

Spitting Image

a radio play

by
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SPITTING IMAGE

The Characters:

Ed Casey: A door-to-door salesman of horizontally reclining
initial greeting devices.
Claire: Dr. Matthew's receptionist.
Dr. Matthews: A gorgeous dentist.
Al: A janitor.

The Place: A dentist's office.

The Time: The present.

SPITTING IMAGE

SOUND: DOOR OPENS/CLOSES

CLAIRE: Hello, can I help you?

ED: Yeah, I have an appointment to see Dr. Matthews. Ed Casey.

CLAIRE: Let me see. Casey? Yes, here we go. I have you down for two o'clock.

ED: Right. That's what time it is.

CLAIRE: Yes. Have you seen Dr. Matthews before?

ED: No.

CLAIRE: So this is your first time here?

ED: Right. That's what I said.

CLAIRE: Then I need you to fill out this paperwork.

SOUND: LOUD THUNK OF MASS OF PAPERS BEING PUT ON COUNTER.

ED: All this?

CLAIRE: Just the highlighted pages.

ED: I have dental insurance. Shouldn't they do this?

CLAIRE: You have insurance? Oh, that's very good. Please fill this out, also.

SOUND: ANOTHER LOUD THUNK.

ED: Okay.

SOUND: WRITING.

SOUND: TURNING PAGES.

ED: Why do you need my shoe size?

CLAIRE: I don't know, sir.

ED: My Grandmother's maiden name? Have I ever smoked marijuana? When was the last time I practiced Zen Buddhism?

CLAIRE: I don't make up the questions, sir.

ED: And what about this little I.Q. test?

CLAIRE: That's for extra credit.

ED: I don't have to take this.

CLAIRE: No, you don't. Are you finished?

ED: Yeah, well, I guess so.

CLAIRE: Thank you. Please have a seat.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS

SOUND: THUMBING THROUGH MAGAZINES

ED: Let's see. New Woman. Cosmopolitan. American Feminist Quarterly. Excuse me. Excuse me. Do you have anything, a little more... manly, to read?

CLAIRE: You mean Sports Illustrated, Playboy, Hustler, Guns & Ammo? Something like that?

ED: Right. Yeah.

CLAIRE: No. But I do have the Wall Street Journal.

ED: No thanks. That's fine. I'll just wait. Here. Thinking. I've got a lot of thinking to do.

CLAIRE: Good luck.

ED: Thanks.

SOUND: WHISTLING

CLAIRE: Excuse me, sir?

ED: Yes?

CLAIRE: Could you please stop that. You're disturbing the other patients.

ED: There aren't any other patients.

CLAIRE: Well, you're disturbing me.

ED: Sorry.

SOUND: FINGERS TAPPING. SIGHS.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS

DR. MATTHEWS: Claire, who's next?

ED: Me. I'm next. I'm the only one here.

CLAIRE: Mr. Casey.

DR. MATTHEWS: Mr. Casey, I'm ready for you.

ED: Well, I tell ya, Doc. I'm ready for you, too.
(nervous laughter)

DR. MATTHEWS: This way, please.

ED: I just have to tell you, and I don't mean this in a bad, sexual harassment, rude kind of way, but you are definitely the most beautiful woman I have seen all week. All month.

DR. MATTHEWS: Thank you, Mr. Casey. I will take that as a compliment.

ED: You should. You should. I usually don't work up the nerve to say that to women, but you... you're something.

DR. MATTHEWS: Maybe we should get down to business. Why don't you have a seat?

ED: Are you married?

DR. MATTHEWS: Divorced.

SOUND: TRAY OF INSTRUMENTS BROUGHT OVER.

ED: That's a shame. A darn shame. Wanna go for coffee after this?

DR. MATTHEWS: I have other patients.

ED: Right. Right. Maybe dinner?

DR. MATTHEWS: How long has it been since your last dental exam, Mr. Casey?

ED: Two or three years. Can never seem to get away, you know. I'm in retail. Hot field these days, retail.

DR. MATTHEWS: Open wide, Mr. Casey.

ED: (w/ fingers in mouth) Yukuhcaee eh.

