
**Characters**

Harry Trewe, English, mid-forties, owner of the Castaways Guest House, retired actor

Jackson Phillip, Trinidadian, forty, his factotum, retired calypsonian

*The action takes place in a gazebo on the edge of a cliff, part of a guest house on the island of Tobago, West Indies.*

[p. 2]

**Act 1**

**Act One**

_A small summerhouse or gazebo, painted white, with a few plants and a table set for breakfast. Harry Trewe enters -- in white, carrying a tape recorder, which he rests on the table. He starts the machine._

**HARRY**

*(Sings and dances): It's our Christmas panto, it's called: Robinson Crusoe. We're awfully glad that you've shown up, it's for kiddies as well as for grown-ups. Our purpose is to please: so now with our magic wand . . . *

*(Dissatisfied with the routine, he switches off the machine. Rehearses his dance. Then presses the machine again) Just picture a lonely island and a beach with its golden sand. There walks a single man in the beautiful West Indies!*
(He turns off the machine. Stands, staring out to sea. Then exits with the tape recorder. Stage empty for a few beats, then Jackson, in an open, white waiter's jacket and black trousers, but barefoot, enters with a breakfast tray. He puts the tray down, looks around)

JACKSON

Mr. Trewe?

(English accent) Mr. Trewe, your scramble eggs is here! are here!

(Creole accent) You hear, Mr. Trewe? I here wid your eggs!

(English accent) Are you in there?

(To himself) And when his eggs get cold, is I to catch.

(He fans the eggs with one hand) What the hell I doing? That ain't go heat them. It go make them more cold. Well, he must be leap off the ledge. At long last. Well, if he ain't dead, he could call.

(He exits with tray. Stage bare. Harry returns, carrying a hat made of goatskin and a goatskin parasol. He puts on the hat, shoulders the parasol, and circles the table. Then he recoils, looking down at the floor)

[p. 3]

HARRY

(Sings and dances): Is this the footprint of a naked man, or is it the naked footprint of a man, that startles me this morning on this bright and golden sand.

(To audience) There's no one here but I, just the sea and lonely sky . . .

(Pauses) Yes . . . and how the hell did it go on?

(Jackson enters, without the tray. Studies Harry)

JACKSON

Morning, Mr. Trewe. Your breakfast ready.
HARRY

So how're you this morning, Jackson?

JACKSON

Oh, fair to fine, with seas moderate, with waves three to four feet in open water, and you, sir?

HARRY

Overcast with sunny periods, with the possibility of heavy showers by mid-afternoon, I'd say, Jackson.

JACKSON

Heavy showers, Mr. Trewe?

HARRY

Heavy showers. I'm so bloody bored I could burst into tears.

JACKSON

I bringing in breakfast.

HARRY

You do that, Friday.
JACKSON

Friday? It ain't go keep.
[p. 4]

HARRY

(Gesturing): Friday, you, bring Crusoe, me, breakfast now. Crusoe hungry.

JACKSON

Mr. Trewe, you come back with that same rake again? I tell you, I ain't no actor, and I ain't walking in front a set of tourists naked playing cannibal. Carnival, but not canni-bal.

HARRY

What tourists? We're closed for repairs. We're the only ones in the guest house. Apart from the carpenter, if he ever shows up.

JACKSON

Well, you ain't seeing him today, because he was out on a heavy lime last night . . . Saturday, you know? And with the peanuts you does pay him for overtime.

HARRY

All right, then. It's goodbye!

(He climbs onto the ledge between the uprights, teetering, walking slowly)

JACKSON
Get offa that ledge, Mr. Trewe! Is a straight drop to them rocks!

(Harry kneels, arms extended, Jolson-style)

HARRY

Hold on below there, sonny boooy! Daddy's a-coming. Your papa's a-coming, Sonnnnneee Booooooy!

(To Jackson) You're watching the great Harry Trewe and his high-wire act.

JACKSON

You watching Jackson Phillip and his disappearing act.

(Turning to leave)
[p. 5]

HARRY

(Jumping down): I'm not a suicide, Jackson. It's a good act, but you never read the reviews. It would be too exasperating, anyway.

JACKSON

What, sir?

HARRY

Attempted suicide in a Third World country. You can't leave a note because the pencils break, you can't cut your wrist with the local blades . . .
JACKSON

We trying we best, sir, since all you gone.

HARRY

Doesn't matter if we're a minority group. Suicides are taxpayers, too, you know, Jackson.

JACKSON

Except it ain't going be suicide. They go say I push you. So, now the fun and dance done, sir, breakfast now?

HARRY

I'm rotting from insomnia, Jackson. I've been up since three, hearing imaginary guests arriving in the rooms, and I haven't slept since. I nearly came around the back to have a little talk. I started thinking about the same bloody problem, which is, What entertainment can we give the guests?

JACKSON

They ain't guests, Mr. Trewe. They's casualties.

HARRY

How do you mean?
This hotel like a hospital. The toilet catch asthma, the air condition got ague, the front-balcony rail missing four teet', and every minute the fridge like it dancing the Shango . . . brrgudup . . . jukjuk . . . brrugudup. Is no wonder that the carpenter collapse. Termites jumping like steel band in the foundations.

HARRY

For fifty dollars a day they want Acapulco?

JACKSON

Try giving them the basics: Food. Water. Shelter. They ain't shipwrecked, they pay in advance for their vacation.

HARRY

Very funny. But the ad says, "Tours" and "Nightly Entertainment." Well, Christ, after they've seen the molting parrot in the lobby and the faded sea fans, they'll be pretty livid if there's no "nightly entertainment," and so would you, right? So, Mr. Jackson, it's your neck and mine. We open next Friday.

JACKSON

Breakfast, sir. Or else is overtime.

HARRY

I kept thinking about this panto I co-authored, man. Robinson Crusoe, and I picked up this old script. I can bring it all down to your level, with just two characters. Crusoe, Man Friday, maybe even the parrot, if that horny old bugger will remember his lines . . .
JACKSON

Since we on the subject, Mr. Trewe, I am compelled to report that parrot again.

HARRY

No, not again, Jackson?

JACKSON

Yes.

HARRY

(Imitating parrot): Heinegger, Heinegger.

(In his own voice) Correct?

[p. 7]

JACKSON

Wait, wait! I know your explanation: that a old German called Herr Heinegger used to own this place, and that when that maquereau of a macaw keep cracking: "Heinegger, Heinegger," he remembering the Nazi and not heckling me, but it playing a little havoc with me nerves. This is my fifth report. I am marking them down. Language is ideas, Mr. Trewe. And I think that this pre-colonial parrot have the wrong idea.

HARRY

It's his accent, Jackson. He's a Creole parrot. What can I do?
JACKSON

Well, I am not saying not to give the bird a fair trial, but I see nothing wrong in taking him out the cage at dawn, blindfolding the bitch, giving him a last cigarette if he want it, lining him up against the garden wall, and perforating his arse by firing squad.

HARRY

The war's over, Jackson! And how can a bloody parrot be prejudiced?

JACKSON

The same damn way they corrupt a child. By their upbringing. That parrot survive from a pre-colonial epoch, Mr. Trewe, and if it want to last in Trinidad and Tobago, then it go have to adjust.

(Long pause)

HARRY

(Leaping up): Do you think we could work him into the panto? Give him something to do? Crusoe had a parrot, didn't he? You're right, Jackson, let's drop him from the show.

[p. 8]

JACKSON

Mr. Trewe, you are a truly, truly stubborn man. I am not putting that old goatskin hat on my head and making an ass of myself for a million dollars, and I have said so already.

HARRY
You got it wrong. I put the hat on, I’m . . . Wait, wait a minute. Cut! Cut! You know what would be a heavy twist, heavy with irony?

JACKSON

What, Mr. Trewe?

