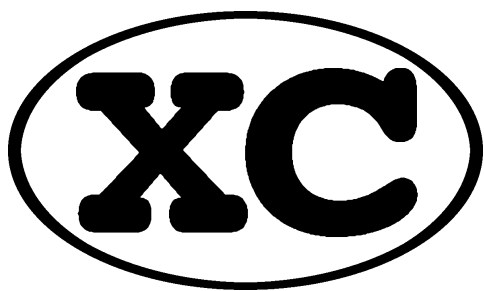


extreme conformity



7

gay
insurance



\$2.50

by larry nocella



extreme

conformity

episode #7

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The Cast



Boy X, a young lad.



Wife X, his mother.



Husband X, his dad.



The boob-tube.



The alien in the left side of the spaceship.



The alien in the right side of the spaceship.



The Devil's Avocado. Lawyer, business entrepreneur, and small horned fruit.



Celebrity X. Former pop music sensation.



Le Artiste. Art critic and freelance image-ologist.



Religious Leader X.



Doctor Linda Schlongslinger. Righteous radio show host.



The People, the unwashed masses.

1



Family X Home Master
Bedroom. Night.



Honey, wake up. I'm worried.



Rabid beagles! Rabid— huh?
What? What time is it?



It's three a.m. What about
rabid beagles?



I was having a nightmare. Go
back to sleep.



But I'm worried.



About what?



Money. Our finances. I think I
need a better job.



A new job will make you stress
more.



But I'm more worried about
money.



Go to sleep and relax.



I'm worried I can't.

2



The Celebrity X Mansion.



I heard you knocking. I don't do autographs. Unless the price is right. Or there's compensation in the form of publicity.



I'm not a fan.



I refuse to believe that.



I'm Le Artiste! Your agent hired me to redesign your image.



Again? But why?



Your record sales just clanked around the bottom of the bowl.



So that's why I haven't been invited to any parties lately.



Fear not. Your image is a work of art in the wild fluid medium of public opinion! I will re-sculpt the you that is this tattered and worn canvas known as Celebrity X.



What the hell does that mean?



I'm your image-ologist. I'm here to make you beautiful again. Make-over city!



But I already am beautiful.



Of course, but we have to make people buy your records!



Let marketing worry about that stuff. I just lip-sync to the songs. That's my art. Other than my body, that is.



Art impaled itself on Marketing a long time ago. Haven't you ever heard of product placement?



Sure have. Look, I tattooed "Soda X" on my ass. An old promotion bit.



Magnificent!



I agree. My ass is simply splendid! Sometimes I hug it.



I meant the tattoo. Your willingness to accept change. This won't be easy, but it's the price you'll have to pay for fame.



I'll pay anything.

3



The Devil's Avocado Law Offices and Insurance Agency.



What can I do for you?



We spoke on the phone. I'm here for the interview.



Yes, yes. Come in. Please don't step on me.



I'll be careful.



First some background. This law firm is branching into the insurance industry. Insuring and Lawyering have much in common. We both focus on the fine print, manipulate opinion...



...and play the Devil's Avocado.



Exactly. Do you have any experience in sales?





No.





Any in lawyering? Or insuring?


 No.


 Then why did you apply for this job?


 To earn money. If I do that, then I hope to overcome my fears about my family's finances.


 Oh. I hope you don't overcome all your fears.

 You don't? Well, I'm sure it won't happen, so I wouldn't worry about it.

 I would.

 Huh? Why would you worry about me losing my fears?


 Because worry is good.

 It is? I have lots of worries.

 Excellent!

 Really?

 Yes! Insurance is all about fear.

 I never thought of it that way. I can do fear. In fact, after I got

done worrying about our finances, I scheduled an appointment with a financial advisor, but I didn't go because I was afraid I might get ripped off. Then I thought maybe I should get some help. But then I was afraid that would mean I was crazy. Everything is really stressing me out.



Fantastic!



Really? It's good I'm so afraid?



Of course! It's a scary world, and in the insurance business, afraid equals money!



Worry equals money!



You learn quick! You're hired!

4



The Celebrity X Mansion.



So what's your plan to get me back on the charts?



Let's consider our options.
How about switching from
pop to country music?



Nah.



Religious music?



I don't know. Why not a sham
marriage?



That would be okay, but I
don't have another falling star
to pair you with.



We could make up some
rumor, like I suddenly have the
urge to get the Elephant Man's
bones.



That's been done.



I could win an award and then
refuse to accept it.



That's always a good one. But
first you have to win the award
and I don't have the budget to
pay off the voters. Besides, you
won't get invited to an award
show. With your record sales
where they are, you'll be lucky
if they let you in the audience.



Well then, I could get into a fight with another audience member.



Nah. Too obvious. And that's been done, too.



Should we fake my death?



Let's save that for when your career is completely finished. I think we can salvage you.



Salvage me? That sounds like I'm damaged goods.



I meant, I think we can make you more wonderful.



Is that possible?



Maybe. Any other ideas?



Hm... a game-show appearance?



No. How about you announce you're gay?



Um...



It will boost your sales, create controversy and secure support from a large market segment.



Will I still be able to date chicks?



Just don't get caught.

5



Family X Home.



Dad, can I play this tape of my favorite video?



Sure, son. Just be sure it's over before The Game.



