

Fear Factor Love Feast Edition

Characters

The Angel Wonderful

The Angel Marvelous

The Angel Lex Talionis

Penny (or Percy) Pride

Larry (or Linda) Literal

Farleigh (or Frances) Fastidious

Gary (or Glenda) Grudge

Trent (or Trish) Talker

Linda (or Lance) Lipservice

Darius (or Della) Disciple

Denise (or Dan) Deacon

Stage hands to bring on and take off footwashing, Love Feast, and Communion supplies

Props: Tables, chairs, fake cameras, basins, towels, serving dishes, short bread and cups of juice, giant chocolate chip cookies

WONDERFUL

Hi there. Welcome to HDTV, which stands for Heaven's Delightful Television. I'm the Angel Wonderful and this is:

(Drum roll)

Fear Factor – Love Feast Edition.

MARVELOUS

That's right. I'm Marvelous.

WONDERFUL

That's a matter of opinion.

MARVELOUS

I mean, I'm the *Angel* Marvelous. The co-host of Fear Factor.

WONDERFUL

I don't have a co-host.

MARVELOUS

That was before the ratings went down. You do now.

WONDERFUL

We'll see about that.

MARVELOUS

It's already been seen to. Anyway, on this show we invite three ordinary Christians to find out how they do when they face their greatest fear – Going to the Love Feast.

WONDERFUL

That's right. Christians have the chance to go to the same meal hosted by none other than our Lord and Savior – Jesus of Nazareth. They are invited by the King of King and Lord of Lords to actually sit at his table and share the moment with others.

MARVELOUS

They're not only invited. They're commanded. It says in the Gospel of John—

WONDERFUL

What? Like I don't read my bible on my own?

MARVELOUS

If you call reading your own bible stuffing heavenly comic books between the pages so you can look at the pictures when you're supposed to be studying.

WONDERFUL

Can we get back on task here? What exactly does the Gospel of John say?

MARVELOUS

At the first Love Feast Jesus said—Rum Dole please
(Drum roll)

--- “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” (John 13:34)

WONDERFUL

He also said at the same time that he was setting an example: “For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.” (John 13:15)

MARVELOUS

That was – Crum Bole please
(Drum roll)
--Wonderful.

WONDERFUL

I'm still Wonderful.

MARVELOUS

Matter of opinion. Now let's bring out our Contestants and see how they do with our Three Challenges. From High Falutin, I want to introduce Penny Pride and Larry Literal. Penny and Larry are brother and sister.

PENNY PRIDE

Excuse me. Please move the camera a little this way. This is my good side.

WONDERFUL

We'll do our best, Penny. But personally, I never worry about showing my good side.

PENNY

I can understand that. You have to have a good side before you can show it.

MARVELOUS

Can't argue with that. Say, Penny, you were in the news recently when you were stranded on a desert island and showed your devotion to God by making not one, but two churches on different ends of the island out of palm branches. Eventually you were rescued, of course, but tell us, why two churches?

PENNY

Well, even though I was alone, I knew I wanted to be able to sit in a church and worship God without ceasing, praying not just for my deliverance, but for the good of all people all around the world.

WONDERFUL

That's Marvelous.

MARVELOUS

No, I'm Marvelous. Actually, it was wonderful.

WONDERFUL

No, I'm Wonder—never mind. But that only accounts for one of the churches. Why did you build two?

PENNY

The other church was the one I wouldn't be caught dead in.

MARVELOUS

Larry, it's great to have you with us.

LARRY LITERAL

The Bible Says It. I Believe It. That Settles It.

WONDERFUL

Whatever it says?

LARRY

Whatever it says.

MARVELOUS

Deuteronomy says, "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."

LARRY

Pretty clear to me. NO Beef Stroganoff.

WONDERFUL

Leviticus 19:19 says you shall not put on a garment made of two different materials.

LARRY

Sounds pretty clear to me. 100 percent cotton, all my clothes. After all, The Bible Says It, I Believe It, and That Settles It.

