

ISHERWOOD

THE MASSACRE IN PARIS BY GEORGE

MARLOWE

BASED ON A PLAY BY CHRISOPHER

**AN OBJECT THEATRE PIECE FOR
FEUDING FRUIT AND VEGETABLES**

**REFERRING TO THE LATE, LAMENTABLE
EVENTS IN PARIS, AUGUST, 1572**

THE MASSACRE IN PARIS-1572

The Massacre in Paris is said by scholars to be Marlowe's last play. It was written down years after the first performance in the 1590's by actors trying to remember their lines. This gives the play a very uneven quality. We feel that much has been forgotten.

This was one of the first English docu-dramas presenting actual events that

took place in France some twenty years before. There had been plays written about the Wars of the Roses and even the reign of Henry the VII, but this was important even in recent history for most Elizabethans .

For all its rabid anti-Catholicism, Marlowe remained rather close to the historical truth. He is a dramatist and compacts events in time.

Coligny was shot riding his horse in a Paris street, not at the Queen of Navarre's funeral and the Queen of Navarre died of tuberculosis a month before the wedding in Paris. She had already signed the marriage contract her royal rival, so there was really no reason for Catherine to murder the Queen of Navarre (except out of pure Italian malice).

There was such an outcry after the Massacre in Protestant countries that Catherine and Guise claimed that King Charles had ordered the liquidation of the heretics. Guise tried to save his reputation by protecting a few Protestants already during the last days of the massacre. Anjou murdered heretics in a disguise. King Charles IX after a nervous breakdown, was finally forced to claim all the murders were carried out under his orders. His reputation was ruined and he later died. The Valois dynasty never really recovered. It remained stained by innocent blood

The Catholic powers, however, were overjoyed at the news. It is one of the few times recorded that Philip the Second of Spain was seen to smile in public and Pope Gregory struck a memorial medallion.

The political fallout for Catherine and King Charles was that Huguenots could no longer be loyal to the French throne. The Valois could never again be trusted. The civil wars continued. The royal family was caught in the middle, between furious Huguenots and intolerant Catholics. Taxation suffered. France became bankrupt. On the whole the results for the Catholics were negative. Fire and sword could not change a Frenchman's belief. The Valois Family was put more and more under the power of the Guise family and the Catholic leagues. The royal family became no more than a pawn.

What is interesting is how Marlowe condenses and sets the historical events of months into a few long, hot days in August. He shows us the endless evil machinations of the Catholics during that summer. The victims are innocent Protestants who hope for peace and toleration. The poor dupes have been invited to a summer wedding in Paris with a safe conduct from King Charles. They think they will be safe.

Catherine de Medici, in spite of her evil reputation, probably did not plan to murder all her Protestant wedding guests. It seems the royal family over-reacted after the assassination attempt on Coligny. The royal family feared an armed Protestant reprisal, so they struck first. There was an order to eliminate some 70 notable Protestant military men. At the same time there was a popular riot in ever devout Paris. the killing could not be controlled. Bishop Some 4,00 Protestants were murdered. The French ambassadors were told to tell the shocked world, "The events happened through a private quarrel fostered between two houses."

In the present age of religious wars and religious distrust, the play attains a new sort of actuality. It is very much like those American, British New Labour post 9/11 terrorist CGI entertainments. We have to stop them or they will strike again.

A few fundamentalists can discredit whole world faiths. The Moslims are out to get us, before they get us, get them. " You are either for us or against us," said one of the dimmest American presidents in history.

This flawed thinking worked against the Jews in Germany and, before them, against the English Catholics. For centuries the British government could always rely on a national, rabid fear of Catholics based on St Bartholomew's Day, from Guy Fawkes until the late 18th century, to distract the English people from their own rulers incompetence or lack of reform.

In the 70's I took a street theater group up to Northern Ireland. We played in Derry, Hollywood (the only Hollywood I ever worked in) and Belfast. We played a musical fairy tale called "The Rainbow Show." In Derry I began to blow fire against a rather evil dragon. A British soldier told me "to burn the little fenian Bastards!"

I saw heavily armed British soldiers policing the housing estates full of little Catholic children. The soldiers marched through one of our street shows to pour some kind of evil chemical on the dogs that protected the Irish children. Two of my actors were bitten by the angry, overdosed dogs..

The most appalling sight was Belfast itself, once a great industrial city, now a bombed out, boarded up shell. Feuding Christian gangs...beating and blowing up their neighbors. Walls of barbed wire between the neighborhoods...Hatred, fear and revenge making the very air stink. This almost turned me into an agnostic. Religious hatred was still running rampant in modern Britain and incited on the continent.

Marlowe was accused of being an "atheist". Perhaps the complete lack of charity and tolerance he had seen operating in hysterical Tudor England had led him to believe a loving God couldn't exist. In Merry England Jesuits were hung drawn and quartered , while Puritans had their ears sliced off.

Scholars think Kit Marlowe, a known atheist, was murdered in staged brawl,an assassination like an accident, by an agent of the Elizabethan secret service, . The man who stabbed him was later pardoned. Marlowe died in 1593. The Massacre in Paris is his last play.

One of his accusers said, " Marlowe is able to show more sound reasons for atheism, than any divine in England is able to prove divinity."

George Isherwood. Amsterdam, July, 2008

THE MASSACRE IN PARIS BY CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

**ADAPTED FOR A SMALL VEGETARIAN CAST OF THOUSANDS BY
GEORGE ISHERWOOD**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Henri le Fevre- *A Parisian green grocer*

Clothilde- *his hard working wife who likes Catherine Deneuve movies*

Jean Luc- *Henri's younger brother*

Michelle- *Jean Luc's African fiance from Senegal*

Madame Thibault- *A n attractive French housewife who lives at Numero 10, Place D' Italie*

THE CATHOLIC FRUITS

The Old Duke of Squeeze- *an over ripe old lemon of the True Faith*

The Young Duke of Squeeze- *his son, a greener lemon, very bitter*

Catherine, the Queen Mother- *a big domineering pineapple*

The King- *a rotten apple with a worm that always gives him bad advice*

His Worm-*A Machiavellian invertebrate. He whispers bad advice into the sick king's ear*

Herold- *a well dressed Kiwi*

Margo-*his sister, an appealing banana, who peels easily*

Bishop of Lorraine, brother of the Duke of Squeeze- *a proud, round Galican pear*

Domaine- *a repugnant Roman Catholic rhubarb*

Anjou- *a preening, perverted peach that kills for kicks*

Gonzago- *a serial killing pomegranate*

Retes- *a homicidal apricot*

Apothecary- *Du Pont , a grapefruit that specializes in poisonous pesticides,a former employee of IG Farben and Imperial Chemicals*

The Green Nun- *a very sour lime that believes in the Council of Trent had gone too far*

Her Students- *young strawberries that think the Scarecrow of Rome is "totally*

awesome", some have "totus tuus" tattoos and crucifix piercings

William from Orange- *a once Catholic fruit who goes over to the vegetables.*

The Queen's Servants- *devout plums*

THE REFORMED VEGETABLES

Devout Potatoes - *fear only the Devil's hungry bunny rabbits*

Admiral Carotte- *a courageous Calvinist carrot, also sometimes afraid of bunny rabbits*

Henri of Navarre- *a princely, green celery, ready to toss in anyones salad, fears neither rabbits nor no one. Famous for the quote, ' Paris is worth a quiche.'" Later he became a beloved king of France," Le galant vert"*

Old Queen of Navarre- *a roundly Reformed pumpkin. Mother of Prince Henri of Navarre.*

Prince Conde- *a Lutheran leek*

Ramus- *a learned cucumber and royal gastronome. He can make 24 different sauces. That's four more than Gordon Ramsey*

Taleus- *a classically educated egg plant*

Seroune- *a pious red onion often moved to tears*

His Wife- *a yellow onion from Orleans who also easily weeps*

Butcher- *a Lutheran lettuce*

His wife -*a Baptist cabbage*

Loreine- *a Presbyterian Parsnip who believes in predestination*

A yellow Protestant paprika lost in the big city

LOST IS THE MIDDLE

An innocent Tomato- *He doesn't really know where he belongs*

THE MASSACRE IN PARIS

INTRODUCTION

(We are in a Parisian green grocer. In the center stage a long counter. In back crates with fruit and vegetables. Hanging over the counter is a sign- Henri le Fevre- Fruit and Vegetables. A door with a bell attached stage left. Probably it is better that the vegetables are placed stage left, fruit on the right. As the lights rise we see a fat French grocer, Henri wiping down the counter about to close his shop for the night.

