

# EXERCISING BELIEF



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## CHARACTERS

ERNEST	Everyman
QUARK	Theoretical Scientist.
SYNAPSE	Psychotherapist
SAPIEN	Anthropologist
BLESSED	Shaman
AENID	Poet

*Gender is deliberately non-specified.*

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SETTING	Six chairs or blocks and an altar containing props. Downstage playing area is open.
AT RISE	ERNEST enters from the back of the audience, climbing over them on his way to the stage.

ERNEST

[APOLOGIZES AS HE MOVES THROUGH THE AUDIENCE] Excuse me. Can someone tell me why I'm here? Seriously, what am I doing here? Sorry about that. Where am I? Yes, I know the play's about to begin, I'm in it. Excuse me. Does anyone know why I'm here? I'm lost. Well not really, I'm Ernest. Seeker and my name is in your program. That's right. That's me. Sorry. So someone please tell me why I'm here. I know you're used to the play taking place on the stage and I'm on my way there, honest. But I couldn't wait to ask you. Does anyone know why I'm here? I know why I'm in the theater. That's not what I'm asking. I want to know why I'm here – why any of us are here alive on this planet at this point in time. Never mind. Don't worry about me, I'm just having an existential crisis. [ONSTAGE] There, better? I promise I won't break through the fourth wall that protects you although there are no guarantees. Besides, I know you are now asking yourself the same question – the why are we here thing. Do you have an answer? Do you? Do you? You don't have a clue any more than I do about why we're here. No problem. I'll call in specialists. They're special. They know things.

[THE REST OF THE CHARACTERS ENTER AND PERFORM SOME KIND OF RITUALISTIC DANCE. THEY END UP STANDING IN A LINE FACING THE AUDIENCE DOING PATTYCAKE]

Allow me to introduce them.

QUARK

My name is Quark  
A theoretical physicist  
The quantum gives me momentum  
But some say I speak gibberish

SYNAPSE

Synapse is here  
to shrink your mind  
I'm intense and direct  
But I'm always kind

SAPIEN

Call me Sapien  
I'm in anthropology  
I study human beings  
From culture to mythology

BLESSED

I am Blessed  
I focus on the sacred  
Spirituality is my reality  
And sometimes I get naked

AENID

Aenid Verse is who I am  
I think and write in poetry  
My dance with words can be absurd  
Iambic pentameter is the death of me

[PADDYCAKE ENDS IN CONFUSION]

SYNAPSE

Excuse me, but why are we here?

ERNEST

That's my question.

SAPIEN

And the answer?

ERNEST

I don't have one.

QUARK

We're random constructs of matter.

AENID

I don't agree, but I like your answer. We can't know what we don't know and personally, I don't care that I don't know.

SYNAPSE

I care, but perhaps only God knows the answer.

QUARK

Whomever that is.

AENID

Thank you for using the correct word.

SAPIEN

Maybe you can ask an easier question?

ERNEST

Okay. Synapse started it so, what is God? I've read books, gone to houses of worship, looked up at the sky, left the window open. But God is an unknown, unknowable, unbeknownst to me. Just the concept of God is so vast, so beyond reach and--

QUARK

--infinite. From me to you there are an infinite number of points. There are multitudes of molecules that amass into anything we can imagine including ourselves. What is the power that brings together random collections of molecules that separate my being from yours?

ERNEST

I'm a random collection of molecules? How is that God? Besides, I thought I was--

SYNAPSE

--Self. The fathomless depths of the conscious and unconscious are realized through ego, libido, id and bids on the consensus we call reality. Yet the collective unconscious has its own depth so that at some point we are not separate but the same.

ERNEST

We're all the same? But I'm an individual who is--

SAPIEN

-- connected. Faith in God or in gods provide a reason for us to come together. In our fight against chaos and entropy we create a greater frame of reference. Sometimes we call this God. We come together to share that greater frame of reference to give our lives meaning and order.

ERNEST

So God requires faith and faith requires God. That sounds like--

BLESSED

--magic. Not slight of hand, but that something we can't name. Ritual opens our hearts and minds to the divine, infusing our being with something beyond our comprehension that we embrace with our spiritual selves. Together we create reality like magic. Can you feel it?