Okay.



Coming up, the new Celebrity X video!



Is this an old tape?



Yeah. They don't play Celebrity X videos anymore. I'm glad I made this tape. I like this song.



Is it that rainbow song?



Yeah! Dance Me a Rainbow! I love it! Especially how he dances.



I think it's kind of gay.



Honey, I'm home! I got the job!



You did? Great! I knew you would!



What will you be doing, mom?



Selling insurance.



What kind?



All kinds. I'm worried I won't do well. I have to come up with—



Shh! Here comes my song. I love this video.



This is Celebrity X, singing his hit, "Dance Me a Rainbow."



That's great news, honey. We'll be protected from anything. For free!



Well, not for free. I still have to buy my own insurance, and

that will help with my sales commission.



So you pay yourself to earn money?



I know it sounds odd, but—



Mom! Dad! Shush!



Dance me a rainbow! Make me so colorful!



Mmm hmm... Look at the way that man dances.



Settle down, honey.



He's so clean, his smile is just perfect. He seems just so nice, and so happy. Look at those buns!



I'll bet he's gay.



You're just jealous.



What straight guy has buns like that?





Hmm...





What straight guy is that clean?

 Hmm...

 I love this song! Watch me dance like that.

 Be careful, son! I'm afraid you'll break something.

 Watch me shake my butt like Celebrity X!


 Careful son, I'm afraid you'll become...


 Become what?

 Never mind.

6

 Town Stadium. Back stage.

 Damn! There's barely anyone out there!

 Don't worry about it. Follow my plan and there will be lots more. And those few people out there will be able to say, I was there when Celebrity X

made his big announcement.
They'll be the envy of
everyone.



I'm still nervous about it.



Relax. This is your big night.
After tonight, the press will
explode with your name.



Cool!



No one can resist your radiant
wonderfulness.



Yeah. You're right!



Now get in there and come
out!

7



Town Stadium. On stage.



Hooray! It's Celebrity X!



Hello, my loyal fans! The
twelve of you are fantastic!



We love you!



People of Town. Are you ready to rock?



Yeah!



You want to rock?



Yeah!



Wait a minute. Guess what? I'm gay!



What?



Now let's rock!

8



The Devil's Avocado Law Offices and Insurance Agency.



Welcome to your insurance sales class. Whoa! Look out behind you!



What? What is it?





Nothing. And now you know the basics of insurance.


 I do?

 Yes. You just demonstrated it.


 I did?


 Yes! We want people to worry.


 Um. Okay.


 For instance, what would you do if, say, your head exploded?

 I guess I'd die.


 Most likely you would. But what would your family do? Now deprived of half their support?

 Cry. Mourn. Then move on, I guess. This is sad.

 Look, we're trying to SELL here, not script a feel-good movie.

 I guess they'd... um...

 Try to collect insurance.

 Yes. Eventually. Hopefully not too quickly. They'd do that.



They'd TRY. But then a claims adjuster would check the fine print: that life insurance only covers natural death, not freak deaths, like spontaneous cranial detonation.



But what are the chances of my head exploding?



I don't know. Do you?



Well, no...



Then you can't be sure you're immune to it.



Well, no...



Wouldn't you like to have everything covered? For your family?



Well, yes...



Are you starting to worry that your head might explode?




I guess it could happen...





How about some head-exploding insurance?





I'd love some!


 See?


 You're good. Now I've got something else to worry about.

 Exactly. Would you agree that anything is possible?


 Well, mostly, I think.


 Insurance is all about possibilities. For example, a large orange and purple monster could materialize right next to you and devour you whole before returning to its home dimension.


 That won't happen.

 But if it did, you'd be defenseless!

 True...

 That's why you need orange and purple monster insurance! Get it?

 I should probably pick up pink and blue monster insurance, too.

 Oooh. You're good!

9



Family X Home.



Son, get me a soda.



All right, dad! Hey UFO, you want anything?



We wish to dominate your world.



Then leave it promptly for a more logical planet.



I meant did you want anything from the refrigerator.



That primitive device is beneath our notice.



We have no use for anything it may offer.



Remind me never to offer you two anything again. Jerks!



Next on our entertainment segment, Celebrity X comes out! Just before the entertainer began his show at Town Stadium last night, he announced he is gay!



Query: What does Emperor Tee Vee refer to when it speaks of the quality of gay?



Unknown. Flesh-blob. Explain.



It's when two people of the same sex like each other.



I suppose this means we are gay.



Your conclusion is valid.



You two are the same sex?



At this time, yes.



Unnnnnn-ah-ah-ah-unh!



Now we are not.



I just adjusted myself.



You can change your sex at will?



We can choose from thirteen configurations of genitalia.



Is this yet another way in which we are superior to you flesh-blobs?



I'll say. You guys must have some orgies.



Orgies?



Our sexual activities involve at least one of each configuration present to reproduce.



Thirteen? Wow! Even the most vanilla sex is a friggen party!



Hey dad.



Son! Nothing! I mean, I wasn't talking about anything.



Huh? I didn't ask about what you were saying. I just wanted to give you your soda!



Oh. Whew. Thanks.



Oh, cool! Is that Celebrity X they're showing on the news?



Yes.



Why did you change the channel? You know I love him!