MARVELOUS

We've got some other contestants to introduce to you. From Long Memory we have Gary Grudge and Farleigh Fastidious. From Ingrown Indiana we have Linda Lipservice. And from Dunkerdale we have Darius and Denise Deacon. We'll take time to meet the rest of our players a little more closely in a minute, but let's get ready for the first round of Fear Factor – Love Feast Edition. But first, a word from Lex Talionis, the Angel from the Legal Department.

LEX

Just a short statement here, to the effect that first of all, our show bears little or no resemblance to any program on Earth. Secondly, if there is a resemblance that can be proved in court, it would have to be proven in Heavenly Court, and we pretty much control that venue. Third, no title can be copyrighted and parody is protected, both in heaven and on earth. And besides, who's going to sue heaven? And besides since this is heaven we're in eternity which means we must have thought of it first here before it was thought of on earth, so we ought to be the ones suing them.

MARVELOUS

Thank you, Lex. Perfectly Clear.

WONDERFUL

In our first round we are going to perform a task that is frightening to many folks. Once we describe the task, you must either go through with it, right away, or you're out of the game. If you're the least bit afraid, you're gone.

PENNY

What is it? I hope it's really scary. Like dropping us off a building or driving us into a brick wall.

LARRY

Because I'm not afraid of anything. There's a Bible answer to see us through no matter what. So go ahead. Shoot cannons at us. Make us climb flagpoles over the edge of a cliff. Drop us into shark-infested waters. The rest will all chicken out, but I'll still be there when you're all history.

PENNY

Bring it on. We're not afraid of nothing.

MARVELOUS

(Angels bring out basins and towels)

Well, according to the Bible, at the final meal that he shared with them before he was betrayed to his death—

LARRY

Betrayed? What's going to happen to us? Because I'm not afraid...

MARVELOUS

Jesus "got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. (John 13:4-5) So go ahead. Do what Jesus did.

PENNY

(Long Pause)

You want us to do what?

WONDERFUL

We want you to wash each other's feet.

(The other contestants begin to quietly wash each other's feet while

WONDERFUL continues)

Way back when people bathed before they went to visit a home, but because they walked barefoot or in sandals on dusty roads their feet got pretty dirty so basins of water were provided when they arrived.

MARVELOUS

They either washed their own feet or a slave was forced to wash their feet for them. But there is no record anywhere in the ancient world of someone superior washing the feet of a social inferior until Jesus did it.

PENNY

Wait, wait, wait. Excuse me just one little minute. You want us to do what?

WONDERFUL

We want you to wash each other's feet. Like Jesus did for the disciples

PENNY

Feet? Ugly, gnarly, corn plastered, chip-nailed disastered, flat footed, splay sooted feet?

WONDERFUL

Well, actually everybody washes their feet pretty good before they ever come to a foot washing, but it's not a beauty contest, you know.

MARVELOUS

It's like in the Bible and everything.

LARRY

(Clears throat)

Ahem. Yes, er, I know something about the Bible, and I'm pretty sure we're supposed to take this symbolically. It stands for service to other people. We're not supposed to actually do it. Like in real life. It just stands for something.

MARVELOUS

Well, you're right. Feet stand for something. Or rather, we stand on feet. Even so, the foot washing shows before heaven and earth that there's nothing we won't do, no place we won't go, no ministry we won't attempt, in the name of Jesus. But speaking of Jesus, he did say we were supposed to do this in imitation of him.

LARRY

Wait just one minute. Where did you read that?

WONDERFUL

(reciting)

Jesus said, "For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them." (John 13:15-16)

LARRY

Show me that in the Bible.

MARVELOUS

We angels don't have to carry a bible. In a way, we are Bibles.

PENNY

I don't care if it's in every book of the Bible. I'm not doing it.

LARRY

I'm leaving with you.

WONDERFUL

Sounds like Larry's not as literal as he thought!

MARVELOUS

(imitating a chicken)
Bak-bak-bak-bak-bak

WONDERFUL

You're pretty good at that, aren't you?

MARVELOUS

Actually, it *is* kind of fun. Try it.

