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Big Thick Rod
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More Great Plays Available
From OWP

7 Redneck Cheerleaders

by Louis Jacobs

4 Males, 4 Female

Synopsis: LA Cult Hit 7 REDNECK CHEERLEADERS tells the story of a novice playwright and expert push over, Ben, attempting to direct his first play—at the advice of a favorite aunt on her deathbed. He meets a Hollywood theatre producer at Trader Joe’s and the Equity-waiver hell begins. Ben’s play within the play is an American Tale of a small town boy, Young, who against the wishes of a tyrannical, podunk father, is determined to become a high school cheerleader for the sake of love. Out of his element with actor-types, Ben rehearses the cast in their redneck roles. Hearts are trampled on. Rim jobs are discussed. Testicles are mangled and some actors die. But not without a serious, and cathartic, cheer-competition finale. And Ben’s favorite aunt smiles down from Lesbian Heaven.

Poona the Fuckdog
and other plays for children

by Jeff Goode

cast of 8-17, depending on doubling

Synopsis: Once upon a time there was a Fuck Dog. Named Poona. Poona was a very lonely Fuck Dog until one day she was visited by her Fairy God Phallus and taught how to play a fun game in her big pink box. Poona suddenly becomes a very popular Fuck Dog! Poona's adventures take her to the Kingdom of Do (where nobody did) ruled by a powerful television set. She meets, among others, Suzy-Suzy Cyber Assassin, a thespian shrub, lost space aliens, and she even talks to God! Poona finally grows old and must tell her fabulous story to all you little kiddies.

Big Thick Rod

By

Stanton Wood

CHARACTERS

Cricket

(f) 20's. a nymph

Elmer

(m) 30's, her husband, a lawyer

Jerome

(m) 20's, their gardener, an itinerant laborer

Big Thick Rod

(m) 20's, A talented hired "hand".

Burgermeister

(m) 30's, A banker. Rod's "master".

Announcements: At the beginning of each scene, the actors (in character) inform the audience of where the scene is taking place. This is the only time the actors speak directly to the audience. These announcements should be simple and direct, and not of the "nudge nudge wink wink" variety.

Tone: The play has very little subtext, by design. People pretty much say what they're thinking.

Set: The play is designed to move quickly, with a set that allows for location to be sketched through the announcements and a few simple pieces.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Big Thick Rod was produced by Rabbit Hole Ensemble (Artistic Director, Edward Elefterion) as part of the New York International Fringe Festival in summer, 2008.

The play was directed by Edward Elefterion with the following cast and production team:

Cricket.....	Tatiana Gomberg
Elmer.....	Arthur Aulisi
Jerome.....	Dan Atl Kitrosser
Big Thick Rod.....	Matt Cody
Burgermeister.....	Emily Hartford

Stage Manager.....	Abigail Strange
Costumes.....	Michael Tester
Lights.....	Avery Lewis
ACR.....	Lauren Cook
Graphic/Web Designer.....	David Liao
Surround Events.....	Jessica Quimby
Interns.....	Rachel Myers, Jackie Nese
Programs.....	Kelly Aliano

The show was subsequently picked up and extended as part of the Access Theatre “Spotlight” Series with the same cast and crew.

Acknowledgements: The author would like to specially thank Arthur Aulisi, Edward Elefterion, Lori Ann Laster, and John Picardi.

Almost all of our relationships begin and most of them
continue as forms of mutual exploitation, a mental or
physical barter, to be terminated when one or both parties
run out of goods.

- W. H. Auden

BIG THICK ROD

SCENE 1

(ELMER and CRICKET are kissing. CRICKET abruptly stops and speaks directly to the audience.)

CRICKET: The couch in the living room.

(THEY go back to kissing. ELMER abruptly pulls away.)

ELMER: This has been the most glorious honeymoon.

CRICKET: I know. Let's go into the bedroom this time. I nearly punctured a lung on that armrest this morning.

ELMER: Well. Hold on. I got you a present.

(HE pulls out a book.)

ELMER: "War and Peace".

(HE hands her the hardcover book. It's gigantic.)

CRICKET: Jesus. It's huge. What am I supposed to do with this? I can barely hold it.

