

*Homo apocalyptus*

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A Play (Short Sample)

by

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"Soy un hombre de carne y hueso!"

*I am a man of flesh and bone.*

- Miguel de Unamuno

"What we must consider then is not, from where does this great and multitudinous evil flow, but rather, how does grace ever break into the world?"

## Cast of Characters

JED: 40's. Survivor.

LENORA-FONTAINE: 30's. Indomitable.

KIRA: 20's. The Future.

WHALEN: 40's. Scientist. \*

CARTER: 20's. Lab Assistant. \*\*

FETUS 1: A fetus. \*\*

FETUS 2: Another fetus. \*

THREE ACTORS ARE REQUIRED

\* Part doubled by the actor playing LENORA-FONTAINE.

\*\* Part doubled by the actor playing KIRA.

## Scene

A bar on a tourist island. Now a barren wasteland.

## Time

4 Years After the Zombie Apocalypse.

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*Homo apocalyptus* was developed in residency at The Studios of Key West, Eric Holowacz, Executive Director.

PROLOGUE

BEFORE THE PLAY BEGINS, WE HEAR A SERIES OF REAL 911 RECORDINGS PLAYING QUIETLY AS WE TAKE OUR SEATS IN THE SPACE. IT SHOULD INCLUDE EVERYTHING FROM BURGLARY TO CAR ACCIDENTS TO DOMESTIC BATTERY, AND CONTAIN THE COMPOSED, KNOWING TONE OF THE OPERATORS AND THE HELPLESSNESS OF THE VICTIMS. WE PONDER ASYMMETRY. THE LAST RECORDING HAS THE FEEL OF A LONG, LATE NIGHT PHONE CALL, THE VICTIM DELUDED NEARLY BEYOND RECOGNITION UNTIL, AT THE END, THEY REGAIN LUCIDITY AND URGENCY JUST BEFORE THE LINE IS CUT.

SCENE 1.

DARKNESS. A LOW MONOTONOUS DRONE  
BUILDS INTO A LOUD, THUMPING NOISE.  
THIS GROWS INTO A CACOPHONY OF  
POLICE SIRENS, RADIO MESSAGES,  
HELICOPTERS, MACHINE GUNS, AND  
HUMAN SCREAMS. THE SCREAMS  
EVENTUALLY SUBSIDE; THE LOW DRONE  
RISES TO COVER ALL IN ITS OMINOUS  
EMBRACE. THIS CONTINUES FOR A LONG  
WHILE UNTIL IT IS FINALLY BROKEN BY  
A HEAVY-DUTY CHAIN SAW. SILENCE.

(We discover JED, 40's, in the  
dimness, crouched, as if in a  
trance. He hums to himself, rocking  
and shifting continuously as he  
squats, bathed in the electric blue  
glow of a synthetic campfire  
screen. He sings to us.)

JED

*When there was one,  
Was one, was me,  
Then two, and after that came three  
Then four. Or more!  
Till twenty bil-lion,  
Bodies floated in the sea.*

(He stirs the electronic fire.)

*We stacked them on  
The Devil's Key.  
Seagulls and sharks picked 'em away.  
Beware! Beware!  
Don't breathe the air,  
Di-lithium Triphosphate!*

(MORE)

JED (Cont'd)

(Suddenly heart broken, He cries, softly, then in a rage beats his fists against his head. He pulls himself together.)

*Tide wash away*

*These sins that we --*

(Suddenly he hears a sound and stops singing. He crouches, very slowly, and extinguishes the blue campfire, revealing a long scary metal blade in his hand. In a flash he leaps at us, slashing at the air and howling, and is gone.)

TRANSITION.

END OF SCENE.

SCENE 2.

WE ARE NOW IN A CHEAP REDNECK BAR.  
THE REMNANTS OF ONE. AN OLD JUKEBOX  
STANDS ON ONE WALL, OPPOSITE THE  
BAR. THE DOOR AND WINDOWS ARE  
BOARDED SHUT, BUT LIGHT STREAMS  
THROUGH THE CRACKS TELLING US IT'S  
A GRAY, POLLUTED DAY.

(LENORA-FONTAINE, 30's, is wiping  
down a table. When she lifts the  
rag, we see it is dripping with  
blood. She's the type of girl who  
has seen pretty much everything,  
and has at least one wicked knife  
strapped to her at all times. You  
guess where.)

LENORA-FONTAINE

(She hums.)

