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Canned Peaches in Syrup

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**CANNED PEACHES IN
SYRUP**

BY

ALEX JONES

Canned Peaches in Syrup received its World Premiere on October 6, 2007 by Furious Theatre Company, artists-in-residence at the Pasadena Playhouse. Directed by Dámaso Rodriguez.

The cast was as follows:

SCAB	NICK CERNOCH
JULIE	KATIE DAVIES
ROG (Pron: 'ROJ')	SHAWN LEE
BILL	ERIC PARGAC
BLIND BASTARD	DANA J. KELLY
PA	ROBERT PESCOVITZ
MA	LAURA RAYNOR
HEATHER	LIBBY WEST

PRODUCTION TEAM:

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - MEGAN GOODCHILD
STAGE MANAGER - SUDRO BROWN
COSTUME DESIGNER - CHRISTY M. HAUPTMAN
FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER - BRIAN DANNER
HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGN - CHRISTA McCARTHY
LIGHTING DESIGNER - DAN JENKINS
SOUND DESIGN/ORIGINAL MUSIC - DOUG NEWELL
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER - CHRIS BLAKE
SCENIC DESIGNER - MELISSA TEOH
MARKETING & PUBLICITY - DAVID ELZER/DEMAND PR

THE SET:

(The stage is an ancient tarmaced road, which has almost been entirely engulfed by the desert, which the world is reverting to following a hundred years of drought. The whole space is covered with sand. There are a few rocks, which are broken pieces of concrete with the rusty reinforcing-steel sticking out. There is one broken concrete lamppost. There is a huge sky backdrop, which glows sourly through the veil of a stricken sky. The place is somewhere in America. The time is the future...)

CANNED PEACHES IN SYRUP

ACT 1, SCENE 1: THE FAMILY'S CAMP.

(The family arrive on stage pulling an old wagon that has been somewhat modified.)

MA: How much further, Pa? I don't think I can manage much more.

PA: Thought I saw some green when we were on top of that last ridge, bit of grass or shrub or somethin'.

MA: Can't say I saw anythin', Pa.

PA: Could've been mistaken. *(Stops)* Wanna stop then?

MA: The girl's tuckered, Pa.

PA: You tuckered, girl?

JULIE: Bit tuckered, Pa.

PA: We'll camp up then. It's as good a spot as any: clear view all around, see anyone comin' way off.

JULIE: I'll boil some water, huh Pa?

PA: No, best not, girl; save our resources. We'll chew on them roots we dug up yesterday, plenty of moisture in them.

(They begin to make camp.)

MA: What say we put up for a few days, Pa? My legs are like jelly and my shit's ever such a funny color.

PA: What color is it?

MA: Pink.

PA: What color's your shit, girl?

JULIE: Green, Pa.

PA: That's normal then. Whatcha been eatin', Ma?

MA: That's a crazy question: the same as you of course - grass an' boiled root.

PA: Pink shit don't sound right. You could prob'ly use a rest. I just hope there's no cannibals around these parts.

MA: Don't be silly, Pa. There's no one for miles.

(Julie has set up the deck chairs and picnic table. They sit down to eat their roots.)

PA: Pink shit, huh?

MA: Bit peculiar, isn't it?

PA: Could've been that bark we had last week; that was a bit pinky underneath.

MA: But the girl's shit is fine. What about you? What colour's your shit?

PA: Green.

(Pause. They carry on eating.)

JULIE: I'm gonna have to be sick.

(Julie gets up and throws up a few paces off. The others carry on eating, regardless. Eventually she returns to the table.)

JULIE: I don't think I can manage much more.

MA: You eat up, girl - there's goodness in that root.

PA: None of us feel like eatin' that often, but we have to force ourselves. Don't let a bit of vomit put you off. You need your sustenance.

(Julie carries on eating. Pause.)

PA: We'll stay here a few days then. We've got enough provisions just now.

MA: Oh that would be nice! It's been a good while since we've had a decent break. Since the tribe broke up it seems like we hadn't stopped walkin'.