ELMER: I thought maybe you could join the book club at the law firm.

CRICKET: And do what?

ELMER: The wives of all the major partners participate.

CRICKET: In what?

ELMER: They read.

CRICKET: Do they have sex?

ELMER: They discuss *War and Peace*.

CRICKET: Do they have sex after they've discussed it?

ELMER: No.

CRICKET: Do they have sex before they've discussed it?

ELMER: No.

CRICKET: Do they have sex while discussing it?

ELMER: No. It's a book club, not an orgy.

CRICKET: I don't see why it can't be both.

ELMER: They just read the books and then discuss them. This will help me in my career. All of the partners are married and their wives all participate in this book club.

CRICKET: It will take me weeks to read this.

ELMER: That's okay. You can still join the discussions.

CRICKET: It will cut into our sex time.

ELMER: I have to go back to work tomorrow anyway.

CRICKET: What do you mean?

ELMER: I have a job. I'll be gone all day.

CRICKET: Does that mean we're never going to have sex again?

ELMER: Cricket. We've had nothing but sex for the last three weeks. I've never had so much sex. It was glorious. We had so much sex so often and so vigorously that it was practically a religious experience. But that was our honeymoon. A honeymoon is supposed to be a once in a lifetime event. That's why it's called a honey "moon" as opposed to a honey "lifetime" or a honey "eternity".

CRICKET: But I'm just getting warmed up.

ELMER: Well get un-warmed up. Our honeymoon is over today and I'm going to court tomorrow morning. I'm trying to make partner and I can't look like I'm slacking.

CRICKET: Okay, so we'll just have sex in the morning and the evening.

ELMER: I have a trial right now. I'm going to have to work late.

CRICKET: I'll wait up.

ELMER: I won't have the energy.

CRICKET: What are you trying to tell me, Elmer?

ELMER: This can't go on. This...pace. I can't keep it up.

CRICKET: So we'll cut back a little.

ELMER: We'll have to cut back a lot.

CRICKET: Well how much is a lot?

ELMER: I figure that each month we can have sex one time.

CRICKET: One time a month?

ELMER: Yes.

CRICKET: But that's outrageous! Don't I have a say?

ELMER: You can choose which day.

CRICKET: Can't we compromise? You told me that marriage was a romantic partnership.

ELMER: Marriage is a contract, Cricket. Why do you think there's a licensing procedure?

CRICKET: But you went to all this trouble to bring me here. You demonstrated your desire so dramatically. I thought you loved me!

ELMER: I do love you. And I especially love the idea of you. People really respect me when they hear about you.

CRICKET: But this desire is part of who I am. I can't give up sex.

ELMER: I'm not asking you to give it up. I'm just asking you to maintain a more humane pace.

CRICKET: It's all this civilization. It's the city. It's stimulating. I thought you wanted this. Why bring me out of the forest if you're just going to make me read *War and Peace*. I'm a nymph. I'm a magical being. Why go to all this trouble? What you did to bring me here. It was epic. And you did it for this? Don't you think this is a waste?

ELMER: Married people make partner more quickly.

CRICKET: But there must be humans...why marry ME?

ELMER: I've noticed that most of the wives have a special talent. One is particularly good at macramé, for instance, and another writes gothic poetry. There's also a partner's wife who creates historically accurate models of the great clipper ships using shortbread cookies. But an actual wood nymph...that will be very impressive to the committee.

CRICKET: But I lost all of my magical powers when I left the forest. About all I can do now is inspire a love poem.

ELMER: That's good enough for me. And I know that they'll see instantly how special you are. I'm sure they'd just adore you at the Book Club. Can't you just give it a try?

CRICKET: Are you sure they won't want to have sex?

ELMER: No sex.

CRICKET: Maybe they could meet me halfway. I'll read the first chapter and make a ginger bread house in exchange for a brief orgy.

ELMER: You're going to have to cut back on the sex, Cricket. That's not how we do things here. (*studying her*) Maybe it's marriage you don't like.

CRICKET: I love you, Elmer.

ELMER: You're not really showing it.

CRICKET: I wouldn't have seduced you if I didn't. I wouldn't have made myself visible to you.