Henri- Yes, it is quiet now, but they are still not so close as they once were.

(He pauses and remembers and calls to stage right)

Jean Luc, Michelle take out the days rotten produce!

Jean Luc- *(from off)* Oui! Mon frere.

Michelle- *(from off)* Oui! Henri!

(Jean Luc and Michelle carry out some crates of old vegetables.)

Michelle- I bet you expected me to carry this on my head.

Jean Luc- No, I know you are a big city girl...from Dakar

Michelle-Colonialist!

(The bell rings and enter Madame Thibault, an attractive, well dressed middle-aged Parisian woman. She like Catherine Deneuve has classic French good looks that even time can't wither. The French say, "C'est une femme d'un certain age." If the same actress that plays Madame Thibault also plays his wife, Clothilde. Madame T. must

have a stylish beige rain coat with Clothilde's costume underneath)

MadameThibaut- Sorry for coming so late, Monsieur le Fevre.

Henri- You can call me Henri. The last customers are always the best customers

(Henri finds Madame Thibaut quite alluring and plies all his Gallic charms. Madame Thibaut laughs politely, but isn't at all impressed)

Madame Thibaut - Well, Henri, A demi-kilo of green beans, a kilo of potatoes, three tomatoes, and four pears and some fresh parsley. I'm having guests for dinner.

Henri - At your service!

(Henri gathers up her order and puts it in a bag)

Madame Thibaut- Merci, how much will that be?

Henri- For you, Madame, only four euros

Madame Thibaut- C'nest pas possible. That can't be right.

Henri- Pour vous, four euros, si vous plaits

(Madame Thibault pays)

Madame Thibaut-A bien tot!

(Madame Thibaut goes out the door. The bell rings as she goes. Henri's eyes follow her entranced.)

Henri- Quelle belle femme!

(Then he returns from his reverie and speaks to the audience)

Henri- As I was saying, not so close as they used to be. C'est dimage.

(Enter Clothilde, Henri's hard working wife. She has been carrying vegetable crates all day and is not in the least stylish. Her hair is hanging down and her hands are dirty. Perhaps a cigarette hangs from her weary lips)

Clothilde- And who was that then? I thought we were closed.

Henri- Only a customer

(She looks angrily at the till)

Clothilde- And you charged her only four euros?

Henri- She is a very good customer.

Clothilde- I can imagine! A female customer! Oh Henri! I am a very good wife; Jean Luc is a very good brother and Michelle is a very good helper! O Henri, why don't we just send our trade to the supermarket across the street, close shop and go live with my mother in
the Provence. Aix is always lovely...all the year.

Henri- There are things worse than death! Clothilde, my family has had this shop since Napoleon and during the last war we were the
only shop near the Place d'Italie that never sold to "the Boche". We were

"the resistance! " We liberated the place, before the americans came in "44.

Clothilde-Haven't I heard this before?

Henri-They locked my poor grandmother up for two weeks for throwing tomatoes at their "Fuhrer". *(Clothilde has heard this story a thousand times and goes off stage right. From off she she finishes his sentence)*

Clothilde-...Without even her false teeth.

Henri-Yes, without even her false teeth, the dogs. Thank God, she missed!

Clothilde- We're closed! Henri, closed! and if you keep going on like this we'll be closed for good!

Let's go home. There's a Deneuve movie on television tonight .

(Henri realizes it is useless to talk to his wife when she is angry)

Henri-One moment, si vous plait.

(Clothilde goes off. He turns off all the lights but the one that illuminates the center counter. He begins to speak to his produce.)

Henri-Now you are quiet, but it was not always...eh

(He sets out some potatoes in a circle. Light change)

SCENE I-THE FIGHT BEGINS

Henri- It all began in Vassey actually when some potatoes were peacefully worshipping the sun in the soil of a quiet back garden.

(In the darkness behind the counter, Clothilde, Jean Luc and Michelle and others can help manipulate the the little actors. The potatoes sing piously the 23rd Psalm in French.)

Dieu mon jardinier me conduit et me garde
J'entends sa voix et vers lui je regarde.
Il me fait paitre en de verts paturages
Au long des eaux, sous la paix des ombrages;
Et pour qu'en moi son amour s'accomplise,
Il me conduit aux sentiers de justice

(From the other side of the counter enter a marauding group of Catholic lemons with broad black moustaches. Sound of galloping horses)

Old Duke of Squeeze- Mon Dieu! They respect not even the Great Scarecrow of Rome. They dare to sing in potaytoesian!

Potatoes-Citrus of sin!

Lemon 1- Wolves, foxes, snakes and assassins!

Lemon 2-Tue! Tue! Tue!

(The angry lemons drive away all the potatoes but one. This poor potato they place near a plastic vegetable slicer)

Old Duke of Squeeze- Is the holy fertilizer the real excrement of our Divine Gardner?

Potato- His real droppings are as far from the earth as heaven itself.

Lemon 1-Blasphemy!

Lemon 2-Perfidious potato!

Potato- Dung is just dung! May your grandchildren be eaten by caterpillars!

Old Duke of Squeeze- You leave us little choice, proud tuber.

(They slice the pious potato to pieces)

Old Duke of Squeeze-That will teach them! Allons!

Lemon 1-We will make French Fries of them all!

(The lemons retreat in triumph. The potatoes view the remains of their sliced comrade. They weep and tear their jackets)

Potato1- He died a starchy, but devout martyr.

Potato 2- Ah, would that I had not so many eyes with which to cry!

Potatoes- Rivanche!

(Enter Admiral Carotte, a Calvinist carrot.)

Admiral Carotte- My poor brothers!

Potatoes- Admiral Carotte, lead us to victory!

Admiral Carotte- Attack!

(With Carotte leading a troop of angry potatoes, they attack the citric army. They capture the Old Duke of Squeeze)

Old Duke of Squeeze- I forgive you for you know what you squeeze.

(They cut him in half)

Old Duke of Squeeze- Achhhh!

(Then they crush each half in a juicer.At the base of the juicer, hearing his father's agonized screams, stands the Young Duke of Squeeze.)

Young Duke- For pressing my dear father so mercilessly , I will never forgive you. He was far too noble to become mere lemonade!

Lemons-Rivanche!

(Now all hell breaks loose. Music. The fruits and vegetables are fighting each other violently. One orange rolls over to the side of the vegetables. The vegetables cheer. The lemons hiss.)

Young Duke- Traitor! Turncoat!

Lemon 1- He has gone over to the other side!

Lemon 2-That must be William of Orange!

Young Duke-Kill heem!

(More fighting. Whistle/kazoo fanfare. The warring parties pull apart. Enter the Queen Mother, a large Wagnerian pineapple with a slight Italian accent with her ailing son, Charles IX, the King of France, is an apple with a rotten spot . The worm is in him. This rotten spot on the King will become bigger in every scene.)

Queen Mother- Be assured..

The King-Be assured..

Queen Mother- We will have peace in our herbaceous Kingdom..

The King-Peace in our botanical kingdom

Queen Mother - Fruits and vegetables will live together

The King- Together in peace.

Queen Mother-Yes, together in peace

The King-And these wars...

Queen Mother- worse than civil..

The King-will end

Queen Mother-or come to a fruitful end.

The King-From this day forward, these wars will end! The garden is big enough for all.

(Enter a delicate Valois banana called Margot)

Queen Mother-To this end, I propose that my lovely daughter, Margot, shall marry the Prince of Navarre, Le Galant Vert

(Enter Navarre, a cool crisp and green celery)

The King- and I propose it too!

Young Duke- Mais, Margot?

Margot- It's over, Squeeze. What we had was purely physical.

Young Duke- La bellePutain!