PA: We gotta find new pastures. We stay put too long, we'll starve. 'Less you fancy cannibalism?

MA: Ooh don't talk so vile! I couldn't bear the thought - meat is murder, Pa; you know that. We took the pledge with the rest of the tribe. You shouldn't even joke about it.

PA: Sorry Ma.

MA: The vegetarians are the chosen people. We'll survive because of our purity and our links with the earth,

PA: Then how come our tribe are wiped out?

MA: Oh Pa, we're still here and there are other vegetarian tribes around. It was a test of our faith.

PA: Yeah, maybe.

MA: "*Flesh is weak and the grass is always greener on the other side*".

PA: When we can find some.

MA: *Resolve* - that's what you're always tellin' me.

PA: Yeah, you're right Ma - *Resolve*. We'll survive.

MA: That's more like it!

(An old man with bandaged eyes, holding a wooden staff, slowly gets up from behind a boulder. Julie spots him.)

JULIE: *Pa!*

PA: *(Clocking him)* Fetch my gun, girl!

(Julie quickly gets Pa's rifle from the wagon. Pa points it at the blind man.)

PA: Who are you?

B.B: They call me *Blind Bastard*.

PA: Why?

B.B: Because I'm blind.

PA: I see. And what can we do for you, Blind Bastard?

B.B: No - what can I do for you?

PA: Well you could start by fuckin' off.

B.B: A natural reaction to a stranger in a strange land.

PA: Then naturally fuck off.

B.B: *(Walking towards Pa)* I am an old man, blind and scabby; what possible harm can I do you?

PA: Hold it right there, Mr Blind Bastard; whether you can see or not you need to know I've got a gun in my hand.

B.B: *A gun!* Do you have bullets?

PA: What use is a gun without a fuckin' bullet?

B.B: God's leaden deliverers were all spent many years ago.

PA: You can take it from me they're not all spent; one more step you can have one of your very own.

B.B: You speak through fear. But your threats are empty - you have no bullets.

PA: What's your game, stranger? We have no food to share.

B.B: Do not fear me: I am a Holy Man; I mean no harm.

MA: You're a Holy Man?

B.B: *I am the eyes of the world!*

PA: I can't see it myself.

MA: *Respect Pa.* He's a Holy Man - he has an affliction.

PA: There are plenty of blind people since the sun went crazy. It don't mean a thing. And what was he doin' hidin' behind a rock?

B.B: I sought shelter from the mid-day burn. I fell asleep... I believe you have some root. I haven't eaten for three days.

MA: Oh let him have some root, Pa - he's safe.

B.B: Thank you Madam, my blessin' upon you.

MA: He blessed us Pa. We ain't been blessed for a long time now.

(Pause.)

PA: All right, Blind Bastard; join us for a while.

B.B: Accept my scabby thanks. Please... guide me to your feast -
(Ma sits him down and hands him some root. He begins to chew.)

B.B: Very nice, very woody.

MA: It's a bit dry.

B.B: Sustenance from the soil. We must be grateful for whatever this poor maligned rock deems to give up to us. *(Chews for a while)* What tribe are you?

PA: Vegetarian: the last of the Oklahoma City Salad Men. We were nomadic; our tribe have always been grazers, movin' from pasture to pasture.

B.B: Vegetarian, huh?

MA: Are there any vegetarians around here?

B.B: Some.

PA: What tribes?

B.B: The last I saw were the Pocatello Thistlejaws and Pineconers.

PA: What were they doin' down here? I hear there's still trees up north.

B.B: The trees are sick.

PA: We're all sick, friend. The whole world's sick, but trees are trees! A tree is a great source of protein.

MA: Would you like to try this other kind of root, Blind Bastard? It's a bit more sappy.

(Ma places another root in Blind Bastard's hand.)

B.B: You are kind, Madam. Blessin's on you and your family.

MA: Oh thank you, a blessin' never goes amiss.

PA: What other tribes have been here?

B.B: There was a group of people from the Mexico borders seen a few weeks ago.

PA: Veggies?

B.B: Meat eaters.

PA: *(Concerned)* What kind of meat?

B.B: Animal.