HARRY

We reverse it.

(Pause)

JACKSON

You mean you prepared to walk round naked as your mother make you, in your jockstrap, playing a white cannibal in front of your own people? You're a real actor! And you got balls, too, excuse me, Mr. Trewe, to even consider doing a thing like that! Good. Joke finish. Breakfast now, eh? Because I ha' to fix the sun deck since the carpenter ain't reach.

HARRY

All right, breakfast. Just heat it a little.

JACKSON

Right, sir. The coffee must be warm still. But I best do some brandnew scramble eggs.

HARRY
Never mind the eggs, then. Slip in some toast, butter, and jam.

**JACKSON**

How long you in this hotel business, sir? No butter. Marge. No sugar. Big strike. Island-wide shortage. We down to half a bag. [p. 9]

**HARRY**

Don't forget I've heard you sing calypsos, Jackson. Right back there in the kitchen.

**JACKSON**

Mr. Trewe, every day I keep begging you to stop trying to make a entertainer out of me. I finish with show business. I finish with Trinidad. I come to Tobago for peace and quiet. I quite satisfy. If you ain't want me to resign, best drop the topic.

(Exits. Harry sits at the table, staring out to sea. He is reciting softly to himself, then more audibly)

**HARRY**

"Alone, alone, all, all alone, Alone on a wide wide sea . . . I bit my arm, I sucked the blood, And cried, A sail! a sail!"

(He removes the hat, then his shirt, rolls up his trousers, removes them, puts them back on, removes them again) Mastah . . . Mastah . . . Friday sorry. Friday never do it again. Master.

(Jackson enters with breakfast tray, groans, turns to leave. Returns)

**JACKSON**

Mr. Trewe, what it is going on on this blessed Sunday morning, if I may ask?
**HARRY**

I was feeling what it was like to be Friday.

**JACKSON**

Well, Mr. Trewe, you ain't mind putting back on your pants? [p. 10]

**HARRY**

Why can't I eat breakfast like this?

**JACKSON**

Because I am here. I happen to be here. I am the one serving you, Mr. Trewe.

**HARRY**

There's nobody here.

**JACKSON**

Mr. Harry, you putting on back your pants?

**HARRY**

You're frightened of something?
JACKSON

You putting on back your pants?

HARRY

What're you afraid of? Think I'm bent? That's such a corny interpretation of the Crusoe-Friday relationship, boy. My son's been dead three years, Jackson, and I'vn't had much interest in women since, but I haven't gone queer, either. And to be a flasher, you need an audience.

JACKSON

Mr. Trewe, I am trying to explain that I myself feel like a ass holding this tray in my hand while you standing up there naked, and that if anybody should happen to pass, my name is immediately mud. So, when you put back on your pants, I will serve your breakfast.

HARRY

Actors do this sort of thing. I'm getting into a part.

JACKSON

Don't bother getting into the part, get into the pants. Please.

HARRY

Why? You've got me worried now, Jackson.
[p. 11]
JACKSON

(Exploding): *Put on your blasted pants, man! You like a blasted child, you know!*

(Silence. Harry puts on his pants)

HARRY

Shirt, too?

(Jackson sucks his teeth) There.

(Harry puts on his shirt) You people are such prudes, you know that? What's it in you, Jackson, that gets so Victorian about a man in his own hotel deciding to have breakfast in his own underwear, on a totally deserted Sunday morning?

JACKSON

Manners, sir. Manners.

(He puts down the tray)

HARRY

Sit.

JACKSON

Sit? Sit where? How you mean, sit?

HARRY
Sit, and I'll serve breakfast. You can teach me manners. There's more manners in serving than in being served.

**JACKSON**

I ain't know what it is eating you this Sunday morning, you hear, Mr. Trewe, but I don't feel you have any right to mama-guy me, because I is a big man with three children, all outside. Now, being served by a white man ain't no big deal for me. It happen to me every day in New York, so it's not going to be any particularly thrilling experience. I would like to get breakfast finish with, wash up, finish my work, and go for my sea bath. Now I have worked here six months and never lost my temper, but it wouldn't take much more for me to fling this whole fucking tray out in that sea and get somebody more to your sexual taste.

[p. 12]

**HARRY**

*(Laughs):* Aha!

**JACKSON**

Not aha, oho!

**HARRY**

*(Drawing out a chair):* Mr. Phillips . . .

**JACKSON**

Phillip. What?

**HARRY**
Your reservation.

**JACKSON**

You want me play this game, eh?

*(He walks around, goes to a corner of the gazebo)* I'll tell you something, you hear, Mr. Trewe? And listen to me good, good. Once and for all. My sense of humor can stretch so far. Then it does snap. You see that sea out there? You know where I born? I born over there. Trinidad. I was a very serious steel-band man, too. And where I come from is a very serious place. I used to get into some serious trouble. A man keep bugging my arse once. A bad john called Boysie. Indian fellow, want to play nigger. Every day in that panyard he would come making joke with nigger boy this, and so on, and I used to just laugh and tell him stop, but he keep laughing and I keep laughing and he going on and I begging him to stop and two of us laughing, until . . .

*(He turns, goes to the tray, and picks up a fork)* one day, just out of the blue, I pick up a ice pick and walk over to where he and two fellers was playing card, and I nail that ice pick through his hand to the table, and I laugh, and I walk away.

[p. 13]

**HARRY**

Your table, Mr. Phillip.

*(Silence. Jackson shrugs, sits at the table)*

**JACKSON**

Okay, then. Until.

**HARRY**

You know, if you want to exchange war experiences, lad, I could bore you with a couple of mine. Want to hear?
JACKSON

My shift is seven-thirty to one.

(He folds his arms. Harry offers him a cigarette) I don't smoke on duty.

HARRY

We put on a show in the army once. Ground crew. RAF. In what used to be Palestine. A Christmas panto. Another one. And yours truly here was the dame. The dame in a panto is played by a man. Well, I got the part. Wrote the music, the book, everything, whatever original music there was. *Aladdin and His Wonderful Vamp.* Very obscene, of course. I was the Wonderful Vamp. Terrific reaction all around. Thanks to me music-hall background. Went down great. Well, there was a party afterward. Then a big sergeant in charge of maintenance started this very boring business of confusing my genius with my life. Kept pinching my arse and so on. It got kind of boring after a while. Well, he was the size of a truck, mate. And there wasn't much I could do but keep blushing and pretending to be liking it. But the Wonderful Vamp was waiting outside for him, the Wonderful Vamp and a wrench this big, and after that, laddie, it took all of maintenance to put him back again.

[p. 14]

JACKSON

That is white-man fighting. Anyway, Mr. Trewe, I feel the fun finish; I would like, with your permission, to get up now and fix up the sun deck. 'Cause when rain fall . . .

HARRY

Forget the sun deck. I'd say, Jackson, that we've come closer to a mutual respect, and that things need not get that hostile. Sit, and let me explain what I had in mind.

JACKSON

I take it that's an order?
HARRY

You want it to be an order? Okay, it's an order.

JACKSON

It didn't sound like no order.

HARRY

Look, I'm a liberal, Jackson. I've done the whole routine. Aldermaston, Suez, Ban the Bomb, Burn the Bra, Pity the Poor Pakis, et cetera. I've even tried jumping up to the steel band at Notting Hill Gate, and I'd no idea I'd wind up in this ironic position of giving orders, but if the new script I've been given says: Harry Trewe, Hotel Manager, then I'm going to play Harry Trewe, Hotel Manager, to the hilt, dammit. Sosit down! Please. Oh, goddamnit, sit . . . down . . .

(Jackson sits. Nods) Good. Relax. Smoke. Have a cup of tepid coffee. I sat up from about three this morning, working out this whole skit in my head.

(Pause) Mind putting that hat on for a second, it will help my point. Come on. It'll make things clearer.

