

Black Flamingos

by

Julius Galacki

(10 PAGE SCRIPT SAMPLE)

CAST (in order of Appearance)

ACT I: (late June)

CECILIA *"She who drives."*

Late 20's, early 30's; tough and fiercely determined, her movements are quick and nimble; she is attractive in an unconventional way, and wears comfortable, clean travel clothes; she is on a quest.

JAKE *"A fucking black hole."*

Late 20's, early 30's; a walking id, concerned with the immediate fulfillment of his needs and wants; he is lithe, but fairly muscular with rugged good looks, but he is not particularly well-groomed.

MOSES *"A baby grown to man size."*

An apparent desert hermit of indeterminate age - from 45 to 55 - salt and pepper hair, sun-leathered skin, but possessed of a surprising physicality; he is smelly, unkempt and dirty.

ACT II: (3 days later, early July)

EV *"Just got one extra voice in my head."*

A child-woman, who maintains a disarming innocence; she is physically identical to Cecilia, however her hair is uncombed and she wears soiled clothing - like an untended little girl.

ISAAC *"Kind of lost my place in the world."*

The physical counterpart to Moses, however he manifests his evil in a far more sly, dapper even joyful way; while also a mountain man, he is vain about his appearance.

TOBIAS *"The written over type."*

A man of thought not action, trying to drive away from a bad situation; he is physically identical to Jake, however he is the picture of casual, yet tasteful, Southern California middle class.

Note:

*These roles are meant to be double cast, i.e.
Cecilia and Ev; Jake and Tobias; Moses and Isaac.*

And the Lord said to Satan, Behold, all that he has is in your power; only upon himself you shall not put forth your hand. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

The Book of Job

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish, and it swallowed up Jonah.

The Book of Jonah

I am that food which eats the eater of food.

from the Tattiriya Upanishad

The Atman is Eternal.

Atman is made of consciousness and mind: it is made of life and vision. It is made of the earth and the waters: it is made of air and space. It is made of light and darkness: it is made of desire and peace. It is made of anger and love: it is made of virtue and vice. It is made of all that is near: it is made of all that is afar. It is made of all.

from the Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad

Oh God said to Abraham, "Kill me a son"
Abe says, "Man, you must be puttin' me on"
God say, "No." Abe say, "What?"
God say, "You can do what you want Abe, but
The next time you see me comin' you better run"
Well Abe says, "Where do you want this killin' done?"
God says, "Out on Highway 61."

Bob Dylan

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(The stage is black. A droning sound builds in intensity, then suddenly stops. An isolated light focuses on Cecilia.)

CECILIA

Not any voice, do you hear? Not just any voice I'm hearing. It's the Voice of God coming through a big snow-cone. One of those plastic orange snow-cones you see on the road. So His Voice - and God is a He, let me tell you, but not that cuddly Jesus on your dashboard. No, this Voice is loud and in the nose like it's coming through plastic. When you see that many mangled bodies, you hear God. And He's not too happy. Or, He's real happy. I just haven't figured out which.

(Blackout. The sound of a car stopping and then a door opening. Lights up. Cecilia is sitting, upstage, on a large flat "rock".

Around this "rock" is the West - a dry, empty, open West.

She is currently in the Nevada desert driving East on Route 80. Note, however, she does not mime holding a steering wheel, nor does anyone else in the play. The time is late afternoon, the end of June.

Jake enters carrying a duffel bag and holds a sign with only the word "East" written on it. He is dressed in a white T-shirt and white painter's pants that have become a bit stained and dusty from traveling.)

CECILIA

If you feel safe in my car, get in.

(Blackout. Lights up. Another part of desert. Jake and Cecilia are sitting on the rock.)

JAKE

Why are we stopping here?

CECILIA

I don't know where I am unless I can smell what's on the side of the road.

JAKE

You could just roll down the window.

CECILIA

(Standing and walking away from the "car.") See that grass move?

JAKE

Yeah.

CECILIA

Before the grass and us were moving at the same speed. You've got to stop to feel the earth move.

JAKE

You know I've never been picked up by a single woman. Single women never pick up men.

CECILIA

Oh, I got a knife.

JAKE

But are you fast?

CECILIA

(Shrugging.) Fast enough.

JAKE

Not that it matters to me.

CECILIA

You don't worry me.

I'm not harmless. JAKE

Good. I like a challenge. CECILIA

Yeah, whadda'ya got on your mind? JAKE

(Slight pause.) You wear all white for a reason? CECILIA

It's ancient hitch hiker lore. JAKE

It shows the dirt. CECILIA

Yeah, but more people will stop for ya'. They trust white. JAKE

There are all kinds of white. CECILIA

I'm the good kind. JAKE

Uh, huh. CECILIA

You ready to go? JAKE

(PLAY CONTINUES)

(RESUMING, P.19 OF THE ACTUAL PLAY, JAKE HAS BEEN LEFT ALONE AND MOSES HAS ENTERED.)

JAKE

(*Surprised, not scared.*) Damn.

MOSES

Mind if I join you for a spell?

JAKE

So she's only half crazy. (*Laughing.*) She really saw something.

MOSES

Cecilia, you mean? Yeah, she's got some sharp eyes.

JAKE

That's her name, huh? *She told you?*

MOSES

Not exactly. But I can see where people wear their names. You got yours on your dick.

JAKE

Don't tell me, you got a knife too.

MOSES

Oh, 'course.

JAKE

Uh, huh. So. Where does Cecilia wear her name?

MOSES

In the eyeball.

JAKE
You cut her up?

MOSES
What do you care?

JAKE
Just wonderin'.

MOSES
You don't seem particularly scared of me.

JAKE
Well, ya' are an ugly son of a bitch.