PA: *(Relieved)* Thank God!

B.B: There *are* cannibals 'round these parts.

PA: I knew it!

MA: Oh Pa, we haven't got to move on again have we?

PA: What's their strength?

B.B: Remnants like you: just a handful, sick and stained by the corruption of their foul misdeeds; you needn't be worried by them.

MA: Are you vegetarian then, Blind Bastard?

B.B: Of course; the only true way, Madam: redemption through earthly ties - the soil will give up its fruit once more when the canker is cut from the branch of life. The cannibals are diseased by the diseased flesh they devour. The earth will claim their bones and surrender a flower for each disgustin' corpse interred within its loamy tomb.

MA: Ooh, that's beautiful! You really are a Holy Man.

B.B: My affliction is Christ's gift; a burden and a blessin' - I can see, but can't see; the world is dark, but the way forward is bathed in light and visions. I am chosen: *Meat is murder!*

ALL: *Meat is murder!*

PA: You're welcome, Blind Bastard. I didn't know you were of our creed. Can't be sure in times like these. It's hard to trust anyone.

B.B: Think nothin' of it.

PA: These cannibals, where are they?

B.B: Some miles off. I have observed them, unseen: a crass bunch of worm-ridden carcasses, brown-drawer'd and runny-assed in the face of danger. Your gun will keep them at bay... even though you have no bullets.

PA: I have bullets.

(Pause.)

JULIE: We've got a can.

MA: *Shush girl!*

B.B: A can?

PA: Nothin' to speak of, just a can.

B.B: What kind of can?

JULIE: Fruit,

B.B: *A can of fruit?* I haven't seen a food can for many years.

PA: You shouldn't speak of it girl, you know that.

JULIE: But he's a Holy Man, Pa.

MA: It's an heirloom; belonged to your granpa that did.

B.B: A great treasure, no doubt. You can trust me. Let me examine it, please? I would consider it a great honor.

PA: I don't know...

MA: Oh go on. Pa. It can't do no harm.

PA: Fetch it then, girl -

(Julie enters the wagon and comes back with the can. Blind Bastard holds out his hands, expectedly. Julie passes the can to Pa, who places it in Blind Bastard's waiting hands - it is almost a religious experience. Blind Bastard begins to stroke the can. He shakes it by his ear.)

PA: *Careful!*

B.B: Of course... The fruit is suspended in liquid of some kind. I can feel it heavy and ripe, bumpin' against the sides of the can... What is it?

JULIE: Canned peaches in syrup.

B.B: *(Soft moan)* I know the fruit from old.

JULIE: What's it like?

B.B: You've never tasted it?

JULIE: No, it's the only can we have. I ate an apple once though; that was real nice - all crispy and wet.

B.B: Apples were fine fruit: apples and pears were prolific at one time, but a peach is somethin' much rarer.

MA: Tell us what it's like, Blind Bastard.

B.B: A peach is a soft, heavy fruit, the color of the sun; its flesh is firm and sweet to the tongue, like a small breast in the mouth.

MA: Ooh, it sounds lovely; apart from the *small breast* bit.

B.B: Why haven't you eaten them?

PA: We're savin' it for a special time when the last cannibal is dead and the land is sproutin' green again. When we know the world's on the mend, then we'll eat 'um - in celebration, like.

B.B: A worthy thought.

PA: *(Concerned for the can)* Yeah, uh can I relieve you of it, Blind Bastard? It is very valuable.

B.B: Of course... (*Goes to hand it over, but holds back*) But first I will bless it; it is the only can I know of. There is to my mind no other fruit upon this earth. I will pray for all of you, entrusted with this sacred object of the earth's finer time.

MA: A prayer - for us?

B.B: What are your names?

MA: I'm Ma, he's Pa, an' she's our girl, Julie.

B.B: Oh Lord God creator and destroyer, whose mighty hand once gave succour to this blighted stone! Bless Ma, Pa and Julie. Sustain them and guide them, guardians of this can of peaches in syrup. Bless this fruit oh Christ our Lord and protector. Keep it safe and free from harm, so that when the world is once again a fine and wondrous place to behold, Ma, Pa and Julie can feast in your honor upon the peach and drink the heavy sticky syrup of your love.