(He gives Jackson the goatskin hat. Jackson, after a pause, puts it on) [p. 15]

JACKSON

I'll take that cigarette.

(Harry hands over a cigarette)

HARRY

They've seen that stuff, time after time. Limbo, dancing girls, fireeating . . .
HARRY

Oh, sorry.

(He lights Jackson's cigarette)

JACKSON

I listening.

HARRY

We could turn this little place right here into a little cabaret, with some very witty acts. Build up the right audience. Get an edge on the others. So, I thought, Suppose I get this material down to two people. Me and . . . well, me and somebody else. Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday. We could work up a good satire, you know, on the master-servant -- no offense -- relationship. Labor-management, white-black, and so on . . . Making some trenchant points about topical things, you know. Add that show to the special dinner for the price of one ticket . . .

JACKSON

You have to have music.

HARRY

Pardon?
JACKSON

A show like that should have music. Just a lot of talk is very boring.

HARRY

Right. But I'd have to have somebody help me, and that's where I thought . . . Want to take the hat off?
[p. 16]

JACKSON

It ain't bothering me. When you going make your point?

HARRY

We had that little Carnival contest with the staff and you knocked them out improvising, remember that? You had the bloody guests in stitches . . .

JACKSON

You ain't start to talk money yet, Mr. Harry.

HARRY

Just improvising with the quatro. And not the usual welcome to Port of Spain, I am glad to see you again, but I'll tell you, artist to artist, I recognized a real pro, and this is the point of the hat. I want to make a point about the hotel industry, about manners, conduct, to generally improve relations all around. So, whoever it is, you or whoever, plays Crusoe, and I, or whoever it is, get to play Friday, and imagine first of all the humor and then the impact of that. What you think?
JACKSON

You want my honest, professional opinion?

HARRY

Fire away.

JACKSON

I think is shit.

HARRY

I've never been in shit in my life, my boy.

JACKSON

It sound like shit to me, but I could be wrong.

HARRY

You could say things in fun about this place, about the whole Caribbean, that would hurt while people laughed. You get half the gate. [p. 17]

JACKSON

Half?
HARRY

What do you want?

JACKSON

I want you to come to your senses, let me fix the sun deck and get down to the beach for my sea bath. So, I put on this hat, I pick up this parasol, and I walk like a mama-poule up and down this stage and you have a black man playing Robinson Crusoe and then a half-naked, white, fish-belly man playing Friday, and you want to tell me it ain't shit?

HARRY

It could be hilarious!

JACKSON

Hilarious, Mr. Trewe? Supposing I wasn't a waiter, and instead of breakfast I was serving you communion, this Sunday morning on this tropical island, and I turn to you, Friday, to teach you my faith, and I tell you, kneel down and eat this man. Well, kneel, nuh! What you think you would say, eh?

(Pause) You, this white savage?

HARRY

No, that's cannibalism.

JACKSON
Is no more cannibalism than to eat a god. Suppose I make you tell me: For three hundred years I have made you my servant. For three hundred years . . .

**HARRY**

It's pantomime, Jackson, just keep it light . . . Make them laugh.

**JACKSON**

Okay.

(Giggling) For three hundred years I served you. Three hundred years I served you breakfast in . . . in my white jacket on a white veranda, boss, bwana, effendi, bacr, sahib . . . in that sun that never set on your empire I was your shadow, I did what you did, boss, bwana, effendi, bacr, sahib . . . that was my pantomime. Every movement you made, your shadow copied . . .

(Stops giggling) and you smiled at me as a child does smile at his shadow's helpless obedience, boss, bwana, effendi, bacr, sahib, Mr. Crusoe. Now . . .

[p. 18]

**HARRY**

Now?

(Jackson's speech is enacted in a trance-like drone, a zombie)

**JACKSON**

But after a while the child does get frighten of the shadow he make. He say to himself, That is too much obedience, I better hads stop. But the shadow don't stop, no matter if the child stop playing that pantomime, and the shadow does follow the child everywhere; when he praying, the shadow pray too, when he turn round frighten, the shadow turn round too, when he hide under the sheet, the shadow hiding too. He cannot get rid of it, no matter what, and that is the power and black magic of the shadow, boss, bwana, effendi, bacr, sahib, until it is the shadow that start dominating the child, it is the servant that start dominating the master . . .
(Laughs maniacally, like The Shadow) and that is the victory of the shadow, boss.

(Normally) And that is why all them Pakistani and West Indians in England, all them immigrant Fridays driving all you so crazy. And they go keep driving you crazy till you go mad. In that sun that never set, they's your shadow, you can't shake them off.

HARRY

Got really carried away that time, didn't you? It's pantomime, Jackson, keep it light. Improvise!

JACKSON

You mean we making it up as we go along?

[p. 19]

HARRY

Right!

JACKSON

Right! I in dat!

(He assumes a stern stance and points stiffly) Robinson obey Thursday now. Speak Thursday language. Obey Thursday gods.

HARRY

Jesus Christ!
JACKSON

(Inventing language): Amaka nobo sakamaka khaki pants kamaluma Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ kamalogo!

(Pause. Then with a violent gesture) Kamalongo kaba!

(Meaning: Jesus is dead!)

HARRY

Sure.

(Pause. Peers forward. Then speaks to an imaginary projectionist, while Jackson stands, feet apart, arms folded, frowning, in the usual stance of the Noble Savage) Now, could you run it with the subtitles, please?

(He walks over to Jackson, who remains rigid. Like a movie director) Let’s have another take, Big Chief.

(To imaginary camera) Roll it. Sound!

(Jackson shoves Harry aside and strides to the table. He bangs the heel of his palm on the tabletop)

JACKSON

Patamba! Patamba! Yes?

HARRY

You want us to strike the prop? The patamba?

(To cameraman) Cut!

[p. 20]

JACKSON
(To cameraman): Rogoongo! Rogoongo!

(Meaning: Keep it rolling)

HARRY

Cut!

JACKSON

Rogoongo, damnit!

(Defiantly, furiously, Jackson moves around, first signaling the camera to follow him, then pointing out the objects which he rechristens, shaking or hitting them violently. Slams table) Patamba!

(Rattles beach chair) Backaraka! Backaraka!

(Holds up cup, points with other hand) Banda!

(Drops cup) Banda karan!

(Puts his arm around Harry; points at him) Subu!

(Faster, pointing) Masz!

(Stamping the floor) Zohgooooor!

(Resting his snoring head on his closed palms) Oma! Omaaaa!

(Kneels, looking skyward. Pauses; eyes closed) Booora! Booora!

(Meaning the world. Silence. He rises) Cut! And dat is what it was like, before you come here with your table this and cup that.

HARRY

All right. Good audition. You get twenty dollars a day without dialogue.

[p. 21]
JACKSON

But why?

HARRY

You never called anything by the same name twice. What's a table?

JACKSON

I forget.

HARRY

I remember: patamba!

JACKSON

Patamba?

HARRY

Right. You fake.

JACKSON

HARRY

I'll tell you one thing, friend. If you want me to learn your language, you'd better have a gun.

JACKSON

You best play Crusoe, chief. I surrender. All you win.


(Smiles)

HARRY

All right, then. Improvise, then. Sing us a song. In your new language, mate. In English. Go ahead. I challenge you.

JACKSON

You what?

(Rises, takes up parasol, handling it like a guitar, and strolls around the front row of the audience)

(Sings) I want to tell you 'bout Robinson Crusoe. He tell Friday, when I do so, do so. Whatever I do, you must do like me. He make Friday a Good Friday Bohbolee; [1] That was the first example of slavery,'Cause I am still Friday and you ain't me. Now Crusoe he was this Christian and all, And Friday, his slave, was a cannibal, But one day things bound to go in reverse, With Crusoe the slave and Friday the boss. [p. 22]

HARRY
Then comes this part where Crusoe sings to the goat. Little hint of animal husbandry:

*(Kneels, embraces an imaginary goat, to the melody of "Swanee")*

*(Sings)* Nanny, how I love you, How I love you, My dear old nanny . . .

