

BELIEVE

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ORIGIN sits at a desk, wearing robes and writing in a book. Behind him, two people are seated on the ground also in robes; their faces are covered by their hoods. TIM walks in wearing everyday work clothes.

TIM: I'm home.

ORIGIN: Hey.

TIM looks around the room, suspiciously, at the scene before him.

TIM: What you doing?

ORIGIN: Writing.

TIM: Why are you wearing robes? Are you going to a fancy dress party or something?

ORIGIN: No, I just like robes.

TIM: O...k. Um, who are the people behind you?

ORIGIN: Hmm?

TIM: The people, sitting on the ground, behind you.

ORIGIN: Oh them. They're acolytes.

TIM: Whose acolytes?

ORIGIN: Mine.

TIM: Jeff...?

ORIGIN: No! Not Jeff. I am now Origin.

TIM: Okay... Origin?

ORIGIN: Yes?

TIM: What's happening?

ORIGIN: I am now the leader of the one and only true religion.

TIM: Really?

ORIGIN: Yes.

TIM: Do you still work at the video store?

ORIGIN: No, I work only in *his* service.

TIM: Of course, what was I thinking?

TIM starts changing out of his work clothes. He takes off his shirt and picks a t-shirt up off of the ground.

TIM: Do you still pay rent because it's due tomorrow. And if your *acolytes* want to crash here I think we need to have a chat.

ORIGIN: This is a holy place now. We won't be paying to worship.

TIM: Really? And, what are you worshipping?

ORIGIN reaches inside his robes. He pulls out a pink teddy bear and places it reverently onto the desk. He then bows down before it, the ACOLYTES also bow.

ORIGIN: Him.

A light comes on behind the Teddy. And a choir starts singing.

ORIGIN: ADORE HIM!

He raises his hands to the sky.

ORIGIN: Adore him. For without him you would not be!
Without his foresight, his creativity and his awesome power you would not exist.

TIM: Sure. Are there any messages for me?

ORIGIN: BOW DOWN!

TIM: What?

ORIGIN: Bow in his presence.

TIM: Jeff, I'm going out later and to do that I need to get dressed and smell better than I do right now. I'm sorry, I don't have time for your little make – believe.

The ACOLYTES stand as one.

ACOLYTE: Make Believe.

ACOLYTE: MAKE BELIEVE.

TIM: That's a little creepy.

ORIGIN: Do you not believe?

TIM: In the teddy bear?

ORIGIN: Those of his creations who do not believe. They are damned. They should be destroyed.

The ACOLYTES stand either side of ORIGIN.

TIM: I just walked in the door. I haven't really had time to believe.

ACOLYTE: Believe it or die.

ACOLYTE: Believe it or I hate you.

ACOLYTE: Believe it or be damned.

ACOLYTE: Live like I do or don't live at all.

ACOLYTE: Be me or be no one.

TIM: What the hell is going on? Why are they talking like that?

ORIGIN: Because to not believe is a sin against us and that is punishable by death!

TIM: You're going to kill people for not believing a teddy bear created the universe?

ORIGIN: To not believe is to be damned.

TIM: So far, apart from you guys, I'm the only one who knows about this. Are you saying that everyone else in the world is damned?

ORIGIN: They will hear the word.

TIM: And then...?

ORIGIN: They will accept him into their lives.

TIM: What if they don't hear the word?

ORIGIN: They *will* hear the word.

TIM: What if they live in a little village in the Amazon?

ORIGIN: Fear not, their ignorance will be punished in the after life.

TIM: Well, that's a relief.

ACOLYTE: Do not mock us!

TIM: Why?

One of the ACOLYTES steps closer to TIM then speaks deliberately.

ACOLYTE: We have no sense of humour.

The ACOLYTES pull back their hoods to reveal pink fluffy bear ears. ORIGIN pulls back his to reveal golden ears. They surround TIM.

ORIGIN: But do not worry, for he is forgiving.

TIM: You're really starting to creep me out.

ORIGIN: No matter what pain you have caused to others in your life, no matter what sick, perverse, deeds you have committed, accept him and you will be forgiven.

TIM: That seems like a bit of an easy way out.

ORIGIN: Accept him and be absolved of all guilt.

TIM: I can do anything and be forgiven?

ORIGIN: Yes.

TIM: Rape?

ACOLYTE: Yes.

TIM: Murder?

ACOLYTE: Yes.

TIM: Genocide?

ORIGIN: Yes.

TIM: Wow, tempting. A licence to do anything I want with no consequences and all I have to do is lie and say I believe *that thing* controls the universe.

ACOLYTE: Accept him.

TIM: You know that teddy bear's mine right? You've been in my room again.

ORIGIN: What?

TIM: You've been in my room again.