MA: Ooh Pa, I could cry! That was so movin'.

B.B: It is reassurin' to meet such fine people. Believe me, you will live to see this world clothed in green again.

PA: I hope you're right, friend. Sometimes I just can't see it though - it looks pretty fucked up to me.

MA: Oh Pa, it'll happen - have faith! God fucked it up to test us.

PA: No Ma, it was all the cars and chemicals that did it.

B.B: Not cars - *whales*.

PA: What the fuck's a whale?!

B.B: Great monster fish of the oceans that once swam in their millions, teemin' and spawnin' like a foul disease. Their faeces contained deadly radioactive toxins, poisonous to all but them.

MA: Who would have thought it - *whales*?

B.B: The whales were prodigious shitters. One turd could weigh as much as 300 tons.

PA: That's a big turd!

B.B: The seas began to clog with their shit - all manner of sea animal died.

PA: Why didn't people kill 'em?

B.B: They tried. Whole Cities took to sea in all manner of craft; but to no avail - all were devoured by the whales.

PA: *Damn!*

B.B: Finally the radioactive gas from their shit filled the sky, formin' great noxious clouds that rained their filth to the ground, poisonin' the earth.

MA: What happened to the whales?

B.B: Choked by their own shit.

MA: What... color was their shit?

B.B: What?

MA: What color was their shit?

B.B: Erm... yellow, bright yellow. Why?

MA: Nothin'.

PA: Well that is a remarkable story, Blind Bastard. I always knew it was nothin' to do with God.

B.B: God's great design can take many forms.

MA: Of course it can. God probably sent the whales, didn't he, Blind Bastard?

B.B: His punishment for all of the wickedness he saw.

PA: Well I reckon we've been punished enough.

MA: Excuse Pa, Blind Bastard. He's not really a backslider, just a bit cynical at the moment.

B.B: You must keep the faith: *Believe and the Lord will provide.*

PA: How come you haven't eaten for three days, then?

(Pause.)

B.B: *(Stands) Christ Almighty, Lord of the apple, peach and pear..!*

PA: No more blessin's, please.

B.B: I have overstayed my welcome - my apologies.

MA: *Oh Pa!*

PA: I don't mean no disrespect, but we've had a hard time of it lately and prayers ain't what we need just now.

B.B: Of course, I understand. I will take my leave.

(Blind Bastard stands and begins to tap his way into the desert, beyond.)

PA: Hold it right there, prophet.

(Blind Bastard freezes instantly, wincing that he has been caught. He feigns surprised innocence.)

B.B: There is disdain in your voice. What have I done to offend you?

PA: I think you've forgotten something, Holy Man.

(Pa walks up to Blind Bastard and takes the can from his hand. Blind Bastard becomes embarrassingly apologetic.)

B.B: Oh... I apologize most profusely; an aberration, a clumsy forgetful moment exacerbated by my senility and rancid old age...

MA: *(Understanding)* Anyone could have done it.

B.B: Then I will call again and share your company... if I am welcome?

MA: You're more than welcome... isn't he, Pa?

(She turns and hard stares her husband.)

MA: You're more than welcome, Blind Bastard.

(Blind bastard smiles his thanks, his brain already planning a stratagem to get the peaches.)

B.B: If you could just point me towards the ridge to the East..?

(Julie does so. Blind Bastard begins to tap his way off stage.)

MA: Will you be all right? How do you manage to find your way when you can't see?

B.B: I can see perfectly - The Lord is my guide.

(He walks straight into the side of the wagon and falls. The others help him up.)

B.B: The... ridge to the East..?

(Once again Julie points him in the right direction. As he exits...)

B.B: Bless you, benevolent strangers bound to the earth by your vegetable roots... bless you and bless your fruit; a bright glowing grail in a world fucked by flesh eating monsters - their sins will reap the whirlwind of God's terrible wrath - *they will be punished!*

(He taps his way off with his stick.)