**JACKSON**

Is a li'l obscene.

**HARRY**

*(Music-hall style)*: Me wife thought so. Know what I used to tell her? Obscene? Well, better to be obscene than not heard. How's that? Harry Trewe, I'm telling you again, the music hall's loss is calypso's gain.

*(Stops)* *(Jackson pauses. Stares upward, muttering to himself. Harry turns. Jackson is signaling in the air with a self-congratulatory smile)*

**HARRY**

What is it? What've we stopped for?

*(Jackson hisses for silence from Harry, then returns to his reverie. Miming)* Are you feeling all right, Jackson?

*(Jackson walks some distance away from Harry. An imaginary guitar suddenly appears in his hand. Harry circles him. Lifts one eyelid, listens to his heartbeat. Jackson revolves, Harry revolves with him. Jackson's whole body is now silently rocking in rhythm. He is laughing to himself. We hear, very loud, a calypso rhythm)* Two can play this game, Jackson.

*(He strides around in imaginary straw hat, twirling a cane. We hear, very loud, music hall. It stops. Harry peers at Jackson)*

[p. 23]
You see what you start?

(Sings) Well, a Limey name Trewe came to Tobago. He was in show business but he had no show, so in desperation he turn to me and said: "Mister Phillip" is the two o' we, one classical actor, and one Creole . . .

**HARRY**

Wait! Hold it, hold it, man! Don't waste that. Try and remember it. I'll be right back.

**JACKSON**

Where you going?

**HARRY**

Tape. Repeat it, and try and keep it. That's what I meant, you see?

**JACKSON**

You start to exploit me already?

**HARRY**

That's right. Memorize it.

(Exits quickly. Jackson removes his shirt and jacket, rolls up his pants above the knee, clears the breakfast tray to one side of the floor, overturns the table, and sits in it, as if it were a boat, as Harry returns with the machine) What's all this? I'm ready to tape. What're you up to?

(Jackson sits in the upturned table, rowing calmly, and from time to time surveying the horizon. He looks up toward the sky, shielding his face from the glare with one hand; then he gestures to Harry) What?
(Jackson flaps his arms around leisurely, like a large sea bird, indicating that Harry should do the same) What? What about the song? You'll forget the bloody song. It was a fluke.

[p. 24]

JACKSON

(Steps out from the table, crosses to Harry, irritated): If I suppose to help you with this stupidness, we will have to cool it and collaborate a little bit. Now, I was in that boat, rowing, and I was looking up to the sky to see a storm gathering, and I wanted a big white sea bird beating inland from a storm. So what's the trouble, Mr. Trewe?

HARRY

Sea bird? What sea bird? I'm not going to play a fekking sea bird.

JACKSON

Mr. Trewe, I'm only asking you to play a white sea bird because I am supposed to play a black explorer.

HARRY

Well, I don't want to do it. Anyway, that's the silliest acting I've seen in a long time. And Robinson Crusoe wasn't rowing when he got shipwrecked; he was on a huge boat. I didn't come here to play a sea bird, I came to tape the song.

JACKSON

Well, then, is either the sea bird or the song. And I don't see any reason why you have to call my acting silly. We suppose to improvise.
HARRY

All right, Jackson, all right. After I do this part, I hope you can remember the song. Now you just tell me, before we keep stopping, what I am supposed to do, how many animals I'm supposed to play, and . . . you know, and so on, and so on, and then when we get all that part fixed up, we'll tape the song, all right?

[p. 25]

JACKSON

That suits me. Now, the way I see it here: whether Robinson Crusoe was on a big boat or not, the idea is that he got . . .

(Pause) shipwrecked. So I . . . if I am supposed to play Robinson Crusoe my way, then I will choose the way in which I will get shipwrecked. Now, as Robison Crusoe is rowing, he looks up and he sees this huge white sea bird, which is making loud sea-bird noises, because a storm is coming. And Robinson Crusoe looks up toward the sky and sees that there is this storm. Then, there is a large wave, and Robinson Crusoe finds himself on the beach.

HARRY

Am I supposed to play the beach? Because that's white . . .

JACKSON

Hilarious! Mr. Trewe. Now look, you know, I am doing you a favor. On this beach, right? Then he sees a lot of goats. And, because he is naked and he needs clothes, he kills a goat, he takes off the skin, and he makes this parasol here and this hat, so he doesn't go around naked for everybody to see. Now I know that there is nobody there, but there is an audience, so the sooner Robinson Crusoe puts on his clothes, then the better and happier we will all be. I am going to go back in the boat. I am going to look up toward the sky. You will, please, make the seabird noises. I will do the wave, I will crash onto the sand, you will come down like a goat, I will kill you, take off your skin, make a parasol and a hat, and after that, then I promise you that I will remember the song. And I will sing it to the best of my ability.

(Pause) However shitty that is.

[p. 26]
HARRY

I said "silly." Now listen . . .

JACKSON

Yes, Mr. Trewe?

HARRY

Okay, if you're a black explorer . . . Wait a minute . . . wait a minute. If you're really a white explorer but you're black, shouldn't I play a black sea bird because I'm white?

JACKSON

Are you . . . going to extend . . . the limits of prejudice to include . . . the flora and fauna of this island? I am entering the boat.

(He is stepping into the upturned table or boat, as Harry halfheartedly imitates a bird, waving his arms)

HARRY

Kekkk, kekkk, kekkk, kekkk!

(Stops) What's wrong?

JACKSON

What's wrong? Mr. Trewe, that is not a sea gull . . . that is some kind of . . . well, I don't know what it is . . . some kind of jumbie bird or something.

(Pause) I am returning to the boat.
(He carefully enters the boat, expecting an interrupting bird cry from Harry, but there is none, so he begins to row)

**HARRY**

Kekk! Kekkk.

(He hangs his arms down. Pause) Er, Jackson, wait a minute. Hold it a second. Come here a minute.

(Jackson patiently gets out of the boat, elaborately pantomiming lowering his body into shallow water, releasing his hold on the boat, swimming a little distance toward shore, getting up from the shallows, shaking out his hair and hands, wiping his hands on his trousers, jumping up and down on one foot to unplug water from his clogged ear, seeing Harry, then walking wearily, like a man who has swum a tremendous distance, and collapsing at Harry's feet) Er, Jackson, This is too humiliating. Now, let's just forget it and please don't continue, or you're fired.

(Jackson leisurely wipes his face with his hands)

[p. 27]

**JACKSON**

It don't go so, Mr. Trewe. You know me to be a meticulous man. I didn't want to do this job. I didn't even want to work here. You convinced me to work here. I have worked as meticulously as I can, until I have been promoted. This morning I had no intention of doing what I am doing now; you have always admired the fact that whatever I begin, I finish. Now, I will accept my resignation, if you want me to,after we have finished this thing. But I am not leaving in the middle of a job, that has never been my policy. So you can sit down, as usual, and watch me work, but until I have finished this whole business of Robinson Crusoe being in the boat

(He rises and repeats the pantomime) looking at an imaginary sea bird, being shipwrecked, killing a goat, making this hat and this parasol, walking up the beach and finding a naked footprint, which should take me into about another ten or twelve minutes, at the most, I will pack my things and I will leave, and you can play *Robinson Crusoe* all by yourself. My plans were, after this, to take the table like this . . .

(He goes to the table, puts it upright) Let me show you: take the table, turn it all around, go under the table . . .

(He goes under the table) and this would now have become Robinson Crusoe's hut.
(Emerges from under the table and, without looking at Harry, continues to talk) Now, you just tell me if you think I am overdoing it, or if you think it's more or less what we agreed on?