ELMER: Maybe you'd just be happier back in the forest. I can take you back. We can replant your tree.

CRICKET: I want to give this a try, Elmer. I don't want to go back right now. It's okay, honest. I'm fine. No problem. I was exaggerating. Once a month is great. I'll study meditation.

ELMER: Will you read *War and Peace*?

CRICKET: No.

ELMER: I'd really like you to join the Book Club. Couldn't you give it a try?

CRICKET: I can't. I can't read that. It looks like a manual for how to be miserable. If you're not going to have sex with me than I need a hobby. I need greenery. I know how to grow things. Maybe that will impress them.

ELMER: Well that's an interesting talent.

CRICKET: You mean a talent they'll understand.

ELMER: You don't have to be snotty.

CRICKET: I'll um...need a gardener also. A strong, gentle gardener. To help me. I'm sure I can get someone to volunteer.

ELMER: Volunteer? No. You won't beg for help. We'll hire you a full time gardener. I've been yearning to have a gratuitous servant. The cleaning woman is so utilitarian that it's almost like being a communist.

CRICKET: That's perfect, Elmer. Thank you. And I promise I won't badger you for sex.

ELMER: But I want you to interview at least five people before you select someone. And when you've hired someone, I'll help you write up a contract.

CRICKET: I don't need a contract.

ELMER: Of course you do.

CRICKET: It's just someone to help me garden.

ELMER: They should have a contract. These casual arrangements might have worked in the forest, Cricket, but here in the real world you don't hire someone without having a contract. It leads to chaos, lawsuits, and hurt feelings. Not to mention that without a contract you actually have to care if they're happy.

CRICKET: I'm new at all this, Elmer. I'll just take your word for it.

ELMER: As you should.

CRICKET: And I'll try to learn for the future. After all, this is my home now.

(Crossfade)

SCENE 2

(Elmer's Study. JEROME stands uncertainly, peering around him at the garden.)

JEROME: *(to the audience, confidentially)* Elmer's Study.

(CRICKET enters.)

CRICKET: Hi, Jerome.

JEROME: Hi, Cricket. Nice to meet you.

CRICKET: So...um...like I told you on the phone...we'd like to hire a gardener.

JEROME: That's what the ad said.

CRICKET: Do you like gardening?

JEROME: Yes. Very much. It's my favorite thing.

CRICKET: Are you a good gardener?

JEROME: Pretty good.

CRICKET: How much experience do you have?

JEROME: A lot. Although I'm not doing any gardening at the moment. I'm currently working a triple combined shift at Burger King, White Castle and Dairy Queen. I'm sending money home to my Ma. She's dying of complications from this unbelievably strange spider bite that she got on her eyeball. My family has very bad luck. My uncle was hit by a car and now he has this disease where his toes fall off in the middle of the night and then miraculously grow back the next day. They don't even have a name for that one. He used to play golf in the morning. Now he has to wait until afternoon, or he's unable to stand up properly.

CRICKET: Wow.

JEROME: Yeah. It's intense.

(Pause. JEROME waits for the next question. CRICKET studies him intently. Finally she makes up her mind.)

CRICKET: Would you like to have sex now?

JEROME: Is that part of the interview?

CRICKET: I'm bored with these job-related questions.

JEROME: Will my job duties include having sex with you?

CRICKET: Of course.

JEROME: I thought you were married.

CRICKET: What does marriage have to do with my sex life?

JEROME: You don't have sex with your husband?

CRICKET: My husband is on a monthly cycle.

JEROME: We all have our peaks and valleys.

CRICKET: There's no peak. Just one long valley.

JEROME: So my job will include making up the difference, is that it?

CRICKET: Yes. But since he only wants it once a month, there's a lot to make up for.

JEROME: How often would we have to do it?

CRICKET: (*calculating*) Eight times a day. Before and after breakfast, lunch and dinner. A really furious coupling at tea time. Plus a midnite snack. Plus I'd want to schedule one spontaneous romantic type bonus get-together for when we least expect it.

JEROME: (*to himself*) Well...I think I could manage nine times a day. If I ate a lot of fish and raw fruits and vegetables. (*To CRICKET*) How much actual gardening would I have to do?

CRICKET: I think one flowering plant should do it.