PA: *(Watching)* He's fallen over again.

MA: It's marvellous how he manages though.

PA: You shouldn't have mentioned the can, girl.

JULIE: But he's a Holy Man, Pa.

PA: No matter who he is. People'd kill for that can; I've told you before.

JULIE: Sorry.

MA: Oh no harm done - he's harmless enough.

PA: I hope so.

MA: Don't be so cynical, Pa. He's a nice blind old man, totally trustworthy. When he said that prayer, it was like standin' in the rain - I felt all refreshed!

PA: *(Smiles)* Did you Ma?

MA: Yes I did - all holy and chosen.

(Pa reverently replaces the tin in a shrine on the inside door of the wagon. Ma and Julie watch.)

JULIE: *Meat is murder.*

ALL: *(Smiling) Meat is murder!*

(They all hug. Music as lights cross fade to and take us to...)

ACT 1, SCENE 2: THE CANNIBAL'S CAMP

(The same day. The camp is set around the rusted carcass of a burnt out car, in which they sometimes shelter. The place is littered and untidy. Scab is sitting, propped against the tireless wheel of the car. Bill is nearby, stirring the contents of a pot over a meagre fire.)

SCAB: I feel like a pile of crap.

BILL: Pretty much what you look like, Scab.

SCAB: Is it?

BILL: Yeah - all brown an' runny.

SCAB: I keep throwin' up, but I don't know where it's comin' from.

BILL: Well just stop when you see a little circle come up, 'cause that'll be your ass-ring.

SCAB: S' a joke, innit?

BILL: I think so.

SCAB: I thought it was.

(Pause as Scab looks up at the sky.)

SCAB: Look at the sun, Bill - it's like a great big red-hot ball of fire.

(Pause.)

BILL: The sun *is* a big red-hot ball of fire.

(Pause.)

SCAB: I mean it looks different.

BILL: You say that every day, Scab.

SCAB: I think it's changin' color.

BILL: Prob'ly.

SCAB: What does it mean?

BILL: Means we're all fucked, prob'ly.

SCAB: Thought so.

(Pause.)

SCAB: My skin's ever so sore, Bill.

BILL: I know, buddy.

SCAB: I could cry sometimes.

BILL: I know.

SCAB: I can't sleep for the pain.

BILL: Just keep wrapped up, Scab. Keep out of the sun; it's all you can do.

SCAB: Yeah... Think it'll clear up?

BILL: Could.

SCAB: Yeah it could, couldn't it?

BILL: Yeah, never know.

SCAB: I've seen people recover; whole body covered in crusty scabs; couldn't see their face, even.

BILL: S' possible.

SCAB: I just wish it'd rain; could do with a wash. I think if I could just wash the poison out of my body, like, it'd heal up.

BILL: Never know.

SCAB: It's real damn sore.

BILL: I know.

SCAB: It never stops.

BILL: Yeah.

(Pause.)

SCAB: How's *your* skin, Bill?

BILL: Same as always, man; bit patchy, y' know, few sun-sores here an' there. Same as everyone really; just normal.

SCAB: Hope you don't get this, Bill.

BILL: Yeah, me too.

SCAB: It's real damn sore.

BILL: I know.

SCAB: It makes me cry sometimes... the pain is terrible - like my whole body's burnin'.

BILL: These things are sent to try us, Scab... *(Spots Heather and Rog approaching)* Hey, the fellas are back from huntin'!

(Heather and Rog enter, tired and pissed off.)

BILL: How'd it go, fellas?

HEATHER: Don't ask!

BILL: But you've been gone two days. No game 'round?

ROG: Some.

BILL: What you got?

(Heather throws her rucksack on the ground and begins to unpack it.)

HEATHER: Well let's see what goodies we got in here...

(She pulls out a load of what looks like straw.)

HEATHER: Well we got us some... dry grass - *yum, yum!* An' we got us some...

(She pulls out something that looks like an old dry stick.)

HEATHER: What is that again exactly, Rog?

ROG: S' a... old dead snake.

(Heather bangs it against the car door - it retains its frozen shape.)

HEATHER: Old dead snake!