(Pause) Okay? But I am not resigning.

(Turns to Harry slowly) You see, it's your people who introduced us to this culture: Shakespeare, Robinson Crusoe, the classics, and so on, and when we start getting as good as them, you can't leave halfway. So, I will continue? Please?

[HARRY]

No, Jackson. You will not continue. You will straighten this table, put back the tablecloth, take away the breakfast things, give me back the hat, put your jacket back on, and we will continue as normal and forget the whole matter. Now, I'm very serious, I've had enough of this farce. I would like to stop.

[JACKSON]

May I say what I think, Mr. Trewe? I think it's a matter of prejudice. I think that you cannot believe: one: that I can act, and two: that any black man should play Robinson Crusoe. A little while aback, I came out here quite calmly and normally with the breakfast things and find you almost stark naked, kneeling down, and you told me you were getting into your part. Here am I getting into my part and you object. This is the story . . . this is history. This moment that we are now acting here is the history of imperialism; it's nothing less than that. And I don't think that I can -- should -- concede my getting into a part halfway and abandoning things, just because you, as my superior, give me orders. People become independent. Now, I could go down to that beach by myself with this hat, and I could play Robinson Crusoe, I could play Columbus, I could play Sir Francis Drake, I could play anybody discovering anywhere, but I don't want you to tell me when and where to draw the line!

(Pause) Or what to discover and when to discover it. All right?

[HARRY]

Look, I'm sorry to interrupt you again, Jackson, but as I -- you know -- was watching you, I realized it's much more profound than that; that it could get offensive. We're trying to do something light, just a little pantomime, a little satire, a little picong. But
if you take this thing seriously, we might commit Art, which is a kind of crime in this society . . . I mean, there'd be a lot of things there that people . . . well, it would make them think too much, and well, we don't want that . . . we just want a little . . . entertainment.

**JACKSON**

How do you mean, Mr. Trewe?

**HARRY**

Well, I mean if you . . . well, I mean. If you did the whole thing in reverse . . . I mean, okay, well, all right . . . you've got this black man . . . no, no . . . all right. You've got this man who is black, Robinson Crusoe, and he discovers this island on which there is this white cannibal, all right?

**JACKSON**

Yes. That is, after he has killed the goat . . .

**HARRY**

Yes, I know, I know. After he has killed the goat and made a . . . the hat, the parasol, and all of that . . . and, anyway, he comes across this man called Friday.

**JACKSON**

How do you know I mightn't choose to call him Thursday? Do I have to copy every . . . I mean, are we improvising?  
[p. 30]

**HARRY**
All right, so it’s Thursday. He comes across this naked white cannibal called Thursday, you know. And then look at what would happen. He would have to start to . . . well, he’d have to, sorry . . . This cannibal, who is a Christian, would have to start unlearning his Christianity. He would have to be taught . . . I mean . . . he’d have to be taught by this -- African . . . that everything was wrong, that what he was doing . . . I mean, for nearly two thousand years . . . was wrong. That his civilization, his culture, his whatever, was . . . horrible. Was all . . . wrong.

Barbarous, I mean, you know. And Crusoe would then have to teach him things like, you know, about . . . Africa, his gods, patamba, and so on . . . and it would get very, very complicated, and I suppose ultimately it would be very boring, and what we’d have on our hands would be . . . would be a play and not a little pantomime . . .

JACKSON

I'm too ambitious?

HARRY

No, no, the whole thing would have to be reversed; white would become black, you know . . .

JACKSON

(Smiling): You see, Mr. Trewe, I don't see anything wrong with that, up to now.

HARRY

Well, I do. It's not the sort of thing I want, and I think you’d better clean up, and I'm going inside, and when I come back I'd like this whole place just as it was. I mean, just before everything started.

[p. 31]

JACKSON

You mean you'd like it returned to its primal state? Natural? Before Crusoe finds Thursday? But, you see, that is not history. That is not the world.
HARRY

No, no, I don't give an Eskimo's fart about the world, Jackson. I just want this little place here cleaned up, and I'd like you to get back to fixing the sun deck. Let's forget the whole matter. Righto. Excuse me.

(He is leaving. Jackson's tone will stop him)

JACKSON

Very well. So I take it you don't want to hear the song, neither?

HARRY

No, no, I'm afraid not. I think really it was a silly idea, it's all my fault, and I'd like things to return to where they were.

JACKSON

The story of the British Empire, Mr. Trewe. However, it is too late. The history of the British Empire.

HARRY

Now, how do you get that?

JACKSON

Well, you come to a place, you find that place as God make it; like Robinson Crusoe, you civilize the natives; they try to do something, you turn around and you say to them: "You are not good enough, let's call the whole thing off, return things to normal, you go back to your position as slave or servant, I will keep mine as master,
and we'll forget the whole thing ever happened." Correct? You would like me to accept this.
[p. 32]

**HARRY**

You're really making this very difficult, Jackson. Are you hurt? Have I offended you?

**JACKSON**

Hurt? No, no, no. I didn't expect any less. I am not hurt.

(*Pause*) I am just . . .

(*Pause*)

**HARRY**

You're just what?

**JACKSON**

I am just ashamed . . . of making such a fool of myself.

(*Pause*) I expected . . . a little respect. That is all.

**HARRY**

I respect you . . . I just, I . . .

**JACKSON**
No. It's perfectly all right.

(Harry goes to the table, straightens it) I . . . no . . . I'll fix the table myself.

(He doesn't move) I am all right, thank you. Sir.

(Harry stops fixing the table)

(With the hint of a British accent) Thank you very much.

HARRY

(Sighs): I . . . am sorry . . . er . . .

(Jackson moves toward the table)

JACKSON

It's perfectly all right, sir. It's perfectly all . . . right.

(Almost inaudibly) Thank you.

(Harry begins to straighten the table again) No, thank you very much, don't touch anything.

(Jackson is up against the table. Harry continues to straighten the table) Don't touch anything . . . Mr. Trewe. Please.

(Jackson rests one arm on the table, fist closed. They watch each other for three beats) Now that . . . is MY order . . .

(They watch each other for several beats as the lights fade)

[p. 33]

[p. 34]

Next section

Previous section

Act 2

Act Two
Noon. White glare. Harry, with shirt unbuttoned, in a deck chair reading a paperback thriller. Sound of intermittent hammering from stage left, where Jackson is repairing the sun-deck slats. Harry rises, decides he should talk to Jackson about the noise, decides against it, and leans back in the deck chair, eyes closed. Hammering has stopped for a long while. Harry opens his eyes, senses Jackson's presence, turns suddenly, to see him standing quite close, shirtless, holding a hammer. Harry bolts from his chair.

JACKSON

You know something, sir? While I was up there nailing the sun deck, I just stay so and start giggling all by myself.

HARRY

Oh, yes? Why?

JACKSON

No, I was remembering a feller, you know . . . ahhh, he went for audition once for a play, you know, and the way he, you know, the way he prop . . . present himself to the people, said . . . ahmm, "You know, I am an actor, you know. I do all kind of acting, classical acting, Creole acting." That's when I laugh, you know?

(Pause) I going back and fix the deck, then.

(Moves off. Stops, turns) The . . . the hammering not disturbing you?

HARRY

No, no, it's fine. You have to do it, right? I mean, you volunteered, the carpenter didn't come, right? [p. 35]

JACKSON
Yes. Creole acting. I wonder what kind o' acting dat is.

(Spins the hammer in the air and does or does not catch it) Yul Brynner. Magnificent Seven. Picture, papa! A kind of Western Creole acting. It ain't have no English cowboys, eh, Mr. Harry? Something wrong, boy, something wrong.