Oh. I did it by accident.



Well, change it back!



Um. Er. Um. I like this.



Tonight on *Word Warriors*, we tackle the controversial details of real estate legislation. Our current discussion is whether or not local municipalities be allowed to provide escrow...



Dad, this sucks. Go back.



Um. I can't.



Don't step on the remote!



Oops. It's broken.



Why won't you let me see *Celebrity X*?

10



Family X Home Master Bedroom. Night.



Honey, I can't sleep.



Hm? Wha? Thirteen types of sex— Hm?



Wake up. I'm worried. Thirteen types of what?



I was dreaming. What's wrong?



I'm worried.



About what?



What if our heads exploded?



What?



I mean, it's rare, sure, but what if?



Go back to sleep.



All right.



Ow! You poked me with your elbow!



I'm holding my head together. I can't deal with this. I'm going to get us head exploding insurance.

11



The Celebrity X Tour Bus.



Beautiful! They're all saying you're gay! Fans will — COME OUT — of the woodwork! Ha! Your sexuality will be discussed, debated, denied, affirmed! The casual conversations of this nation will be filled with free advertising, all for you!



Awesome.



Say "Super." It's gayer.



Super.



Almost there. Now lisp it up.



Thuper.



Perfect!



How do you know what's gayer? Is there a gay-o-meter for these things? A gay handbook?



No.



Adding the lisp seems wrong, like we're feeding into stereotypes.



Don't think of them as stereotypes, man. Why do you have all this negativity? Think of them as cultural identifiers.



Oh. Okay. I guess I'm being silly.



Thilly.



Thilly. I gueth I'm being thilly.



Not bad. Not bad.



Thankth. It still seems like we're feeding into stereo-cultural identification.



What do you care more about, what's wrong or what will make you famous?



I'd rather be famouth.



That's right, girlfriend.



Thath right, girlfriend!

12



The Devil's Avocado Law
Offices and Insurance Agency.



Didjya hear? Celebrity X is gay!



Really?



Omigawd! It's true. It was all
over the entertainment news!
Didn't you see it?



No. I spent all night worrying.



I always knew it. He just was
too clean, too nice to be
straight. Mm! And that body!
He's so gay! You can just tell!



People! Get back to work. You.
I'd like to speak with you.



Yes, sir.



I suppose you're wondering
why I've brought you here.



I am worried about it.



This is good news. Very good. I
wanted to congratulate you.
Not only are you are best

salesperson, you're our biggest customer! How do you do it?



Well, when I'm on the phone getting people worried, I start to get worried myself and then after I sell them on the coverage, I have to increase my own! It's a vicious cycle, and I'm not sleeping much.



Maybe you could work overtime! You don't need sleep when you sell as much as you do! Pay someone else to sleep for you. In the meantime, I'm promoting you to insurance designer.



Insurance designer?



Yes! You're going to come up with new types of insurance that people will want to buy.



I'm concerned I won't be able to do it.



See? You just received good news and you're worrying! You're a pro!



1



Outside Nearby Stadium.
Celebrity X Tour Bus.



Check it out, man. You played
all of Town's venues. Now
we're off to the city of Nearby.



Thuper.



Super. That's right. We're
almost there.



Look at my fanth! Hello,
people! You're beautiful! I'm
fabulouth!



Those aren't your fans.



What? But thereth a whole
crowd out here!



Those are your protestors.



Protethtorth?

2



Outside the entrance to Nearby Stadium.



It's disgraceful! I used to be a big fan. He seemed so clean, so nice. I've invested all this fandom in Celebrity X, now he chooses to be gay!



Gayness is against the church.



I know that!



I live, eat and associate with only men, and I simply don't believe in gayness.



That's right! Gayness is the wrong choice!



Boycott Celebrity X!



Boycott Celebrity X!

3



Nearby Stadium. Backstage.



There's tons of protesters out here!



The lisp - remember the lisp!



To hell with that for now! Look at all these protestors - they hate me! And they outnumber my fans!



I won't talk to you unless you use the lisp!



Thure. Thure. Okay. But the lithp thuckth! Thith conthert ith televithed!



Of course it's televised. That's why I sent your coming-out news release to the protestors. Relax. My plan is unfolding. We're going to bake the fake, make it fresh, cook some bogosity up nice and spice. Trust me, being censored is good. Here's the plan, man...

4



The Devil's Avocado Law Offices and Insurance Agency.



I came up with this great idea for insurance!



What is it?



Job loss insurance. If you lose your job, you're covered!



That's pretty good. But I'm concerned it will overwork our claims department.



What do you mean?



People lose their jobs all the time. It is preferable to come up with an insurance that will sell and at the same time, we won't have to pay out. If we do have to pay out, that's okay, our lawyer division will read the fine print and try to determine why the claim is invalid.



Oh.



For instance, did the client lose their job, or were they laid off?



I don't know.



Well, if they have job loss insurance and the job is being removed, then they have a

claim. But if the company is simply cutting back, well they would need lay-off insurance to get coverage.



The two seem almost the same!



Almost! But not quite! And that's why you sell them both types! So they're fully covered!



I see.



Lastly, if the person has an unsteady job, then don't sell them the insurance!



But that's when they need it most!