(She carries on pulling out more clumps of straw.)

HEATHER: More dry grass... and oh, you're gonna love this -

(Heather takes out a grubby sandwich box and empties out a pile of insects onto a dirty old plate by the cooking stuff.)

HEATHER: *Bugs!*

BILL: What kind?

ROG: A few cockroaches, but ants mostly - I found an old ants nest.

BILL: *(A little perplexed)* Can't go far on an ant.

ROG: What's in the pot?

BILL: Scab's vomit, boiled.

ROG: What's it taste like?

BILL: *(Tastes it)* Scab's vomit, boiled.

ROG: Any fox left?

BILL: It's head.

ROG: Let's have that then - I'm starvin'!

BILL: I was gonna save it for the weekend. I was gonna collect some of that shrubby stuff from by the brook an' boil it into a broth.

HEATHER: Never mind the gourmet stuff, Bill. We've been huntin' for two damn days! We need some grub!

ROG: How's it goin', Scab?

SCAB: The pain's terrible, Rog. Feels like my body's on fire.

ROG: You been keepin' covered up?

SCAB: Yeah. I think it would help if it rained; wash the poison out, like.

ROG: Yeah.

SCAB: Think it'll rain soon, Rog?

ROG: Gonna piss down, bud. We're in for a good storm.

SCAB: Think so?

ROG: You bet.

HEATHER: Long as it ain't like that goddamn monsoon we had two years ago; never stopped rainin' for six months!

SCAB: I wouldn't mind six months of it; wash the poison out of my system that would. S' good for the complexion, Heather.

HEATHER: You do talk crap, Scab!

BILL: He *is* crap - our very own talkin' turd!

SCAB: I *feel* like crap.

(Bill is fingering the ants on the plate, mixed with a couple of beetles and a cockroach or two.)

BILL: Y' know, I reckon these might cook up into a soup; maybe mix in some of that dry grass an' chop in the snake too.

HEATHER: Ant-fuckin'-soup - I can't wait! An' you know what, Bill; you know fuckin' what? While you're boilin' up the regurgitated remnants of Scab's stomach lining an' fricasseeing cockroaches - there are livin' people in the valley - with meat on their bones, an' livers an' kidneys an' brains an' all that lovely eatable shit that human beings are made of.

BILL: *What?!*

HEATHER: A family - three of 'em.

BILL: *Great*; let's get 'em!

(Bill gets to his feet and grabs his weapon - a samurai sword with a broken blade.)

ROG: Dunno Bill...

BILL: Come off it, Rog - pickin's is pickin's.

HEATHER: He's goin' soft!

ROG: No I'm not. Just bein' realistic.

HEATHER: We'd take 'em easy!

ROG: I'm not sure anymore. There's only the three of us now. Can't count on Scab no more.

SCAB: Sorry Rog.

ROG: S' okay Scab, not your fault.

SCAB: If it rains an' the poison's washed away, I think I'd be up to it.

ROG: Yeah, 'course you would.

BILL: We can't just let them wander off, Rog; we've got to try. There's no food left for miles. All you've brought back is some fuckin' insects!

HEATHER: He's right - when are we gonna see a decent meal again?

ROG: We need more information, Heather. Can't just go chargin' in. We'll ask Blind Bastard.

HEATHER: We saw the spasticated cunt-dick down there talkin' to them.

BILL: *Shit!* He's bound to have told them we're around here.

HEATHER: Why don't we just kill the blind fucker?

BILL: No, we can't do that, Heather.

HEATHER: Why not?

BILL: He's a Holy Man.

HEATHER: So?

BILL: It's unlucky to kill a Holy Man; you know that. Remember what happened when we killed *No Legs Cunt Face*? We lost seven of the tribe to skin cancer. Dead in less than a week - couldn't even eat them.

ROG: Yeah I remember - a mass of puss and running sores.

HEATHER: They weren't cloaked up at mid-day, it was a bad summer; the sun turned a funny color.

BILL: Yeah, but *why* was the sun a funny color?