ORIGIN: Are you saying you created him?

TIM: No, I'm saying I won him by popping balloons with darts.

ORIGIN: Then...

TIM: He's not your god!

ORIGIN ponders this.

ORIGIN: You sent him to us.

TIM: I... what?

ORIGIN: You sent him to teach us.

ACOLYTE: He's your prophet.

ACOLYTE: Prophet.

TIM: Alright, sure, he's my prophet.

ORIGIN and the ACOLYTES drop to the ground as one, in a low bow. TIM shakes his head.

TIM: I'm going to have a shower.

TIM attempts to walk away. ORIGIN and the ACOLYTES follow him in a low crawl.

TIM: What are you doing?

ORIGIN: We're coming with you.

TIM: I'm not going to take a shower with you three watching.

ACOLYTE: But you're glorious.

TIM: Well, thanks for that but you still can't watch me shower.

ACOLYTE: How else can we worship you?

TIM: I think you can worship me just fine from the lounge room. In fact, why don't you all head into the kitchen and worship me up a beer?

ORIGIN and the ACOLYTES scramble offstage. They race back on and, ceremoniously, offer him a beer. TIM doesn't take it.

ORIGIN: Is there something wrong with the offering?

TIM: Yes.

ACOLYTE: What is it?

TIM: It's being offered to me by three grown adults, dressed in robes, wearing fluffy bear ears, who call themselves Origin and the Acolytes!

ORIGIN and the ACOLYTES look confused.

ACOLYTE: Would you prefer lager?

TIM: You sound like a vocal group from the sixties.

ORIGIN: Does this displease you, oh great one?

TIM: Oh for god's sake...

TIM smacks the beer out of the hands of his followers.

TIM: I'm not a god!

ACOLYTE: It's a test.

ACOLYTE: A test.

TIM: Could you please stop acting like freaks.

ORIGIN: You *are* a god, oh mighty one!

ORIGIN and the ACOLYTES start to grab at TIM'S legs.

TIM: I'm not mighty!

ORIGIN: YOU ARE!

ORIGIN and the ACOLYTES are now clutching at his clothing.

TIM: I'M NOT!

ACOLYTE: MIGHTY!

ACOLYTE: MIGHTY!

TIM: LET GO! I'M NOT YOUR GOD!

ORIGIN: HOW DO YOU KNOW?

TIM: BECAUSE I CAN'T BLOT OUT THE SUN BY CLICKING MY FINGERS!

Click.

Instant blackout.

Pause. Then from out of the darkness comes...

TIM: Well fuck me.

Pause.

TIM clicks his fingers again, instantly the lights come back on. TIM is now sitting, looking dumbstruck, on the desk. He is hugging the teddy bear. The light, that previously lit the bear from behind, now lights him. ORIGIN and the ACOLYTES lie, prostrate, around him.

TIM: What was that?

ORIGIN: Your power over the universe.

TIM: I'm not a god. I'd know... and... you work in a video store and as for you two... Jeff, where did these people even come from?

ORIGIN: You still don't believe?

TIM: It's... it's ridiculous.

ORIGIN: You've heard the word. You've seen the awesome power and you still don't believe?

ACOLYTE: Blasphemy.

ACOLYTE: Blasphemy.

TIM: Oh, shut up. I can't blaspheme against myself.

ORIGIN: But you don't believe in yourself.

TIM: No. I mean what sort of a name is Tim for a god?

ORIGIN starts chanting and doesn't stop.

ORIGIN: Tim... Tim... Tim... Tim...

ACOLYTE: Believe it or I hate you.

The ACOLYTES start to advance on TIM. ORIGIN continues to chant.

ORIGIN: Tim... Tim... Tim... Tim...

TIM: Hey.

ACOLYTE: Believe it or be damned.

The ACOLYTES reach threateningly for TIM. TIM puts the bear back in its original place and retreats.

ORIGIN: Tim... Tim... Tim... Tim...

TIM: Hey guys, calm down.

ACOLYTE: Live like I do or don't live at all.

The ACOLYTES grab TIM.

ORIGIN: Tim... Tim... Tim... Tim...

ACOLYTES: *(together)* Believe it or DIE.

TIM: Help.

TIM starts to click his fingers. The lights flicker on and off.

ORIGIN: TIM... TIM... TIM... TIM...

TIM: HELP!

TIM is pulled, struggling, to the ground. He keeps clicking as he struggles with the ACOLYTES. The lights continue to flicker.

ORIGIN: TIM... TIM... TIM... TIM...

TIM: ARRGGHHHH!

Eventually TIM stops struggling, ORIGIN stops chanting, and the only light is the light behind the bear on the desk.

It stays lit for a few beats then fades to a blackout.

End.