Which means we'll be more likely to have a claim. Here, I always find this little song is a good reminder of how insurance works:

*Before you insure,
Check to be sure,
You'll never have to pay!*

*If the client is clean,
Then by all means,
Sell coverage in every way!*

*But if the mark be ill,
Run to the hills!
This fool will surely cause bills!*



Golly gee. I think I understand now.



We want them to pay us, and we never want to pay them.



Make them worry about silly things that will never happen.



Exactly.



Don't sell it to them if they need it.



Exactly.



And if they do need it, go to the fine print!



And play...



The Devil's Avocado!



You've got it!

5



Family X Home.



I want to watch the Celebrity X televised concert!



But The Game's on!



Honey! Let him watch the concert. There's always a game on.



Celebrity X!



Now son, we have to learn to share...



Yes. We do.



Celebrity X!



We listen to each other, boy.



Celebrity X!



Son, what did I tell you?



Celebrity X!



What's the harm in it?



Welcome people of Nearby! To the Thelebrity X Thow! You're fabulouth!



Why is he talking like he's got a cold?



Son, that's a lisp. Don't make fun of people who are different.

6



Nearby Stadium.



Before I get thtarted, let me thay, ith good to have friendth like you! Who don't care that I'm gay!



We love you!



We don't!



That's right! I don't love men! I mean, I love all god's children, but not men! Well, I do love men, but not men who are gay. I mean, I hate the sin, not the sinner. Oh forget it! The darn liberal media is distorting my message!



And I'm thorry to thay, that my album thaleth are down. Becauth of thenthorthip!



Your sales are down! No!
Censorship! No way! We love
you!



You should be censored!



Yes, you should!



But I know my fabulouth fanth
will come through for me!
With love! And fabulouthneth!



We'll censor you!



We love you!



I love you too! Now leth party!

7



Family X Home.



What is the flesh-blob that
Emperor Tee Vee features
stating?



Excellent query! There appears
to be communication
interference.



It's a lisp! Don't make fun of people who are different.



Thank you my friendth! Now for my final thong, Danth Me A Rainbow!



Dance Me a Rainbow! That's my favorite! He saved the best for last!



Does this mean, young flesh-blob, that your periodic spasms will end?



As well as the rhythmic audio assault from Emperor Tee Vee?



It means Celebrity X will stop dancing, and so will I.



Thank heavens!



Honey! Leave him alone. He's having fun!



He's going to break something.



Now you're making me worry. Son, take it easy. Watch those hips!



Nothing can stop me dancing with Celebrity X!



Thank you! Thank you, Nearby!
You're all just thuper! Now
before I go, let me leave you
with a methage of peath and
love!



Say it, Celebrity X!



This is getting disturbing.



Honey, please.



But the guy is gay!



Honey! Is he?



Shiny, healthy skin! Tight
pants! Nice hair! Perfect smile!
All those would be fine, but
the lisp clinches it!



Thince I'm gay now, I mean,
thince I'm out of the clothet,
my record thaleth have gone
down.



Faster than you on the nearest
stagehand?



HONEY!



Shush!



Ath thoon ath I announthed
my gayneth, my album thaleth
went down. But good friendth
don't judge! They thow
thupport. Tho thank you for
your thupport!



That's so bogus! Why would
people not want his records?
Just because he's gay?



I juth hope that we can all
learn the methage of love.
Goodnight, Nearby!



He's right. Screw the censors!



Son. Language.



I want to be gay. To support
Celebrity X!



You can't choose to be gay.



Yeth I can. Thee?



Stop talking with a lisp. There's
more to being gay than that.



But that's all that Celebrity X
does!



Shush! It's bedtime! Now.

8



Family X Home Master
Bedroom. Night.



I'm worried.



Me too.



You're awake? But it's three in
the morning.



I'm just concerned. I think our
son might be gay.



Why do you say that?



Because of the way he likes
that Celebrity X song, Dance
Me a Rainbow. What are you
worried about?



The same thing.



Why?



Of course I'll always love him.



Of course.



But. I don't know. It's change.
It's unfamiliar. The rules aren't
all laid out.



What do I say to you when you're worrying too much?



You say, "Don't worry. Go to sleep."



That's not very helpful.

9



Family X Home. Boy X Bedroom. Night.



Why can't I choose to be gay?



Unknown.



We can.



You can? How?



Unnnnnn-ah-ah-ah-unh!



Now we are the same sex.



You could see it if we weren't still stuck in our spaceship.



However, we have no need to deceive your puny brain.



But you aren't speaking with a lisp. How can I be sure you're gay?



Gayness criteria mismatch!



How does one's communication method correspond with their sex?



I'm going to support Celebrity X somehow. He's got to sell more albums!

10



Family X Home.



Honey? Son? I'm home from work. Sorry I'm late. What are all those boxes on the front lawn?



What boxes on the front lawn?





Look.





Oh my. Let me see. They're addressed here!


 To our son. Let's open them!


 It's a whole crate of Celebrity X CDs with his latest hit, "Dance Me a Rainbow."


 But there's hundreds of crates out here!


 Ah. I see my goods have arrived.


 You... but... why?


 Celebrity X said his record sales are down because he admitted he's gay. It's wrong to dislike people unfairly.


 Yes. It is.

 So, I did the right thing. I supported him.

 The bill will be enormous...

