

The Ouija Game

By

Charles Eades

*Black.*

*A PIZZA GIRL enters, carrying four pizza delivery boxes.*

PIZZA GIRL  
Hello?

*(pause)*

Hello?

*Lights up.*

*The scene is a messy room in a student house. The floor is a tip of empty bottles of alcohol and party food. Four students jump up from where they have been hiding; behind the sofa, under the table etc. singing: 'When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that's amore!' and so on.*

PIZZA GIRL  
*(uncertain)*  
Did someone order four pizzas?

*One of the students intercepts her. He is CHESTER, the unprecedented ringleader of the group. Talkative, overly familiar and very strange.*

CHESTER  
We certainly did! And lo, she did cometh, bearing pizza.

*Cheers from the others.*

Sit ye down love, sit ye down.  
*(guides her to a chair and bears her into it)*

Hey Nick, come and distribute the pizzas.

*NICK comes over and takes the pizzas from the bewildered girl.*

NICK  
Yes sir, I shall indeed distribute the pizzas. Okay, I've got a chicken and mushroom right here. Who ordered the chicken and mushroom?

*The answer is HAROLD, a morose fellow lounging on the floor looking very drunk.*

HAROLD  
That's mine.

NICK

Here you go, sir. Chicken and mushroom, very good choice if I may say so, sir. And next up we have the bolognese pizza. What fine fellow did so desire a bolognese pizza?

CHESTER

I did friend Nick, I did desireth a bolognese pizza, and indeed I still do desireth.

NICK

There you go. And this one's a margharita, that would be mine. And that just leaves this last one. What is it? It's a spicy beef for our dear little Cassandra.

*He takes the last pizza to CASSANDRA. She is also on the floor, looking incredibly depressed. Barely reacts when her dinner arrives.*

CHESTER

Is that all of them? Wonderful, wonderful.

(to Girl)

We're so glad you've come. We did so desperately want some pizza for our little get together party and now we have it. We're saved. You've saved us, my little pizza bearing friend.

PIZZA GIRL

Thanks.

(attempts to rise)

Now, altogether that's...

CHESTER

(pushing her down)

Not so fast, little lady. We can't pay until we've all had a try of our delicatessen. Harold my matey, how's yours?

HAROLD

I told them no onion. They always forget.

CHESTER

(to Girl)

Don't mind him, he always finds something wrong. Nick, what's your verdict?

NICK

Splendiferous.

CHESTER

And Cassandra, is that dish to your satisfaction?

CASSANDRA

Nothing satisfies me anymore. All joy is gone from the world, and I am left with a dark tapestry of black colours bleeding into a portrait of despair.

CHESTER

You'll have to forgive our little Cassie, she's in mourning. Has been for the last year. Though we all suspect she secretly enjoys it.

PIZZA GIRL

(trying to stand)  
Well, in that case...

CHESTER

Hold your horses, I haven't tried mine yet.  
(takes a bite)  
Mmm, that is a tasty pizza. Would you like to try a bit?

PIZZA GIRL

No, thank you.

CHESTER

Well, I think everyone is as sated as they can be in the pizza department.

PIZZA GIRL

Great.

*Tries to rise, CHESTER stops her.*

CHESTER

Not so fast, kid. There's one more job we require of you before we pay you.

PIZZA GIRL

What's that?

CHESTER

See, we didn't just call you here for pizza, though that was of course a very important factor of the evening's entertainment.

NICK

Very important.

CHESTER

Explicitly important. However, as well as this undoubtedly crucial delicatessen, we want a little something more from you. Something ever so slightly... unorthodox.

PIZZA GIRL

I'm sorry I can't...

*Once again she tries to get out of the chair but CHESTER keeps her there.*

CHESTER

Whoa, no need to go lickety-split. It's nothing illegal. We're certainly not going to make you do anything sexual like, in case that's what you're worried about.

PIZZA GIRL

Sexual?

CHESTER

I just thought you might suspect that because you're a nice young woman and we've called you here, we might be trying to get you to do something sexual. But you don't need to worry, because like I said, there will be absolutely nothing sexual about this activity. Even though it is, as I said, just a teensy weensy bit unorthodox. No, what we want you to do is take part in a little experiment.

PIZZA GIRL

What experiment?

CHESTER

Oh, a very exciting experiment. We're talking Frankenstein's experiment, only with considerably less horror and screaming and flinging small children into lakes. Nicky boy, bring out the board.