(Jake and Moses exchange false smiles and laughter.)

JAKE *(cont'd)*
But, can't say I'm scared.

MOSES
The only witness you got out here is the wide open sky.

JAKE
(Pulling up his shirt.) See all these scars and cuts on my body. I been getting them forever - marks of my curiosity, ya' know? I never seem to remember what to watch out for. So, ya' get it, I don't give a fuck.

MOSES
And women?

JAKE
What about 'em?

PLAY CONTINUES

RESUMING ON P.32 AFTER MOSES HAS BEEN "PUT TO SLEEP"

CECILIA

There's a buzzing all the time in my ears, Jake. A drone of locusts chafing their wings. I'm trapped between the earth and the sky. That's why I need you to dig that hole. God's a mean son of a bitch - that's what I'm trying to tell you. I've been hearing Him laugh ever since I drove through hell.

JAKE

Hell?

CECILIA

We were coming back from my sister's wedding - you know those long wedding trains of white limousines and tin cans. So, there we were, a dozen cars, like a parade of big white elephants honking away.

Then time began to slow down for me. I saw it from the start. It was a fuel truck, Jake. Came through the guard rail from the other side. Skidded right into our little paradise parade. Just like a big hand sweeping away the ball and jacks. And then that screeching finding a single note and holding it in crystal memory.

I saw my windshield frost and collapse like a thousand icicles. When they fell away, when I could see clearly again, time stopped. The smoke stopped billowing. The truck, the cars, shards of metal and glass, all stopped. All the mangled bodies found their place. The flames eating away at a woman in white, froze solid. Up above, there was nothing but the stars in front of me and that bastard laughing in my ear. I had just driven straight through the pipe of hell and nothing had happened to me. Not a cut. Not a burn. Nothing. I passed through it all. Through it all. (*A beat.*) So, do you understand why I drive?

JAKE

Not sure. But I'm angry.

CECILIA

I'm looking for Him, Jake. I keep driving and little pieces of Him stick to me like burrs. Like tonight. Little rotting pieces of flesh made in His image. But I know if I keep going, I'm going to see him whole. Like I did that night. Like a mountain stretching up to the

stars. And when I find this God again - when I hear him laughing, you wave your arms to make him look your way. Then, I'm going to drive my car right into his throat. It's going to choke him like a chicken bone. I know I can't kill him. But I want to distract him just long enough to give the world some sleep.

Blackout
End of Act I

ACT II

(Please note, in the following act, the same actor who played Moses, now plays Isaac; also, the same actor who played Jake, now plays Tobias; and likewise, Evangeline - "Ev"- is portrayed by the actress who earlier played Cecilia. However, these characters are different people from those in the first act.)

(The stage is dark. The droning sound stops. A single light comes up on Ev. She is wearing a dirty house-dress.)

EV

My name is Evangeline. I don't know what I look like 'cause Isaac doesn't like mirrors. He says "Ev" - that's what he calls me - "Ev, I can see you - that's enough." But, sometimes in the dark, I can see my face. She looks like me, but it's not me. She's driving on this road between the earth and the sky.

(Lights out. A single light comes up on Isaac. Isaac is dressed like a mountain man, but he is clean and well-groomed, almost dapper.)

ISAAC

It's not that she's so beautiful....Even if she were, it don't matter. She's just a nest for my bereavement, my hope for something I can't have. I know that. Still, I can't stop thinking about her as if she actually was going to change my existence.

(Lights out on Isaac, a single light up on Tobias. He is dressed in a clean, neat white button down shirt and slacks. He is also wearing light gray deck shoes. He is the picture of Southern California middle class.)

TOBIAS

I've been driving about two days now with my boat hitched to my car. Got out of San Diego in a hurry before my ex-wife could take the last thing I own.... I guess that makes me a fugitive.

(Blackout. "Crossroads Blues," resonates again for a moment. As in Act I, lights up on a rock surrounded by the West, however, it has been moved to a new position. Partially visible, or offstage, there would be a corroded, dusty gasoline pump and a shack of a house/auto body shop. The action of this Act occurs further east from the previous one : just beyond the Great Salt Lake Desert. The time is early morning, the beginning of July. Isaac is sitting on the rock, cleaning his finger nails. Tobias enters.)

TOBIAS

Hey. Hey there. My car broke down. Back on the highway. I saw your sign there. I had just passed it when my car stopped for no reason. No reason at all. So, I thought it'd be better seeking help than waiting for it. Highway's just too empty this morning.

ISAAC

You should have waited.

TOBIAS

What's that?

ISAAC

Nothing.

TOBIAS

You said, I should have waited.

ISAAC

Your hearing has improved.

TOBIAS

You have a sign.

ISAAC
That's an old sign. He's gone.

TOBIAS
You don't fix cars?

ISAAC
Not usually.

TOBIAS
(*Slight pause.*) Look, then can I use your phone?

ISAAC
No phone.

TOBIAS
I can pay for the call...

ISAAC
Hearing's gone under again?

TOBIAS
I didn't think you were serious.

ISAAC
You shouldn't doubt my meaning.

TOBIAS
Could I at least have a glass of water.... Please?

ISAAC

You are a determined son-of-bitch, aren't you?

TOBIAS

My car broke down. I need your help. I'm just looking for a little human decency.

ISAAC

Oooh, is that all? You might find a smidge about thirty miles up the road.

(Tobias begins to leave, then turns back.)

TOBIAS

I find you very hard to believe.

ISAAC

Why Tobias? What's so strange about me?

TOBIAS

How do you know my name?

ISAAC

I don't know, just a lucky guess. *(Smiling)* You wear all white for a reason?

TOBIAS

Yeah.

(PLAY CONTINUES...)

End of Dialogue Sample