(Margot looks over to the Prince of Navarre)

Bonjour, mon prince

(Margot unpeels a little revealing her pale, luscious interior)

Navarre- Ohh, la ,la!

(Margot and Navarre nod their mutual consent)

Queen Mother-The marriage will take place in August.

The King- My sister will marry in August!

Queen Mother- So be it!

The King- So be it!

Queen Mother- I already said that.

The King-Mother!

Young Duke-(*Apart*) I've peeled that fair banana many a night, now she beds the stinking stalk of celery who calls himself the Gallant Vert -since I cannot prove a lover to entertain Her Majesty's fair well spoken days of peace, I'll be sure the lovely Margot gets a wedding she will never forget.**(*Apart*)** I've peeled that fair banana many a night,

now she beds the stinking stalk of celery who calls himself the Gallant Vert -since I cannot prove a lover to entertain Her Majesty's fair well spoken days of peace, I'll be sure the lovely Margot gets a wedding she will never forget.

Merde!

(The Young Duke goes off in fury)

Margot-Mon prince!

Navarre-Ma cherie amour!

The King- My sister will marry on St Bartolomew's day!

Fruit and vegetables- So be it!

(Margot start to quiver)

Margot- Vite, vite!

Queen Mother- And peace will come again to fields of France.

(blackout)

SCENE II- THE WEDDING

(As the lights come up the sign over the counter now reads Paris 1572. From the crates in the back we see Renaissance Paris with its towers, walls an palaces. Bells. Music. Paris in August, 1572. Music. Enter the court of France followed by the Prince of Navarre and Margot,who is wearing a white plastic bag for a wedding gown.

Herald - His Majesty Charles, by God's Grace, King of France and Her Royal Higness the much beloved Queen Mother, Catherine.

(Enter King Charles with Catherine de' Medici side by side)

The King- Mother it is so hot.

Queen Mother- A king is his own refrigerator. Your father always stayed cool and crisp.

Herold- The Prince Conde

(Enter a leek)

The new Duke of Squeeze and most clerical brother, the Lord Cardinal Guise.

(The two brothers, a lemon and a pear, enter totally unamused. The Cardinal looks over to the Queen Mother. She gives him a stern look. He nods and the Cardinal assumes the middle of the altar to officiate over a service of which he obviously disapproves)

The Duke Dumaine

(He enters also angrily)

The High Lord Admiral, Carotte

(He enters terribly pleased)

The Prince of Navarre and his future wife, the Princess Margot

(Enter the young couple very suspiciously. Margot has a white plastic veil on. They stand before the glowering Cardinal and exchange vows. The Cardinal mumbles some Latin phrases. The Admiral and Prince Conde look at each other mildly amused. The rings are exchanged. One around the banana another around the celery. They share shelf life stickers. The Queen Mother rolls happily)

Cardinal- I now pronounce in the Eyes of God and his Church, two are one. May their love stay fresh until at least 1600 !

Duke Dumaine- Fruit and vegetable one! Impossible!

Cardinal-You may now kiss the bride. *(aside)* ...if you must.

(Navarre half unpeels Margot and gives her a kiss)

Queen Mother- Easy does it, then. You're in Notre Dame.

Young Squeeze- Aye, let them be eaten by beetles!

Dumaine- May they both be blighted!

(All three are furious and are no longer able to hide their anger. The Queen Mother looks on the three as naughty little boys)

Queen Mother-Tut, tut, tut! Do I hear sour fruits?

(The Cardinal turns angrily and leaves with the Duke of Guise, his brother and Duke Dumaine.)

Queen Mother- (laughing) See how they run.

King- Prince of Navarre, my honorable brother, Prince Conde and my good Lord Admiral, I wish this union and religious league, now grafted together... thus joined nuptial rites... may they grow strong together in a new garden of love.

Queen Mother- *(interrupting him)* May their union not dissolve until the autumn of their lives, till they to compost come.

King - Indeed, Mother. Till compost come.

Navarre- The many favours which your Grace hath shown from time to time, but especially in this shall bind me ever to your Highness' will In what Queen Mother or your Grace commands.

Queen Mother-Thanks son, Navarre. of course you won't be mixing with stray vegetables anymore. In Paris it's just not done.

King - Well, madam, let that rest and now, my lords, the marriage rites performed, let us go. I am so exhausted. Too tired event hunt beetles. I tell you, Mother, I am not well. This heat! My rotten spot is growing!

Queen Mother-Daughter, you come with us to an intimate family reception.

(Margot looks at her husband)

King - Sister, I think yourself will bear us company.

(Navarre nods his approval to his new wife)

Margot- I must go, my good Lord.

Queen Mother- That's a good girl, Margot.

King Charles-The rest that will not go, my lords, may stay. Come mother, come

sister, let us go rejoicing in this new union.

Queen Mother-*(aside)* Which I'll dissolve with blood and cruelty.

Navarre- Margot, stay fresh until tonight.

Margot- I will, my good Lord.

(Exeunt King , the Queen Mother, and Margot and their attendants)

SCENE III- VEGETABLES WILL TALK

Navarre- Young Squeeze may storm bitterly, but do us little hurt
Having the King, the Queen Mother on our sides

Carotte- But for how long?

Conde- Cursed be foul Squeeze that seeks ever to peel pious vegetables
wherever they may grow!

Navarre-While the August sun shines there will be peace.

Carotte- Summer's lease is all too short.

Navarre-We have the King's pledge of safe conduct till harvest.

Carotte- My lord, I marvel at th'aspiring Squeeze
Dares once adventure, without the King's consent
To meddle or attempt such dangerous things as our downfall.

Conde- My Lord, you need not marvel at the Squeeze
For what he doth, the Great Scarecrow of Rome will ratify
In murder, mischief, or in tyranny.

Carotte- This Scarecrow, Gregory XIII is indeed the long foretold Anti-Christ.

(He quotes from Revelation)

"And I stood upon the furrow of the soil, and saw a Scarecrow rise
Up out of the polluted earth, having seven heads

Conde- What crow could fear something full of straw called "Gregory"

Carotte-There sit seven black crows on his shoulders,

Conde-Those are his seven bishops! Not to mention the 666 cardinals!

Carotte-Crows can but repeat what they have been taught. Caw, caw ,caw!

Conde- And like their brother magpies they steal all the glitters

Navarre- But He that sits and rules above the clouds doth hear and see the prayers of the just. He will rain down justice on his thirsty ones

Carotte- My Lord, but did you mark the Cardinal,the Squeeze's brother, and the Duke Dumaine, How they did storm at these your nuptial rites?

Conde-No cross-pollination for that lot!

Navarre-- Because we vegetables have now joined the royal greenhouse.

Carotte- Yea, that's the cause that Squeeze so frowns at us and beats his seeded yellow brains to catch us in a deadly trap.

Navarre- Come, my Lords, let's go. My dear mother awaits us.

(The vegetables all exit)

SCENE IV- THE POISONED PLASTIC BAG

(It is well past midnight, August 21. We are in the private chambers of the Duke of Guise)

Squeeze- If ever Hymen loured at marriage rites
And had his altars decked with dusky lights;
If ever sun strained heaven with bloody clouds,
And made it look with terror on the world;
If ever day were turned to ugly night,
And night made semblance of the hue of Hell
This day, this hour, this fatal night,
Shall fully show the fury of them all.

(Enter the Apothecary, a mercenary grapefruit with a mask over his nose and mouth)

Apothecary!

Apothecary-My Lord Squeeze.

Squeeze-Thou master of a parcel pesticides
Now shall I prove a to the full
The love thou bear'st unto the House of Squeeze.
Where is plastic bag which I sent
To be poisoned? Hast thou done it? Speak!

Will every scent breed a chemical cry of death?

Apothecary-See where it be, my good Lord

(The Apothecary presents the plastic bag with tongs to Guise who is just about to smell it)

And he that smells it does but presently die in agony.

(The Apothecary pulls back the plastic bag a the last minute and waves his finger before his nose)

Guise- Then thou remainest resolute?

Apothecary-I am, my Lord, in what your Grace commands. This will be the fat pumpkin's plastic death shroud.

(The Apothecary puts the bag carefully into a present box with tongs. He removes his mask and smiles with evil glee)

Till Death and Putrefaction.