(He exits. Harry lies back in the deck chair, the book on his chest, arms locked behind his head. Silence. Hammering violently resumes)

(Off) Kekkk, kekkkek, kekk! Kekkek, Kekkkekk, ekkek!

(Harry rises, moves from the deck chair toward the sun deck)

HARRY

Jackson! What the hell are you doing? What's that noise?

JACKSON

(Off; loud): I doing like a black sea gull, suh!

HARRY

Well, it's very distracting.

JACKSON

(Off): Sorry, sir.

(Harry returns. Sits down on the deck chair. Waits for the hammering. Hammering resumes. Then stops. Silence. Then we hear)

(Singing loudly) I want to tell you 'bout Robinson Crusoe. He tell Friday, when I do so, do so. Whatever I do, you must do like me, He make Friday a Good Friday Bohbolee

(Spoken) And the chorus:
(Sings) Laide-die Laidie, lay-day, de-day-de-die, Laidee-doo-day-dee-day-dee-die Laidee-day-doh-dee-day-dee-die Now that was the first example of slavery, 'Cause I am still Friday and you ain't me, Now Crusoe he was this Christian and all, Friday, his slave, was a cannibal, But one day things bound to go in reverse, With Crusoe the slave and Friday the boss . . . Caiso, boy! Caiso!

(Harry rises, goes toward the sun deck)

HARRY

Jackson, man! Jesus!

(He returns to the deck chair, is about to sit)

JACKSON

(Off): Two more lash and the sun deck finish, sir!

(Harry waits) Stand by . . . here they come . . . First lash . . .

(Sound) Pow! Second lash:

(Two sounds) Pataow! Job complete! Lunch, Mr. Trewe? You want your lunch now? Couple sandwich or what?

HARRY

(Shouts without turning): Just bring a couple beers from the icebox, Jackson. And the Scotch.

(To himself) What the hell, let's all get drunk.

(To Jackson) Bring some beer for yourself, too, Jackson!

JACKSON

(Off): Thank you, Mr. Robinson . . . Thank you, Mr. Trewe, sir! Cru-soe, Trewe-so!
(Faster) Crusoe-Trusoe, Robinson Trewe-so!

**HARRY**

Jesus, Jackson; cut that out and just bring the bloody beer!

**JACKSON**

(Off): Right! A beer for you and a beer for me! Now, what else is it going to be? A sandwich for you, but none for me.

(Harry picks up the paperback and opens it, removing a folded sheet of paper. He opens it and is reading it carefully, sometimes lifting his head, closing his eyes, as if remembering its contents, then reading again. He puts it into a pocket quickly as Jackson returns, carrying a tray with two beers, a bottle of Scotch, a pitcher of water, and two glasses. Jackson sets them down on the table) I'm here, sir. At your command.

[p. 37]

**HARRY**

Sit down. Forget the sandwiches, I don't want to eat. Let's sit down, man to man, and have a drink. That was the most sarcastic hammering I've ever heard, and I know you were trying to get back at me with all those noises and that Uncle Tom crap. So let's have a drink, man to man, and try and work out what happened this morning, all right?

**JACKSON**

I've forgotten about this morning, sir.

**HARRY**

No, no, no, I mean, the rest of the day it's going to bother me, you know?
JACKSON

Well, I'm leaving at half-past one.

HARRY

No, but still . . . Let's . . . Okay. Scotch?

JACKSON

I'll stick to beer, sir, thank you.

(Harry pours a Scotch and water, Jackson serves himself a beer. Both are still standing)

HARRY

Sit over there, please, Mr. Phillip. On the deck chair.

(Jackson sits on the deck chair, facing Harry) Cheers?

JACKSON

Cheers. Cheers. Deck chair and all.

(They toast and drink)

HARRY

All right. Look, I think you misunderstood me this morning.
[p. 38]
JACKSON

Why don't we forget the whole thing, sir? Let me finish this beer and go for my sea bath, and you can spend the rest of the day all by yourself.

(Pause) Well. What's wrong? What happen, sir? I said something wrong just now?

HARRY

This place isn't going to drive me crazy, Jackson. Not if I have to go mad preventing it. Not physically crazy; but you just start to think crazy thoughts, you know? At the beginning it's fine; there's the sea, the palm trees, monarch of all I survey and so on, all that postcard stuff. And then it just becomes another back yard. God, is there anything deadlier than Sunday afternoons in the tropics when you can't sleep? The horror and stillness of the heat, the shining, godforsaken sea, the bored and boring clouds? Especially in an empty boarding house. You sit by the stagnant pool counting the dead leaves drifting to the edge. I daresay the terror of emptiness made me want to act. I wasn't trying to humiliate you. I meant nothing by it. Now, I don't usually apologize to people. I don't do things to apologize for. When I do them, I mean them, but, in your case, I'd like to apologize.

JACKSON

Well, if you find here boring, go back home. Do something else, huh?

HARRY

It's not that simple. It's a little more complicated than that. I mean, everything I own is sunk here, you see? There's a little matter of a brilliant actress who drank too much, and a car crash at Brighton after a panto . . . Well. That's neither here nor there now. Right? But I'm determined to make this place work. I gave up the theater for it. [p. 39]
Why?

**HARRY**

Why? I wanted to be the best. Well, among other things; oh, well, that's neither here nor there. Flopped at too many things, though. Including classical and Creole acting. I just want to make this place work, you know. And a desperate man'll try anything. Even at the cost of his sanity, maybe. I mean, I'd hate to believe that under everything else I was also prejudiced, as well. I wouldn't have any right here, right?

**JACKSON**

'Tain't prejudice that bothering you, Mr. Trewe; you ain't no parrot to repeat opinion. No, is loneliness that sucking your soul as dry as the sun suck a crab shell. On a Sunday like this, I does watch you. The whole staff does study you. Walking round restless, staring at the sea. You remembering your wife and your son, not right? You ain't get over that yet?

**HARRY**

Jackson . . .

**JACKSON**

Is none of my business. But it really lonely here out of season. Is summer, and your own people gone, but come winter they go flock like sandpipers all down that beach. So you lonely, but I could make you forget all o' that. I could make H. Trewe, Esquire, a brand-new man. You come like a challenge.

**HARRY**

Think I keep to myself too much?
JACKSON

If! You would get your hair cut by phone. You drive so careful you make your car nervous. If you was in charge of the British Empire, you wouldn'ta lose it, you'da misplace it.

[p. 40]

HARRY

I see, Jackson.

JACKSON

But all that could change if you do what I tell you.

HARRY

I don't want a new life, thanks.

JACKSON

Same life. Different man. But that stiff upper lip goin' have to quiver a little.

HARRY

What's all this? Obeah? "That old black magic"?

JACKSON

Nothing. I could have the next beer?
HARRY

Go ahead. I'm drinking Scotch.

(Jackson takes the other beer, swallows deep, smacks his lips, grins at Harry)

JACKSON

Nothing. We will have to continue from where we stop this morning. You will have to be Thursday.

HARRY

Aha, you bastard! It's a thrill giving orders, hey? But I'm not going through all that rubbish again.

JACKSON

All right. Stay as you want. But if you say yes, it go have to be man to man, and none of this boss-and-Jackson business, you see, Trewe . . . I mean, I just call you plain Trewe, for example, and I notice that give you a slight shock. Just a little twitch of the lip, but a shock all the same, eh, Trewe? You see? You twitch again. It would be just me and you, all right? You see, two of we both acting a role here we ain't really really believe in, you know. I ent think you strong enough to give people orders, and I know I ain't the kind who like taking them. So both of we doesn't have to improvise so much as exaggerate. We faking, faking all the time. But, man to man, I mean . . .