 I'm thinking of dressing like him, too. That's going to cost some more, too. But with your credit card...

 Oh. Oh my.

 Honey, you look faint!



Son, go to your room!



You can't stop Celebrity X!



I wish we had insurance for this...



1



The Celebrity X Tour Bus.



Excellentamondo, babe! Since you became gay, your sales have gone up! Your fans are rallying to your side, and the fuss kicked up by the moralists is providing free publicity.



So will I have to keep up this charade forever?



Lisp, man. I need the lisp-action.



Tho will I have to keep up thith charade forever?



Until we fake your death.

2



The Devil's Avocado Law Offices and Insurance Agency.



I got your message, but I've been distracted all day. I'm working a deal with the government to put a cap on how much benefits insurance companies have to pay out. We have to protect our own business—I mean, the almighty economy! Now, what's this new idea you have?



Gay insurance! If someone's child suddenly announces he or she is gay, they have to purchase a whole new wardrobe, a whole new set of toys, a whole new everything! People can stop worrying about whether or not their child is—



Hm? What? I hear my phone ringing. Um... that idea. Sure. Sure. Sounds great. Run with it.

3



Family X Home Master
Bedroom. Night.



Honey... honey, where are you?



Here. I just got home.



But it's three in the morning!



I was working late. A special
project.



I haven't been sleeping
anyway. I've been worrying.



What are you worried about?



Our son might be...



Gay? Well, guess what? I'm
not worried about it.



You're not? But you've been
worrying non-stop lately!



No more. I just invented and
just purchased a Gay Insurance
policy.



We now have Gay Insurance?
What's that?



If our son turns out to be gay, any additional expenses are covered. So now, if he buys a thousand Celebrity X albums, we won't have to pay for it! Any costs incurred due to his potential gayness are covered!



Oh, that's wonderful. Now I can sleep.



Me too.

4



Family X Home. Boy X Bedroom.



Flesh-blob! What are you doing?



Why do you gyrate so?



I'm trying to master Celebrity X dance moves.



Cease the convulsions at once! And end that audio repetition.



No, wait! We should observe this flesh-blob phenomenon.



I should turn off the music and stop dancing anyway, I need to write a report for school on someone I admire. I'm going to do some research on Celebrity X and how his record sales are affected by discrimination against gays. Can you two help?



Our data banks are superior to any primitive flesh-blob record-keeping methods.



We need simply tap the network of your species to process all information.



Awesome! I just have to dig out a pad and pencil from this closet.



Be careful, flesh-blob!



This chamber is our base!



Not to be trifled with!



Or disrupted.



I just need to dig through all this junk. Hey, look what I found! My old army figures!



Miniature military mannequins?



Of what purpose serve those, flesh-blob?



To train the young of your stupid species in violence?



It's really just about imagination. Look I can set up this guy to fight this guy. I can bend their arms to make different poses. Schoo! Bang! Pow! See? It's fun.



Absurd.



Pointless.



Jerks.



Hey son! Why don't you put down the homework and let's go play some ball until mom gets home— what the hell are you doing?



I was looking for a pen and paper to do my report on Celebrity X, and I found my old army guys.



You're playing with dolls now?



They're my old army guys. When I was real young, remember? They were fun. I might want some more.



Ulp. Son, I think... oh boy...



Dad, are you okay?



Son. I think you might be gay.



But I'm not talking with a lisp.



It's all right son, I'll take care of it.

5



The Celebrity X Tour Bus.



Here we are pulling into another town. Thit! There ith more proteththorth...



...and bigger crowds! Your agent called. He's happy with my work, and happier with your sales. He says he wants you to gay it up even more. Why don't you lean out the

window and say something
gayish.



Doeth my whole career have to
be about being gay now?
Thereth more to me than that!



All right man. You think you
know it. Try it.



Hello, protestors! I'm not gay!



You're not?



He's reformed! He's chosen to
turn from gayness! Hallelujah!



A victory for righteousness!



Now we can move on!



Hey. Why is the media packing
up?



Because the protestors are
leaving. There's no story here.



My fame...



Dwindles before your eyes.



Wait a minute people! I wath
juth kidding! Come back! I'm
tho gay I can shake my head

and the dandruff can thweeten
your pancaketh!



What? You evil person! How
dare you be sweet?



Gayness is a sin! Loving men is
wrong, if you're a man. I
mean, well, it's okay to love
your dad and uncles, and oh
forget trying to explain it!
Gayness is bad!



Yeth. I'm tho gay! Welcome
back, protethtorth and
ethpethially my friendth in the
media! Welcome back.
Girlfriendth!

6



Family X Home.



Hello? Gay Insurance hotline?
I'd like to file a claim. Hello?
They hung up on me. I'll have
to try again. Hello? Yes, I'd like
to file a claim. We have Gay
Insurance and my son appears
to have recently become gay.



But all I said was I like
Celebrity X!



It's all right son, we will always love you. Celebrity X said he's gay. You like him, you like his music. You play with dolls. Son, you're gay.



I am? Well, if that means I'm more like Celebrity X then that's fine! No. It's better! It's thuper!



Hello? Damn it. They hung up on me again!



Danth me a rainbow!



Go to your room! I'm trying to make a call!

7



Town Insurance Agency Offices.



Damn! Damn! Damn! Damn!