ERNEST

I feel something, but is it God? God--

AENID

--is, was and will be. As everything else. I do not know, cannot know, and therefore, can create accordingly. Sometimes it seems there is no rhyme or reason. It's up to you to embrace something, anything everything. It's up to you to believe in something, anything everything. It's up to you to believe in--

ERNEST

--the unknown, infinite, self, connection, magic and is was and will be. God is big. Incredibly big. There are no limits, no boundaries, just continuous a universe expanding into nothing or even something but I'm too small to comprehend that which I do not know. I'm merely a --

QUARK

-- cell in the body of a larger being called the universe. You've got to respect the doughnut.

ERNEST

I like a good doughnut, but respect it?

QUARK

I'm talking about the shape of the doughnut – the torus. My skin contains melanin, microcosmic organisms in the shape of a torus, a molecular doughnut. The universe curves in on itself and is also in the shape of a torus, a cosmic doughnut. As the cells in my body create the universe that is me, I am a cell in the universe that is God. As above, so below. As without so--

SYNAPSE

--within. I replicate all that is. The buck stops here with me, individual, unique, yet the same as all of you. I am not alone, merely separate. I am not separate, merely alone. The skin that segregates me from you tells me this. But the feelings and thoughts I share with all of you, tells me differently. Alone together, together alone. We share --

SAPIEN

--a genetic memory of all that has come before us, of all the gods we have created and destroyed to organize what might exist or might not exist -- irrelevant. Relevant is our need to need each other and discover new ways of bypassing personal differences so we can feel safe and supported. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. We constantly reach for--

BLESSED

--spiritual balance. We each channel the power of the gods in our own way according to our level of consciousness. Meditation, invocation, archetypal symbolism, singing, chanting, reeling and writhing, are all stations the gods tune in on. We focus on our intention, our prayers, thus the gods --

AENID

--are, were, will be. As everything else. I do not know, cannot know and therefore, create accordingly. I am therefore there is. Perhaps we are nothing more than God's feces. That's it -- the big bowel movement theory.

ERNEST

Nooooo. I can't go there. I'm already drowning in the sea of the unknown.

QUARK

Quantify what you do know.

SYNAPSE

Your unconscious is trying to tell you something.

SAPIEN  
You are so not alone.

BLESSED  
Embrace the unknown.

AENID  
Accept that the unknowable is unknowable.

ERNEST  
I'm lost in the sea of the unknown. Who am I?

QUARK  
You are a random molecular construct.

SYNAPSE  
You are a Self.

SAPIEN  
You are everyone who ever was.

BLESSED  
You are me and I am you and we are we.

AENID  
You be.

ERNEST  
What is God?

QUARK  
[TAKES A JELLY DOUGHNUT OFF THE ALTAR AND GIVES IT TO ERNEST] The body of the larger being that you inhabit.

ERNEST  
Huh?

QUARK  
Yours is glazed.

SYNAPSE  
[TAKES A LARGE NUT OFF THE ALTAR AND GIVES IT TO ERNEST] The seed of your heart and mind.

SAPIEN

[TAKES A SKULL OFF THE ALTAR AND GIVES IT TO ERNEST] You create God -- along with everyone else.

BLESSED

[TAKES FUZZY DICE OFF THE ALTAR AND GIVES IT TO ERNEST] A gamble of mortality and insight.

AENID

[TAKES AN APPLE OFF THE ALTAR AND GIVES IT TO ERNEST] The fruit of your labors.

ERNEST

What am I supposed to do with all this stuff?

QUARK

They're random matter so you can do with them what you will.

SYNAPSE

Ask yourself how they make you feel.

SAPIEN

They are metaphors so it doesn't matter.

BLESSED

Embrace them.

AENID

Just put them back on the altar.

ERNEST

Thank you for a straight answer. Your metaphors are killing me. Oh no. I'm going to die. I don't know when, but it could be at any time. Oh my God. What does that mean? What happens after you die?

QUARK

The molecules that were you fertilize the earth to help something or someone else grow.

ERNEST

What do you think will grow from the fertilizer that is you?

[EACH ACTOR COMES UP WITH THEIR CHARACTER'S ANSWER]

QUARK

What will grow from you?