*NICK digs around in his bag and gets out a large box, the sort you'd expect to contain a traditional board game. He sets it down on the floor and gets the board out of the box.*

Do you know what that is?

PIZZA GIRL

It's a Ouija board, isn't it?

CHESTER

Correct amundo, it is indeed a Ouija board. Nick, in case our little friend is in any doubt, would you mind explaining to her the concept of a Ouija board?

(to Girl)

Nick is our Ouija expert.

NICK

Hold on, I've got notes.  
(gets out a note book)  
Have a listen to this.  
(reads)

'The Ouija board is also known as a spirit board or a talking board, used to communicate with the dead. The planchette writing which it employs is believed to have originated in ancient China around the time of the Song Dynasty, and was used to contact the dead until its practice was forbidden by the Qing Dynasty. In the late 19th century the businessmen Elijah Bond and Charles Kennard started marketing a palette board, advertised as "the Ouija board" and distributed it as a household game. It was generally regarded as harmless until the American spiritualist Pearl Curran used it as a divining tool during the First World War. Since then it has been an object of some controversy, with mainstream and occult religions denouncing it as a threat of demonic or spiritual possession, whilst the media have condemned it as a modern preserver of primitive and superstitious practices.'

CHESTER

So there you have it. Now we've been playing with that scary piece of shit for weeks, and boy have we been terrifying the pants off each other.

NICK

It's crazy.

CHESTER

Spooky.

HAROLD

Weird.

CHESTER

And darn fucking fantastic. But here's the thing, we're not sure whether to trust that scary piece of shit. I mean, sure we've just been messing around but we're all thoughtful, emotionally deep characters aren't we chaps?

CASSANDRA

Emotions kill. They devour us from the inside.

HAROLD

When you say deep, how deep are we talking here? Are we talking bottom of the ocean deep, or glass-half-full-half-empty sort of deep?

CHESTER

Anyway, we've been thinking into this weird occult stuff. And it occurred to us that we have no idea whether the spirit that seems to possess that board is genuine. I mean, do you know who that crazy spirit claims to be?

PIZZA GIRL

Who?

CHESTER

Only Cassandra's dead boyfriend.

CASSANDRA

Ooohhhh!

NICK

So sad.

CHESTER

He died a year ago this month.

CASSANDRA

Such a terrible way for that wonderful man to go. He was larger than life and now he's dead as the leaves on an autumn day. No passion could bring him back to me. No comfort could make me hear his voice again. No soft words could undo what that syphilis-ridden whore did to him!

PIZZA GIRL

Syphilis? What?!

CHESTER

It's a very nasty story. Turned out the fool was cheating on Cassie, and the other woman in question had been somewhere she shouldn't. Gave him syphilis, which he failed to get treated. He died a needless, painful death.

PIZZA GIRL

Hold on, I'm not an expert, but doesn't it take quite a few years to die from syphilis?

CHESTER

Well, it's true he sped up the process somewhat with the aid of a power drill.

PIZZA GIRL

Power drill?!

CASSANDRA

If only I could have been the one wielding that drill. That would have been so erotic. I loved him, but my goodness he was an idiot.

CHESTER

So anyway, we got this Ouija board a few weeks ago just as a joke. And we're playing it right here in this living room, having a lovely conversation with our chums from beyond the grave, when suddenly it starts telling us it's Cassie's dead boyfriend.

CASSANDRA

If he was alive, I'd kill him again, then fuck his dead body, then raise him from the dead, then kill him and fuck him simultaneously.

CHESTER

We don't know whether to believe it. So we start asking it all sorts of things that only Cassie's dearly departed lover could know. It got the right answer every single time.

NICK

We were getting a bit freaked.

CHESTER

But here's the crucial element. Cassie's deceased beau knew us all quite well, and we knew him quite well, but we all know each other quite well. The so-called 'spirit' could just be one of us having a laugh.

NICK

We are, after all, devious sons of bitches.

HAROLD

Lovely word. 'Devious'.

CHESTER

So we came up with a plan.

NICK

A plan!

CHESTER

We invite someone here, who none of us have ever met in our lives, and we get them to play the Ouija game with us. Then we'll know for sure if that thing in there is for real. And that, my dear, is where you come in.

NICK

Yes indeedy.



CHESTER

All you need to do is sit here and play a quick game with us, and then we'll pay you and you can go. Sound good?

PIZZA GIRL

You're all drunk aren't you?

