

An excerpt from
Illuminati: The Musical
 by Joseph Aragon



SONG: Talk Show Tango

ARTHUR: Listen, I'm just a man with a message. How people receive that message is out of my hands. Hey, can someone help me with this mic? . . .

(The FLOOR MGR. comes to adjust ARTHUR's mic.)

LIZ: **The start of my career was a humble one,
 as a human-interest writer for the Winnipeg Sun.
 Then I clawed toward the top, and gained a measure of renown.
 But there's a point you've got to stop—
 when there's no other way but down . . .**

FLOOR MGR.: We're on in five, four, three . . .

(“Coming-back-from-commercial” music. LIZ and ARTHUR are in the midst of their interview.)

LIZ: Hi, welcome back. We're talking with Arthur Granger, syndicated radio host and author of the new book, “Illuminati for Morons.” Now, Arthur, before the break, you touched on the various activities of the Illuminati. Can you elaborate on that?

ARTHUR: Certainly, Liz. As I was saying . . .

LIZ: **Is this the end? To hear the crap this guy is spewing,
 this pointless interviewing, and acting like I care?
 I can't pretend. Now my career's beyond redemption,
 and I pray for a pre-emption to take us off the air.
 Once, my scathing exposés
 would earn me great acclaim and heaps of praise.
 But now I fight to keep my eyes from glazing . . .
 There's so much I want to do yet—
 My God, is this guy through yet?**

ARTHUR: . . . and it's a little known fact that during World War II, the Nazis collaborated with the CIA on many scientific experiments.

LIZ: The Nazis and the CIA?

ARTHUR: Oh, yes. Mind control, robotics, spacecraft propulsion—

LIZ: Let me guess—As in UFOs?

ARTHUR: Exactly.

LIZ: Ah.

**It's obvious he's into mindless devotion
that logic and reason defies.
So between me and you, let's erase any notion
of winning a Pulitzer Prize.**

**But I won't quit. You try to put me out to pasture,
I'll clock you one so fast your nose'll spout!
So don't you try to write me off
or count me out.**

ARTHUR: . . . which brings me to the Priory of Sion, who are the alleged guardians of holy relics like the Grail and the Ark of the Covenant.

LIZ: Now there's a Nazi connection with this too, isn't there?

ARTHUR: Very good! You've read my book.

LIZ: No, I'm just a big Harrison Ford fan.

ARTHUR: **I should have known. You can't convince a hardened skeptic.
The thought makes me dyspeptic; now I'm back where I began.
The time has flown. But I've got vital information
of an ancient hybrid nation of aliens and man:
Interbreeding with our race
so they can silently usurp our place.
And so I'll keep on shouting to your face—lift—
till I find a way to jar you—
But you're not listening, are you?**

LIZ: And these alien hybrids make up the Illuminati we know today?

ARTHUR: Right. The inhabitants of Atlantis, as technologically advanced as they were, posed a threat to them. A war broke out, and the Atlanteans were literally driven underground.

LIZ: Ah, I get it.

He's crazy.

ARTHUR: **She's brainless.**

LIZ/ARTHUR: **This isn't as painless
as the guy who booked this interview had said.
Now my head starts to throb—**

LIZ: **He's a jerk—**

ARTHUR: **She's a snob—**

LIZ/ARTHUR: **And to top it he's/she's probably lousy in bed!**

(They regard each other.)

. . . but I wouldn't mind testing that hypothesis . . .

LIZ: The book is called "Illuminati for Morons", and is in stores now. Arthur Granger, thanks for talking with us.

ARTHUR: Thanks for having me.

LIZ: Join us tomorrow for "tails" from the San Diego Zoo. Yes, it's Marsupial Mania! See you then.

LIZ/ARTHUR: **So now it's time, and soon I'll settle it forever—
I've got what you can never do without!
So don't you try to write me off,
or try to sell me short or cut me loose or show me up
or put me on or put me down . . .
Or count me out!**

("End credits" music plays.)

PERRY: . . . and we're clear. Good work, everybody. Thank you, Mr. Granger, nice meeting you. Liz, you were—relatively well behaved . . .

LIZ: Goodbye, Mr. Granger. It was a singularly painful experience to meet you. Good luck with hunting down Hitler's brain and all.

ARTHUR: Thank you kindly, Ms. Dixon. Oh, and good luck with those marsupials tomorrow. I hear they crap a lot, so my advice: go with earth tones.

(ARTHUR exits.)

LIZ: Aagh! What did I do to deserve this?! I'm hosting a flaky talk show, my guests are all weirdos and jerks, and my theme song sounds like the theme from "Alf"!

PERRY: Well, we did hire the same composer.

(MONICA *enters.*)

MONICA: Hi, Perrykins! Just wanted to see how my favorite producer is doing.

PERRY: Not now, Monica.

MONICA: I have the greatest news. You wanna hear it?

PERRY: Not now, Monica!—

MONICA: Everybody, I have an announcement to make! Guess who's the new anchor of the six o'clock news? Me!

(*Half-hearted congratulations from the crew.*)

LIZ: What?! You? I cannot *believe*—

PERRY: That's wonderful news, Monica! I'm so glad the brass has finally acknowledged your talent behind the desk.

LIZ: . . . and on the desk, and under the desk . . .

PERRY: Come on, I'll walk you to the commissary and buy you a celebratory pudding.

MONICA: Bye everyone! I'll see you on the air!

PERRY: Quickly, before the skin forms . . .

(PERRY *drags* MONICA *off*. LIZ *is alone.*)



End of Excerpt