

Max, Dr. Meticulous, and The Necronomicon

A Comedy

by

Toby Keenan

I am gay (not a joke)

Toby Keenan
414 e 34th st
973-610-4458

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
MAX	An unfortunate victim of fate.	Adult	Male
DR. METICULOUS	A doctor, direct and dedicated.	Old!	Male
ALTANCHIMEG	Golden Ornament.	Aged	Male
ALTANSARNAI	Golden Rose.	Aged	Male
CRAIG	Chose his name.	Aged	Male

SCENE ONE

LIGHTS UP:

Max, in an oversized winter coat, and a dangling red scarf, holds a phone up to his ear. He's in an airport TSA line. He's a few people in front of Dr. Meticulous, who wears a cream button down coat with a fur trim. He also wears a giant forehead stethoscope and holds a golden knobbed cane. A leather satchel hangs on his side.

The line shuffles slowly forward, a slow dredge offstage.

MAX

[To Phone] Well, the doc says it's my corporeal flesh slowly turning itself inside out, but yes, lesions. It's why I've been wearing the scarf, Danny. And even before that I was waking up with night sweats and fevers, I mean you saw firsthand//

DR. METICULOUS

[Yelling over the line] //Hey! What are you telling him?

MAX

[Yelling back] I'm telling him about the symptoms! *[To Phone]* I know. I know, I wanted to tell you in person, but we had to leave as soon as possible. *[Pause]* I forgot, I'll ask. *[To Dr. Meticulous]* Where are we going again?

DR. METICULOUS

[Yelling] Mongolia!

MAX

[To Phone] Mongolia, apparently. *[Pause]* No! We are not eloping! *[Pause]* I don't know, he read it in his book. *[Pause]* His doctor book I don't know, I forgot the name of it. *[Yelling]* What's the- *[To Phone]* Hang on, *[Yelling]* Whats the name of the book?//

DR. METICULOUS

[Yelling] //The Necronomicon!

MAX

[To Phone] The Necro-something-something. *[Pause]* Of course I trust him, he's my doctor! He has been since I was a kid.

Dr. Meticulous begins pushing his way towards Max.

MAX (cont'd)

[To Phone] No, you shouldn't. I don't want you to deal with the anxiety of waiting for the results when it's *not* AIDS.

DR. METICULOUS

[Yelling] It's not AIDS!

MAX

[To Phone] It's not AIDS. It just has the exact same symptoms as AIDS and showed up on the STD test as AIDS. *[Pause]* Yeah, I said the same thing.

Dr. Meticulous makes it behind Max.

DR. METICULOUS

It's not AIDS, it's Malicathem'non.

MAX

[To Phone] It's Malicathem'non.

MAX (cont'd)

"What's that?", he says.

DR. METICULOUS

Malicathem'non is-

MAX

[To Phone] A very serious, very deadly disease that has never been cured, and also no one has ever gotten it before, or, at least, recorded it. *[Pause]* Yeah, I said the same thing.

DR. METICULOUS (cont'd)

A very serious, very deadly disease that has never been cured, and also no one has ever gotten it before, or, at least, recorded it, and we'll be the first ones to document it!

MAX (cont'd)

[To Phone] No it's not contagious. It said it in the-

MAX (cont'd)

One more time for Danny. The necro?//

DR. METICULOUS

[Yelling To Phone] //The Necronomicon!

MAX

[To Phone] Yeah the- wait you've heard of that before?

The line scoots up.

DR. METICULOUS

Max? Max what's he saying? Maxwell?

Max puts the phone to his shoulder.

MAX

Doc, can you explain to me in your own words what this Necro-lama-thing is?

DR. METICULOUS

It's ancient tome I acquired during my tour of Europe. It holds forgotten knowledge. And yes, it's where the only information I can find about this disease you have. Every page I read takes ten years off my life, and a piece of soul, so be grateful.

Beat. Max puts the phone back to his ear.

MAX

[To Phone] Ok yeah maybe you should get tested. Call me as soon as you get the results ok? Love you.

Max hangs up the phone.

MAX (cont'd)

Oh boy. Ooooh boy.

DR. METICULOUS

Now Max, listen.