What? What? What? Hello?



Some guy keeps calling. He's trying to put in a claim for the new Gay Insurance!



Already? But that just came out.



Sure, and so did somebody's brat. Fine print... where's the damn fine print? Here we are... oh, I love ye, fine print! It says, "There should be no influence within the home to make a child choose to be gay. If there is, this agreement is null and void." All we have to do is find a gay influence vector into the child's life and the claim is invalidated! I'd better investigate this, pronto! You stay here!

8



Family X Home.



Son, someone from the insurance company is coming over to ask some questions.



Tho what? Who careth?



Please stop talking with a lisp.



Thay pleath!



Stop it! Now!



All right. Dad, am I gay?



All the signs are there, son.



Will you and mom still love me? I didn't mean to do it.



Of course we'll still love you. We just have to adjust. I'll paint your room pink and we'll get you some dresses, once the insurance money comes through.



But I hate pink and I don't want to wear a dress.



Son, don't ever deny who you are. Just be yourself.



I'm trying. I don't like pink.



Yes you do. Now shush, I hear someone at the door.

9



Family X Home.



Hello, I'm here to investigate the claim that your son is gay. We need to determine if you deserve a benefit pay-out.



You sold us the insurance. Now you get to decide if you pay or not?



Procedure, sir. Now where is the little flower?



Son, come here.



Hm... a little light in the walk. Here, child. Pick one of these colorful lollipops.



That one.



Hm... he chose pink.



I chose the biggest one.



Well, that could have two meanings. What's your favorite music?



I like Celebrity X, Dance Me A Rainbow.



See? There is definitely some gay here.

10



Family X Home. Boy X
bedroom. Afternoon.



Young flesh-blob! Attention!



We have outstanding queries
about this status called gay.



Shush! I'm leaving a message
on the Celebrity X fan hotline!
Hello, Celebrity X. I am not
sure if I am gay. Everyone says
I am, but I haven't really
thought about it much. I just
wanted to say thank you for
being such an inspiration. I
think everyone should be
allowed to be who they want. I
would love to hear if you have
any more advice. Thank you.



Surprisingly compact
communication, flesh-blob!



Though focused on the
irrelevant inter-blob
relationships of your puny
species, the point is well-made.



I just hope he calls back. That
would be so cool if he replied!
I'd feel thpecial!

11



The Devil's Avocado Law Offices and Insurance Agency.



How did it go?



Not so good. I think we might have to pay out. The kid's gay as a spring day.



Really?



He passed all the tests I could come up with for gayness, but I couldn't find anything in the home that would make him that way. This has me worried. I'm going home to relax. Why don't you look over the paperwork and see what you find?



Sure. Let me see. Hey that's my—



What?



Oh! Oh my. Oooh. Oh, nothing. Nothing. The address, um, never mind. See you tomorrow.

12



Family X Home. Evening.



Hello, honey! Welcome home!



What the hell are you doing?



What?



You called in a claim for our
gay insurance!



How do you know?



I told him not to, mom!



I saw the paperwork in the
office!



But our son's showing all the
signs.



Like what?



He likes Celebrity X's music.



So?



And?



He... um... er... plays with dolls sometimes. Well, army figures, but that's the same thing.



What's the big deal?



And?



He dances. Like Celebrity X.



So?



You still shouldn't have called!



Why? We'll need money to cover the expenses of him being gay!



You're over-reacting! Besides, that's not how insurance works. Now you're taking money away from the company I work at!



I'm not supposed to file a claim?



No. This is insurance!



I'm sick of all this yelling! I'm going to my room!

13



The Celebrity X Tour Bus.



See, that last stop wasn't bad. After a while, protestors are just a part of life's freaky scenery, right?



Yeth.



Your agent called. Your record sales are up.



Can I drop the damn lisp now?



No, man. We've got to deep fry this scam fillet!



Whath the plan?



See, we just got this message on your fan hotline from a gay boy who says you're an inspiration.



Thuper! That maketh me feel thpecial!



It should. Now what we're going to do is visit him at home. Offer support.



Offer thupport?



Sure. We pull the bus over, stop at his place. Publicity man! The media is putty in your hands!



I'm not sure. I mean, should I offer thupport to this kid who's truly lonely? Ithn't that like exploiting him?



He'll love it. You want fame? You want media?



Yes.



Then pay the price! That means, don't drop the lisp. Get the publicity any way you can. It's a guerilla war for attention, and you've got to be public enemy numero uno stalking through the media jungle like a snake! Got it?



I think tho. From now on, I'm a thtalking thsnake!



Brilliantacious!



1



The Devil's Avocado Law Offices and Insurance Agency.



... so that's the whole story.



I'm glad you came forward. Your husband is putting in the claim!



I'm sorry.



Nonsense! This is good news! We always need someone to give us information that will help us refuse the claim. A nosy neighbor usually does the trick, but this is better. We've got someone on the inside. So, what can you tell us?



About?



Your son! Is there anything that can deflect the claim? Is his mother over-protective? Are there gay people around the house that might make him choose to be gay?



Choose to be gay? Being gay isn't a choice, it's just a way some people are born.



Brilliant! With that angle, we can always say that any claims of gayness are invalid due to a pre-existing condition!



But then no claim would ever be valid.