*C'mon to my house, c'mon, c'mon.*

*Somethin', somethin'*

*Sugar... Suuuugar*

*Be sweet to meeee*

(As she sings, she wrings out the  
blood into a bucket. Sets the  
bucket carefully on the bar. She  
continues to hum.)

Now where'd I put that machete?

(We see that JED has entered  
cautiously, from behind the bar,  
perhaps through a grate in the  
floor. A loud click.)

LENORA-FONTAINE (Cont'd)

(Without looking at him.)

One more step and you the next bucket.

You standing on a booby-trap.

(JED freezes. LENORA-FONTAINE turns to him, sizes him up.)

Name. LENORA-FONTAINE (Cont'd)

Jed. JED

Number. LENORA-FONTAINE

JED  
*Mmm* 42104-119-35 *Mmm* 04165-602B.

Date of birth. LENORA-FONTAINE

Yesterday. JED

LENORA-FONTAINE  
Very funny. Who the greatest President of the Universal Congress. Ever.

JED  
*Mmm* Justin *hmm* Beiber.

Which one. LENORA-FONTAINE

The Third. JED

Alright. LENORA-FONTAINE

(She crosses to the bar, pulls an unseen lever, and we hear another click.)  
Step off real easy. There go.

JED  
Hell am I?

(They continue to size each other up, circling.)

LENORA-FONTAINE

My place.

JED

What sectorate?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Ain't no sector. My place, my bed, all mine. Nobody gonna call it anything it ain't. You funny looking.

JED

Got head and shoulders.

LENORA-FONTAINE

That all?

JED

Any more them booby traps round, f-f-fort-ify you?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Wouldn't you like to know.

(She uses the machete to point him to a seat. JED sits half-hunched, a gorilla on guard. He makes little noises constantly, humming or tapping or scraping or scratching.)

JED

Got any Orange Juice?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Ain't nobody used the Underground, long time.

JED

'Cause a myth. Underground Railroad don't network-connect.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Gotta know where to look.

JED

Know the secrets. *Hmm* been on my own.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Out there?

And now you in my sewer?

(SHE approaches JED, still holding the machete. She starts to take off her clothes matter-of-factly. JED watches.)

LENORA-FONTAINE (Cont'd)

Well. Go on. Take your pants off.

JED

Huh?

LENORA-FONTAINE

You wanna cuddle first?

JED

No, I... *mmm...*

LENORA-FONTAINE

You a man, I'm a woman.

JED

I ain't come here for...

LENORA-FONTAINE

Then what good are you?

JED

(With rising anxiety)

Don't need nobody-nobody-nobody!

LENORA-FONTAINE

Calm it down.

JED

Gotta know things, to make it!

LENORA-FONTAINE

(Overlapping.)

Alright.

JED

I know things! I know! How to survive. Island before this, found a shack... ex-ex-ex-crement. Craw-led down.

LENORA-FONTAINE

That explains the smell.

JED

Better than the alternative.

(Pause. LENORA-FONTAINE looks at JED. She gets dressed.)

LENORA-FONTAINE

I don't believe you.

JED

Believing done you good lately?

(LENORA-FONTAINE goes to the bar. Throughout the following, she messes with eye-droppers, a pipe, liqueurs, herbs, and dark potions.)

LENORA-FONTAINE

This, here, my island. MINE. Is safe. Only one left. That island you came from only a few hundred yards... No. They ain't there. They ain't. We blew up the bridges. They can't cross ocean water. Never have before.

(A pause.)

JED

She pretty.

LENORA-FONTAINE

You shitty.

JED

Orange Juice?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Making it.

JED

So, this...place. What clientele you get?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Round here? Mostly tourists.

JED

Shitheads.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Ruining the place. Occasional some foreigners. But usually give up long before they reach me.

JED

I'm from *hmm...* St. Louis.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Never heard of it.

JED

(A test.)

Where you from?

LENORA-FONTAINE

The ocean.

JED

Which of?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Both of them. Both at once.

(They stare at each other for a long moment. JED is satisfied.)

LENORA-FONTAINE (Cont'd)

Thing is that ain't funny. Whole ocean's full a piss, East to West. Can't stop it. It flows. Take a drink of it every morning to keep my D-L-T low. Seems to do the trick.

JED

I'll say.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Shut up.

JED

(Earnestly.)

You the most beautiful skinny-flesh ever seen, in years.

LENORA-FONTAINE

That ain't saying much.

JED

Funny feeling inside...

LENORA-FONTAINE

That's the sewage in your gut, working up toxins.

