



THAT BLASTED SALESMAN

by John Hughes

A SMITH SCRIPT

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That Blasted Salesman

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This is a historical play set in the middle ages. It is the morning, of the day, of a battle that the English are going to have with the French. Unfortunately, the English arrows have not arrived, but the day may be saved by the arrival of a salesman from the 21st century selling weapons. The problem is that everyone is confused as to what these weapons are, with comic consequences.

Any similarities to Monty Python or Black Adder are purely accidental.

Months of historical research has gone into the making of this play.

Presenter: No flash or digital photography or video cameras or mobile phones as they haven't been invented yet.

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| Cast: | Female 6 or 2, Male 5 or 1, Total of 7 |
| King: | Not very bright. |
| Royal advisor: | In the style of Stephen Fry, could be female |
| Dandelion: | Effeminate male or could be female |
| Baldock: | Butch female |
| Cleaning Lady: | Young, with strong French accent, really a spy |
| Sergeant: | Sergeant major type. Male or female. |
| Marshal Beday: | French general |

The scene is set in the king's tent on the morning of a battle with a French army, with a table in the centre and some chairs.

Baldock: Oh yay, we goetheth to seek yon enemy, I spake of thay with nay fear, ye challenge is at hand, and I goeth without spakeing of ye fear.

(Sergeant enters)

Sergeant: What are you wittering on about Baldock? We should be preparing for today's battle with the French and it is a lovely morning for it.

Baldock: Oh good morning Sergeant, I was just practising my old English. Oh, thy go ye to glory in yea battle with yon enemy.

(Royal advisor enters)

Royal Advisor: What on earth are you wittering on about Sergeant, you pillock? Oh yea thy go to thy glory in yea battle with yon enemy.

Presenter: King enters with entourage rest of cast.

(Cleaning lady starts cleaning)

Royal advisor: Yay. all hail the King.

(All bow to the king)

King: What are you wittering on about Royal Advisor? Could I hear you talking a load of rubbish again?

Royal Advisor: Sorry my lord. Just practising old English with Baldock.

King: Never mind old English, you should be concentrating on today's events! It's a lovely day for the battle. I have been looking forward to today for weeks. Need to get our own back on Beday, for the thrashing he gave us last time.

Sergeant: But my lord that wasn't our fault, he started before we were ready.

King: Well we had better be ready this time, or heads will roll. Now Baldock, go outside and see what's happening. Sergeant, are we ready to start yet?

(Baldock exits)

Sergeant: No Sire, we are still short of arrows. Our supplier has gone over to the enemy.

King: But why? This should have been sorted out a long time ago, why did the quartermaster not get them ordered?

Sergeant: Because you sacked him two months ago for not bowing low enough. He refused to bow low in front of Dandelion. Don't you remember?

King: Oh yes, I do remember. But why have the suppliers gone over to the enemy?

(As cleaning lady sweeps and cleans the King follows her with interest)

Sergeant: Well, when you sacked the quartermaster, the French offered him a job and he took it together with his suppliers, and they are paying 5 Groats per arrow more than us, but we are trying to find another supplier.

(Baldock enters)

Baldock: Sire, Marshal Beday of the enemy says, are we ready yet, and they are getting fed up and they are getting cold.

King: Tell him we'll be flaming ready as soon as possible. Sergeant is the army ready and able, and in position for the battle, as soon as we get this arrow problem sorted out?

Sergeant: Well see for yourself sire. There they are. *(Points to audience)* You can see that we have a few problems in the ranks over there, and especially over there.

King: Doesn't look too good with that lot over there either. I don't know if the enemy will be frightened of them, but they scare the hell out of me, especially these ones at the front.

Baldock: Sergeant do you know who that lady is? The one that is cleaning.

Sergeant: No idea Baldock, I have never seen her before; perhaps she was taken on as a cleaner by the Royal adviser.

(There is a knock on the door)

Sergeant: Go and see who it is Dandelion.

(Dandelion goes to see, comes back. Baldock leaves)

Dandelion: There is a salesman at the door sire, wants to know if you are interested in double glazing for the castle, name of Paddy O Doors.

King: Oh, for goodness sake, I have a battle to fight, and I get pestered by a blasted salesman. What company is he from?

Dandelion: He's from the Snowdon double glazing company your highness.

King: Never heard of them. Are they very big?

Royal Advisor: Snowdon is quite big, but not as big as Everest sire.

King: Flaming Nora, those salesmen are a blasted pain, they are so pushy, and call at the worst possible moment, and they always waste my time.

Royal Advisor: Indeed sire.

King: Now I have a battle to organise, so let's not waste any more time talking to salesmen, tell him to go away. Now, is there an answer to this problem with the arrows, Royal Advisor, so that we can start this battle as soon as possible? What do you advise?

Royal Advisor: Well the only thing I can think of is to wait until the enemy have fired their arrows at us, then pick them up, and then fire them back.

Dandelion: My lord that is a bad idea.

Royal Advisor: Well that's the best idea I can come up with at short notice, unless anyone has a better idea.

Sergeant: I have heard better ideas.

King: So we have one idea, which is the best idea we can come up with, so who would be daft enough to run around the battlefield under fire picking arrows up.

Sergeant: *(to audience.)* Right you lot, can I have some volunteers? One at a time please, don't all rush for it at once. Anyone? Come on don't be shy, surely there must be someone? You can have a medal. Posthumously if necessary. I will be your friend. No one? Oh dear sire, no one wants to do it.

King: Lily livered layabouts. There must be someone daft enough to do it.

(Baldock enters and all turn and stare at him)

Baldock: What? what? What is it? Why are you all looking at me like that?

King: Ah Baldock, just the man. We have a duty for you, which will cover you in glory, and which will make your King eternally grateful.

Baldock: Oh no, I don't like the sound of that, what is it?

King: Not a big job my dear faithful Baldock. When the enemy fire their arrows at us, you jump out, pick them up, and hand them to our lot. Then we can fire them back again. Simple aye.

Baldock: No no no, my lord, I will have to decline your kind offer as I haven't had my breakfast yet.

King: Good, then you will bloody well be lighter on your feet, won't you?

Baldock: No no , but it is not possible, I have a gammy leg, I cannot go fast enough to do this deed. But it was a great honour to be chosen, But it is not possible I fear. Oh, what a shame.

King: Same old story with you Baldock. Everything is too much trouble. I will remember this Baldock, that you let me down when I needed you. It's always the same with you. I am very disappointed.

Baldock: I only came back with another message from the enemy my lord.

King: Well what did Marshall Beday have to say this time? Moaning again is he?

Baldock: Sire, Marshal Beday says he is getting really really fed up with waiting. They're very cold, and they are suffering from the wind, and if we don't start soon, they are going home.

Royal Advisor: Yes, I heard on the grapevine, that Beday suffers from the wind sire.

King: I heard that too, but we better come up with some ideas or they will go home, and we have just wasted our time.

(Baldock takes Royal Adviser to one side)

Baldock: Royal adviser, do you know who that cleaning lady is?

Royal advisor: Never seen her before Baldock, but she is very tasty, very attractive. Perhaps she was taken on by Dandelion.

King: Oh, where can we get those arrows from, before those wimps go home? Sergeant, are the soldiers still ready?

Sergeant: I will go and have a look sire. *(To audience)* What a load of lily livered layabouts we have here, look lively you lot.

King: That lot out there look a motley crew. It's very worrying. The problem with these English soldiers is as soon as the battle is about to start, they have to have a blasted tea break, and if you complain, then you are confronted with their shop steward, who threatens strike action.