I know! Were there any signs of your son being gay prior to the claim being filed?



He did lisp when he was first starting to talk.



Perfect.



But he drooled, too.



We have all the information we need, thank you!

2



Family X Home.



Dad, I need some money.



Why?



I want to join the Celebrity X fan club.



How much does that cost?



I want the deluxe membership. It's one thousand bucks.



No!



I'm going to turn up "Dance me a Rainbow" until you give in!



Son! Turn down that Celebrity X music!



We must retreat!



The cacophony threatens to split our molecules!



Son! Someone's at the door! Hello?



Hello, sir.



I sure hope you've got the money for insurance. My son's gayness is getting expensive.



Sir, I'm sorry to say, but a benefit has been denied.



What? But we're paying for coverage to help us if our son's gayness costs us something!



Too bad. Claim declined.



Why?



Pre-existing condition. Your son lisped as a child.



How do you know that?



We just do. And your question just admitted it. Sir, would you say being gay is your son's choice?



No. It's just the way he was born.



Exactly. And we have a strict policy against insuring those with a pre-existing condition.



You mean you won't pay for coverage if he's already gay?



No insurance company offers health benefits if the person is already sick!



But that's ridiculous! It means if you'll let me buy insurance,

then I don't need it! And you won't let me buy it when I do!



Claim denied. Goodbye.

3



The Celebrity X Tour Bus.



Hello, kid. Yeth, thith ith Celebrity X. No, ith not a joke. Thank you. Thank you. You're thpecial to me, too. You're thuper, too. Yeth. Tho, can we come to your place? Yeth. I want to put on a thpecial conthert to thow thupport. Tho, can we? We can? Thuper! Thee you then!



Supremo.



I feel bad. The kid ith really lonely, and now he ith looking up to thomeone who ith fake.



But you're famous. That's all that matters.



I'm thtarting to wonder if it ith.

4



The Devil's Avocado Mansion. Night.



No! No! No! What? Oh. Just a nightmare. Just a nightmare. Whew. I was dreaming that my employees found how much money I make compared to them and they sued me for all I had. I was broke. They were rich. It was more horrifying than that time I dreamt I was trapped in a tortilla. I need some employer insurance!

5



Family X Home. Evening.



Yahooooo! Celebrity X is coming over!



The one your parental flesh-blob refers to as gay?



The one featured by Emperor Tee Vee?



Yes! The same! He's coming to show support for me as a young gay child.



Your status has been graded gay as well?



Is there some central authority of gayness?



I want you two to help me find out everything you can about Celebrity X, so that I can be his biggest fan ever.



We will simply connect to the primitive network you call The Internet.



We will download all pertinent information and provide you with a database.



Yeah! Do that. How soon will you be finished?



It's already done.



We started when you said "Do that."



Nice. How many number one hits has Celebrity X had?



Four.



See?



Thuper!

6



Family X Home.



Hello, honey.



I can hear that music from
down the street!



I know. He won't turn it down.
I've given up. Completely.



What do you mean? What's
wrong?




The insurance company just
denied our claim on gay
insurance.





I know. I told them our son
was lisping long ago.





You told them? They denied it
because of a pre-existing
condition!


 I didn't want to lose my job!

 But claims are what insurance is for!


 That's not how it works!

 Mom. Dad. I turned the music down for some quiet. Now you're arguing!


 What is it, son?

 I have an announcement to make.

 Yes?

 Celebrity X is going to play a benefit concert in our front yard to show support for my gayness.

 What?!

 I give up. Again.

7

 Family X Home. Front Lawn.



Hello People of Town! I hope you enjoy thith conthert! Thow thupport for thith thpecial boy!



Hooray! We love you!



We hate you!



I don't hate you! I hate what you do. I love the sinner, hate the sin. In short, I hate everything you do but I still somehow manage to love you.



I love you all! Thay hello to my friend!



Hello! We love you!



I love you, too!



We hate you!



I don't hate you, little boy. I love you. I mean... not love like man-boy love. I mean like healthy avuncular love, just normal loving. You're my friend, little boy. That didn't sound right. Oh forget it.



Tho, what would you like to thay?



If I'm gay, that's okay. I have gay friends. Sort of. They're from another planet. Some of you may already know them. The shiny sombrero!



Greetings, flesh-blobs!



Greetings!



They helped me do research on you.



How thpecial! What did you learn?



I learned you had four number one hits.



Correct!



Correct!



Correct!



That's why I find it unfair that people should turn on you. They liked you before, then you announce you're gay and they stop buying your records.



I agree—



Incorrect!



Wrong!



What?



Data indicated Celebrity X record sales were on decline for one year prior to gay announcement.



The sales decline came first.



Get off the stage!



We love you!



Since gay announcement, sales have climbed.



This is the opposite of what the boy spoke.



Um...



What? We've been tricked?



We have seen this flesh-blob fallacy before. Emperor Tee Vee does it often. We must categorize it!



We shall henceforth describe this behavioral phenomenon as a "cause-effect switcheroo."



Your puny, fallible human minds reversed the sequence.



A cause-effect switcheroo.



So his record sales went down, then he said he was gay? I thought he said he was gay, then the sales went down!



What's going on?



You all have slow information processors!



His low sales were a pre-existing condition!