*Cheers.*

CHESTER

She's hit the nail on its fucking head! We are indeed, completely drunk, slewed, sozzled, whatever you want to call it. I am so pissed, my hallucinations are starting to feel tipsy. But that should not mean that we're not being deadly serious.

NICK

Deadly serious.

CHESTER

So come on pizza lady, are you in or out?

PIZZA GIRL

You know what, you can have the pizzas for free.

(gets up)

On me, on the house. But I'm not playing any spirit games, thank you.

*Makes for the door, but NICK blocks it.*

CHESTER

If you do this for us, not only will we pay for those pizzas but we will give you double what they cost. And you can keep the fifty percent extra. So what do you say?

PIZZA GIRL

Well, you know I don't get paid very much for this job...

CHESTER

Of course not.

PIZZA GIRL

And it's a hard job, too. You know if I deliver the pizzas later than the company promises, the customer is legally allowed not to pay for it, and it then comes out of my wages?

CHESTER

Shocking.

NICK

Horrendous.

PIZZA GIRL

So a little extra money wouldn't be unwelcome...

CHESTER

Naturellement.

PIZZA GIRL

Okay I'll do it, but just one game.

*More cheers.*

CHESTER

Splendid! Okay, everyone gather around the Ouija board.

*They do so, except the PIZZA GIRL, who sits back on the chair.*

Do the honours, Nick.

*NICK places his hand on the planchette.*

NICK

Is there anybody there?

CHESTER

Come on, put some drama into it.

NICK

(louder, spookier)

Is there anybody there?

*Slowly, the planchette moves.*

'Yes'!

CHESTER

Okay, we're in business. What shall we ask it first?

HAROLD

What's her name?

NICK

Oh spirit, will you tell unto us the name of this here pizza girl?

*The planchette moves. NICK reads the letters out slowly.*

M...A...R...I...A...N. 'Marian'!

*They all look at the GIRL.*

CHESTER

Is that correct?

*She nods. Cue drunken cheers from the players.*

HAROLD

Alright, how old is she?

NICK

Oh spirit, will you communicate unto us the age of this girl called Marian?

*The planchette moves.*

One... nine. 19?

*The GIRL nods again.*

HAROLD

What's her favourite colour?

CHESTER

No no, it's only one more step from that to what is her quest, and then we really are in a Monty Python movie. Let's move onto the juicy stuff. Hey spirit, is this young lady single?

*The planchette moves.*

NICK

'Yes'.

CHESTER

(to Girl)

Richtig?

*A nod from the GIRL.*

The plot thickens.

HAROLD

I've got a good one. Oh spirit, what is her sexuality?

*The planchette moves.*

NICK

G...A...Y.

*Awkward pause.*

CHESTER

Well, we can allow for lucky guesses, but I would never have suspected that one.

*CASSANDRA gets up and rushes over to the GIRL.*

CASSANDRA

Are you taking new members? There's nothing left for me in the world of men!

(throws herself around the Girl)

I want to convert!

NICK

Cassie, sexuality isn't like religion. You can't just convert from one to the other. It's something you're born with.

CASSANDRA

You can be born Jewish!

NICK

That's different, you can be born Jewish but not necessarily practice the faith of the Jews, which just happens to be Judaism. Anyway, you don't change religion by sleeping with someone.

HAROLD

You don't?

CHESTER

We are not having a theological discussion! Cassie, sit down and let us continue.

*They resume positions.*

Okay, so we've established the relationship status of our friend Marian, what next?

NICK

Let's ask it where she was this time last year.

CHESTER

It's supposed to be stuff only she could know, she might not remember that.

NICK

Worth a try.

(spooky voice)

Oh spirit, where was Marian a year ago today?

*The planchette moves.*

P...R...I...S...O...N.

(pause)  
It says 'prison'.

*They all look at the GIRL.*

CHESTER  
Is that true?

*She doesn't respond.*

Hey spirit, why was she in prison?

*The planchette moves.*

NICK  
M...U...R...D...E...R.

*Pause.*

CHESTER  
Maybe it's broken.

CASSANDRA  
Who did she kill?

CHESTER  
Shut up!

HAROLD  
It's moving!

NICK  
M...E. It says 'me'!

CHESTER  
'Me'?

NICK  
No, 'me'.

CHESTER  
That's what I said.

NICK  
No, you said you.

CHESTER  
I said 'me'.

NICK  
That's what I'm saying, it didn't say you it said 'me'.

CHESTER

I know.

NICK

Then why did you say you?

CHESTER

Who said anything about 'you'?