Squeeze-Which ever comes first!

Apothecary-Which ever...

(The Apothecary bows)

Squeeze- Thanks my good friend, I will requite thy love.

Go then, present them to the most rotund Queen of Navarre. She that is a portly pumpkin.

Apothecary- The over-ripe mother of the newly wed prince?

Squeeze- The very same, who, alas, because of her new faith could not attend our nuptial festivities. For she is that huge orange blemish in our eye that eclipses our very Sun. She makes these upstart vegetarianisms in France and puts in shadow the true faith..

Apothecary-Indeed, she doth

Squeeze-Be gone to the old gourd, my venemous friend, present them to her straight

(Exit Apothecary. Enter the Spanish Ambassador, an arrogant Seville orange with a lisping Spanish accent worse than Antonio Banderas' in Zorro)

Ambassador- This marriage both little good for Franth. The infallible

thcarecrow,Gwegorwy dithapproves mightily. Mightily!

Squeeze- He takes a ton of fertilizer from our King and then says nothing. Why wasn't Navarre excommunicated?

Ambassador-In Spain, 800 vegetables in Seville were weeded up by the Holy Inquisiton in one day.

Squeeze- Ambassador, we are not in Spain. Here the vegetables spread to every city like weeds.

The heretics in La Rochelle have turned Catholic gardens into potato patches.

Ambassador- And now the damned Carotte poisons the ear of your King to send troops into the northern potato polders of the Lowlands in aid of the Brussel sprouts to attack Catholic fruit.

Squeeze-Spanish fruit.

Ambassador-Is there a difference? We defend the soil wherever we can.

Squeeze-As do we Squeezes do in Farnce.

Ambassador-Selflessly?

Squeeze- Certement. As selflessly as you Spaniards

(They look at each other like two still reptiles about to strike.)

Ambassador-Our Most Thitric King Philip said he would bar-b-que his own ton on an open fire, If he thought he were a vegetable.

Squeeze- That says much about the family relationships in Spain.

Ambassador-Caramba!

Squeeze-King Charles is the apple of Catherine's eye,
The Queen Mother controls her sickly son. One day she is for war,
The King declares war on the next .
The next day she will an armed truce.
The King says all vegetables are to be tolerated.
Then she weeps over falling tax revenues. The old girl likes her
fertilizer. "What will I wear, what will I wear?"
And her son cries,"I'm rotting!" And the whole cycle begins again.

Ambassador-Thethe ethotic fruits dreth rather well and are sweet to all, but are too weak to defend the true faith. That is why there are so few pineapples in Rome

(They both laugh)

But a strong fruit like you, Squeeze, could do the United Fruit Company a great service. A service that His Scariness would well reward. A necessary service.

Squeeze- And what might that service be?

Ambassador- Think of Taint Raymond Blanc, the gardener in paradise. Cut off the head of the maggot, and it cannot live much longer. The cores of vegetables are here in Paris for the marriage. If you locked the city gates, none could ethcape alive.

Squeeze- But the King has given his word. They have safe passage. The Queen Mother favours the match. She thinks it will bring peace.

Ambassador-The old pineapple is fickle as an Augutht moon and a rotten apple is eathy to scare.

Squeeze- But how?

(The Ambassador gives him a bag of fertilizer)

Ambassador- I am sure you will think of something. Bon Thoir and as they say in my country, Hasta la Vista!

(The Ambassador bows and goes)

Squeeze- Now, Squeeze, begin thy deep engendered thoughts
To burst abroad those never dying flames
Which cannot be extinguished but by blood.
For this, from Spain, the stately Philip
sends fine fertilizer;
for this, I have dung from Rome too.

(Enter a royal Soldier, a mean looking avocado)

Soldier!

Squeeze- Now come forth and play thy tragic part
Stand in some window under a tapestry,
And when thou see'st Admiral Carotte walk by,
Stab him deep in his orange guts,
And then'll repay thee with a store of compost

(Squeeze shows the poor soldier a sack compost)

Soldier-I will, my Lord, tho' it lead me into peril.

Squeeze-That peril is the chiefest way to happiness

Soldier-Indeed, my Lord!

(Exit Soldier understanding only the reward)

Squeeze-What glory is there in a common good
That hangs for every peasant plant to achieve?
We all of us reach for the sun
Let me grow as high as the sunflowers
No, higher than the sunflowers and all others wilting in my shadow.
I shall be the first fruit in France or nothing!

For this I wake, when others think I sleep

(Enter a Messenger)

Messenger- My Lord, a note from the Queen Mother

(He gives Squeeze a note and then goes. Squeeze reads the note and smiles)

Squeeze- The Queen Mother works wonders for my sake,
And in my love entombs the hope of French gardens
Riffling the bowels of her massive compost treasury
To supply my wants and necessities.

Then Squeeze, since thou hast all the sour seeds of discontent
within thy leaves,
throw them on the bloody soil of France like dragon's teeth.
That, right or wrong, thou shall grow thyself a king.

And as for the others, root them all out, not one shall survive... burn
them like autumn leaves!

France Ay, but Navarre, Navarre, 'tis but a small back garden in Southern
Sufficient yet for such a petty princely plant
That with a rabblement of his vegetables,
Blinds every eye and troubleth our fertile estate.
Him will we..

(Guise makes a cutting gesture across his throat)

Slice Navarre's green stalks, and liquidize him totally

And take his pretty wife, Margot and peel her. Jesu, what a comely
banana! I'll have her! But I shan't keep her long. She will die shortly after our
honeymoon, then I can wed the comely, Mary, Queen of Chalots

Boy, bring me my paring knife!

(Enter page, a plum with knife)

Boy- Mais oui, my noble Lord

(Page gives Squeeze a paring knife and goes. Squeeze sharpens his knife)

Squeeze- But first let's follow those in France
That hinder our possession of the crown.
like a new Tiberius," Let them hate me, as long as they fear me!"

(The page holds a mirror to the vain lemon. He looks at himself in a mirror. Squeeze likes what he sees)

Give me a sour look thou well appointed lemon
Yellow death may fall like zest grated from my face
A hand that with a grasp may gripe the world,
A royal seat, a sceptre, and a crown, the whole garden!
And don't forget that fetching fruit, Margot!
A banana is a healthy snack!

The plot is laid, and things shall come to pass
Where resolution strives for a citric victory.

(The Duke of Squeeze exits with his sharpened knife)

SCENE V-THE DEATH OF THE OLD QUEEN OF NAVARRE

(We are in the greenhouse apartments set aside for the Protestant wedding guests. The vegetables are enjoy ing a fashion show . Attractive seed packets are walking up and down the cat walk posing. Margot has joined her new husband, Henri)

Conde- Stunning!

Carotte-Tres chic!

The Old Queen-Don't they ever eat?. I could never get into something like that.

Margot- You aren't that fat, mother.

The Old Queen- How sweet of you to say so, dear.

Carotte- They say Squeeze is so sour at the wedding that he was seen spitting seeds all down the Champs d'Elysee.

Conde-They say "self love is cleverer than the cleverest men"

Navarre- Do not underestimate that rancorous fruit

Carotte- There are cleverer lemons in even Sicily!

Conde- There may be cleverer lemons, even in Sicily, but none so sour and sour lemons are dangerous lemons.

(All the vegetables laugh)

The Old Queen- But we should not jape so in front of my new daughter. What will she think of vaporous vegetables?

Margot- I should be think me most welcome in my new family.

The Old Queen-As indeed you are, girl

(The old pumpkin and banana kiss.)

The Old Queen- Now at last you have a French mother who loves you.

Margot- I already have an Italian one that ignores me.

The Old Queen- Alas, one who would sell you off to be married to the highest bidder. Thank the Great Gardner, you have married for love.

(Margot and Navarre kiss. She whispers into Navarre's leafy ear)

Margot-Voulez vous couches avec moi?

Navarre-Bien sur!

(Enter Apothecary. He offers a box to the Old Queen)

Apothecary- Madam, I beseech your Grace to accept this simple gift.

Old Queen- Thanks, my good friend.

Apothecary-Here, your Majesty. From one queen to another.

Margot-From my mother, be careful!