MAX

Ohhh man. Ohhh Jeez.

Dr. Meticulous grabs Max.

DR. METICULOUS

Max get a hold of yourself!

Dr. Meticulous slaps Max.

DR. METICULOUS (cont'd)

Max, I love you.

MAX
What?

DR. METICULOUS
I love you.

MAX
Ok.

DR. METICULOUS
You've always been my favorite patient. You've never complained, never made unnecessary small talk, and even though you always tell that same stupid joke about the three guys in heaven, I listen, because it gets a little better each time.

MAX
I've been workin' on it.

DR. METICULOUS
Malicathem'non. You have Malicathem'non.

MAX
I think I have AIDS doc. I'm pretty damn **sure** I have AIDS, that's why I got the frickin test.

DR. METICULOUS
Have you been unfaithful to poor Danny?

MAX
No!

DR. METICULOUS
Had Danny been unfaithful to you?

MAX
No! I mean, I don't think so?

DR. METICULOUS
Then it can't be AIDS!

The line moves forward as Dr. Meticulous holds Danny.

MAX
Look, doc, I appreciate you tryna do whatever this is you're doin'. I love you too. And I mean that. But all this voodoo-hoodoo stuff just doesn't make any sense to me!

DR. METICULOUS

Have I ever lied to you? Or tricked you? Sugarcoated a diagnosis?

MAX

Well, no.

DR. METICULOUS

Then why would I start now?

MAX

Because this is big, doc! This is could be AIDS! This affects other people. This affects Danny. If this is AIDS my life is over!

DR. METICULOUS

Do you remember when you were a child, and you came crawling into my office, green with cluff?

MAX

Yeah.

DR. METICULOUS

They thought it was cancer, Max. They were going to put you through chemo. But I treated you for cluff, and you were cured within the day. I wasn't wrong then, and I'm not wrong now. This may be the last thing I do for anyone. The book has taken so much from me, but I opened it one last time, for you, and if you don't want to die an excruciating, cosmic death, then you'll come with me to Mongolia and we'll cure this thing together.

Beat. The line moves offstage.

DR. METICULOUS (cont'd)

Don't you trust me, Max?

MAX

Yeah. Yeah, I trust you.

DR. METICULOUS

Onward then! History awaits!

They move offstage.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE TWO

LIGHTS UP:

Max and Dr. Meticulous trudge across stage in snow shoes. Gusts of winter wind blow around them as they hike up a mountainside.

MAX

[Out of breath] Doc, can we, just, take a break? Just for a second?

DR. METICULOUS

Taking a break while hiking only grows your fatigue, Maxy!

MAX

But Doc, I have Mally-cham//

DR. METICULOUS

Malicathem'non Max! And if you want it gone you'll keep trudging!

MAX

How do you have so much energy?

DR. METICULOUS

I'm fueled by my passion! By my blood! The world must know about the threat of this disease, and be given hope by it's cure!

MAX

What even is the cure? You know, you've been very vague about this whole situation.

DR. METICULOUS

Well, if you must know, the cure is-

Dr. Meticulous stops.

DR. METICULOUS (cont'd)

Well I- *[Pause]* Oh dear.

Max stops.

MAX

Doc? Doc what's going on? You alright?

Dr. Meticulous falls to his knees.

DR. METICULOUS
Oh dearest me.

MAX
Doc, talk to me.

Max falls, crawls towards Dr. Meticulous.

DR. METICULOUS
I didn't turn the page.

MAX
You what?

DR. METICULOUS
I didn't turn the page Max, I didn't turn the page!

MAX
[Yelling] What do you mean you didn't turn the page?!

Max grabs Dr. Meticulous.

DR. METICULOUS
I didn't turn the page! I didn't turn the page! Ah!

MAX
Get a hold of yourself!

Max slaps Dr. Meticulous.

DR. METICULOUS
The Necronomicon. It said the cure was on this mountain but it didn't say where! It must be on the other page!

MAX
Why not?!

DR. METICULOUS
Don't you remember? One more look at that wretched omen and I'm a goner! My soul forever trapped by the dark entities of the unknown!