ERNEST

[ANSWERS] But what do I know? Come on, what really happens when you die?

SYNAPSE

You make the decision to go.

ERNEST

But where do you go?

[EACH ACTOR COMES UP WITH THEIR  
CHARACTER'S ANSWER]

SYNAPSE

Where will you go, Ernest?

ERNEST

That's why I'm asking. What will happen to me when I die?

SAPIEN

You will dress in your finest costume and await your next performance.

ERNEST

What's your next performance?

[EACH ACTOR COMES UP WITH THEIR  
CHARACTER'S ANSWER]

SAPIEN

What is your next performance, Ernest?

ERNEST

I like talking about plays and movies, but what I really want to know is, what happens when you die?

BLESSED

The answer is within yourself. Look within yourself.

ERNEST

What do you think I'm doing?

BLESSED

No one knows, Ernest. We can only imagine.

ERNEST

You're no help. What happens when you die?

AENID

A psychic once told me I am an old soul. What were you in a past life?

[EACH ACTOR COMES UP WITH THEIR CHARACTER'S ANSWER]

AENID

What were you in a past life, Ernest?

ERNEST

How the hell do I know? You are so full of crap. You don't have a clue who you were. How could you know? You don't even know if there is such a thing as a past life. [TO AUDIENCE] Do any of you know who you were? Do you? Never mind. You couldn't even tell me why I'm here. Or maybe I shouldn't break the fourth wall again. I've made some bad choices and humungous mistakes in my life. I know I'm not evil, but have I sinned? Have I? Uh oh. What exactly is sin? Is it a sin to ask? What if I don't agree with your answer? Is that a sin?

QUARK

[TAKES THE JELLY DOUGHTNUT OFF THE ALTAR] Sin is like a black hole -- as opposed to a white one. Imagine them seducing and rejecting each other because they can't help themselves. All right, so white holes are theoretical, but imagine one dancing with a black hole to fabricate what we call reality. Imagine they create the quantum foam -- the ultimate universal contraceptive. Thus we have the old in and out model, in and out, in and out. At the core of a black hole is the singularity - the source of sin. Let's say you shrank to about this tall and decided travel to the core of a jelly doughnut. Be careful, jelly alone is not enough to prevent an unwanted incarnation. The jelly is singularity where space-time curves and becomes infinite. The singularity has no volume but the density is infinite. When you get there you find sin - a place of castration, premature ejaculation and oozing infection. To connect with singularity can mean becoming an insatiable nymphomaniac who is HIV-positive with Hepatitis C, syphilis and herpes. Scared? Good. Leaving the fluffy deep fried dough around the jelly is you enter a place is kind of kinky. All of your strangest and most bizarre fantasies live there. You know the ones I'm talking about. Yes, you really do. Luckily, the Penrose Mechanism can take you away from the jelly and through the dough until you pop out of the crust back to reality. However, because you tasted the sweet jelly of singularity, you now enter a new normalness with reality alterations. All is similar yet just out of memory's rhythm -- careful, that rhythm method of relativity is risky as well. Avoid voids for that is the real source of sin. In and out, in and out.

SYNAPSE

Sin is passivity. The avoidance of direct dealing through distraction or denial -- this is the source of sin. Discounting helps disguise the core feeling, layer by layer, until agitation and escalation result. The unease creates dis-ease. For example, let us start with the core feeling of fear. [TAKES THE NUT OFF THE ALTER AND PLACES IT ON THE GROUND] I am afraid. First layer, I am afraid of the unknown.

[AENID MOVES TO SIT WHERE SYNAPSE  
PLACED THE OBJECT AND CRIES LIKE A  
BABY]

SYNAPSE

Second layer, distract to the known.

QUARK

[MOVES TO AENID TO CREATE THE BEGINNINGS OF A HUMAN TOTEM POLE]  
Safety in numbers.

SYNAPSE

Third layer, deny the fear. [SAPIEN JOINS THE TOTEM POLE WITH A SHRUG] Fourth  
layer, discount the existence of the unknown.