(The Apothecary shows the Old Queen the box with ribbons)

Old Queen- Ahhh! Hold, take thou this for thy pains.

(She gives him a tiny fly swatter.)

Apothecary- Goodly thanks, Queen of Navarre.

(He gives her the poisoned trash bag.)

(aside) And take this for thy pains yet to come.

(Exit Apothecary quickly.)

Old Queen- Presents are more common for the bride than her mother-in-law on such occasions. But when in Paris.....

(The Old Queen eagerly opens the box. She sees the bag and tries it on)

A plastic bag and it fits beautifully. it is from the Big Girl collection. I love it!

Navarre- Mother! Be carefull!

Old Queen- Methinks the bag has a very strong perfume. The scent whereof doth make my head to ache. 'Tis but the lavender.

Carotte-Doth not your Grace know the man that gave it to you?

Old Queen- Not well.

(She smells the aroma of the bag. She sniffs)

Or' tis the lilac?

Prince Conde- "Beware, Madame, of fruits bearing gifts"

Carotte- Your Grace was ill advised to take the bag, considering of these danger of our times

Navarre- Mother,we are in the presence of our enemies.

Old Queen- "And he shall prepare a table before me in the presence of my..."

(She smells the bag again. white deadly dust rises from the bag)

Alas, 'tis DeeTeee Deee..!

(The Old Queen begins to roll around. The old pumpkin now shakes and rocks and rolls violently)

Help, son Navarre, I am poi-poi-poisoned! The bag!...
DDT!...Poison!

(She rolls over gasping to Margot)

Old Queen- Dear Margot! Take care of my Henri...

Margot- The heaven forbid your Highness such mishap!

Navarre--It must have come from the Duke of Squeeze! Mother, I tried to warn you!

Margot-- I hope it be only some natural passion makes thee sick.

Old Queen- O, no, sweet Margaret, the fatal pesticide
Works within my marrow, my seeds explode, damn-ed DDT! I am
food for worms! I dieth!

(She dies.)

Navarre- My dearest mother poisoned before my very eyes! Gone before Halloween!

(Margot consoles Navarre)

Margot- Let not this heavy chance, my dearest Lord,
For whose effects my peel is speckled brown with grief,
Infect thy green breast like caterpillars in Cambrai
To aggravate our present bliss.

Carotte- Come, my lords, let us carry her body hence
And see it honored with just solemnity

(Funeral march. Drums.As they are rolling the Old Queen out , the soldier from the previous scent takes a nick out of Carotte.)

Prince Conde- What are thou hurt, brave Carottel?

Carotte- Aye, my good Lord, cut through the peel.

Navarre- We are betrayed! Come, my lords, and let us go tell the King of this.

Carotte These are the cursed Squeezians that do seek our death.

Margot- O, fatal was this marriage!

Carotte- Fatal to us all!

Conde- Roll her out!

(They roll the round Old Queen off the table with a thud. They carry out then poor wounded Carotte)

SCENE VI- THE KING OF FRANCE GIVES HIS CONSENT

(The other wing of the royal greenhouse in Paris. Fanfare. Enter King, the Queen Mother, the Duke of Squeeze, the Duke of Anjou, the Duke Dumaine and attendants)

The Queen Mother-My noble son and Duke of Squeeze. Now have we got the poor veggieslike so many lightning bugs trapped in a glass jar, we've but to turn the lid, to close the gates.

King- I have given then safe conduct. Madam. Itheir murder would be noted through the world... An action bloody and tyrannical-

Dumaine- Words are words and knives are knives.

The Queen Mother- " Hoe and rake our stems may break, but words will never hurt us."

King- Under the safety of our word, they justly challenge their protection.

Guise- One can be forgiven for lying to vegetables. Gregory will give us a dispensation

King- Besides, my heart relents that noble plants, only corrupted in religion, should taste such ruthless ends.

Anjou- Though gentle minds should pity other's pains, yet will the wisest note their proper griefs, and rather seek to scourge their enemies than be themselves base subjects to the knife.

Squeeze- Methinks, my Lord, Anjou hath well advised Your Highness to consider of the thing and rather choose to seek your country's good than pity or relieve these upstart greens.

The Queen Mother- I hope these reasons may serve my princely son to have some care for fear of our enemies, his enemies

Dumaine- Their allegiance is to their new doctrines, not their king.

Anjou- My Lord, but ten years fore, they tried to steal the young king, your gentle brother, Francis, When he was but a blushing blueberry.

Squeeze-And now they plan to attack us here. In retaliation for a crime we never committed

The Queen Mother- Rebellious vegetables are the king's sworn enemies. Dear son, it is either us or them.

Anjou-Fruits or vegetables?

Squeeze-Which shall it be, Your Majesty?

Weird music. A worm comes out of his rotten sore and whispers to him.

Worm-Psss, psss, pssst!

King - Well, Madam, I refer it to Your Majesty, and to the noble Duke of Squeeze;

(Catherine and Squeeze look at each other. The battle for the King's conscience is won. The king nods)

What you determine, I will ratify.

The Queen Mother-The king has his father's wisdom.

King --Then so be it. Let none live, that none may reproach me!

The Queen Mother-There's a good boy. That's what your father would have said, God bless him!

King-I 'm not well. I'm rotting, rotting before my time. Mother, I am not well.

The Queen Mother- My poor boy. Why don't you chase beetles?

King -That's it!i feel better already. I am off to hunt beetles!

The Queen Mother- The dear boy loves hunting beetles.

King-Tally hoo! Abeetling I will go!

(The king goes off to hunt beetles)

The Queen Mother- My royal son has spoken. Then tell me, Squeeze, what order will you set down for the massacre?

Squeeze-Thus, madam:

(Sinister music)

They that shall be actors in this massacre shall carve crosses on their peels.

(The fruits carve crosses on themselves or put on white band aids like crosses)

He that wants a cross and is suspect of heresy, shall die, be he king or emperor or endive.

Queen Mother- That's the spirit of your fighting father! If your poor squashed father could have lived to see this day! The poor murdered old Squeeze. He must be crying lemon droops in heaven today.

Squeeze-Then I'll have bubbly champagne ordinance shot from the tower, at which they shall issue out and set the streets; And then, the watchword being given, a dinner bell shall ring, Which when they hear, they shall begin to cut them down and never cease until that bell shall cease;

(They hear someone coming. A messenger tells Catherine that the Queen of Navarre is dead. The fruits turn quickly and cover themselves in black. Squeeze feigns a sad pose. Catherine begins to weep crocodile tears. Catherine feigns remorse over the death of her former enemy)

Queen Mother- Let us roundly remember the grand Old Queen of Navarre who hath left us in her plump prime been a living model to us all.

Anjou- "Leave us, dear orange lady, from a short season of time which reachest from seedling but to the compost heap..."

(Enter the Admiral's Man.)

King Charles- How now, fellow what news?

Admiral's Man- An it please your Grace, the Lord Admiral, Carotte, carrying the Old Queen to her final rest on the Royal Heap, was most traitorously cut....

Queen Mother-Oh no!

Squeeze- Oh no!

The Queen Mother- Oh No! One woe doth tread upon another's peal.

Admiral's Man- And most humbly entreats the admiral your Majesty to visit him sick in his pantry bed

Queen Mother - Messenger, tell him I will see him straight.

(Exit Admiral's Man. All the fruits are relieved. enter the King)

King- Merde! Every beetle got away!

Squeeze- Milord, Carotte is wounded (*aside*) 'Sblood! Not yet dead but at his door!

King -What shall we do, Mama?

The Queen Mother- Your Majesty were best go visit him, and make show as if all were well.

(Weird music. The worm advises the king to visit Carotte)

King - Content, I will go visit the poor wounded Carotte.

Squeeze (*aside*) And I will go take order for his death.

(All exit but King and his mother.)

SCENE VII -THE KING AND HIS MOTHER SHOW CONCERN

(Enter King and his mother. The Carotte in his pantry bed. His wound is being dressed. The Admiral Carotte moans in pain while being treated)

Doctor- Good sir, play the carrot. One more dressing.

Carotte-- Jesu! Not the balsamic vinegar! Ahhh! I would prefer the honey mustard.