Dr. Meticulous sobs. Max thinks.

MAX

The Necro-mommy-con. Did you bring it with you?

DR. METICULOUS

Necronomicon. And yes, it's in my satchel.

MAX

Then give it to me. I'll read it.

DR. METICULOUS

Oh Max, no. I can't allow that. This book, it's cursed! As a doctor I swore to never put a patient in harms way like that!

MAX

We're on a mountain in Mongolia! The hippocratic oath has been broken! We're both gonna die up here if we don't find this god damn cure!

DR. METICULOUS

Alright!

Dr. Meticulous takes the book out of his bag. It's an old, dark purple tome, with a leathery casing and stained pages. He hands it to Max.

MAX

How do I know what page it's on?

DR. METICULOUS

I bookmarked it.

Max examines. The book is marked with a holographic doggy bookmark.

DR. METICULOUS (cont'd)

Are you ready for this, Max? Once you've glimpsed that page there's no going back.

Max nods. They both close their eyes. Max opens the book, turns the page. He opens his eyes and begins reading. Dr. Meticulous peeks an eye open at Max.

DR. METICULOUS (cont'd)

Well? What does it say?

MAX

It says the only cure for Malicathem'non is the harmonized voices of the three immortal brothers atop Otgontenger mountain.

DR. METICULOUS

Does it give an exact location?

MAX

The peak.

Dr. Meticulous jumps up and marches forward with a strut.

DR. METICULOUS

Onward then! The peak awaits!

Dr. Meticulous exits. Max watches. He slams the book shut and follows.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE THREE

SPOTLIGHT UP CENTER STAGE:

Max and Dr. Meticulous trudge forward, exhausted. They enter the spotlight and collapse.

DR. METICULOUS

[Breathless] We made it. By God, we made it.

MAX

[Breathless] Yeah.

They catch their breaths. Look around.

MAX (cont'd)

I don't see any monks.

A voice beckons out.

ALTANCHIMEG

Weary travelers!

SPOTLIGHTS UP:

Three spotlights beam down, revealing three men sitting left, right, and back-center stage, elevated high on stone column's. ALTANSARNAI sits back-center stage, adorned in a golden robe and holding a rose in his left hand. ALTANCHIMEG sits stage left, sits stage left, adorned in golden robes and holding his hands together. CRAIG sit's stage right, slumped asleep.

MAX

Oh my god they're real.

Dr. Meticulous grabs a notepad and pen from his satchel, frantically begins writing.

ALTANCHIMEG

I am Altanchimeg.

ALTANSARNAI

And I am Altansarnai. Over there is our brother Craig. Although he is deep in meditative sleep.

MAX

Craig?

ALTANSARNAI

He's transitioning.

MAX

Ah.

Dr. Meticulous steps forward. He bows.

DR. METICULOUS

Greetings oh great wise men! My name is Dr. Meticulous. Abbond Meticulous.

Beat. Dr, Meticulous nudges Max with his cain.

MAX

Oh! And I'm Max!

ALTANSARNAI

You are welcome in our presence, Maxwell.

MAX

Thank you! Whew! Oh my god, thank god you're real! And thank god you speak english!

ALTANSARNAI

It's pretty necessary given the rapidly growing western population and it's stranglehold on intercontinental transactions.

DR. METICULOUS

Haha, indeed! How wise and understanding you//

ALTANCHIMEG

//Tell us, Maxwell, what brings you to our mountain?

MAX

Uhm, well, according to my doctor, I have Malicathem'non.

ALTANCHIMEG

Oh wow.

ALTANSARNAI
Dang, that's serious.

MAX
Yeah. Apparently you're the only ones who can cure it?

The two brothers share a look.

ALANCHIMEG
Indeed. We can in fact cure it.

DR. METICULOUS
Oh divine beings! Bless us with your tones! Serenade us in//

ALANCHIMEG
//Shut up.

ALTANSARNAI
We will happily cure your affliction Max. However, that man you are with must leave.

DR. METICULOUS
What?!

ALANCHIMEG
He is soulless. A stain on the earth, and he has used you for his own personal gain.

DR. METICULOUS
Max, don't listen to them. They're just a bunch of old bilkers using you to- ok I'll leave.