DR. MATTHEWS: What?

ED: You can call me "Ed."

DR. MATTHEWS: Yes, all right... Ed. I'm a dentist, see. I need to examine and clean your teeth. I can not do that if we have to keep stopping. Understand? My time is precious.

ED: Sorry.

DR. MATTHEWS: Open.

ED: Ahhh.

DR. MATTHEWS: All right. Let's see what we've really got here.

SOUND: METAL PICK POKING AT TEETH.

SOUND: THE STICKY SOUND A PICK MAKES WHEN IT HITS A CAVITY.

DR. MATTHEWS: Hmmmm. That doesn't sound good, does it?

ED: Uh-uhn.

DR. MATTHEWS: Hmmmm.

SOUND: POKING AT THE SAME PLACE. SEVERAL TIMES.

ED: Ahhh. OWww... hnkugahh oc.

DR. MATTHEWS: What?

ED: I think you got it, Doc.

DR. MATTHEWS: Yes. Definitely a cavity there. We'll have to get that out. First let's clean up the rest.

ED: Maybe we could wait on the cavity, huh?

DR. MATTHEWS: Oh, no. There's a great deal of decay. No sense waiting.

ED: Okay.

DR. MATTHEWS: Open up, let's get those clean.

SOUND: THAT LITTLE TOOTH CLEANER, ROTATING THING.

SOUND: SUCTION ON.

SOUND: CLEANER GETS THROUGH A NUMBER OF TEETH. SUDDENLY STOPS.

DR. MATTHEWS: Don't ever touch me there again.

ED: Sorry. It was an accident. You jabbed that thing into my gums and my hand shot up. Sorry.

DR. MATTHEWS: I do not like to be fondled, grabbed, or manhandled. That is not why I get paid.

ED: Sorry. It was an accident.

DR. MATTHEWS: See to it that such an accident does not happen again.

ED: I'm really sorry.

DR. MATTHEWS: Open.

SOUND: CLEANING MACHINE AGAIN. IT STOPS.

DR. MATTHEWS: Here's some water. Rinse.

SOUND: WATER SQUIRTING INTO HIS MOUTH.

SOUND: SPITTING WATER INTO BASIN.

DR. MATTHEWS: Let's get rid of that cavity, shall we?

ED: Okay. What happened before... it really was an accident, Dr. Matthews, you have to believe me.

DR. MATTHEWS: Let's just put it behind us.

ED: Okay.

DR. MATTHEWS: Good.

SOUND: INSTRUMENT TRAY RATTLING.

SOUND: CLICKING OF SWITCHES.

SOUND: SUCTION STARTS UP.

SOUND: DRILL REVVING UP.

DR. MATTHEWS: Open wide.

ED: Wait! Wait!

DR. MATTHEWS: What's the matter?

ED: Don't I get novocaine first?

DR. MATTHEWS: Sorry. I forgot. Guess I just thought you were a real he-man.

ED: I am. But not that much.

DR. MATTHEWS: All right. Fine. We can do it your way.

SOUND: INSTRUMENTS RATTLE. GLASS OF NOVOCAINE BOTTLE.

DR. MATTHEWS: This should do the trick.

ED: Oww. Ahhh. Ahhh.

DR. MATTHEWS: Just need to make sure we get it all in. There we go. How's that?

ED: Great.

DR. MATTHEWS: Let's just give that a second to take effect.

ED: Right... Like I was saying, I'm in retail. I'm one of our top sellers.

DR. MATTHEWS: What is it that you sell, Mr. Casey?

ED: Well, I specialize in horizontally reclining initial greeting devices.

DR. MATTHEWS: Ah, yes. And in English that would be...

ED: Door mats. We carry all the common models, but we also handle a lot of custom work. Businesses can lay out a lot of money on the right door mat.

DR. MATTHEWS: I'm sure.

ED: For example, your office badly needs a new horizontal greeter. The one you've got out there looks, well, frankly, a little shabby.

DR. MATTHEWS: You think so?

ED: Now for dentists, we have some very popular models. "Smile." "Have a Happy Day." "Remember to Floss."