Queen Mother- Ahhh! Our poor Carotte!

King Charles- How fares it with my Lord High Admiral?

Queen Mother- Hath he been hurt by villains at the Old Queen's funeral?

Carotte- Aye, my good Lady. I am but cut to the peel. There's juice yet in me !

King Charles-I vow and swear, as I am King of France, root out the culprit and to repay the man with death.

Carotte- Thousand thanks, my good Lord.

King - With death devices and torments never used, Blenders, beaters, and garlic presses, For he That durst presume, for hope of any gain to hurt the noble Carotte their sovereign loves.

Carotte- Ah, my good Lord, these are the Squeezians that seek to mince us.

Queen Mother- We have sworn on Nigella's Cookbook to keep the peace.

King - Assure yourself, my good Lord Admiral, I deeply sorrow for your treacherous wrong, and that I am not more secure myself, than I am careful you should be preserved. Captain!

(enter Captain, a royal cantaloupe)

Take twenty of our strongest guard and under your direction see they keep all treacherous violence from our noble friend here.

Captain- D'accord, sir.

King - And so be patient, good Lord Admiral and every hour when I am not hunting, I will visit you.

Queen Mother- I know, dear Carotte, the first cut is the deepest. Do get better. France needs you, Admiral. To strengthen our eyes in the present darkness.

(She kisses him)

Carotte-I humbly thank Your Royal Majesty.

Queen Mother-We will be praying for you.

Carotte- (Wincing in agony) I humbly thank you, Madame.

King- Now mummy, can I go back to the hunt!

Queen Mother-Go along, dear.

(King and Queen Mother exit)

Carotte- Ahhhhh, Jesu! Mercy!

Doctor-Could we try the yogurt dressing!

SCENE VIII - THE CATHOLICS COMMENCE- DEATH OF CAROTTE

(Enter Guise, Anjou, Dumaine, Gonzago, Retes, Mountsorrell and soldiers eagerly to the massacre)

Guise-Anjou, Dumaine, Gonzago, Retes swear
By the crosses you wear
to kill all you suspect of heresy.

Dumaine- I swear by my red juice to be unmerciful.

Anjou-*(He wears sunglasses)* I am disguised and none knows who I am>

Dumaine-Tres cool!

Anjou- I therefore mean to kill every veg I meet on every street. What a treat!

Gonzago- And so will I.

Retes- And I, but without shades.

Squeeze- Away, then, break into the Admiral's house.

Retes- Ay, let the Admiral be first dispatched.
Chief standard-bearer to the vegetables,
Shall in the entrance of this massacre
Be murdered in his garden bed.

Gonzago- And from this last sleep

Retes- He'll na'er wake up next spring!

Gonzago- Come, sirs, follow me.

(Exit Gonzago and other killers)

Anjou- Now, Squeeze, shall fruits flourish once again
The head being off, the members cannot stand.

(He shows Squeeze his new sunglasses)

Don't I look fabulous in these?

Retes- But look, my lord, there's some in the Admiral's house. Most of royal guards have disappeared like butterflies in rain! But two remain.

Squeeze- They can be bought for fresh fertilizer

(The Admiral's house is a fragile orange crate. A lighting change to reveal Gonzago and his men on a higher level entering the Admiral's house. The Admiral is wailing)

Carotte- Not the blue chess!

(The furious fruits break their way into the Admirals house)

Anjou- Prepare to meet thy maker.

Carotte- O, let me pray before I die!

Gonzago- Then pray to our lady, Mary Berry; kiss the spatula.

(Gonzago grates the wounded Carotte)

Carotte- O God, forgive my sins!

(The Admiral dies. Gonzago grates the Admiral. Squeeze is waiting below.)

Guise- Gonzago, what is he dead?

Gonzago- Ay, my lord.

Squeeze-Then throw him down in pieces. It is the King's will.

(The chopped orange body of the Admiral is thrown down.)

Cousin, 'tis he, I know him by his orange look. He that pressed my father to his death. The Duke of Squeeze stamps on thy lifeless bulk!

(The Duke bounces on the broken pieces of the once mighty Admiral Carotte)

Dumaine- Away with him! Pickle his pieces, and send them as coleslaw to Rome! I'll take his head to the Queen Mother!

Squeeze- Anjou, Gonzago, Retes, if that you three will be as resolute as I and Dumaine, there shall not be a vegetable growing in all France.

Gonzago-Let us kill many others, for the king commands it.

(He stabs a butcher, a lettuce walking by with his wife, a comely cabbage)

Anjou- I swear by this cross, we'll not be partial, but slay as many as we can come near.

Butcher- Ma petite chou! Have I ever told you what a beautiful round figure you have?

Wife- Oh, Louis, I bet you say that to all the cabbages

(Anjou chops the lettuce up)

Butcher- Au revoir, ma cherie!

Wife- You are one sick fruit. Hey, get your dirty peels off me!

(Anjou then cuts the cabbage. They put the leaves in a salad drier and turn with malicious glee)

Squeeze- Mountsorrell, go shoot the ordnance off,

(Mountsorrel goes up to a bottle of bubbly)

Mountsorrell-Bottle ready, sir!

Squeeze-That they which have already set the street may know their watchword.

Mountsorell- I will, my Lord.

(Exit Mountsorell)

Squeeze- And now, my lords, let us closely to our business. Let us wash France clean of such reformed roots, tubers and stems!

Anjou-Anjou will follow thee in these.

(Anjou can't get over how cool he looks in his new shades)

Je suis un chic type!

Dumaine- Mais oui.

Squeeze- Allons, come then, let's away

(The Catholic fruits exit . A couple dashing few lemons swing over to the door and lock it. One brave lemon climbs the door sill and starts to ring the bell. Mountsorrell pops a champagne bottle(the ordinance). The bell over the door will keep ringing on and off through the massacre scenes)

SCENE IX- THE BURNING OF THE CHAPEL

(We see a small chapel, a Calvinist microwave. The potatoes within are singing in French Psalm 23. As they sing, we see a group of Catholics fruits shut the door and turn on the heat. Panic. Squeeze and Anjou are waiting by the microwave door. Smoke. It is the only way out of the inferno. The potatoes are coughing. As the charred potatoes run out out, Squeeze and Anjou cut them down.

Squeeze- Tue, tue, tue!

Dumaine-Let none escape. Murder them!

Anjou- Kill them, kill them! Patat! Patat!

Squeeze-None shall live till harvest!

SCENE X - THE MURDER OF LOREINE

(Enter Loreine, a pious potato, rolling for his life; a Catholic gang of fruit pursues him)

Squeeze- Lorein, Lorein, follow Lorein! Sirrah!
Are you a preacher of these vegetarian heresies?

Lorein- (puffing) I try to lead my followers into the sunlight and out of the shadow of the Scarecrow of Rome.

Squeeze- 'Dearly beloved brother"- thus tis written in Scripture, Protestant potato. "If thy eye offend thee, cut it out"

Lorein- Not my eyes! Please!

(He stabs Lorein in the eye. Lorein dies blinded.)

Anjou- Come, drag him away, and throw him on a compost heap with the others. Today the flies will feast!

(Guise and Anjou exit dragging the potato off)

SCENE XII -THE LAST DANCE

(In the royal greenhouse of Paris. The table is turned longways. An exquisite apartment set aside for the invited wedding guests. The "more cultivated vegetables "are enjoying a literary evening with lyric verse and Renaissance music. A poetical asparagus sings to soft lute music)

Poetic Asparagus- COME LIVE WITH ME, AND BE MY LOVE
AND WE WILL IN ALL GREEN PASTURES GROW
IN VALLEYS, GROVES, HILLS AND FIELDS
WOODS OR STEEPY MOUNTAIN
EVER IN THE OTHERS SHADOW

Artichoke 1- How charmingly sweet he sings!

Artichokes- *(swooning)* Que gentil! Fantastique! Formadable!

(Dance Music. We see a courtly dance of tall elegant Asparagus dancing with twirling Artichokes. As one couple after another turn and dance out, they are cut down by the lemons, until only one vegetable couple is dancing. In the background some lemons are pulling off the leaves of some artichokes. The devote artichokes

Wife- Red! Somebody downstairs wants to talk to you.

