to those who do not follow in his clear path. To them shall he pounce until the poison of their evil is drained from their bodies and they are made pure again. Hear me and follow me for I have touched the sacred and will guide you in the ways of truth and right.

**Theo:** **(to Prophet 2)** OK. Your turn.

**Prophet 2:** **(nods, turns head, slowly puts hand in box, gasps, removes hand, then moves downstage centre to address the audience.)** All prophets before me have been deceived for I have been shown the truth. I have touched the divine and she is light and thin like a gossamer wing. She floats through the air with grace and beauty. Those whom she touches are filled with wonder and joy. Those who speak of poison and purity through suffering are misguided. The divine speaks in hushed whispers to those who are still enough to hear. She spreads her love

above us and protects us. Hear me and follow me for I have touched the sacred and will guide you in the ways of truth and right.

**Theo:** (to **Prophet 3**) Your turn.

**Prophet 3:** (nods, turns head, slowly puts hand in box, gasps, removes hand, then moves downstage left to address the audience.) Do not listen to those who proffer false witness before you. I have touched the Great One and it is neither snake nor bird. It is something so much more than those things, so much greater than any living being. The Great One is like a pillar—strong and tall. It supports the weight of the whole world and connects above and below. It is immovable and unshakeable. It provides the foundation for all other things. Without it, nothing else could develop. Hear me and follow me for I have touched the sacred and will guide you in the ways of truth and right.

**Prophet 1:** Do not follow them! Block your ears! All manner of terrible things will befall you should you be deceived by their false words.

**Prophet 2:** Do not be misled by fear and threats! Come be filled with the divine affection your miserable lives have never experienced.

**Prophet 3:** Do not trust them. Their beliefs come and go. They change their words to suit the blowing winds and their own hidden agendas. Do not be fooled.

**Prophet 1:** (to **Prophet 3**) What would you know of the truth? Your way is stiff and unmoving. You are preaching falsehoods.

**Prophet 2:** (to **Prophet 1**) The false words come from your mouth. Your way is based on twists and turns of logic that allow anyone to interpret the teachings as they like.

**Prophet 3:** (to **Prophet 2**) Is your way any better? You speak of an ethereal and elusive presence. How can one come to know such a presence much less trust those who act as representative to it?

(The Prophets argue with each other.)

**Theo:** (interrupting) Hey! You got what you came for. If you feel the need to tell everyone else about your experience, fine, but may I remind you that you are in the presence of... (lifts the box) the box!

**Prophet 1:** (Together) The box!

**Prophet 2:** (Together) The box!

**Prophet 3:** (Together) The box!

**(Prophets kneel)**

**Theo:** Now, go from here and... play nice! For it is written, 'Ain't no mountain high enough, ain't no valley low enough, ain't no river wide enough to keep me from getting to you.'

**Prophet 1:** Words of the Supreme One?

**Theo:** The Supremes. Now go!

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**(Theo watches as the Prophets head back into the house and leave the same way they entered while they implore their section of the audience to follow them. Theo looks at the box and speaks after they have exited the house.)**

**Theo:** This may have been the best birthday present yet. **(reaches into the box and pulls out a carving in the shape of an elephant)** An eyesore for sure. **(a beat)** I'm not even sure where I would put this. I barely have room for all the other junk my sister has sent me over the years. You know, maybe I'll just leave it here for someone else to find. It does seem to inspire strange reactions in people. **(sets the carving on the stage floor)** I wonder what I'll get next year. **(exits)**

**(The stage lights dim until only the carving is lit then the lights go black.)**

**Curtain**