HEATHER: It's superstition, that's all. I ain't ever gonna be suckered by those scroungin' religious pussy-rags. Listen up an' I'll give you *my* lesson for the day: eat the weak an' slaughter the crippled an' weary of the world for your own sake a-fuckin'-men!

BILL: We kill no Holy Man.

HEATHER: Bunch of fuckin' girly vaginas!

(Pause.)

SCAB: The sun's changin' color. Somethin' funny's happenin' to it.

HEATHER: Scab -

SCAB: What?

HEATHER: *Shut the fuck up!*

SCAB: Sorry.

(At that moment, Blind Bastard stumbles on stage and throws his hands into the air like Moses on acid, proclaiming his presence, making them jump.)

B.B: In the name of Saint Barack of Obama, the patron saint of terrorists an' fucked up causes, I bless this boneyard refuge and its savage tribe of Christ's dark angels - flesh for flesh!

ALL BUT HEATHER: Flesh for flesh!

HEATHER: Why do you always have to creep up on us like that, you blind asshole?

B.B: I tread with the Lord's nimble step.

(He falls over.)

HEATHER: S' funny you should turn up, you old cocksucker. I was just suggestin' we kill you.

B.B: (*Ranting, desperate*) I am a Holy Man! I am chosen! My affliction is my burden and my blessing! It is a most pernicious sin to kill the chosen - death will most surely follow. If you recall the prophet, No Legs Cunt Face..?

ROG: Calm down, Blind Bastard. You're safe; we're not goin' to kill ya.

B.B: (*Still ranting*) Seven of your tribe dead within a week..!

HEATHER: Oh shut up you rantin' old prick!

B.B: God have mercy upon her frailty. Forgive this profanity!

ROG: We saw you in the valley, Blind Bastard.

HEATHER: With the wagon people.

(*Pause.*)

B.B: I have information.

ROG: That's what we want.

B.B: I must beg a favour in return.

ROG: You can have some of their meat, don'tcha worry.

HEATHER: Yeah we'll save the prick for you - you can shove it up your skinny ass; might shut you up for a while!

B.B: I deaf my ear to your verbal filth. But Christ will record every word that pours like a torrent of piss from your scummy mouth.

HEATHER: I'm gonna chew your buttocks one day, you scroungin' old cum-bucket!

ROG: Give it a rest, Heather! If we want their meat, let's get this shit figur'd out before they all fuck off... (*To Blind Bastard*) You can have a share in their flesh. Now tell us whatcha know?

B.B: There is somethin' more I want.

HEATHER: He's not havin' the fuckin' wagon - that's a damn good shelter!

B.B: Not the wagon... a can.

(*Pause.*)

BILL: A can?

ROG: What of - meat?

B.B: Fruit.

BILL: What kinda fruit?

B.B: Peaches.

BILL: Never heard of 'em. What they like?

B.B: They are like... fruit.

SCAB: I tasted fruit once.

BILL: What's it like, Scab?

SCAB: Nice.

ROG: I didn't know there was anythin' like that left.

HEATHER: What's so special about this can, then? Why do *you* want it so much?

B.B: It is meant for the prophet's lips alone: the Christ child Jesus himself led me to it

HEATHER: Well maybe we want the fuckin' can.

BILL: Let him have it - it's only a fuckin' can.

ROG: I've never seen a can.

BILL: S' only a scrap of metal, Rog; nothin' special.

ROG: Okay, the can's yours when we take them. So give us the low-down -

B.B: They are a family of vegetarians.

BILL: *Nice!*

HEATHER: They're dead meat!

B.B: They have a gun.

BILL: *Shit!*

ROG: Have they got bullets?

B.B: They say so.

HEATHER: They haven't got bullets. Nobody's got bullets anymore.

ROG: Did you see any?

B.B: I'm blind.

ROG: Oh - yeah.

HEATHER: I thought you were the eyes of the fuckin' world! I thought you saw everythin'?

B.B: Only what The Lord chooses to reveal to me.

HEATHER: Bullshitter!

B.B: Your words are recorded.

HEATHER: I'm gonna bake your balls some day, you blind fucker!