MARVELOUS and WONDERFUL

(with appropriate chicken movements)
Bak-bak-bak-bak-bak.
(coming to their senses and regaining a little lost angelic dignity)

WONDERFUL

Well, we've eliminated two contestants. Let's see what's in store for our contestants.

MARVELOUS

(Others begin to set tables with food)
As you can see our tables are being set with a special meal. We'll see if our contestants will be able to stomach what's about to happen. And while we're at it, let's get to meet a couple of them a little better. I'd like to introduce Farleigh Fastidious, from Fancy Feast, PA. Farleigh, you have a reputation of being something of a picky eater.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

Untrue, untrue. I'll eat anything. Or, just about anything. Most anything. If it's something I like. I'm not picky at all. But I do know what I like. And I like things the way I'm used to them. Otherwise I'll eat anything at all. Just about.

WONDERFUL

Good thing, because there's no telling what we're going to serve up here on Fear Factor.
(All except Farleigh and Gary sit down and begin to eat together)

LEX

(Rushing on and interrupting)
That's Fear Factor – Love Feast Edition. I'm pretty sure Heaven can't be sued, but why take chances?

MARVELOUS

You're our lawyer. You're supposed to take care of those things.

LEX

That's true. But there *are* other lawyers, and a lot of them work for the, ah, Other Guys.

WONDERFUL

Do your best. Let's also meet another contestant. Gary Grudge, from Gundgeville, Ohio.

GARY

(Long Pause)
Oh. Am I supposed to talk?

WONDERFUL

That's part of meeting you.

GARY

Well, you took your sweet time getting to me. You interviewed those other two, Penny Perfect and Larry Lowdown, before me. Not that it matters. Not that I'd ever hold a grudge or anything. Or remember. It's not that important. But you can't hardly notice that other people get mentioned first. Like that time, five years ago, when I got a clean spoon at the potluck.

MARVELOUS

Excuse me. You got a *clean* spoon? And you're mad about that?

GARY

You don't understand. At the potluck before that the men had done the dishes afterwards and all the spoons were spotted. Not quite as clean as they could be. Everyone got dirty spoons and was laughing about it. Except me. I got a clean spoon. Can you imagine? Not that I'd ever mention it again. Not that it's worth talking about. Even if it is part of a pattern. Like when I was in kindergarten and my chocolate chip cookie clearly had a third less chips than Suzie's at the next desk over. Or when it was sunny on everyone else's birthday and it was only sunny with some clouds and a chance of rain, only it didn't really rain on my birthday, but it still wasn't really sunny. Not that I would ever bring it up.

WONDERFUL

That's good, because –

GARY

A clean spoon. Can you believe it? And Suzie's cookie had at least a third more chips that day. Anyone could see it.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

I hate to interrupt here, but I'm getting a little hungry. I'm so hungry I could eat a bug. Or a scorpion. Or a bug stuffed scorpion. With worm sauce.

GARY

Thanks for interrupting me. Not that it matters. It doesn't. And I won't mention it ever again.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

So what are we eating?

WONDERFUL

Welcome to – The Love Feast! Yes, here is the meal that early Christians shared that brought them together to one table.

MARVELOUS

That's right. In the ancient Roman Empire men didn't eat with women, free citizens didn't eat with slaves, Gentiles didn't eat with Jews, rich people didn't eat with poor. In every walk of life people separated themselves from each other. But in the name of Jesus the early Christians came together and broke bread –

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

What kind of bread?

MARVELOUS

Good bread. Bread and ate fish together.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

What kind of fish?

WONDERFUL

Well, actually, a lot of time we serve beef, or lamb, or—

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

Because the only kind of fish I like is Tuna.

MARVELOUS

For you, we can serve tuna. We have fresh tuna just caught.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

No. Tuna. Out of the can. Otherwise I'm not coming

MARVELOUS

Okay.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

With mayonnaise.

WONDERFUL

You're from Pennsylvania, aren't you?

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

How could you tell?

