

# The Aristocrats

A man walks into a talent agency.

“What’s your act?” asks the agent.

“Myself, my wife, my kids, and my dog,” says the man.

“Well, what do you do?”

“My wife and I (CENSORED). Then my kids come out and (CENSORED). Meanwhile, the dog (CENSORED). Finally, the survivors eat whatever’s left over.”

“And what do you call this... act?” asks the horrified agent.

The man, with a canny grin, replies: “The Aristocrats!”

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A man walks into a talent agency.

“What’s your act?” asks the agent.

“Myself, my wife, my kids and my dog,” says the man.

“You forgot the Oxford comma!” cries the agent.

The man, thunderstruck, does not reply.

“Get out of my office!”

Head down, the man shuffles away.

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A man walks into a talent agency.

“What’s your act?” asks the agent.

“Myself, my wife, my kids, and my dog,” says the man.

“Well, what do you do?”

“My wife and I \*\*\*\*\* . Then, my kids—“

“What was that?” says the agent.

“My wife and I \*\*\*\*\* . Then, my kids come out—“

“I’m sorry,” interrupts the agent. “But I couldn’t make that out. You and your wife do *what?*”

“Just listen!” says the man. “Listen all the way through, and you’ll understand. Is that too much to ask?”

The agent blinks. “I suppose not. Go on, then.”

“My wife and I \*\*\*\*\* . Then, my kids come out and \*\*\*\*\* . While that’s going on, the dog \*\*\*\*\* and then \*\*\*\*\* . The little boy \*\*\*\*\* my wife’s \*\*\*\*\* while I \*\*\*\*\* and the girl \*\*\*\*\* the dog. Finally, \*\*\*\*\* dog \*\*\*\*\* the ashes after \*\*\*\*\* cuts off his \*\*\*\*\* while \*\*\*\*\* , \*\*\*\*\* , and \*\*\*\*\* .”

The agent, not a man to waste time, rises from his chair. “Enough! I can’t understand half of what you’re—“

The man pulls out a long, sharp knife with his right hand. With his left, he grabs the agent’s tie and pulls him close. The agent shuts up.

“*Let me finish!* The *dog* \*\*\*\*\* the ashes after \*\*\*\*\* cuts off his *goddamn* \*\*\*\*\* while \*\*\*\*\* , \*\*\*\*\* , and \*\*\*\*\* . Now, the next part calls for audience participation...”

The door bursts open. Two doctors in white coats rush in, each holding a rifle. One doctor fires a tranquilizer dart into the back of the man’s neck. He releases the agent’s tie and slumps back in his chair. The knife clatters to the ground.

“That was close!” exclaims the shorter doctor. “Sorry, sir. He escaped from the mental hospital down the road. Hope he didn’t scare you too badly. He’s not violent, per se, but he doesn’t like being interrupted when he talks about the act.”

The doctors wait until the agent is breathing normally again. Shaken, he asks: “What does he call his... act?”

The doctors look at each other. The taller doctor shrugs.

“Damned if I know. We really are terribly sorry, sir. If you’d like to inquire further, this is the hospital’s phone number.”

The taller doctor hands the agent a business card. Then, with practiced efficiency, the doctors haul the unconscious man out of the office.

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A man walks into a talent agency.

“What’s your act?” he asks the agent.

They stare into each other’s eyes across the desk.

Finally, the man speaks: “How about we try this again?”

“Yes,” replies the agent. “That seems best.”

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A man walks into a talent agency.

“What’s your act?” asks the agent.

“Myself, my best friend, my boss, the woman I love, and the populace of a small French village.”

The agent frowns. “I can’t pay for a village.”

“No need. They’re mostly farmers. Self-sufficient.”

“Very well, then. What do you do?”

“My best friend and I drink and argue in a café. Soon, a rhinoceros runs across the stage and startles the villagers. Later that day, my coworkers debate the meaning of the incident. But while we lose ourselves in petty conflict, other villagers are turning into rhinos left and right. Before long, a second rhinoceros collapses our staircase, forcing us to escape through a window. The day after, I find my friend sick in bed, skin gray and mottled—“

“Hold on!” cries the agent. “This is just a production of Eugene Ionesco’s postmodern masterpiece [\*Rhinoceros\*](#)! Do I look like a stage manager to you?”

“You don’t understand!” the man protests.

“Don’t I?”

“It gets dirty—real dirty! I slap the woman I love! The whole village falls into the grip of symbolic Nazism!”

“That’s Act Three! Do you take me for a fool? Get out of my office!”

“I’m not capitulating!”

The agent transforms into a rhinoceros and drives his horn through the man’s chest, killing him.

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A woman walks into a talent agency.

“What’s your act?” asks the agent.

“Act? Well, first I take off my clothes. Then, I crawl under your desk and perform fellatio with professional skill. Finally, we take off *your* clothes and make love until the hour’s up. Then, you pay the fee we agreed upon, and I leave.”

Agent, aroused but confused: “Come again?”

The woman looks back at the door. “Is this 35 Elm Street?”

“36.”

“Oh! Sorry about that. I’ll just get going, then.”

“Wait!”

“Yes?”

“Could you leave a call-back number?”

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A man walks into a talent agency.

“What’s your act?” asks the agent.

“Myself, my wife, my kids, and my dog,” says the man.

“Well, what do you do?”

“We sit around the dinner table, eating in silence. The meal’s almost finished before my wife dares to speak. She asks if we liked the potatoes. My daughter says she did. My son snickers, and my wife asks what’s so funny. My son, with an evil little smirk, says that it’s my daughter’s brown dress. What about the dress, my daughter growls. It’s just that it makes you look like a potato, replies my son, shameless. My daughter’s trying to watch her weight, but it’s no use—she’s been fat since she was a baby. She tries to say something, but chokes up instead. I laugh, tell my boy that’s a good joke, but not good enough that he won’t be leaving for military school in a month. He blushes and looks down at his plate. My wife glares across the table at me. I glare back at her. She smelled my mistress’ perfume on one of our pillows last week, but she’s never worked a day in her life, and divorce would ruin her. My daughter starts to cry in earnest and lumbers up to her room. My son slinks away not long after. My wife starts to say something, and then stops. With open contempt, I push myself away from the table and leave her alone with the dishes.”

The agent sits and thinks it over. “What about the dog?” he asks.

The man smiles. “The dog?” he says. “We’ve been eating the dog this whole time!”

“Oh!” replies the agent. “This is just The Aristocrats, isn’t it?”

“Exactly!”

“I love it—you’re hired!”