(Pause) that could be something else. Right, Mr. Trewe?
[p. 41]

HARRY

Aren't we man to man now?
JACKSON

No, no. We having one of them "playing man-to-man" talks, where a feller does look a next feller in the eye and say, "Le' we settle this thing, man to man," and this time the feller who smiling and saying it, his whole honest intention is to take that feller by the crotch and rip out he stones, and dig out he eye and leave him for corbeaux to pick.

(Silence)

HARRY

You know, that thing this morning had an effect on me, man to man now. I didn't think so much about the comedy of Robinson Crusoe, I thought what we were getting into was a little sad. So, when I went back to the room, I tried to rest before lunch, before you began all that vindictive hammering . . .

JACKSON

Vindictive?

HARRY

Man to man: that vindictive hammering and singing, and I thought, Well, maybe we could do it straight. Make a real straight thing out of it.

JACKSON

You mean like a tradegy. With one joke?

HARRY
Or a codem'y, with none. You mispronounce words on purpose, don't you, Jackson?

*(Jackson smiles)* Don't think for one second that I'm not up on your game, Jackson. You're playing the stage nigger with me. I'm an actor, you know. It's a smile in front and a dagger behind your back, right? Or the smile itself is the bloody dagger. I'm aware, chum. I'm aware.

[p. 42]

**JACKSON**

The smile kinda rusty, sir, but it goes with the job. Just like the water in this hotel:

*(Demonstrates)* I turn it on at seven and lock it off at one.

**HARRY**

Didn't hire you for the smile; I hired you for your voice. We've the same background. Old-time calypso, old-fashioned music hall:

*(Sings)* Oh, me wife can't cook and she looks like a horse And the way she makes coffee is grounds for divorce . . .

*(Does a few steps)* But when love is at stake she's my Worcester sauce . . .

*(Stops)* Used to wow them with that. All me own work. Ah, the lost glories of the old music hall, the old provincials, grimy brocade, the old stars faded one by one. The brassy pantomimes! Come from an old music-hall family, you know, Jackson. Me mum had this place she ran for broken-down actors. Had tea with the greats as a tot.

*(Sings softly, hums)* Oh, me wife can't cook . . .

*(Silence)* You married, Jackson?

**JACKSON**

I not too sure, sir.
HARRY

You're not sure?

JACKSON

That's what I said.

HARRY

I know what you mean. I wasn't sure I was when I was. My wife's remarried. [p. 43]

JACKSON

You showed me her photo. And the little boy own.

HARRY

But I'm not. Married. So there's absolutely no hearth for Crusoe to go home to. While you were up there, I rehearsed this thing.

(Presents a folded piece of paper) Want to read it?

JACKSON

What . . . er . . . what is it . . . a poetry?

HARRY

No, no, not a poetry. A thing I wrote. Just a speech in the play . . . that if . . .
JACKSON

Oho, we back in the play again?

HARRY

Almost. You want to read it?

(He offers the paper)

JACKSON

All right.

HARRY

I thought -- no offense, now. Man to man. If you were doing Robinson Crusoe, this is what you'd read.

JACKSON

You want me to read this, right.

HARRY

Yeah.

JACKSON
(Reads slowly): "O silent sea, O wondrous sunset that I've gazed on ten thousand times, who will rescue me from this complete desolation? . . ."

(Breaking) All o' this?

[p. 44]

HARRY

If you don't mind. Don't act it. Just read it.

(Jackson looks at him) No offense.

JACKSON

(Reads): "Yes, this is paradise, I know. For I see around me the splendors of nature . . ."

HARRY

Don't act it . . .

JACKSON

(Pauses; then continues): "How I'd like to fuflee this desolate rock."

(Pauses) Fuflee? Pardon, but what is a fuflee, Mr. Tewe?

HARRY

A fuflee? I've got "fuflee" written there?

JACKSON
(Extends paper, points at word): So, how you does fuflee, Mr. Harry? Is Anglo-Saxon English?

(Harry kneels down and peers at the word. He rises)

HARRY

It's F . . . then F-L-E-E -- flee to express his hesitation. It's my own note as an actor. He quivers, he hesitates . . .

JACKSON

He quivers, he hesitates, but he still can't fuflee?

HARRY

Just leave that line out, Jackson.

JACKSON

I like it. [p. 45]

HARRY

Leave it out!

JACKSON

No fuflee?
HARRY

I said no.

JACKSON

Just because I read it wrong. I know the word "flee," you know. Like to take off. Flee. Faster than run. Is the extra F you put in there so close to flee that had me saying fuflee like a damn ass, but le' we leave it in, nuh? One fuflee ain't go kill anybody. Much less bite them.

(Silence) Get it?

HARRY

Don't take this personally . . .

JACKSON

No fuflees on old Crusoe, boy . . .

HARRY

But, if you're going to do professional theater, Jackson, don't take this personally, more discipline is required. All right?

JACKSON

You write it. Why you don't read it?
HARRY

I wanted to hear it. Okay, give it back . . .

JACKSON

(Loudly, defiantly): "The ferns, the palms like silent sentinels, the wide and silent lagoons that briefly hold my passing, solitary reflection. The volcano . . ."

(Stops) "The volcano." What?

HARRY

. . . "wreathed" . . .
[p. 46]

JACKSON

Oho, oho . . . like a wreath? "The volcano wreathed in mist. But what is paradise without a woman? Adam in paradise!"

HARRY

Go ahead.

JACKSON

(Restrained): "Adam in paradise had his woman to share his loneliness, but I miss the voice of even one consoling creature, the touch of a hand, the look of kind eyes. Where is the wife from whom I vowed never to be sundered? How old is my little son? If he could see his father like this, mad with memories of them . . . Even Job had his family. But I am alone, alone, I am all alone."

(Pause) Oho. You write this?
HARRY

Yeah.

JACKSON

Is good. Very good.

HARRY

Thank you.

JACKSON


HARRY

What?

JACKSON

Goats. You leave out the goats.

HARRY

The goats. So what? What've you got with goats, anyway?
JACKSON

Very funny. Very funny, sir.

HARRY

Try calling me Trewe.
[p. 47]

JACKSON

Not yet. That will come. Stick to the point. You ask for my opinion and I gave you my opinion. No doubt I don't have the brains. But my point is that this man ain't facing reality. There are goats all around him.

HARRY

You're full of shit.

JACKSON

The man is not facing reality. He is not a practical man shipwrecked.

HARRY

I suppose that's the difference between classical and Creole acting?

(He pours a drink and downs it furiously)
JACKSON

If he is not practical, he is not Robinson Crusoe. And yes, is Creole acting, yes. Because years afterward his little son could look at the parasol and the hat and look at a picture of Daddy and boast: "My daddy smart, boy. He get shipwreck and first thing he do is he build a hut, then he kill a goat or two and make clothes, a parasol and a hat." That way Crusoe achieve something, and his son could boast . . .

HARRY

Only his son is dead.

JACKSON

Whose son dead?

HARRY

Crusoe's.

JACKSON

No, pardner. *Your* son dead. Crusoe wife and child waiting for him, and he is a practical man and he know somebody go come and save him . . .

HARRY

*(Almost inaudibly):* "I bit my arm, I sucked the blood, And cried, `A sail! a sail!'' How the hell does he know "somebody go come and save him"? That's shit. That's not in his character at that moment. How the hell can he know? You're a cruel bastard . . .
JACKSON

(Enraged): Because, you fucking ass, he has faith!

HARRY

(Laughing): Faith? What faith?

JACKSON

He not sitting on his shipwrecked arse bawling out . . . what it is you have here?

(Reads) "O . . ." Where is it?

(Reads) "O silent sea, O wondrous sunset," and all that shit. No. He shipwrecked. He desperate, he hungry. He look up and he see this fucking goat with its fucking beard watching him and smiling, this goat with its forked fucking beard and square yellow eye just like the fucking devil, standing up there . . .