MARVELOUS

Just a wild guess. Canned tuna it is. With Mayonnaise.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

Devil's Food Tuna. You ever hear of it? Devil's Food Tuna. It's only the best tuna ever made. That's my favorite kind of tuna.

WONDERFUL

We don't carry that brand.

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

Why not?

WONDERFUL

Copyright reasons. They've got lawyers too, remember?

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

Then I don't come. That's it. It's my way or the highway.

WONDERFUL

Not even if we serve exactly what you like?

GARY

(Interrupting)

Clean spoons! I knew it. People are making fun of me.

MARVELOUS

But everyone has clean spoons...

GARY

Exactly. You think I can't see what you're doing here? Everyone has a clean spoon so I won't think you're singling me out with a clean spoon which is another way of singling me out. Do you really think I'd fall for that? The rest of you can have your Love Feast, but I wouldn't be caught dead here.

WONDERFUL

You just might be.

GARY

Be what?

WONDERFUL

Caught dead. And standing before the throne of judgment.

GARY

That would be typical. Everything held against me. Single me out. You know, I'm not just anybody. Although, maybe you're right. Maybe I need to bend just a little. Maybe

—

(He looks at the table)

Now you wait just one second here. Is that Suzie? Is Suzie here from all those years ago? There's no way, absolutely no way, I'd sit down at the same table with her. You've got to be kidding. This isn't a game show. This is a set-up. All I've got to say is Gee Double O Dee Bee Why Ohio Good-bye-O!

FARLEIGH FASTIDIOUS

(Leaving with Gary)

And you know, even if I ate a different brand of tuna how do I know you'll use enough mayonnaise?

WONDERFUL

(As Stage Hands remove Love Feast supplies)

It's getting a little easier than I thought to eliminate our contestants. Let's meet a couple more of our guests. From Blathering Ohio, we have Trent Talker.

TRENT TALKER

Glad to be here, Wonderful, and may I say, it's wonderful to meet you.

WONDERFUL

I guess you may. Say it, that is.

MARVELOUS

And from Incipient, Indiana, let me introduce Linda Lipservice.

LINDA LIPSERVICE

Marvelous, let me tell, absolutely marvelous to get to know you, Marvelous.

TRENT

Wonderful.

LINDA

Marvelous.

TRENT

And let me add, if I may, that I can't think of anything you might throw our way that could deter us now.

LINDA

Persecution.

TRENT

Torment.

LINDA

Death.

TRENT

Day old coffee.

LINDA

Or stale bread. We're ready.

TRENT

For anything. And I stand by what I said.

LINDA

I stand by it too. What he said. And what I say.

TRENT

We're standing there. Together. Only separately since we're competing.

LINDA

One in heart. Though apart.

TRENT

Well put. Anyway, bring it on. We're ready.

MARVELOUS

All we ask is that you break this communion bread and drink this communion cup.
(Long silence)

LINDA

That's it?

TRENT

Easy enough.

WONDERFUL

Breaking bread is easy, but following Jesus to the cross is hard. If you break this bread you're remembering the death of Jesus until he returns.

LINDA

Remembering.

TRENT

No problemo, lamo. We're supposed to pick up our cross and follow Jesus. Elementary, my dear What, Son? Come on, Linda, let's break bread together.

MARVELOUS

Great. Now for you, Linda, that means answering the call and spending a couple years in Brethren Volunteer Service. There's a soup kitchen in Alabama that needs you.

WONDERFUL

And Trent, you'll be spending your weekends stuffing grocery sacks at the foot pantry down the street from your house when you're not doing a little clerical work for them.

TRENT

Weekends? During football season?

LINDA

Alabama? Isn't that somewhere in the east?

WONDERFUL

South.

LINDA

I meant south. Can't I pick up my cross a little closer to home?

TRENT

And I'd be more than willing to do some of that cross bearing on Thursday nights. There's not that much I must see on Must See TV anymore.

MARVELOUS

Yeah, I miss Friends too.