BLESSED

[JOINS IN WITH A SNORT] I like being on top. [THE TOTEM POLE WRIGGLES AND  
WRITES]

SYNAPSE

Layer upon layer protects the defenses. Layer upon layer defends the protections. The  
core is unsafely, insecurely obscured and like a tumor, it is discomforting, causing unease,  
inflicting disease. The symptoms? Seemingly irrational reactions. Emotions get hooked by  
unlikely bait. Inappropriate zaps are fun and powerful at one moment only to become  
humiliating and guilt-ridden in the next. The fear of fear overwhelms through self-  
destructive violence -- sometimes manifested outside the self, but more likely a cultivated  
cancer from within. The core seeks out stronger and more grandiose distractions and  
more dramatic denials as the discounts depress and compress the layers around the core  
creating more and more pressure. The pressure increases. Distract from denials. Deny  
discounts. Discount distractions. The fear of fear of fear agitates, exponentiates and  
escalates until BOOM. [TOTEM POLE EXPLODES] However, the disease is not cured,  
merely momentarily disseminated, drumming up more dramas to follow. [TOTEM POLE IS  
REBUILT] The pressure is released for the moment, but the core will seek out more  
protections again and again and again. This is how sin is born. [TOTEM POLE  
EXPLODES]

ERNEST

What the hell is going on?

SAPIEN

[TAKES SKULL FROM THE ALTER] Exactly. What the hell is going on? You call this  
civilized? Look around you. Better yet, inhale [COUGH] or drink from the tap. We're  
pooping in the air and water who embrace the scumful molecules as though they  
belonged. But then, what do air and water know? Sinful. Wildlife is adapts to our thorough  
infestation and deliberate deformation of the planet by becoming extinct because they no

SAPIEN

longer have a habitat. Sinful. American imperialism in the guise of Starbucks and McDonalds makes for a world of manic Big Macs. Sinful.

ALL

Sinful.

SAPIEN

Terrorist extremists of all stripes demand we live in fear - not only of being attacked, but of nuclear war that could end life as we know it. There's technological progress for you. How about we practice nuclear war? When the bell dings we pretend we're radioactive survivors and watch our species mutate or die. It's new age consciousness raising. Sinful.

ALL

Sinful.

SAPIEN

Rules, rules and more rules. Can you keep track? Careful, taboo will make voodoo of what you do. Don't. Uh uh. Bad. Behave or be punished. Be good or be banished. value or be devaluated. Make love not libel or you'll be in court not courtship. Vote or have your choices surgically removed with such precision you'll never know you had them. Sinful.

ALL

Sinful.

SAPIEN

Virtually connect to the world. The internet is full of new and better ways of communicating without sharing anything personal. Commit to the moment and let the future take care of itself. [ALL HUM *BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC*] The rich get richer, the poor get poorer and even after the horrors of the holocaust we keep seeing mass genocides among the masses. Sinful.

ALL

Sinful.

SAPIEN

Adultery is for those tired of being adults. Answer to your authorities. Glorify your gurus. Obey or forever hold your opinions. So what the hell is going on? [HUMMING STOPS] What are you staring at? Did I do something wrong? Am I paranoid? Do I need rehab? How about redemption? Or am I just a bad person?

ERNEST

Sinful.

## BLESSED

[TAKES FUZZY DICE AND OTHER THINGS TO PERFORM MAGIC TRICKS] The Fool stands at the edge of the cliff, looking into the abyss. His dog grabs his cloak, but can't stop the Fool from jumping off the edge. In that moment as his feet leave the ground, the Fool is exhilarated by the magick of taking a leap of faith. Just before he lands, the Magician embraces him, infusing him with possibilities. The story told by the Tarot continues as the Fool builds layers of awareness with each major arcana he meets. His story ends when he meets the World. And thus reality begins, infused with mystery and magick. Religions and spiritual paths tell a similar story. They use ritual to help them take them to a similar cliff as the Fool's. Their traditions use words, actions, thinking and feeling to re-enact that moment of magick. What you see me performing are illusions of magic. You willingly suspend disbelief - even if only for a passing moment - to be overwhelmed with awe. Too much suspension can break the bridge between illusion and delusion. I don't believe in sin. I also don't do the dualistic thing. You know, the black, white, good, bad, up, down, around and through dualities of dogma - except for sometimes. Can you see how I distract you from the reality of what I'm doing? I'm playing God - for a passing moment, anyway. Is it a sin to enjoy the illusions you think you see? Only if you believe I'm doing more than a slight of hand. Then again, maybe I am.