Seroune- Yeah! What can be so important at this hour?

Wife- Husband, go down, here's one who would speak with you from the Duke of Squeeze.

Seroune- The Duke of Squeeze at this hour! What the hell can he want? To speak with me, a poor honest onion, from such great fruit as he?

(Enter Seroune in a night cap from the front door)

Mountsorrell- Ay, ay, for this Seroune, and thou shalt ha't

(Mountsorrel shows his dagger; then hides it)

Seroune- O, let me pray before I take my death.

Mountsorrell- Dispatch then, quickly.

Seroune- O Great Gardner, my Saviour!

Mountsorrell- Gardner, common onion? Why dar'st thou to presume to call directly to the Gardner without the intercession of some saintly fruit? Not even mentioning Our Lady of Angiosperms?

Seroune- No need. We onions have direct contact.

Mountsorrell- I'll show you direct contact with my blade!

(Montsorell shows Seroune his sword)

Seroune- It is my end, I fear. As the French say, "Life is an onion and one peels it crying."

Mountsorell- Nice sentiment, but... I'll take my chances!

(He stabs Seroune)

Wife- At least you could have let the poor old onion have his last prayer, you brute!

Mountsorrell- Wouldn't want the poor old onion to be lonely in hell, would we?

(Mountsorrell looks up at the wife with lust.)

Wife-Allors, non!

Mountsorrell- But now and then I like to peel a little onion

Wife-Si vous plaits, non! I am from last year!

Mountsorrell- I hate to keep old veg waiting.

Wife-You will weep hot tears if you touch me!

Mountsorrel-Break down the door!

Wife- Non! Non! Was it The Gardner's plan that I die defile-ed ? What sin have I forgotten to repent that he punishes me so?

(Montsorell appears at the bottom door)

Soldier- We have found 3,00 onion rings! We are rich!

(Mountsorrel ray enters her house and appears behind her. Mountsorrell climbs up and starts to peel her. She puts up a good fight , but in the end he peels her.)

You'll be sorry! You will cry!

(Mountsorrell has his violent way with her. The window shuts and the house shakes. A death cry from the wife.)

Mountsorell- Real fruits never cry! All I know is that she was no spring onion!

(He puts the onions on a metal skew and hangs them out of the window. Exit Mountsorrell.)

SCENE XIV-SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN

(We see a nun, Sister Citronella, a very sour lime in a habit leading a line of young school girls, little red strawberries. One is reminded of the illustration of the childrens book, "Madeleine". The girls sing, Au Claire de la Lune. A yellow paprika is running for her life in the other direction. Bells are still ringing.)

Nun (Sister Citrionella)- Now, what did we learn girls? .

Strawberries- Yes, Sister Citrionella.

(The Nun jumps once. The red berries circle the poor Protestant paprika .

The paprika is trapped. The little Catholic strawberries dance around their victim sweetly smiling and singing...

Water, water, holy water, murder the paprikas one by one!

(The Nun jumps twice. The strawberries pull out tooth picks)

Strawberry One- This is going to hurt.

(One little Berry stabs the paprika and smiles.)

Paprika-Auwww!

Strawberry One- Told you!

Strawberry Two-You can't run away now.

Strawberry Three- We got you!

(The Nun jumps three times. The strawberries begin to stick tooth picks into the defenseless paprika.)

Strawberries- Water, water, holy water murder the paprikas one by one!

(The skewered paprika in the middle is dead like a porcupine.)

Paprika-Like God's good pin cushion, I die!

(The Nun jumps for joy. She looks at her red students with pride)

Nun- Yes, practice makes perfect. Come on, my berries, there is much of God's work to do this summer night.

Strawberries- Yes, Sister Citrionella.

Nun-Come along now. Remember blessed are the berries for only they shall inherit the garden!

Strawberries- Yes, Sister Citrionella.

(The Nun and her strawberries go out into the night singing in search of more victims)

SCENE XVI - THE DEATH OF A RENAISSANCE SCHOLAR

(Enter the scholar Ramus, a learned cucumber, Royal Gastronomer in

his study perusing Pliny's Etruscan cookbook)

Ramus- Spiced wine- Conditum paradoxum- duo amphorae vinorum-two amphoras of wine, two liters of wine. It must be a genitive plural!

" Ahh, that's better Latin! God bless, dear Pliny! Tria spoonia meliae- three spoons of honey. But does he say tomatoes are fruits or vegetable?"

(Ramus returns to his reading. The sound of bells and screaming)

What fearful cries come from the river Seine. Someone's souffle must have fallen.

(Enter Taleus, a learned eggplant puffing)

Taleus- Fly, Ramus, fly, if thou wilt save thy life.

Ramus- Tell me, Taleus, wherefore should I fly. I have found an ancient recipe for spiced wine? you are going to love it. Won't you join me, dear friend?

Taleus- Sounds delicious, but the Squezians are hard at thy door, and mean to murder us.

(Sound of a Fruit gang)

Hark, hark, they come. I'll leap out at the window.

Ramus- Sweet Taleus, stay. I have almost found out the ancients answer to one of life's great secrets- the riddle of the tomato.

Taleus- No time for tomatoes!

(Taleus jumps. We hear a scream and a falling "ssssccccchhhhplaat." Taleus has jumped to his death. Ramus sadly recites)

Ramus- Now he will never know the answer. Nox perpetua dormienda est ; sed proximo vere iterum florebitur. "Death is but a night of endless sleep," says Catullus, "but we shall flower again next spring."

Now more importantly, to the question of the tomato. Lucretius says in his de Rerum Natura that they are indeed fruits, but Tacitus vehemently disagrees. The matter was finally decided in the Council of Nicea, where the Emperor Constantine himself declared...

(Ramus goes back to his studies. Enter Gonzago and Retes.)

Gonzago- Who art thou?

Ramus- Ramus, gastronome to the King of France

Retes- Fruit or veg?

Ramus- Does that really matter? Put down thy weapons, they have no power over the spirit." The cookbook is mightier than the sword"

Gonzago- Come Ramus give us gold, or thou shalt have the stab.

Ramus- Alas, I am a learned chef, how should I have gold? All I have is but my tips from the King when I roast a wild beetle with a cranberry in his mouth for him, which is seldom, for the King is a terrible shot and always asks the worm when to fire. Alas, the worm is slower than the beetles.

(Enter Squeeze and Anjou with Dumaine, Mountsorrell and soldiers)

Anjou- Who have you there?

Retes- 'Tis Ramus, the King's Gastronome

Squeeze-Stab him!

Anjou-Slice him!

Gonzago- And dice him!

Ramus- O, my good lord, wherein hath Ramus given offence?

Squeeze- Was it not thou that scoff'dst the Summa Cookologica and said it was heap of vanities not worthy to be on the same bookshelf as Mary Berry?

Ramus- I only agreed with Saint Jamie, that only the Good Gardner alone could tell for sure if the tomato was a fruit or a vegetable

Anjou- He's a cumbersome sophist!

Gonzago- What does one expect from a cucumber?

Squeeze- One more word and it's guzpacho for you, my green friend!

(He puts a kitchen knife to Ramus' throat. Others bring in a Blender)

Ramus- O, my Good Gardner, let me but speak a word

Anjou- Well, say on.

Ramus-Nigella Lawson and Gordon Ramsey tend to agree that the tomato is a vegetable, but Delia Smith states that outside the kitchen of our consciences, there may well be an ideal tomato that is neither fruit of vegetable, but still undoubtedly red and juicy.

Squeeze- Why suffer you that over-cultivated creeping plant to declaim? Stab him I say, and send him down to Satan's microwave.

Anjou- Ne'er was a cucumber's son so full of the seeds of pride.

(Anjou pushes him into a blender and notices green stains on his sunglasses)

Merde, there are green spots on my shades! My new Armanis are ruined!

Gonzago- Another one for the heap!