DR. MATTHEWS: Yes, well, I think the novocaine is probably working.

ED: I do a lot of door to door, but in my business, that's a plus. You can see instantly--

DR. MATTHEWS: Open.

ED: Ahhh.

DR. MATTHEWS: Does that hurt?

ED: Uh-uhn.

DR. MATTHEWS: How about this?

ED: Uh-uhn.

DR. MATTHEWS: This?

ED: Ahhhh. Yaaah.

DR. MATTHEWS: Okay, good. We're ready. Here we go.

SOUND: DRILL GRINDING INTO TOOTH. SUCTION. GRINDING SUDDENLY STOPS.

DR. MATTHEWS: I thought I made it clear about your hands, Mr. Casey.

ED: It's a reflex. I swear. Honest. I can't help it.

DR. MATTHEWS: Claire! Claire, I need your assistance.

ED: I did not mean to... to do that at all. I never rush things on the first date. I'm not that hard up. I'm as lonely as the next guy, sure, but... I'm not like that. You have to believe me.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS.

CLAIRE: Yes, Dr. Matthews?

DR. MATTHEWS: It seems Mr. Casey has trouble keeping his hands to himself.

CLAIRE: Oh, one of those.

ED: It was an accident.

DR. MATTHEWS: I was wondering if you would--

CLAIRE: Glad to. Which arm?

DR. MATTHEWS: Left.

CLAIRE: How's this, Mr. Casey? Tell me if I press too hard.

ED: That's fine.

DR. MATTHEWS: Open.

SOUND: DRILLING. CONTINUES THROUGHOUT THE FOLLOWING.

SOUND: SUCTION.

CLAIRE: Doesn't he remind you of Frank?

DR. MATTHEWS: I hadn't thought of it.

CLAIRE: I did. The minute I saw him.

DR. MATTHEWS: Don't distract me, Claire.

CLAIRE: Sorry... But look at his forehead.

DR. MATTHEWS: Maybe a little.

SOUND: THE DRILLING GETS MORE INTENSE.

CLAIRE: And the way his eyes--

SOUND: DRILL SLIPS.

ED: Ahhh. AHHHH.

DR. MATTHEWS: Sorry. Claire, put a little suction there.

SOUND: SUCTION.

ED: Hooo izz Frank?

DR. MATTHEWS: My ex-husband.

CLAIRE: You look just like him.

ED: Maybe we should--

DR. MATTHEWS: I do not see any resemblance. Thank you, Claire.
Open.

SOUND: DRILL STARTS AGAIN.

DR. MATTHEWS: Except for the way you want to paw me all the time. Reminding me, crudely, how much I wish I had someone to touch me. And the way you talk. Your ignorant patter. All the time, talking and talking. Just like him. As if anyone really wants to listen.

CLAIRE: Doctor?

DR. MATTHEWS: The curve of your nose, your strong chin--almost perfect. The way your nostrils flare, just like when you told me you were going to Reno with that slut!

CLAIRE: Doctor, I think that's the wrong tooth.

DR. MATTHEWS: Oh. Yes. Of course. Rinse.

SOUND: SPITTING INTO BASIN.

SOUND: CLINK OF TOOTH IN BASIN.

ED: That's my tooth.

DR. MATTHEWS: Where?

ED: Right there. Right there. That's my tooth, from my mouth. You weren't supposed to take out my teeth, just fix my cavities.

CLAIRE: They even whine the same way.

DR. MATTHEWS: There's no problem here, Frank. We'll take care of you.

ED: Ed. My name is Ed. Frank is--

DR. MATTHEWS: I know who Frank is, thank you very much, Mr. Casey.

ED: I want my tooth back.... I want it back in my mouth.

DR. MATTHEWS: It was already badly cracked, Mr. Casey. You're lucky it happened here and not while you were out in the street hawking door mats.

ED: Do you have something against door mats?

DR. MATTHEWS: No. No. I have nothing whatsoever against door mats. Nothing. We will cap this tooth as soon as I finish drilling this cavity.

ED: I like you, Doc, but maybe--

DR. MATTHEWS: Here we go then.