JEROME: One plant? Don't you want a forest? I could plant some trees. I thought you said you were a wood nymph.

CRICKET: I live in the city now. Nature no longer sustains me.

JEROME: That sounds kind of sad. I could plant one tree, just to remind you of home.

CRICKET: I have other work for you to do. Are you interested or not?

JEROME: Will you pay me every Friday?

CRICKET: Of course.

JEROME: Will you pay me well?

CRICKET: I'll double what you're making now. At all your jobs. How does that sound?

JEROME: Sounds good.

CRICKET: Good. Can we have sex now?

JEROME: Um. Okay. Sure, why not? But...um...does that mean I get the job?

(*CRICKET looks at him impatiently. Crossfade*)

SCENE 3

(*ELMER is reading the stock report again. HE puts the book down for a second.*)

ELMER: (*to audience*) The Lounge.

(*HE goes back to reading. CRICKET enters*)

CRICKET: I hired a gardener, Elmer.

ELMER: Good. Let's write him up a contract.

CRICKET: He seems like a nice person. Are you sure I really need to do that? Can't we work on the honor system?

ELMER: The honor system is for chumps. I want something written down. How can you mistreat the help if you don't know what the rules are?

CRICKET: Okay. Well, I wrote out this sample.

(SHE hands him a piece of paper. ELMER looks at it.)

ELMER: You're going to pay him per "bush tending"? What does "bush tending" mean?

CRICKET: Well it means taking care of my needs...um...with respect to that particular flowering plant. Is there something wrong with it?

ELMER: It's vague. Maybe you should say "bush tending session." I mean, how will he know when he's done with that particular bush tending?

CRICKET: He'll know when I'm satisfied.

ELMER: So he'll tend your bush nine times a day, until you're satisfied?

CRICKET: Sounds good to me.

ELMER: We'll amend that. *(HE makes a note.)* I notice you only talk about one bush. Do you want him planting seeds elsewhere in the garden?

CRICKET: Oh I don't think he'll have any energy. But just in case, I'd like to punish him for unauthorized plowing. Can we do that?

ELMER: Sure. What do you think would be appropriate?

CRICKET: Forty lashes?

ELMER: *(Proudly)* Now you're talking like a homeowner. *(HE makes a note)* Suppose he wants to quit?

CRICKET: Well, I guess we get a new gardener.

ELMER: Yes, but that requires effort. Don't you want to punish him for that? I mean, you're writing out the contract. Go hog wild.

CRICKET: Forty lashes again?

ELMER: No, in this case an economic punishment is probably better.

CRICKET: He has to pay back all the money we've paid him?

ELMER: Excellent. *(HE makes a note)* I think that's it.

(HE hands the contract back.)

ELMER: I'm proud of you, honey. That's an excellent contract.

(CRICKET smiles happily)

CRICKET: That was fun.

ELMER: And I have a present for you.

(He pulls out a gigantic checkbook.)

ELMER: Your very own checkbook. Write a check to pay the gardener and whatever else you need. Each month, I'll deposit your allowance into this account. You'll have stay on budget, though. Don't overspend!

CRICKET: Oh honey, what a nice present. Thank you!

(SHE gives him a kiss)

CRICKET: You're the best husband a girl could ask for.

(THEY smile at each other. Crossfade.)

SCENE 4

(CRICKET and JEROME. JEROME looks bedraggled and worn out, like he just got back from a 19th century polar expedition.)

CRICKET: *(to audience)* The Billiard Room. *(to JEROME)* Ready? Let's screw.

JEROME: I'm not in the mood.

CRICKET: Professionals do it even when they're not in the mood.

JEROME: I'm not a professional.

CRICKET: You're a professional gardener.

JEROME: You wear me out. I've only got one.

CRICKET: You think I sprout a new one daily?

JEROME: I think you're insatiable.

CRICKET: I'm a magical being.

JEROME: You're a black hole of sex. Do you have any idea how many times we've had sex in the last week?

CRICKET: Fifty-seven and a half. Not counting the rutabaga.

JEROME: It would take every man and woman on this planet to satisfy you. And even then they might need the help of some related species.

CRICKET: I have high standards. What is this about?