*Dr. Meticulous sulks offstage, then sneakily re-enters,
hides behind Craigs pillar. He keeps writing.*

ALTANSARNAI
Now Max, the floor is yours.

Max closes his eyes. He spreads his arms out. Beat.

ALTANSARNAI (cont'd)
What are you doing?

MAX
Hm?

ALANCHIMEG
Yeah what is that?

MAX

I'm- waiting for you to harmonize.

The brothers exchange looks.

ALTANSARNAI

Oh, we don't-

ALTANCHIMEG

Yeah we don't just do that.

MAX

What?

ALTANSARNAI

You have to make us laugh.

ALTANCHIMEG

Yes. You did know that, didn't you?

Beat.

MAX

Oh my god I didn't turn the page.

ALTANSARNAI

Ooo, awkward.

ALTANCHIMEG

In our current state we can only cure you through genuine, harmonized laughter. Sorry Max.

Beat.

DR. METICULOUS

[Whispering] Psst! Max! You're joke! Tell them your joke about the three guys in heaven!

MAX

Oh my god, thats right! Ok! Ok! I have a joke!

ALTANSARNAI

Then please, serenade us.

MAX

Ok, so there are three guys waiting in line to get into heaven. Saint Peter is- Wait, do you guys know who Saint Peter is?

ALTANSARNAI

Of course we do.

ALTANCHIMEG

Just tell your joke man.

MAX

Ok ok. So, there's three guys waiting in line to get into heaven. The line is super long behind them, so Saint Peter pulls out a megaphone and yells "Due to overcrowding, we're only letting people in who have had particularly gruesome deaths!" So the first guy walks up to the pearly gates and Saint Peter asks "How'd you die?" And the guy says. "Well, for the longest time I've been suspecting my wife's of cheating on me, so I told her I was going to work, waited in my car for an hour, and came back to find my wife naked! So I scoured the place, looking everywhere, until I went out on the balcony, and guess what I saw? A pair of hands dangling from the edge! So I grabbed a hammer and started bashing the guys hands until he fell! I thought I had him, but I look down and the guys still alive! So I go into the kitchen and drag the refrigerator out and push it over the balcony, squashing him to death! And I was so heartbroken, so enraged, that I had a heart attack and died on the spot." Saint Peter goes, "Well, I don't know if you can get into heaven, but that's pretty nuts so I'll let you through." The guy goes through and the next guy comes up, and Saint Peter asks, "How'd you die?" And the guys goes, "Well, I'm a janitor at this apartment complex. I was cleaning this balcony on the fifth floor, when all of a sudden a gust of wind knocks me off! Luckily, I grabbed onto the fourth floor, balcony, and just as I'm about to pull myself up, some guy comes out of nowhere and starts bashing my hands with a hammer! So I fall, but luckily I land in a bush! Just as I'm about to get up, a refrigerator falls from the sky and squashed me to death!" Saint Peter chuckles to himself and says "Alright, alright I see, you can go in." So the guy enters and the third guy walks up and Saint Peter asks, "How'd you die?" And the guys goes, "Ok, so get this. I'm hiding, naked in a refrigerator.

Beat. Silence. Then,

ALTANSARNAI

Heh. Heh heh.

ALTANCHIMEG

Heh Heh Heh.

From the mouth of Craig,

CRAIG
Heh Heh Heh.

The laughter of the three harmonize together, filling the room. The spotlight on Max brightens. He closes his eyes and holds out his arms. A flash. The light returns to its original state.

MAX
Hoh wow.

CRAIG
Well... told... Max...

MAX
Oh man, you liked it?

ALTANCHIMEG
Hehe yeah, that was pretty good.

ALTANSARNAI
Agreed! You even had Craig laughing!

MAX
Yes!

ALTANCHIMEG
You are cured, Maxwell. Your soul is restored and your affliction vanished. Cherish your new life. And get a new doctor.

The spotlights on the brothers brighten, then cut. Max stands alone in the spotlight. Dr. Meticulous runs up to him.

DR. METICULOUS
By god you did it! How do you feel?

MAX
I feel warm.

