

The Big Fish Story
by
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Finalist
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PREVIEW SCRIPT

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

2m, 3f

Jonah – The biblical character

The Lord - The unseen (but always heard), and unexpectedly female, personification of The Big G. Capable of sounding believably male.

Man -

Aaron - Jonah's friend

Man - The ship vendor and captain, and prison guard

Person of Ninevah - A person of Ninevah

Woman 1 -

Woman 1 - The ship's first mate, a bit dim

Person of Ninevah 2 - A person of Ninevah

Woman 2 -

Woman 2 - An aggressive ship's crew member

Person of Ninevah 3 - A person of Ninevah

(**JONAH** sits in the stomach of a big fish. This is best accomplished with a tent dressed to look like the inside of a fish, that can be easily reused for other things, such as a tent.)

JONAH

I bet you're wondering how I got in here. Yup, inside the stomach of a great big fish. At this hour. And you're probably wondering how I'm alive in here, and not chomped to bits or dissolved by whatever it is that dissolves things that get eaten. I'm wondering, too. Three days in the belly of the beast. I'm Jonah, by the way. I'd ask who you are but I wouldn't hear you, being inside a fish and all. So what's a nice guy like me doing in a fish like this? Well, it started out innocently enough. I had a friend, Aaron, over to my tent, and we were watching the big game.

(**AARON** appears, pushing on a large rock that slightly resembles a futon. **HE** puts it downcenter, in front of the fish which **JONAH** has simply redressed to look like his tent. **BOTH** sit in it, looking straight out toward the audience.)

AARON

Some game, huh?

JONAH

Yeah.

AARON

(pause) Those lions aren't really doing much on the field today, are they?

JONAH

Not really. (pause) Been like that for weeks.

AARON

Well, they're mostly over the hill now. You want to watch the other game?

JONAH

Sure.

(**AARON** and **JONAH** get up, angle the rock toward down-right, then sit facing that direction instead.)

AARON

The bears aren't doing much this week either.

JONAH

Not really. Just grazing the surface.

AARON

You'd think by now they would have moved down the field some.

JONAH

They're pretty slow.

AARON

Yeah. And their nickel defense just isn't getting it done on third down.

(**JONAH** looks at **AARON** oddly, then they sit more in silence.)

You got any fish sticks, Joe?

JONAH

You know I hate seafood.

AARON

(pause) Well, I'm gonna go get some chicken wings. You want any?

JONAH

No, I'm good. Thanks.

(**AARON** pulls out a knife, one suitable for cutting wings off chickens.)

AARON

I'll be back.

(**AARON** exits. **JONAH** keeps watching, lounges on the rock like a sofa. Then we hear the voice of **THE LORD**, though unseen.)

THE LORD

Jonah.

JONAH

Yeah?

THE LORD

Jonah.

JONAH

Back with the wings already?

THE LORD

It's the Lord, Jonah.

JONAH

I paid for the month already.

THE LORD

No, Jonah. The Lord.

JONAH

Sorry, thought you said landlord.

THE LORD

I am the lord of the land, as well as the sea and sky.

JONAH

Good to diversify your portfolio. What do you want? Can't you see I'm busy watching the game?

THE LORD

I want you to build an ark.

JONAH

What?

THE LORD

Build an ark, Jonah.

JONAH

What am I now, Jonah Ark?

THE LORD

What? (less grand:) No. Sorry. Wrong one. (more grand:) Jonah, son of Amittai, arise! Go to Ninevah, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me.

JONAH

Whoa, what?

THE LORD

(sighs) Jonah, son of Amittai, arise. Go to Ninevah, that great city...

JONAH

Yeah, yeah. I heard you. Who are you?

(**JONAH** sits up, starts looking around.)

THE LORD

I'm the Lord, Jonah. Your Lord, and the Lord of your forefathers.

JONAH

Whoa, I had only one father. And my mother didn't remarry or cheat. Don't you talk about my mother like that.

THE LORD

No, I'm the Lord of your father, grandfather, great grandfather, great great grandfather...

JONAH

I get it. Where are you?

THE LORD

Everywhere.

JONAH

Then what are you doing here?

THE LORD

(pause) I'm everywhere.

JONAH

I mean, why are you talking to me now?

THE LORD

(more grand:) Go to Ninevah, that great city...

JONAH

Whoa. First of all, nice grandeur. You take voice lessons for that? Second, Ninevah isn't so great. Have you been there lately?

THE LORD

Of course. I'm everywhere.

JONAH

Then why do you want to send someone? You're already there. Do it yourself.