JEROME: You've got to help me. You're killing me. I've been screwing you at least nine times a day for twenty five days. If I keep this up I'll be dead in a year. You're a man eater.

CRICKET: We made a deal.

JEROME: IT'S A DEATH SENTENCE. A DEATH SENTENCE. (*JEROME sinks, sobbing.*) What about your husband, couldn't he help out more? Just once a day, maybe?

CRICKET: He's too busy.

JEROME: How about once a week?

CRICKET: I wish.

JEROME: Jesus, can't he take up at least some of the slack? I'm the only guy rowing the boat, here.

CRICKET: He's a busy man. He has a career to manage. He's trying to make partner. He doesn't have time to have sex with me.

JEROME: What about the weekends?

CRICKET: Fishing.

JEROME: Can't he take one day? He could take the swing shift on Friday.

CRICKET: Jerome, we signed a contract. Elmer says that binds us. We have to do what it says. If you want to cancel the contract, you'll have to pay me back all the money I've paid you. That's the cancellation agreement.

JEROME: I just wanted to be a gardener. That's all I wanted. You offered me a good job. Tending the roses. Raking leaves. I love plants. I love vegetables. I even love fruits. But I'm just a regular guy. I mean, I thought it was a dream come true. Until I realized the ramifications.

CRICKET: If you can't fulfill the contract, you'll have to repay the money.

JEROME: I sent it all to the eyeball doctor.

CRICKET: I'm sorry, Jerome. I don't know what to say. I don't know what to do. I don't want to hurt you. But I can't cancel the contract. It was Elmer's idea. I'll give you an hour to freshen up, okay? But you have to give me sex nine times a day or give me my money back.

JEROME: I can't. I can't. I love tending your bush. I even love having sex with you. But I can't keep up this pace. Please. Don't fire me. Don't make me repay the money. I beg you. I'm desperate and I need the money for my ma.

(CRICKET studies him.)

CRICKET: I guess maybe I could make an exception.

JEROME: It's more than a full time job.

CRICKET: Hmm. I do have a check book. I guess I could hire someone to help you.

JEROME: Yes, yes. That's what I'm trying to tell you. I need help. Can't you hire a second person?

(Pause. Cricket considers this. Crossfade.)

SCENE 5

(A woodshed. BIG THICK ROD is chopping wood with a huge, brutal looking axe. The chopping has a rhythm. The axe looks like something the vikings might have used. He wears a muscle shirt. He pauses briefly.)

ROD: *(to audience)* Behind the wood shed.

(HE resumes his chopping. HE chops wood throughout the scene. BURGERMEISTER enters.)

BURGERMEISTER: How's it going, Rod?

ROD: I'm getting there.

BURGERMEISTER: Doesn't look like you're making much progress.

(BURGERMEISTER pulls out a whip.)

ROD: I know, sir.

BURGERMEISTER: And I'll need you to swab the kitchen floor.

ROD: Yes, sir.

BURGERMEISTER: And clean out the fireplace.

ROD: Yes, sir.

BURGERMEISTER: And polish the silver.

ROD: Yes, sir.

BURGERMEISTER: And iron my undershorts.

ROD: Yes, Mr. Burgermeister.

(BURGERMEISTER is getting excited by giving ROD an impossible amount of work.)

BURGERMEISTER: And if you don't finish up by the time I return from the bank, I'll have to... *(softly)* whip you...

(HE exits. ROD sighs heavily. CRICKET approaches. She carries her checkbook. SHE watches him chop wood.)

CRICKET: Excuse me. I...I've been watching you. I heard you chopping wood. I heard...the chopping sound. Even from the street. I wonder if I might talk with you for a second.

ROD: Sure. Bend over and grab your ankles.

CRICKET: I beg your pardon.

ROD: That's what you want, isn't it? Go ahead. Don't be shy. But I have to keep chopping wood while we do it. I have to have a cord done by the end of the day.

CRICKET: That's not really what I want. Well...at least not at this particular moment.

ROD: You want me to bend over? Well, gee, okay. I'll do it. But I'll be honest with you. It's not my forte.

CRICKET: No. I mean, well...we'll have to try that some time...but right now I need some help. My husband isn't giving me enough sex.

