

TRANSFIGURED GOAT for soprano, baritone, clarinet, and piano by Richard Wilson

A Curtainraiser

Text by Richard Wilson, inspired by Joe Orton

1.

Man: What kind of dog is this?

Woman: An outrageous animal.

Man: What sort of fraud do we have here?

Woman: A preposterous charlatan....Have you got an appointment today?

M: The trademark is in the shape of a goat.

W: Have you got an appointment today?

M: A French cheese salesman would be even worse.

W: Have you got an appointment today?

M: Yes, I'm to be at Lincoln Center at eleven. I'm meeting someone behind the scrim.

W: You always go to such interesting locations. Are you taking the van?

2

W: There is no telling who my father was.

M: Are you taking the van?

W: I refuse to discuss my financial affairs.

M: Is violence within your means?

W: Are you taking the van?

M: There is no telling who your father was.

W: We grant an exemption only in the case of possession by the Devil.

M: This dog has violated every known rule and regulation.

W: I am shocked beyond expression.

M: You always go to such fascinating locations. Are you taking the van?

W: The trademark is in the shape of a goat.

3.

M: Let me be candid, Ms. Vander Twee. I can't promote you if you're in any way miraculous. It would be contrary to our tenure policy. You did have a father?

W: Our dog is some kind of a goat.

M: Are you an exhibitionist?

W: I slept next to one once.

4.

M: Don't go yet. I don't trust myself....

W: Couldn't you just pretend...

M: ...at this time of the evening.

W: ...to have throttled me? Couldn't you just pretend...

M: Don't trust myself at this time...

W: Just pretend to have throttled me?

M: To save face? I don't trust myself.

W: To save face? Couldn't you just pretend...

M: Pretend to save face...

W: I am shocked...

M: You are throttled...

W: No telling...there is no telling...

M: No telling where the dog is...

W: Who my father was...

M: Some kind of baboon...

W: Pretend to throttle...

M: I just don't trust...

W: No telling who was shocked...

M: Who was throttled...

W: What kind of dog...

M: Something is going on here...

W: My father was throttled...

M: And I don't know what...

W: Shocked beyond expression.

M: How refreshing...

W: How refreshing...

M: How refreshing to meet a sensitive artist in today's world of highly-praised baboons.

W: Don't go yet.

M: I don't trust myself at this time of the evening.

M: Your first was poisoned. Your second collapsed while celebrating Nixon's resignation. Your third fell from a hot air balloon. Your fourth took an overdose on the eve of his retirement from Princeton. Your fifth and sixth husbands disappeared in the subway. Presumed dead. Your last partner suffered a seizure three nights after marrying you. How do you account for this?

W: I refuse to discuss my financial affairs.

6.

M: A French cheese salesman would be even worse.

W: You could say she'd gone to Anaheim. That spells death to most people.

M: She's shown no preference for California. Not even under hypnosis.

W: There is some kind of chicanery involved here.

M: I've an appointment at the nude calendar shop. I've been commissioned to do October.

W: Say she's on a surf-riding holiday. The bizarre culture of the coast fascinates her. She takes up residence. And, after a decent interval, is swept into the ocean on a dinghy.

M: Would that suit you?

W: It isn't the death I've dreamt of.

7.

W: Our dog is some kind of impostor.

M: You refuse to discuss your financial affairs.

W: I refuse to discuss my financial affairs.

M: Our dog is a fraudulent animal.

W: What a....

M: Dismal failure...

W: Yes, the trademark is in the shape of a baboon.

M: I refuse to discuss our dog...

W: ...is some kind of a goat...

M: ...does not share your affection for Grieg...

W: Are you some kind of a nut?

M: ...and Rachmaninov; Spohr and Puccini.

W: What are you talking about?

M: Let me be candid, Ms. Vander Twee. I can't promote you if you're in any way miraculous. It would be contrary to our tenure policy. You did have a father?

W: Oh, I'm sure I did. My mother was frugal in her habits, but she'd never economize to that extent.

M: Have you got an appointment today?

W: I've an appointment at the nude calendar shop. I've been commissioned to do October.

M: You always go to such fascinating locations. Are you taking the van?