THE LORD

It doesn't work like that. People don't listen to me.

JONAH

So I'm not the only one. Why me?

THE LORD

Why not you?

JONAH

But if people won't listen to you, in your all-powerfulness-itude-ism... Why would they listen to a guy who sits around watching the worst game in town every week?

THE LORD

You'll make it work.

JONAH

Right. Sure I will. So, what do you want me to do at Ninevah?

THE LORD

Cry against it.

JONAH

Cry? You want me to go to Ninevah and cry?

THE LORD

Yes, for their wickedness is come up before me.

JONAH

If I go to Ninevah and cry, they'll laugh so hard their lunch will come up before you.

THE LORD

No, cry against the city.

JONAH

So, go all the way to Ninevah, lean against the city wall, and have a little sob on your behalf because apparently whatever happens in Ninevah does *not* stay in Ninevah?

THE LORD

Not cry. Cry against it. Declare in a shouting manner. Yell at them. Don't you understand English?

JONAH

Well, if you want to get technical, I don't.

THE LORD

All right, smart ass, here it is in Aramaic...

JONAH

All right, all right. But why Ninevah? In case you hadn't noticed, this town ain't so great either.

THE LORD

You're known here, so people will not fear me through you.

JONAH

And total strangers will?

THE LORD

It's how you come across. Don't take it personally.

JONAH

All right, who is this? Where are you?

(**JONAH** gets up, starts looking around. As he circles the tent, **THE LORD** sneaks into view for the first time, holding a bullhorn, keeping herself hidden from **JONAH**.)

THE LORD

I am everywhere. Jonah, I am the lord of your fathers. Go to Ninevah, cry out against them and their wickedness.

(**JONAH** is downcenter again, **THE LORD** is hidden behind the tent again. **THE LORD** peers over, **JONAH** quickly looks back, just misses the quickly rehidden **LORD**.)

JONAH

Fine. You've got it. No problem. Let me just get my toothbrush.

(**JONAH** goes into his tent, then sneaks out the left side and exits. **THE LORD** comes around the right side of the tent, looking for **JONAH** and doesn't find him. **AARON** re-enters from right, eating a chicken wing, carrying a bucket labelled KFC - Kanaan Fried Chicken.)

AARON

Hey, where did Jonah go?

THE LORD

(Without the bullhorn:) I don't know.

AARON

Who are you? Friend of his?

THE LORD

He should hope so.

AARON

(Flirty) You're not his girlfriend, are you?

(**THE LORD** looks askance at him, then looks at the bucket and waves her hand at it. A chicken sound comes from the bucket, startling **AARON**. **THE LORD** exits right.)

Girlfriend.

(**AARON** takes his rock and goes home, exiting right. **MAN** enters left, goes into the tent and adds a sign that says, "Tarshish Shipping - Joppa Office." **JONAH** reappears, looking around cautiously.)

JONAH

Excuse me, do you have a boat going to Tarshish?

MAN

No.

JONAH

You don't?

MAN

No.

JONAH

What about what your sign says?

MAN

What about it?

It says Tarshish Shipping. **JONAH**

Says you. **MAN**

Says it. **JONAH**

Says you. **MAN**

You don't? **JONAH**

I don't know what the sign says. **MAN**

It's your sign. **JONAH**

I can't read English, Mister Anachronism. **MAN**

It says Tarshish Shipping. **JONAH**

It does? (pause) Yes, I have a boat going to Tarshish. **MAN**

Thank you. I'd like to book passage. **JONAH**

Very good. Smoking or non-smoking? **MAN**

It's a wooden boat, right? Non-smoking. **JONAH**

Travelling alone? **MAN**

JONAH

No, the crew will be on board.

MAN

Has anyone other than yourself had the opportunity to put anything in your baggage?

JONAH

I don't have any baggage.

MAN

Still single at your age and you don't have any baggage. Right. That'll be twenty shekels.

(**JONAH** pays.)

And fifty for passage on the boat.

JONAH

What was the twenty for?

MAN

Relationship advice.

(**JONAH** pays again.)

Boat leaves in thirty minutes. Straight to the right.

JONAH

Is it straight or to the right?

MAN

That way.

JONAH

Thank you.

(**JONAH** exits right. **THE LORD** appears from behind the tent, follows him. **WOMEN 1 & 2** join **MAN** in the tent, dressed as men. They pull up some tent flaps to form a sail. **WOMAN 1** brings a ship's wheel with her, and starts steering the boat, the tent now becoming the ship's bridge.)

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