NICK

Me?

CHESTER

Who?

NICK

What?

*Pause.*

HAROLD

Head hurts! Head hurts!

CASSANDRA

But if it said the word 'me', then that means she killed the spirit in that board. Is the spirit my boyfriend? Did she kill my boyfriend?

CHESTER

Let's not jump to conclusions.

CASSANDRA

But if the spirit is my boyfriend, and Marian killed the spirit, then that means she killed my boyfriend?

NICK

Now hold on...

CASSANDRA

Did she kill my fucking boyfriend?!

(to Girl)

Was it the power drill, did you use the power drill?!

CHESTER

I'm sure she didn't kill anybody.

PIZZA GIRL

It's true.

ALL

WHAT?!!

PIZZA GIRL

I killed that man. A year ago. With syphilis.

HAROLD

(to the others)

I thought she said she was a lesbo.

CHESTER

Shh!

PIZZA GIRL

I'd been around. Been some bad places. Slept somewhere I shouldn't. When I realised I'd picked up syphilis, I was about to go and get it treated. But then my friend came home in tears. She'd been thrown off by her boyfriend. He'd been cheating on her.

CASSANDRA

But he was cheating on me...

HAROLD

Shh, this is brilliant.

PIZZA GIRL

She was devastated. The only thing that could comfort her was the thought of revenge. So we put our heads together, and between us we hatched a plot. A terrible, terrible plot. I was to go round to his house, dressed up all nice, and offer him a shoulder to cry on. My friend said he had a wondering eye, that he wouldn't be able to resist a sympathetic girl. And then, knowing the disease I had, I would have sex with him and deliberately infect him. So I did as she said. I went to him, looking my best. When he opened the door he looked like he'd been crying. I said I'd heard about what happened, that I'd come to see if he was alright. He let me in and we got talking. I could see he was very upset. But I could also see he was very attracted to me. When the time was right I asked him if he wanted a fuck. He just nodded. So he led me up to his bedroom, and we did it together.

CASSANDRA

You randy little...

PIZZA GIRL

We did it. It disgusted me, but we did it. Then when it was all over I left and didn't look back.

(pause)

The plan worked like a treat. A few weeks later my friend told me she'd heard that he now had syphilis. I was on medication by then, but he never went for treatment. A month later he took a power drill to his

(MORE)

PIZZA GIRL (cont'd)  
left temple. I was sorry, in spite of what he did to my friend. He seemed such a nice boy...

*Pause.*

NICK  
But the board said you went to prison for murder. They couldn't have arrested you for that, they'd have had no proof.

PIZZA GIRL  
Oh, I wasn't in prison for murder. I got arrested for stealing. That was shortly after he died.

HAROLD  
So the spirit was exaggerating.

CASSANDRA  
You murdering bitch!

*She goes for the GIRL, but the three men sieze her and pin her to the floor. The PIZZA GIRL just sits there, staring straight ahead. While HAROLD and NICK secure CASSANDRA, CHESTER gets up and goes to the GIRL. He takes out his wallet and produces a wad of bank notes.*

CHESTER  
Well Marian, there's the money for the pizzas and your fifty percent extra as promised. Thank you so much for your help, I think we've safely established the true nature of the spirit possessing that board. If you could just take the money and go away now please, that would be really helpful.

*The GIRL snaps out of her trance and notices him. She takes the money and leaves without a word.*

*With her gone, the room begins to calm down. CASSANDRA is no longer thrashing around, but lying there, almost thoughtfully.*

CASSANDRA  
Bitch. Murder by syphilis. You've gotta hand it to her though, that's fucking genius.

CHESTER  
Yes well, I think that's enough Ouija games for one night. Alright chaps, let her up.

*NICK and HAROLD release CASSANDRA. She sits up slowly.*



NICK

Do you think it's too late to order more pizza?

ALL

Yes.

HAROLD

Hey guys?

CHESTER

What?

HAROLD

The planchette is moving.

*They gather round, staring at the Ouija board.*

CHESTER

What's it say?

NICK

It's going pretty fast.

(reads)

'you... gonna... get ... you ... gonna ... fucking...  
kill... you... kill... kill... you... kill...'  
Do you want me to go on?

HAROLD

Should we pack it away now?

CHESTER

Pack it away, burn it, get out of this fucking flat.  
I'm game for suggestions, chaps.

*They leave hastily. The Ouija board sits where  
they left it, planchette moving around frantically  
as the lights darken.*

*Fade to black.*