

**PROFESSOR PEDANTO ON
"CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG"**

A Radio/Stage Play

By

Eric Coble

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RUDMAN

LAST SUMMER YOU WERE AWED BY HIS INSIGHTS INTO "OKLAHOMA" AND "SOUND OF MUSIC", AND HE IS CURRENTLY ROCKING THE MUSICAL THEATRE WORLD WITH FRESH REVELATIONS IN HIS NEW BOOK "THE DICHOTOMY OF YIN/YANG TENSIONS AND THE PRESCIENT PHENOMENA IN THE HIERARCHICAL PEDAGOGY OF 'CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG': ANOTHER BRIEF SURVEY". LADIES AND GENTLEMEN -- ERUDITE L. PEDANTO!

(APPLAUSE)

PEDANTO

THANK YOU. ALWAYS A PLEASURE, I'M SURE.

RUDMAN

SO HOW IS THE WORLD OF SCHOLARLY INTERPRETATION TREATING YOU, PROFESSOR?

PEDANTO

EXTREMELY WELL. I JUST RETURNED FROM A MUSICAL THEATRE CONFERENCE IN BELGIUM, WHERE I SAT ON A PANEL EXPLORING THE STRIKING PARALLELS BETWEEN "RICHARD III" AND "YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN".

RUDMAN

CAN'T SAY I'VE NOTICED THOSE.

PEDANTO

WELL, ACTUALLY OF MORE INTEREST I FOUND WAS MY PAPER ON THE SUBLIMATED HOMOSEXUAL THEMES IN "ANNIE".

RUDMAN

WHAT?

PEDANTO

OH, PLEASE. DON'T PRETEND YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED.

RUDMAN

I'M NOT PRETENDING.

PEDANTO

"THE SON WILL COME OUT. TOMORROW". CLEARLY A YEARNING TO CLAIM ONE'S TRUE SEXUAL ORIENTATION, BUT PUT OFF YET AGAIN FOR FEAR OF SOCIAL REPRISAL-

RUDMAN

RIGHT, RIGHT, RIGHT. BUT YOUR NEW BOOK CONCERNS "CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG"?

PEDANTO

YES, WELL, CONTRARY TO POPULAR (MISTAKEN) OPINION, THIS FAMILY CLASSIC IS NOT MERELY THE WHIMSICAL ADVENTURE OF A FLYING CAR. IT'S AN EXAMINATION OF THE UNITED STATES' SCHIZOPHRENIC RESPONSE TO THE LOOMING OIL SHORTAGE.

RUDMAN

EXCUSE ME?

PEDANTO

IT'S ALL RIGHT THERE IN THE TITLE SONG: "CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG".

(BEAT.)

RUDMAN

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO HELP ME OUT HERE.

PEDANTO

CLEARLY THE CURRENT OIL ECONOMY IS FALTERING, STUMBLING, THE MACHINERY ITSELF BEGINS TO COLLAPSE WITH AN ONOMATOPOEITIC "CHITTY CHITTY CHITTY" SOUND. AND THEN "BANG! BANG!" THE SOUND OF OIL DRILLS FINALLY HITTING DRY ROCK AS THERE IS NO OIL LEFT TO PUMP.

RUDMAN

OH MY.

PEDANTO

OBVIOUS, ISN'T IT? CLEARLY THE END OF THE LINE! BUT THEN HOW DOES THE HAPPY FAMILY REACT? DO THEY SWITCH TO ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF FUEL AND TRANSPORTATION? NO! THEY SING THEIR PRAISES TO THEIR CAR AND THE CRISIS! "CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, WE LOVE YOU! OH YOU PRETTY CHITTY BANG BANG, OUR FINE FOUR-FENDERED FRIEND! YOU'RE SLEEK AS A THOROUGHbred, YOUR SEATS ARE A FEATHERBED, YOU'LL TURN EVERYBODY'S HEADS TODAY! WE'LL GLIDE ON OUR MOTOR TRIP, WITH PRIDE IN OUR OWNERSHIP, THE ENVY OF ALL WE SURVEY!" CLEARLY THIS IS A FAMILY IN A CO-DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR S.U.V.

RUDMAN

SOUNDS LIKE IT.

PEDANTO

AND YET THEY REALIZE THE UNTENABLE PARADOX OF S.U.V. LOVE: "CHITTY BANG BANG, CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, CHITTY BANG BANG, CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG!"

(BILL SHAKES HIS HEAD "NO...")

'CHITS' IN THIS INSTANCE REFERRING TO THE MARKERS OUR NATION MUST PUT DOWN BIDDING ON THE PRICE OF FOREIGN OIL -- AND OF COURSE "BANG BANG!" -- THE VIOLENCE AND WARFARE THAT WILL BREAK OUT AS NATION BATTLES NATION TO CLAIM WHAT DWINDLING SUPPLIES ARE LEFT. "CHITTY... CHITTY... BANG! BANG!"

RUDMAN

WHO KNEW?

PEDANTO

I KNEW! AND IAN FLEMING KNEW! CLEARLY HE FORESAW OUR CURRENT CRISIS FORTY YEARS AGO! AND OBVIOUSLY THE TERM "CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG" ITSELF REFERS TO THE ANCIENT TIMALEAN PHRASE "CHILI CHILI BOON BOON", WHICH ROUGHLY TRANSLATES AS "I AM PAYING TOO MUCH AT THE PUMP" OR "MY CAR IS BIGGER THAN YOUR HOUSE". IT'S ALL RIGHT THERE IN THE SONG.

RUDMAN

I'M FLABBERGASTED.

PEDANTO

THERE'S MORE FLABBERGASTATION WHERE THAT CAME FROM. FOR INSTANCE, THE PRICE OF MY BOOK -- A PHENOMENALLY LOW \$39.95 FROM HARCOURT PRESS!

RUDMAN

THEN WHAT'S NEXT? MAYBE MARY POPPINS IS A SYMBOL OF WIND POWER USED FOR CHILD CARE?

PEDANTO

NOW YOU'RE JUST BEING STUPID. BUT I CAN TELL YOU THIS: THE FAMILY WITH THE CAR DOES REALIZE WHAT ACTIONS THEY MUST TAKE TO MAINTAIN THEIR OIL HABIT: "CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, WHAT WE'LL DO! NEAR CHITTY, FAR CHITTY" -- CLEARLY REFERRING TO DOMESTIC OIL DRILLING AS WELL AS OVERSEAS SUPPLIES. BUT ONCE THEY HAVE EMBARKED ON THIS PERILOUS COURSE, ARE THEY CONCERNED? "IN OUR MOTOR CAR, OH WHAT A HAPPY TIME WE'LL SPEND." WINDOWS UP, CD AND AIR CONDITIONING BLARING, THEY CAN'T BE BOTHERED!

RUDMAN

WELL, THANK YOU FOR ANOTHER EYE-OPENING PRESENTATION, PROFESSOR-

PEDANTO

THERE'S MORE! DON'T YOU WANT TO HEAR HOW "TOOT SWEET" AND "TRULY SCRUMPTIOUS" ARE INDICTMENTS OF OUR CURRENT OBESITY EPIDEMIC?

RUDMAN

ANOTHER TIME. THANK YOU, PROFESSOR ERUDITE L. PEDANTO!

(APPLAUSE)