[ALL APPLAUD]

## AENID

[TAKES A BASKET OF APPLES FROM THE ALTAR AND THROWS THEM INTO THE AUDIENCE] Beware of eating apples  
You will twin the original sin  
Sure, we're all siblings under the skin  
But when it comes to the yang and the yin  
And the heart and soul from within  
Sometimes revealed by a dumb grin  
Or a swift kick in the shin  
When the action is thin  
We want to begin an original sin.  
The gin won't shut out the din  
As your skin feels the pin  
That has a prick.  
Thrust forth a chin  
In order to win  
Over the desire for original sin.  
For it is not original  
And a twin from without  
Of that within.  
Look in the bin  
And ask yourself,  
What came before the apple core?

ERNEST

[KNEELS] Forgive me Father for I have sinned. Oh my Mother I'm heartily sorry if I have offended thee. I detest all of my sins, so please dissolve -- I mean absolve me. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm so so sorry. And I'm sorry I'm sorry. I'm sorry that I'm a sorry sorry I. Please, I'm so sorry.

QUARK

Find yourself a nice white whole.

SYNAPSE

It's okay to be afraid.

SAPIEN

Put your apology into action.

BLESSED

Seek magick not forgiveness.

AENID

[GIVES ERNEST AN APPLE] Have an apple.

ERNEST

Why am I so sorry?

QUARK

You were seduced by a black hole.

SYNAPSE

You denied, discounted and disguised your fear.

SAPIEN

Does it matter? You were sorry -- very very sorry.

BLESSED

You can do something bad without being a bad person.

AENID

[MAKES ERNEST EAT APPLE] You were hungry. Very hungry.

ERNEST

[EATS THE APPLE] Sweet. Now am I okay?

QUARK

It's okay to emerge from singularity. Welcome back.

SYNAPSE

It's okay to be afraid. Welcome back.

SAPIEN

I'm okay, you're okay. Welcome back.

BLESSED

You were always okay. Welcome back.

AENID

You're okay, pips and all.

ERNEST

[HUGS EVERYONE] Bless you. Bless you all. I'm so sorry I was ever sorry. Sorry, I didn't mean to be sorry. Bless you. [HUGS THE ALTAR AND NOTICES MAGIC WAND] What's this for?

QUARK

It's another random molecular construct.

SYNAPSE

What do you want it to be?

SAPIEN

It's a prop.

BLESSED

Magic.

AENID

A wand of truth.

ERNEST

Truth? What is truth? I remember things grown-ups would tell me when I was a kid. I hated it when I found out they lied to me. They'd say they were trying to protect me and maybe they were. But learning the truth can be traumatic. Has anyone ever told you things you believed and then you found out later they weren't true? I know, I'll use this wand of truth on each of you to tell me about a time when the truth hurt.

[ERNEST GOES TO EACH ACTOR. WHEN THEY ARE TOUCHED BY THE MAGIC WAND, EACH CHARACTER TELLS A SHORT STORY ABOUT LIES TOLD AND TRUTH REVEALED. THE CHARACTERS COMMENT]

ERNEST

[ERNEST TOUCHES HIS OWN HEAD AND REACTS WITH GREAT DISCOMFORT] I don't feel so good.

SYNAPSE

Maybe I can help, Ernest.

ERNEST

Forget it, not important.

SYNAPSE

No discounting or denial allowed. Obviously, you still feel bad about something you wanted to be true and wasn't.

ERNEST

I don't want to talk about it.

SYNAPSE

That's fine. Let's try something. Take a minute, close your eyes, and put yourself into a safe place. Are you there, Ernest.

ERNEST

This is dumb.

SYNAPSE

[TO AUDIENCE] I want all of you do this as well so Ernest doesn't feel so dumb. Yes, we all know you're there. Close your eyes and put yourselves into a safe place -- a desert island, the forest, your room -- any place you know to be safe. Find that place -- that safe place. That place where no one can hurt you. Raise your hands if you're there. Good enough. Keep your mind in that place where you are completely safe and satisfied. All is well. All is as it should be. You are exactly where you're supposed to be, doing exactly what you're supposed to be doing. Do you feel it?