B.B: Your soul will writhe in hell's fires - repent now, or my curse will blight your fortunes.

HEATHER: *(Grabs blind bastard) I've had enough of this shit!*

(Bill and Rog pull her off.)

BILL: Cut it out, Heather! We can't fuck up - he *is* a Holy Man!

HEATHER: It's all bullshit, Bill! He wandered in here from nowhere, scrounges our food, an' we're stupid enough to fall for it!

BILL: You can't offend God, Heather. We can't take the risk.

HEATHER: For fuck sake, Bill - *we eat people!* Think God'd give a flyin' fuck for a cannibal?

B.B: Cannibals are the chosen people: "*The strong will inherit the earth!*" sayeth The Lord.

HEATHER: Shut him up somebody before I slice the fucker!

ROG: All right, Blind Bastard; that's enough religion for now. Anythin' else we oughta know about these veggies?

B.B: The can of peaches is an offerin' from God; it is meant for my lips...

HEATHER: *He doesn't fuckin' stop!!*

ROG: *(Shouts)* Calm down everybody!

(Pause.)

ROG: Right... We saw three - a man and two women. Any more?

B.B: They are all there is: Ma, Pa and their daughter.

ROG: Any other weapons?

B.B: I know only of the gun. When will you kill them?

HEATHER: Think we'd tell you, you withered old prick!

ROG: When we're ready. When we've reccied and got the situation figur'd.

BILL: You can fuck off now, Blind Bastard.

B.B: My gut is empty and achin'. I haven't eaten for three days.

HEATHER: Lyin' prick! We saw you eatin' with the veggies.

B.B: Dry and withered root - hardly sustenance. It is right an' proper to offer a morsel to your wanderin' priest.

ROG: Oh give him somethin' for fuck sake!

BILL: Give us your bowl, Blind Bastard -

(Blind Bastard takes a bowl from his bag and hands it to Bill, who fills it from the pot.)

B.B: What is it?

BILL: Stew.

(Blind Bastard now has to run through his well-worn priest routine before moving on - he strikes an actor's pose.)

B.B: May the hail of Mary's blessing fall like frozen rain on your coming enterprise, in the sure hope that the vegetarians die a righteous death to preserve God's hallowed race - flesh for flesh!

ALL BUT HEATHER: *Flesh for flesh!*

(Blind Bastard exits.)

HEATHER: *Cocksucker!*

BILL: What they look like then, these veggies?

ROG: We saw them from way off. But the girl looks tasty.

HEATHER: Yeah - nice ass.

ROG: Plenty of meat on it.

BILL: What about the gun then?

HEATHER: It's just a gun, that's all. They can't have any bullets; bullets ran out years ago.

SCAB: Yeah, but they're vegetarians remember? Nothin' to kill - they might not have used them up.

BILL: Vegetarians still kill *people* though, Scab; vegetarians kill cannibals.

SCAB: You can't blame them.

ROG: No, you can't blame them... and *we're* cannibals, ain't we? If they do got some bullets, we could die for it.

(Pause.)

ROG: One of us'll have to check it out.

HEATHER: Oh yeah, that's good - "*Excuse me, we're cannibals - we'd just like to know if you have any bullets for your gun?*" "*No, we just keep the gun to scare off cannibals with.*" "*Great, we'll be over tonight to eat you all then.*" "*All right, look forward to it - bye for now!*" Prick!

ROG: When I say one of us oughta check them out; I mean that one of us oughta make friends with them; win their confidence.

BILL: Be difficult, Rog.

HEATHER: Nobody trusts strangers anymore.

ROG: They spoke to Blind Bastard.

BILL: That's different; he's a Holy Man. Besides they didn't tell him much.

ROG: But they didn't kill him. Look boys, I agree it's desperate. I can't see us killin' anymore game for a while. I ain't seen a dog for months.

BILL: I saw a rabbit last week.

HEATHER: I'd love a rabbit!

BILL: I like 'em boiled.

HEATHER: I'd eat one fuckin' raw!

ROG: But we ain't got no rabbit, nor no dog and there's fresh prime meat out there.