Suddenly, Max's phone starts to ring.

DR. METICULOUS
You get service up here?

MAX
Yeah I guess so.

Max picks up.

MAX (cont'd)
[To Phone] Hello? Danny! Hey! Oh you'll never believe what just- *[Pause]* WHAT?

DR. METICULOUS
What? What's he saying?

Max hangs up.

MAX
He got the results back. He has AIDS! You lied to me! The book lied! This has all been one sick.. piece of.. AH!! You really are just a hooboo-voo-, voodoo-hoodoo piece of//

DR. METICULOUS
//Your legions Max.

Max pauses. He unzips his coat. The legions are gone.

MAX
They're gone.

DR. METICULOUS
And you feel, well?

MAX
Well... yeah.

DR. METICULOUS
So it appears the cure worked!

Dr. Meticulous scribbles on his notepad, closes it.

DR. METICULOUS (cont'd)
And it appears Danny was the unfaithful one all along. And I was right. And you were wrong. And it wasn't AIDS. And//

The spotlight-lights on the monks return.

ALTANSARNAI
//Ok, ok, hold on. [Pause] Malicathem'non, is AIDS.

DR. METICULOUS

What?!

MAX

What?!

ALTANSARNAI

Yeah, it's just the chitonic word for it.

DR. METICULOUS

Really?!

MAX

Really?!

ALTANSARNAI

Yeah. I assume you learned about it in the Necronomicon? You know if you flip the page it tells you all the other names for it.

MAX

So let me get this straight. You cured my AIDS?

ALTANSARNAI

Yeah.

ALTANCHIMEG

We can cure almost any illness.

DR. METICULOUS

By God! This is incredible! Max, do you know what this means? I've discovered the Panacea! The cure for all disease!

ALTANCHIMEG

You didn't discover it, we did.

ALTANSARNAI

Why do you think we've been meditating up here?

ALTANCHIMEG

Through our practices and meditations we will one day transcend to a higher plain where we can spread our cure throughout everything.

ALTANSARNAI

Hopefully, in the coming years we will complete our transcendence and rid the world of illness. Craig's almost there.

ALTANCHIMEG

Yeah, and it'd be a lot easier for *us* if you people stopped interrupting every time someone pick up the necronomicon.

Max thinks, then takes the necronomicon out of his pocket, holds it up.

MAX

Will you take it then?

DR. METICULOUS

Max? What are you doing?

ALTANSARNAI

I mean, if you wanna leave it here that'd be a big help.

DR. METICULOUS

Max, that's mine. I took it off that beggar in Amsterdam, I deserve to keep it!

MAX

I thought if you looked at it again your soul would be forever trapped by the dark entities of the unknown.

Dr. Meticulous snatches the book from Max.

DR. METICULOUS

Or, I'll learn an amnesia spell and make you all forget the events of today, and I'll be known as the man who found the cure for all earthly sickness!

Beat.

ALTANSARNAI

You're call man.

Dr. Meticulous opens the book. Suddenly, the stage-lights strobe flashes of purple! Horrid sounds of tentacles writhing and guttural chants fill the air! Dr. Meticulous screams as he's sucked inside the necronomicon! With one last scream the lights cut. After a beat, they return to normal.

Dr. Meticulous is gone. The Necronomicon lays by Max's feet.

MAX

Huh.

Beat.

MAX (cont'd)

So, should I just leave this here, or?

ALTANCHIMEG

There's fine.

MAX

He had my return tickets on him...

ALTANSARNAI

You should stay with us, Maxwell.

MAX

What?

ALTANCHIMEG

Indeed. You are a good soul of balanced karma. We'd be blessed to have you join us in our quest for enlightenment.

MAX

But, what about Danny?

ALTANSARNAI

With your mind and spirit joined in our meditation, we'll likely achieve enlightenment in time.

MAX

You mean, I could, be the cure?

ALTANSARNAI

Indeed.

CRAIG

Join... Us... Maxwell...

Maxwell thinks. He smiles and nods, closes his eyes, then sits. Beat. He peeks one eye open at the necronomicon, then kicks it out of the spotlight.

LIGHTS FADE.

END OF PLAY