ERNEST

Kinda.

SYNAPSE

You are safe and you are satisfied. Hold it as long as you can. Hold it, and hold it a little longer.

ERNEST

That didn't work.

SAPIEN

You are an alien from another planet.



ERNEST

Say what?

SAPIEN

Ernest, imagine you're an alien from another planet and look out there. What do you see?

ERNEST

A bunch of people staring at me.

SAPIEN

They're all wearing some kind of covering over their bodies. I wonder why.

QUARK

How can little round disks hold up all that material?

ERNEST

Are you talking about their pants?

AENID

I like the ones with interweaving sets of metal teeth.

[ALL EXCEPT ERNEST CONTINUE  
COMMENTING ON THE AUDIENCE]

ERNEST

At least they're staring at you, not me.

SAPIEN

I give up. Someone else deal with him.

QUARK

Ernest, when did you stop beating your wife?

ERNEST

What?

QUARK

Where did you find that hippopotamus?

ERNEST

I don't get it.

QUARK

Where do you hide your gun?

That's a loaded question. ERNEST

Sometimes truth is irrelevant. QUARK

Still not helping. ERNEST

Are you sure? QUARK

Yes... no... I don't know. ERNEST

There's progress. QUARK

Ernest, truth is relative. Name one absolute. BLESSED

Death. ERNEST

Like you've already learned, we don't really know what happens when we die. We barely know what life is. Therefore, death is absolute only relative to life -- as least as far as we know. BLESSED

True. How about taxes? ERNEST

Right, like all corporations pay taxes. Sorry. SAPIEN

Fine. What about change? Isn't that absolute? ERNEST

Change means different things to different people. BLESSED

Great. There are no absolute truths. ERNEST

BLESSED

Life is full of mysteries. [TO AUDIENCE] Am I right?

ERNEST

Then how do we know what is real?

BLESSED

There are times when we don't know.

ERNEST

Take your existential crap and cram it up your--

AENID

Ernest, try doing as Alice did in Alice in Wonderland -- believe six impossible things before breakfast.

ERNEST

I should believe in the impossible?

AENID

The shortest distance between two points is a verb. The easiest path between the possible and impossible is believing.

ERNEST

Just because I believe something is possible doesn't mean it really is.

AENID

For that moment of belief it is possible. Tell me something impossible.

ERNEST

Let's see. Everyone out there is naked.

AENID

Good. Look at them. See them without their clothes on. Know that they are naked. Believe they are naked.

ERNEST

For a second there it was true, I swear. They were all naked. This woman had the perfect body. This guy had the biggest--

AENID

Now try it again and sustain that moment of belief. Believe it for just a little bit longer. [TO AUDIENCE] If this makes you uncomfortable, visualize Ernest naked.

ERNEST

But there are more of them there is me.

AENID

Why would that matter?

ERNEST

Because now I feel naked.

[QUARK, SYNAPSE AND SAPIEN MOVE INTO  
A SEPARATE SPACE FROM BLESSED AND  
AENID.ERNEST MOVES TO JOIN QUARK,  
SYNAPSE AND SAPIEN]

ERNEST

That was totally embarrassing. I feel so vulnerable. Like I do when I fall in love.

QUARK

Love is even more complicated than truth.

SYNAPSE

There are many types of love.

SAPIEN

Some types of love are more fun than others.

ERNEST

What is love?

BLESSED

A poet is a shaman who failed at metamorphosis.

AENID

A shaman is a poet who failed at articulation.

BLESSED

A shaman manifests magic through ritual and invocation.

AENID

A poet manifests magic through craft and evocation.

BLESSED

A poet reflects on a personal vision of reality.

AENID

A magician reflects on a vision of personal reality.

BLESSED

A poet is attracted to a shaman because of a need for magic.

AENID

A shaman is attracted to a poet because of a need for poetry.

BLESSED

A poet loves magic.

AENID

A shaman loves poetry.

BLESSED

A shaman loves.