(They roll the Blender away)

SCENE XV- THE RIVER

(All hell is breaking loose in Paris. Music (Can-can). We see flames in back of the Parisian sky line. Fruits are killing vegetables all over the counter. On the right side of the counter is revealed a stairway, leading to a big pot on a camping stove. Squeeze runs down the stairs and lights the camping stove. On the pot is written- The

River Seine. Up on the counter everything imaginable is happening to the defenseless vegetables. Every kitchen appliance is being used. Garlics are put into presses, potatoes are peeled and defenseless carrots are grated alive. Blenders are whizzing. Squeeze is ecstatic. He pushes the chopped vegetables into the slow cooking

pot, stage right. The lemons shoot forks into the pot laughing.)

Squeeze-Tue! Tue! Tue! The king commands it!

Domaine- Make ratatouille of them all! Potage des legumes!

Squeeze- My lord Anjou, there are a hundred vegetables Which we have chased into the river Seine that bob about and so preserve their lives. How may we do?

Gonzago-I fear me they will live.

Dumaine- Go place some men upon the bridge with forks to shoot at them they see, or sink them with spoons as they try to swim.

Squeeze- Send these overcooked vegetables down the river to Rouen where the Potatoes live in heresy.

Dumaine- Voluntiers!

(We see the fruit standing over the pot hitting pieces of veg with long wooden spoons)

Soldier- Mon Dieu, it's like shooting ducks in a barrel!

Squeeze- And now, sirs, for this night let our fury stay here in Paris. Yet will we not that the massacre shall end; Gonzago!

Gonzago-Oui!

Squeeze-Post you to Orleans, Retes to Dieppe, Mountsorrell unto Rouen, And spare not one that you suspect of vegetarianism

(The killers go their separate ways. The ringing of the bell stops. Enter the Bishop of Loreine huffing and puffing).

Bishop- Mon Dieu, it is hard work slicing vegetables!

(Enter Messenger.)

Messenger- Navarre is still alive and has converted!

Bishop- It is impossible for a vegetable to become a fruit!

Squeeze- Nothing in France is impossible !

Messenger-The King says no one is to kill his brother in law. Navarre is right now trying to extract the worm from the ear of the king.

(We hear in the background Piaf's "Je ne regrette rien")

Bishop- Alas, then the worm has turned...turned against us

Squeeze-Then all this slaughter has been for naught.

Soldier- At least, the murder was good pastime! It was easier than killing Spanish soldiers. They have weapons.

Bishop- Get thee to confession, soldier! We killed because we had to, not because we enjoyed it.

Soldier- We were only following orders.

Squeeze- One wedding and four thousand funerals for naught and nothing!

Bishop- For less than naught, what ever that may be.

Bishop- O France, if thou take delight in impious war at home, first conquer all the world, crusade against the wicked beetles, then turn thy force thy force against thyself. Brother, it was all for nothing. Rien! Rien!

(Squeeze is weeping.)

Mon frere. We will be rewarded in Heaven. I hope.

(The bishop, a broken Gallican pear tries to console his brother before rolling sadly off.)

Soldier- Il ne fait pas de poire!

(Soldier goes.)

Squeeze- Zut! There's nothing less than nothing!

(Squeeze weeps.)

SCENE- XVII- LE POTAGE DU JOUR

(Enter Michelle. Music stops. The fruits are lifeless. She sees the mess on the counter)

Michelle- Quelle Bordelle!

(She puts a little of the sliced veg in the garbage and tastes the soup.)

Michelle-It needs something. Ce manque quelque chose.

(She cuts Squeeze in half and squeezes him into the soup.)

Mais oui!

(She tastes it.)

Michelle- Pas mal!

(She turns off the camping stove and takes away the pot.)

Michelle- Jean Luc, soup is ready!

(Michelle goes and a lighting change)

SCENE XVIII - WHAT I DID FOR LOVE

(Music. The stage is still half covered with tangled vegetables. Enter the royal fruits.)

King- This unnecessary shredding of so many loyal vegetables, young seedlings, peas squashed barely out of the pod, causes us perpetual regret

Queen Mother- Eternal *and* perpetual regret

King-It wilts the tender green nature of our youth

Bishop- Indeed ,Your Majesty

Queen Mother- So many loyal subjects pureed to pieces.

(Enter Margot. there is bright red beet juice on her white plastic gown. Margot is shocked)

Margot- Mother, you wrecked my whole wedding!

Queen Mother-You can always get married again, Margot.

Margot- But , Mama!

(Margot storms off)

Queen Mother- i tried to stop their endless blood feuds, but what can one poor woman do?

Bishop- Of course, you did your best, Madame. Don't blame yourself. Even the Queen Mother is only human.

(Catherine cries crocodile tears)

Queen Mother- How could this ever happen? Boohoo, boo hoo.

(The Bishop consoles the Queen Mother)

Bishop- Now, now, dear. Let us go into Notre Dame and pray for the poor victims.

(The worm whispers into the king's ears)

King- I shall order a full investigation of this horrible affair. No stone in this garden shall be unturned!

(The royal fruits begin for Notre Dame)

Bishop- Are you coming with us, Madame?

Queen Mother- Give me a moment of silent prayer over the victims. I shall come bye and bye.

Bishop-We shall wait for you before the altar of Our Lady of Cholesterol

(The royals leave for the cathedral. Light change. Catherine is left alone. Catherine surveys the mangled vegetables. There are servants (pious plums) with her. They pull the jewelry off the dead and rotting wedding guests. She advises her servants what jewels to pluck. Catherine sees some pearls on a leafless artichoke)

Queen Mother- There are some lovely pearls. She won't be needing them where she will be dancing. They dress very poorly in Hell.

(She laughs. The servants take the pearls off an artichoke)

So many cut down, so many. Not since the draught of '58, have I seen so many still. Paris is a blood red field with spires. At least, it is quiet now. The bells have stopped. They drowned out the screaming. Oh, I have such a headache!

Servant- Your majesty, there is no more screaming now, because all the wedding guests are dead.

Queen Mother- that's a kind of relief. There's a gold tooth in that corn over there. Fetch it for me! But they won't rise up again soon...the vegetables..are well cooked in their own juices. They won't grow up again. They were hardly perennials

Not as long as I have their Henry, Prince of Navarre. And I shall never let my dear son- in- law go to the other side of the garden. Never. Now he is one of us.

(She lifts a dead asparagus with a ring around his stalk

I do like that ring. He won't be needing it now

(Her servants cut the ring off the fallen asparagus)

A King must rule and be obeyed in his own garden . A king must rule and be loved by his people like my husband, Henry, before he got a pitchfork through his eye. Poor Henry! I did this for my son, slowly rotting Charles.

The poor boy's is not well. His brown spot is growing. I fear the worm is in him.

I must congratulate Squeeze on his splendid efforts. Prepare him a sack of the finest fertilizer and toast to his success.

Would he eat it? Why wouldn't he, in front of the king, fears he DDT? Not to eat would be an insult. Fruits have been pressed for less! He is growing too high in the sun.

Yes, it must be a pungent fertilizer to cover the chemical taste underneath, sheep dung would be perfect. Yes, Long live the Duke of Squeeze! May he live as long as he can! He knows too much.

That broach is exquisite. I once saw one very like it around the neck of Dianne de Poitier, that cheap peach, my rival.

(Catherine picks up a broach that hangs on a shredded paprika.)

That paprika must also have been a whore.

SCENE XIX - THE LAST CUSTOMERS ARE THE BEST CUSTOMERS

(A light change. The fruits are lifeless. We hear a knocking at the door.)

Henri- Ici it is a complet catastrophe! I turn my back for a moment and what do I get?

(Henri quickly cleans off the counter. The bell rings. He opens the door. Enter Madame Thibault)

Madame Thibault - Oh, pardon, but I forgot the dessert. Have you something not too sweet?

Henri- Here, try this.

(He gives her the Queen Mother pineapple)

Madame Thibaut- A pineapple?

Henri- I know you will find her delicious. A little tart, but she is the queen of the fruits. Pour toi, two euros.

Madame Thibaut- Here. Merci.

(Madame Thibaut pays him and goes out. Henri locks the door and turns the sign on the door)

Henri- Clothilde, we are closed!

Clothilde- Finalment! *(from off)* The film starts at nine.

(Henri looks at his produce)

Henri- And you, tonight at least, peace

(Henri turns out the shop lights)

THE END

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