JED

Orange Juice ready?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Hold on.

JED

Gotta. I... Oh my God.

(JED runs over to a bucket, retches  
in it violently. Retches again.  
Brings his head up.)

LENORA-FONTAINE

Feel better.

JED

No. Yeah. No.

(JED retches again. Sits.)

LENORA-FONTAINE

Name's Lenora. Lenora-Fontaine Wembley. That's my maiden  
name.

JED

You married?

LENORA-FONTAINE

This here's my place. It's called Jack's, but it's really mine. I just left the sign up, you know, for... Adds to the mythology of the whole thing.

JED

Ver-it. Ver-it-ably.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Here go.

(LENORA-FONTAINE is finished with her elixir and she brings it over to JED in a tiny shot glass. She strokes his head, and takes away the bucket. Slowly she straddles JED, facing him. She takes the elixir with one hand, and with the other she grabs JED'S hair, forcing his head backwards until his mouth is open. Dumps the elixir down his throat, and immediately shuts his mouth, hugs his head to her chest.)

LENORA-FONTAINE (Cont'd)

Shhh. That's it. Shhh.

(JED'S body tries to reject the liquid, but she keeps him stable. Slowly he calms down. She stands in front of him, watching him carefully.)

JED

Licorice?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Aniseed. And some herb-bitters.

(LENORA-FONTAINE goes back to the bar.)

(MORE)

LENORA-FONTAINE (Cont'd)

Makes it easier on the stomach. Everybody got they own recipe, but mine the only one that works fast, lasts long.

JED

Why I come here.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Watch me.

(LENORA-FONTAINE slugs back a shot of her elixir of Orange Juice. Chases it with a glass of brown, sludgy tap water. She shivers, then groans.)

JED

I like this place. Good-ly atmosphere. Good corporation. *Company*.

LENORA-FONTAINE

I gotta add a lime or something.

JED

No, it's palatable-good.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Taste like dog balls wrapped in mud tires.

JED

What's the capitol of Mars Colony?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Shit, I don't know. Dog balls in mud tires ain't enough for you? I think that counts as irony.

JED

I guess.

LENORA-FONTAINE

They can't tell metaphor cause they ain't human. But you, you too stupid. You thought I was being literal?

JED

Literary.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Literary.

JED

Yeah. Dunno.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Well I ain't never tasted mud tires.

(JED begins to explore the bar, and  
goes to the old jukebox.)

JED

This place... Look at this! What's called. A Jew box? A jewel  
box! Yeah, it'd be mmm-fun.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Save it for Celebration Day.

JED

Celebration Day?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Well, sure. You know. After.

JED

After what?

LENORA-FONTAINE

After the government... fixes this.

JED

Shit.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Oh, come on. You know! After? After Dr. Henderson and his  
team of experts from the Atomic Government in Copenhagen,  
discover the cure. Stop the spread. Fix the disease. I can't  
believe I'm first one to tell you this. In all the papers.

JED

You don't formulate, then.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Formulate what?

JED

Dr. Henderson.

LENORA-FONTAINE

What? Come on, now you're scarin' me.

JED

Dr. Henderson and his famous expeditionary... turned... years ago. Where you been hiding?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Dr. Henderson?

JED

Ain't no Copenhagen. Ain't no government.

LENORA-FONTAINE

But...

JED

The Fuselage, the *Fusillade*, was it. Mmm, fired off every atomic weapon in the world. Embraced mass self destruction. Killed most of 'em, I guess. And us. Ain't much left now. Couple a burned out hippies. You. Me.

LENORA-FONTAINE

I guess. Huh. I guess I been reading the same old newspapers so long it ain't news no more. Nothing good in there anyway.

JED

Nothing particular.

(A pause.)

LENORA-FONTAINE

Jed?

JED

Yeah?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Nothin'. Just. You know.

JED

What?

LENORA-FONTAINE

You can stay. If you want.

JED

Stay?

LENORA-FONTAINE

I mean, if you got plans or whatever. Some place to go.

JED

Here?

LENORA-FONTAINE

Well, you know, get on. I don't care.

JED

No, mean, Don't... I don't... know. Ain't.... People freak me out.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Uh huh.

JED

Been on my own, me and Sampson.

LENORA-FONTAINE

How long?

JED

Ain't slowed down, by anyone.

LENORA-FONTAINE

Poor baby.

(LENORA-FONTAINE comforts JED. A pause. He suddenly he draws his Sampson blade and charges her, backing her up against the bar.)