ROD: Hire a gardener.

CRICKET: I did hire a gardener.

ROD: And it's still not enough?

(CRICKET slowly and sadly shakes her head)

ROD: Crikey. How many times do you need it?

CRICKET: Nine times a day.

ROD: Sheesh, that's nothing. What's the big deal?

CRICKET: Dunno, but it's driving me bonkers. My husband only wants sex once a month. And the gardener is sweet, but I'm going to mash him like a sweet potato. Can you help?

ROD: I can't quit my day job.

CRICKET: You can work part time.

ROD: I get beaten if I don't fulfill my wood quota.

CRICKET: I'll pay you good.

ROD: It'll have to be plenty.

CRICKET: How much is plenty?

ROD: I want twice as much as I make chopping wood.

CRICKET: How much do you make chopping wood?

ROD: A lot.

CRICKET: How much is a lot?

ROD: I get a hundred bucks.

CRICKET: How often?

ROD: Each year.

CRICKET: I'll pay you a hundred bucks a day.

ROD: Yeah, right.

CRICKET: No, seriously. I have a check book. See?

ROD: Wow, that's a big check book.

CRICKET: Is it a deal?

ROD: All right!

(CRICKET unzips her checkbook and quickly writes out a check.)

CRICKET: What's your name, anyway?

ROD: They call me Big Thick Rod.

(SHE stops and glances up at him.)

CRICKET: "Big Thick Rod"? Is that like calling a big fat guy "Tiny"?

ROD: It's like calling a big fat guy "Big Fatso".

CRICKET: Oh. Perfect.

(SHE finishes writing out the check, rips it out of the book, and hands it to him.)

CRICKET: The address is on the check. See you tonight.

(SHE gives him a kiss on the cheek and exits. Crossfade.)

SCENE 6

(The bedroom. CRICKET is brushing her hair. Elmer is reading a deposition. He puts it down.)

ELMER: *(to audience)* Our bedroom. A week later.

(HE picks it back up.)

ELMER: *(to CRICKET)* You're spending too much money on sex.

(CRICKET jumps guiltily, then stops brushing her hair.)

CRICKET: I don't know what you're talking about. I'm not spending any money on sex.

ELMER: Oh yeah? I've seen the check stubs. Who exactly is "Big Thick Rod", then?

CRICKET: Well...I have been spending...a little money...on gardening...tools.

ELMER: *(Putting down his deposition)* That's what I'm talking about! Our gardening bill is outrageous. We only have one rose bush. You'd think we were living in Versailles.

CRICKET: Why are you complaining, Elmer? You're rolling in money.

ELMER: That's not the point. I refuse to pay someone to have sex with my wife. It's un-American. Use a vibrator.

CRICKET: I crave intimacy.

ELMER: Buy a dog. We have to make sacrifices, Cricket. You can't pay for sex. I forbid it.

CRICKET: Then you're going to have to take advantage of your marital privileges more often.

ELMER: No. I can't keep up. And I'm man enough to admit it. Get it for free.

CRICKET: I can't. I can't ask people to screw me as a hobby. It's a full time job.

ELMER: Then you're going to have to do without. Channel your obscene sexual energy into something socially responsible. Work in a soup kitchen. Read to blind people. Give me back your checkbook.

CRICKET: My checkbook? Why?

ELMER: I'm cutting off your allowance. I don't want any more checks going to this "Big Thick Rod" person.

CRICKET: What about Jerome?

ELMER: Well he has a contract. And at least he's doing something useful. But I'm going to personally pay the gardener myself until you learn how to handle your money responsibly. Come on, hand it over.

(CRICKET reluctantly picks up the checkbook and hands it to him. He has to tug it a couple of times to take it from her.)

CRICKET: But this is no fair. You told me I would have an allowance.

ELMER: That was before you abused the privilege. You'll get your allowance back if you behave yourself.

CRICKET: But this is cruel.

ELMER: If you want to pay for sex, you can use your own personal money.

CRICKET: I don't have any personal money. I come from the forest.

ELMER: Then get it for free. Like normal people. Or there's always *War and Peace*.

(CRICKET gasps in dismay as he exits. Crossfade.)