AENID

A poet loves.

BLESSED

A shaman needs love to reinforce a sense of personal power, to share wisdom learned, to tantrize, to realize--

AENID

--to ostracize?

BLESSED

--to exercise the energy of unification.

AENID

A poet needs love to support a romanticism that helps words to flow, to share the heart's song with another, to translate, to investigate--

BLESSED

--to pontificate?

AENID

--to illustrate the energy of unification.

BLESSED

Unify to connect.

AENID

Connect to unify.

BLESSED

A shaman such as I relates to love.

AENID  
A poet such as I loves to relate.

BLESSED  
I love connecting with you.

AENID  
I connect loving with you.

BLESSED  
Do you love me?

AENID  
As a moth takes to light I am attracted.

BLESSED  
Enough poetry, do you love me?

AENID  
Yes. Do you love me?

BLESSED  
I feel the power of our bonding.

AENID  
Enough magic, do you love me?

BLESSED  
Yes.

QUARK  
Aenid and Blessed are experiencing an endocrine imbalance from sharing a white hole.

SYNAPSE  
Aenid and Blessed are falling in love with love.

SAPIEN  
Ain't love grand?

QUARK  
They are finding that the sum of their beings is greater than their separate selves.

SYNAPSE  
They are creating a third entity. The first two entities are their separate selves, the third is their relationship.

SAPIEN

They're titillated and stimulated by one another.

QUARK

They are like rotating magnets attracting and repelling.

SYNAPSE

They suffer from an approach/avoidance complex.

SAPIEN

They're nervous and shy and want to impress one another without moving too fast..

BLESSED

Writing, writing, writing.

AENID

Chanting, chanting, chanting.

BLESSED

Can't you talk to me without simile and metaphor?

AENID

Can't you communicate without affirmation and prayer?

BLESSED

Do you love me?

AENID

Yes, I love you. Do you love me?

BLESSED

Yes, I love you.

AENID & BLESSED

Love is not enough ... what I mean is--

AENID

I've loved loving you but it makes me feel out of touch with parts of myself.

BLESSED

You've given me parts of yourself I have no business possessing.

AENID

But I want you to have them. You and only you.

BLESSED

It's obsessive to be too possessive.

AENID

But if I take those parts of myself back, will you still love me?

BLESSED

Yes. Those parts will no longer be a burden to me and will make you whole.

AENID

What a relief.

BLESSED

I've loved loving you but I feel over-stimulated, overwhelmed by our relationship.

AENID

If you were to share this excess of energy directly with me instead of imposing it on our relationship, I might help ground you.

BLESSED

But I'm afraid it will make you go away.

AENID

Too much manic leads to panic.

BLESSED

But if I share my fears and anxieties with you, will you still love me?

AENID

Yes. You will be more vulnerable and together we will be more intimate.

BLESSED

What a relief.

QUARK

The wave forms of Aenid and Blessed seek to be in sink.

SYNAPSE

Aenid and Blessed are finding new means of communicating that strengthens their individual selves as well as their connection.

SAPIEN

That was close.



QUARK

They recognize their unique formulas for self-survival.

SYNAPSE

Their personas break down as their egos begin to show themselves.

SAPIEN

The honeymoon is over.

QUARK

Since the endocrine imbalance is no longer a factor, they seek alternative means of connecting.

SYNAPSE

They battle against the potential for a symbiotic co-dependent relationship.

SAPIEN

They're trying to make friends of one another.

[BLESSED WATCHES AENID STRUGGLE]

BLESSED

The magic is gone? [HANDS AENID A DECK OF TAROT CARDS] Shuffle.

AENID

You know how I feel about these.

BLESSED

Yes, I'm aware of your ignorance. Cut them into three piles.

AENID

That's right, piles.

BLESSED

You are clever but are you wise as well? Proceeding is the Heirophant, present is the Tower, potential is the Lovers. We begin with the Heirophant.

[ERNEST, SYNAPSE, SAPIEN AND QUARK  
ACT OUT THE CARD]

You self-righteous egomaniacal pompous ass. Using your work to preach and prognosticate. I don't even do that in my own line of work despite the demand.