WONDERFUL

You're going to be missing a lot more than your friends if you get sidetracked. Linda and Trent, I'm afraid everyone's cross is different. Not everyone gets martyred for their faith. A lot of people have to give a little for a long time. Like a lifetime. It's hard to package discipleship into convenient little packages.

MARVELOUS

But since you two are willing to go anywhere, do anything, in memory of Jesus then it should be no problem at all for you to –

TRENT

You know, I'm excited about this discipleship thing. Very excited. But I'll need to clear my calendar a little more before I—

LINDA

Exactly. I'm really into this. I think this is doable. A great idea. But I'll have to make sure that I've got all my ducks in a row.

TRENT

Right. Exactly. Ducks. In a Row.
(They exit)

MARVELOUS

Now isn't that ducky?

WONDERFUL

At least they weren't chicken. I guess following Jesus to the cross is a little harder than we all thought. But we've still got two contestants.

MARVELOUS

Yes, Denise Deacon from Dropkick, Delaware, and Darius Disciple from Dunkerdale, Virginia. I'm glad to see you're still with us. Are you ready to break bread together?

DENISE

We'll do whatever we're asked. Though I don't know if we're worthy.

DARIUS

Yes, I thought we'd be out in the first round.

WONDERFUL

Who knew? Anyway, you're still here. Now remember, as you prepare to break bread and drink the cup, that only one of you can win.

MARVELOUS

That's right. Winner Takes All! Which one of you will be unable to conquer your fear?

DARIUS

Well, I'm afraid of one thing. I'm afraid if only one of us can win, we won't play.

DENISE

That's right. We're members of one church, one body. We may not be very impressive, we may not get along all the time, but we love each other.

WONDERFUL

But the game! How can we have a game without a winner?

DARIUS

We're all winners. Jesus said at the Love Feast "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

WONDERFUL

Are you trying to tell me that you love Penny, Larry, and Farleigh?

MARVELOUS

Or Gary, Trent, and Linda?

DENISE

We're not so easy to love ourselves. But we're sisters and brothers. We're Brethren.

DARIUS

We're stuck with each other. You know, when you talk about Fear Factor, I have to admit, I'm afraid all the time. Afraid we'll fall apart. Afraid we'll hurt each other. Afraid we'll fail in ministry.

DENISE

But there's no question in our minds – Jesus Christ is Lord. Everything else is just details. So if you want us to break this bread and drink this cup, we would love to share it with all the others.

DARIUS

Maybe we can talk to Larry, and let him participate in just those parts he can handle. Maybe Penny can take part in handwashing instead of footwashing.

DENISE

And I'll promise Farleigh I'll make him some special sandwiches for his place setting. I'll invite Trent and Linda to go with me on a volunteer trip some weekend – not during football season – so we can work into this discipleship thing at their speed. They'll catch up.

MARVELOUS

And what about Gary Grudge?

DARIUS

I'm patient. We'll work on Gary. We'll get Gary here.

WONDERFUL

I think we have our winners.

MARVELOUS

Did you say winners? With an s?

WONDERFUL

That's right. Bring on all our contestants.

(Music, Let Us Break Bread Together, begins to play in the background)

You're all winners. When we come to the Love Feast together, as broken as we are, then we conquer our fears together.

(The contestants greet each other, some with hugs, some with handshakes. Gary holds back.)

MARVELOUS

Oh, we've got a special prize for you Gary, just for taking part.

GARY

(Suspiciously)

What is it?

WONDERFUL

It's a giant, extra large, double fudge, double rich, extra-chocolate chip cookie. With a bag of chips on the side.

(hands them over)

GARY

(looking them over, pauses)
I suppose this will do. I'll join you, on one condition.

LARRY

What's that?

GARY

That you all break off a piece of this cookie with me.

(All start to sing as they break off pieces of the giant cookie together. More giant cookies might be produced and broken with the congregation.)

ALL

Let us break bread together on our knees, (on our knees)
Let us break bread together on our knees. (on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees, (on our knees)
Let us drink wine together on our knees. (on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees, (on our knees)
Let us praise God together on our knees. (on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.