SOUND: DRILLING

SOUND: SUCTION.

CLAIRE: Are you single, Mr. Casey?

ED: Yuh.

CLAIRE: Did you hear that, Dr. Matthews?

SOUND: DRILL SLIPS

ED: Ahhh!

DR. MATTHEWS: Sorry.

SOUND: DRILLING CONTINUES.

CLAIRE: She doesn't get out much.

DR. MATTHEWS: Claire.

CLAIRE: I don't understand it. I mean look at her. If I looked like that... well let's just say that I wouldn't be at a loss for company.

DR. MATTHEWS: We will not discuss my personal life, Claire.

CLAIRE: Sorry... Her ex-husband was such a sleazebag.

SOUND: DRILL SLIPS. STOPS ABRUPTLY.

ED: OWWWW!

DR. MATTHEWS: I would very much like to keep my mind clear of Frank while I'm working, if you don't mind.

CLAIRE: Sorry. It's just that you always claim that you're over him. But you're not.

DR. MATTHEWS: I would be if people like you would stop constantly talking about him.

CLAIRE: I don't. See, that shows how hung up you are about him. Everything you hear seems to be about Frank. Frank, Frank, Frank. That's not what we say, but it's all you hear.

DR. MATTHEWS: Enough! Let's finish this cavity, then I will fire you. All right?

ED: Okay.

CLAIRE: She's a little sensitive.

SOUND: MOTOR STRUGGLING AND FAILING.

DR. MATTHEWS: Can you hold his head, please.

ED: Whahh?

CLAIRE: How's this?

DR. MATTHEWS: Good. The drill bit is stuck in his tooth. I have to loosen it.

SOUND: STRUGGLING AND GRUNTING.

DR. MATTHEWS: I can't seem to budge it.

SOUND: MORE STRUGGLE.

SOUND: METAL SNAPPING.

DR. MATTHEWS: Damn.

ED: What?

DR. MATTHEWS: At least the drill is free.

SOUND: DRILL REVVING.

ED: But?

CLAIRE: Oh, I see it. Open wider. Never seen that happen before.

DR. MATTHEWS: Me neither.

ED: What? What happened?

DR. MATTHEWS: The bit broke off.

ED: It broke?

DR. MATTHEWS: Hand me those pliers, Claire.

ED: Pliers?

DR. MATTHEWS: Open.

SOUND: PLIERS GRIP THE BIT.

ED: Ahh. Ahhhh.

DR. MATTHEWS: I can't get it.

CLAIRE: Let me try.

ED: Wait. Are you certified for this?

CLAIRE: Hold still. (Grunts) Nope. It's really in there.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS.

SOUND: CART WHEELED IN.

SOUND: TRASH CANS BUMPING.

AL: Afternoon, ladies.

CLAIRE: Hello, Al.

AL: How's the dentist business today?

DR. MATTHEWS: A little bumpy, thanks. How's the janitor business?

AL: Real smooth. Not much trash today.

CLAIRE: I've always admired your physique, Al. Doesn't he look strong, Dr. Matthews?

AL: I like to keep in shape.

DR. MATTHEWS: Yes. I can see that. Al.... I hate to impose upon your good nature, but... We need a favor.

AL: Anything for you, Doc.

DR. MATTHEWS: This is Ed.

ED: Hi, Al.

DR. MATTHEWS: He has a drill bit in his tooth.

AL: Well, yes. Yes... he does.

CLAIRE: It's stuck.

AL: And you need big, strong Al to pull it out?

DR. MATTHEWS: If you would be so kind.

ED: Could he at least wash his hands first?

AL: Sure. Sure. Gotta stay sanitary, right?

SOUND: VERY QUICK WASHING OF HANDS.

AL: Okay... Pliers. I always wanted to say that.

DR. MATTHEWS: Pliers.

SOUND: SNAP OF PLIERS INTO HAND.

AL: Suction.

DR. MATTHEWS: Suction.

SOUND: SUCTION ON.

AL: Clamps.

DR. MATTHEWS: We don't have clamps, Al. Just pull it out, please.