AENID

What the hell are you talking about? Who died and made you king? Can I help it if I have a larger sense of the world? Can I help it if the way I translate my empathic understanding of people in my work makes them cry out for more?

BLESSED

The Tower.

[ERNEST, SYNAPSE, SAPIEN AND QUARK  
ACT OUT THE CARD]

BLESSED

Your problem is you believe your own press.

AENID

Yes... No... Maybe. The bottom line is I'm a shit. I'm nothing but a pile myself. No wonder this crap I'm writing stinks. I wreak of recycled verbiage.

QUARK

Verbal diarrhea.

SYNAPSE

Anal grandiosity.

SAPIEN

The need excremental meditation.

QUARK, SYNAPSE & SAPIEN

Om.

BLESSED

The Lovers.

[ERNEST, SYNAPSE, SAPIEN AND QUARK  
ACT OUT THE CARD]

I see, you're impotent.

AENID

I beg your pardon?

BLESSED

Come now, it's only a metaphor. And metaphors can become similes, similes become allegories, I love you.

AENID

And I you.

I love what you do to me. BLESSED

And I what you do to me. AENID

I love what I do to you. BLESSED

And I what I to you. AENID

I love what I do. I love magic. BLESSED

I love what I do. I love -- I love -- I love poetry. AENID

Excuse me? BLESSED

Thank you, I needed that. AENID

I'm all alone. ERNEST

I hope that's inaccurate. I'd like to believe I exist. QUARK

No, you know what I mean. ERNEST

You mean you're not in love? not mated? not entranced by another you feel incomplete without? SAPIEN

Yes. I'm all alone. I have no love in my life. ERNEST

That's love of your life. We all love you. SYNAPSE

ERNEST

That doesn't count.

QUARK

You romantics are all alike. You love the tension of love, but refuse the joy of togetherness. Why do you insist on the anxiety?

ERNEST

You have no feelings.

SAPIEN

Hey, buddy, it's natural to want to bond with someone, to procreate, to grow old together, to be around someone who knows you almost as well as you know yourself. But it takes far less romance and a lot more commitment. Are you willing to do the work?

ERNEST

Sure. I guess. I figure with true love, the commitment would be automatic and the work easy -- piece of cake.

SYNAPSE

For a diabetic. [GRABS ERNEST'S HAND] Do you feel this?

ERNEST

Of course.

SYNAPSE

I love you, dear Ernest. You are dear to me and I support your search in understanding why you are here. You are love in my life.

ERNEST

I'm the love of your life?

SAPIEN

Ernest, listen to the words. The preposition was "in" not "of". The definitive article "the" was never used. And while you're at it, claim your own pronoun.

ERNEST

Same difference.

QUARK

Ernest, paradox is inappropriate at this moment.

SYNAPSE

Ernest, love is love. If you deny one love because it does not fit the parameters you want at the moment, you've received nothing and the giver feels discounted. There's enough love out there and in here to satisfy everyone's needs tenfold.

But-- ERNEST

You're the butt, Ernest. SAPIEN

If you can't accept your friends' love, how do you expect to embrace a lover? As it is, with all your pissing and moaning, you are totally unattractive. QUARK

I just feel unloved. ERNEST

Let us in and you'll know you are loved. SYNAPSE

But-- ERNEST

Sit on it, Ernest. SAPIEN

Do you really love me? All of you? All of me? ERNEST

Yes, I love you. SYNAPSE

That is the state of things. QUARK

You bet, Ernest. SAPIEN

Hey Ernest, how about we do a menage a trois? AENID

That's sick. ERNEST

Don't be so quick to judge, Ernest. BLESSED

Who are you people? ERNEST

[QUARK, SYNAPSE, SAPIEN, BLESSED AND  
AENID REPEAT THE CHANTING OF WHO  
THEY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY PADDY CAKE.  
THEY SHAKE HANDS AND EXIT]

ERNEST

They weren't any help. Well, maybe they were a little. But please, is there someone out there who can tell me why I'm here? Please? [RESPOND WITH ARGUMENTATIVE ANSWERS IF AUDIENCE MEMBERS RESPOND] I just want to know why I'm here. No good answer? None? Oh, well. I guess I can live with that.

[BLACKOUT]