Get off the stage, man! Run for it! The gig's up! They found the underground! They rammed the scam! They raked the fake!



I can't take it! I can't take the fake! I'm not gay, people! We just did that for publicity. Okay?



We love you! You're a celebrity! We love you no matter what!



Little boy. I'm sorry I lied to you.



Oh. That's okay.



But if my fans can love me no matter what, then I'm sure you'll still be loved, no matter what. Right, people?



Right! We love you and if you say so, we love the boy!



I hate you all! Before Celebrity X was gay, I invested all this fandom in him. He was so clean, a good wholesome role model. After he came out, I invested all this hate in him. Now I'm feeling ripped off twice!



That's okay. We'll find someone else to hate soon enough. I mean, we'll find someone to love, but hate what they do and everything about them, soon enough. All in the name of love.



Kid, what can I do to make it up to you?



Sing "Dance Me a Rainbow."



What do you say, people?



Yeah!



All right. This one's for a very thpecial — I mean, special — kid.

8



The Celebrity X Tour Bus.



You tanked it, man.



I didn't tank it. It tanked itself. Our scam was exposed.



Oh man, I'm hurtin'. We're burned. Smoked. Grilled.



But I'm still famous! I feel bad about that kid though. He looked up to me. I used an identity he looked up to for my own gain.



He'll be fine. You still have your fame and that's all that really matters.



True.



Maybe we can spin this as though you're having a mental illness. The breakdown, fact or

false, works wonders for
publicity, you know.



No thanks. No more spin. I'm
famous. I can be whatever I
want. I don't think I need your
image-ology services any more.



Oh man, that hurts! Like scars,
man. I'm out of a job now.



You should have bought
insurance.



Your fame is intact and now
you're tossing me like trash?



Yes. Goodbye.

9



Family X Home. Boy X
Bedroom.



Young flesh-blob, why so still?



You have not moved for an
entire rotation of your orb.



I'm wondering if I'm gay.



Of what significance said quality?



Why is one's gayness status of such concern to flesh-blobs?



I don't know. Everyone else makes a big deal about it. I don't hate myself. I'm not confused. I don't care if I'm gay or not. I'm just me.



A tautology.



What other tiny thoughts crawl across your primitive brain?



Will you two still like me if I'm gay?



A flesh-blob is a flesh-blob.



We care not for your superficial hierarchies.



Does that mean yes?



We view you no differently then before you shared this data with us.



You are still the same unevolved flesh-blob to us.



Thanks!

10



Family X Home.



I'm glad that free concert is over. Our lawn is a mess! Now do you see why I wanted gay insurance?



You're treating our son like he has some disease!



Well...



You've just got to let him be. Stop worrying.



What?



Stop worrying!




Um...




I'm one to talk. I've got to stop worrying, too. It's the damn job.



It is.


 I think I'm going to quit.


 You should.

 I will. Tomorrow. I promise.


11


 The Devil's Avocado Law
Offices and Insurance Agency.

 Sir? May I have a word with
you?

 Of course. After our meeting.
All right, people! Listen up!
Our business could come
under any number of
difficulties, so we've taken out
Business Protection Insurance.
This means you ALL got a
commission!

 All right!

 But I'm sorry to say it cost so
much, the company is broke
and you're all fired!

 Oh no!



But if you have job loss insurance, you'll be eligible to receive a benefit.



Whew.



But don't expect to get a benefit, since we'll be bankrupt.



What about a severance package?



Only if you have severance package insurance.



But there is no such thing!



Bummer. Well, thanks for everything! See ya!



But I quit!

12



Family X Home.



We're lucky I had job loss insurance!



Why?



I lost my job today.



I'm glad. We can collect the insurance, and maybe you'll stop worrying. About money, about your job, about our son.



I'll try.



And in business news, The Devil's Avocado Insurance Agency filed for bankruptcy! Too many job loss claims have poured in at once, so the insurance provider was forced to request a government bailout package.



Wow. So we paid the insurance company to protect us, but they don't. Then they go bankrupt and in the end we pay for ourselves through our taxes. Nice. I've got to get in to that business.



Don't. It's too much worry. I'm going to take care of something that matters. I'm going to go see our son.

13



Family X Home. Boy X
Bedroom.



Mom. Dad. Am I gay?



Only you can answer that son.



Does it matter?



Of course not. We will always
love you.



Son, we love you no matter
what you are.



Okay.



No.



No?



I mean, we love you no matter
WHO you are.





Okay. Whatever. Thanks. And I
love you, too.




I always wished there was
some kind of insurance to
cover us no matter what.


 Made up of people who care.


 And it wouldn't cost you anything.


 And they wouldn't work against you for profit.

 There wouldn't be any fine print.

 That sounds like our family.


 It is. You've got the best insurance of all: our love.

 Thanks, mom! Now there's nothing to worry about!

 You're right, son.

14

 Town Insurance Agency.

 It sure is quiet in here since I sacked everyone. Sure is quiet. Hello? Hello? Echo? Echo? At least my business is safe with business protection insurance.

But to pay for that, I had to fire everyone. So, the business isn't moving, but it's protected in case it fails. And here I wait, insured against any business problems, but unable to conduct any business at all. I can't go out of business and I can't conduct business. Let's hear it for insurance! Hello? Echo? Hello?

end.

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