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Excerpt *
(end of Act 1)

from

Black Flamingos

by

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** A shortened version of these pages was converted into a monologue that appears in the Smith & Kraus "Audition Arsenal" series.*

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.*

JAKE

(Slight pause.) Can I have it?

CECILIA

The car's in that direction, Jake. Follow that star, there, rising over the horizon. See how it's at the bottom of a big triangle. Just keep it in front of you. Go on. You're free.

JAKE

I want the knife. So, we'll be equal.

CECILIA

You're stronger.

JAKE

You're faster.

CECILIA

But I have a soul to lose, you don't.

JAKE

I'm going with you. But, I want that knife.

(A beat. She gives him the knife.)

JAKE *(cont'd)*

You got nothing to fear from me. Caught me like a sticky pod, you did. Your tune's a chain in my head. It runs up me like a ladder. But I gotta know why. I gotta know where the song is coming from.

(She moves away from him.)

JAKE *(cont'd)*

You *know* every good tune is based on trust. The chords go where chords gotta go, and the people trust it will take them to where they need to go too.

(She crouches or leans on something for support; there is a pain, physicalized, in her that is very great.)

JAKE (*cont'd*)

But that's the deal, that's the deal the musician makes to keep his magic. He...And, she. Gotta trust back.

CECILIA

I never stop driving.

JAKE

Then stop now.

CECILIA

Can't. Every day, I've got to be on the road 'till I find it again. If I can keep going at night too, it might help. I'll need you to grab the wheel if I fall asleep. And if we come across some small, everyday evil, like tonight, then I need you to distract it again, so I can give it some rest.

JAKE

That doesn't tell me what I need to hear.

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

Laugh? Hell? You're losing me one to three. Drive me from B to C.

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.

CECILIA (*cont'd*)

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, 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

(There is a pause between acts – lights come up slightly as a low hum neither pleasant nor unpleasant gently builds – like the summer hum of insects in a field on a hot, humid afternoon in the northeast. Suddenly, the audience lights return to black, and the air is pierced sharply by the painful drone from the top of Act I.)