(Pantomimes the goat and Crusoe in turn) smiling at him, and putting out its tongue and letting go one fucking bleeeeee! And Robbie ent thinking 'bout his wife and son and O silent sea and O wondrous sunset; no, Robbie is the First True Creole, so he watching the goat with his eyes narrow, narrow, and he say: blehhh, eh? You muther-fucker, I go show you blehhh in your goat-ass, and vam, vam, next thing is Robbie and the goat, mano a mano, man to man, man to goat, goat to man, wrestling on the sand, and next thing we know we hearing one last faint, feeble bleeeeeeeyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy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HARRY

I think I'll join you.

JACKSON

So because I go and pee, you must pee, too?

HARRY

Subliminal suggestion.

JACKSON

Monkey see, monkey do.

HARRY

You're the bloody ape, mate. You people just came down from the trees.

JACKSON

Say that again, please.

HARRY

I'm going to keep that line.
JACKSON

Oho! Rehearse you rehearsing? I thought you was serious.

HARRY

You go have your pee. I'll run over my monologue.

JACKSON

No, you best do it now, sir. Or it going to be on my mind while we rehearsing that what you really want to do is take a break and pee. We best go together, then.

HARRY

We'll call it the pee break. Off we go, then. How long will you be, then? You people take forever.

[p. 50]

JACKSON

Maybe you should hold up a sign, sir, or give some sort of signal when you serious or when you joking, so I can know not to react. I would say five minutes.

HARRY

Five minutes? What is this, my friend, Niagara Falls?
It will take me . . . look, you want me to time it? I treat it like a ritual, I don't just pee for peeing's sake. It will take me about forty to fifty seconds to walk to the servants' toilets . . .

**HARRY**

Wait a second . . .

**JACKSON**

No, you wait, please, sir. That's almost one minute, take another fifty seconds to walk back, or even more, because after a good pee a man does be in a mood, both ruminative and grateful that the earth has received his libation, so that makes . . .

**HARRY**

Hold on, please.

**JACKSON**

(Voice rising): Jesus, sir, give me a break, nuh? That is almost two minutes, and in between those two minutes it have such solemn and ruminative behavior as opening the fly, looking upward or downward, the ease and relief, the tender shaking, the solemn tucking in, like you putting a little baby back to sleep, the reverse zipping or buttoning, depending on the pants, then, with the self-congratulating washing of the hands, looking at yourself for at least half a minute in the mirror, then the drying of hands as if you were a master surgeon just finish a major operation, and the walk back . . .
[p. 51]

**HARRY**

You said that. Any way you look at it, it's under five minutes, and I interrupted you because . . .
JACKSON

I could go and you could time me, to see if I on a go-slow, or wasting up my employer's precious time, but I know it will take at least five, unless, like most white people, you either don't flush it, a part I forgot, or just wipe your hands fast fast or not at all . . .

HARRY

Which white people, Jackson?

JACKSON

I was bathroom attendant at the Hilton, and I know men and races from their urinary habits, and most Englishmen . . .

HARRY

Most Englishmen . . . Look, I was trying to tell you, instead of going all the way round to the servants' lavatories, pop into my place, have a quick one, and that'll be under five bloody minutes in any circumstances and regardless of the capacity. Go on. I'm all right.

JACKSON

Use your bathroom, Mr. Harry?

HARRY

Go on, will you?
JACKSON

I want to get this. You giving me permission to go through your living room, with all your valuables lying about, with the picture of your wife watching me in case I should leave the bathroom open, and you are granting me the privilege of taking out my thing, doing my thing right there among all those lotions and expensive soaps, and . . . after I finish, wiping my hands on a clean towel?

[p. 52]

HARRY

Since you make it so vividly horrible, why don't you just walk around to the servants' quarters and take as much time as you like? Five minutes won't kill me.

JACKSON

I mean, equality is equality and art is art, Mr. Harry, but to use those clean, rough Cannon towels . . . You mustn't rush things, people have to slide into independence. They give these islands independence so fast that people still ain't recover from the shock, so they pissing and wiping their hands indiscriminately. You don't want that to happen in this guest house, Mr. Harry. Let me take my little five minutes, as usual, and if you have to go, you go to your place, and I'll go to mine, and let's keep things that way until I can feel I can use your towels without a profound sense of gratitude, and you could, if you wanted, a little later maybe, walk round the guest house in the dark, put your foot in the squelch of those who missed the pit by the outhouse, that charming old-fashioned outhouse so many tourists take Polaroids of, without feeling degraded, and we can then respect each other as artists. So, I appreciate the offer, but I'll be back in five. Kindly excuse me.

(He exits)

HARRY

You've got logorrhea, Jackson. You've been running your mouth like a parrot's arse. But don't get sarcastic with me, boy!

(Jackson returns)

[p. 53]
JACKSON

You don't understand, Mr. Harry. My problem is, I really mean what I say.

HARRY

You've been pretending indifference to this game, Jackson, but you've manipulated it your way, haven't you? Now you can spew out all that bitterness in fun, can't you? Well, we'd better get things straight around here, friend. You're still on duty. And if you stay out there too long, your job is at stake. It's . . .

(Consulting his watch) five minutes to one now. You've got exactly three minutes to get in there and back, and two minutes left to finish straightening this place. It's a bloody mess.

(Silence)

JACKSON

Bloody mess, eh?

HARRY

That's correct.

JACKSON

(In exaggerated British accent): I go try and make it back in five, bwana. If I don't, the mess could be bloodier. I saw a sign once in a lavatory in Mobile, Alabama. Colored. But it didn't have no time limit. Funny, eh?

HARRY
Ape! Mimic! Three bloody minutes!

(Jackson exits, shaking his head. Harry recovers the sheet of paper from the floor and puts it back in his pants pocket. He pours a large drink, swallows it all in two large gulps, then puts the glass down. He looks around the gazebo, wipes his hands briskly. He removes the drinks tray with Scotch, the two beer bottles, glasses, water pitcher, and sets them in a corner of the gazebo. He lifts up the deck chair and sets it, sideways, in another corner. He turns the table carefully over on its side; then, when it is on its back, he looks at it. He changes his mind and carefully tilts the table back upright. He removes his shirt and folds it and places it in another corner of the gazebo. He rolls up his trouser cuffs almost to the knee. He is now half-naked. He goes over to the drinks tray and pours the bowl of melted ice, now tepid water, over his head. He ruffles his hair, his face dripping; then he sees an ice pick. He picks it up)

[p. 54]

JACKSON

"One day, just out of the blue, I pick up an ice pick and walk over to where he and two fellers was playing cards, and I nail that ice pick through his hand to the table, and I laugh . . ."

(Harry drives the ice pick hard into the tabletop, steps back, looking at it. Then he moves up to it, wrenches it out, and gets under the table, the ice pick at his feet. A few beats, then Jackson enters, pauses)

JACKSON

(Leaks) What you doing under the table, Mr. Trewe?

(Silence. Jackson steps nearer the table) Trewe? You all right?

(Silence. Jackson crouches close to Harry) Harry, boy, you cool?

(Jackson rises. Moves away some distance. He takes in the space. An arena. Then he crouches again) Ice-pick time, then? Okay. "Fee fi fo fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman . . ."

(Jackson exits quickly. Harry waits a while, then crawls from under the table, straightens up, and places the ice pick gently on the tabletop. He goes to the drinks tray and has a sip from the Scotch; then replaces the bottle and takes up a position behind the table. Jackson returns dressed as Crusoe -- goatskin hat, open umbrella, the hammer stuck in the waistband of his rolled-up trousers. He throws something across the room to Harry's feet. The dead parrot, in a carry-away box. Harry opens
One parrot, to go! Or you eating it here? [p. 55]

HARRY

You son of a bitch.

JACKSON

Sure.

(Harry picks up the parrot and hurls it into the sea) First bath in five years.

(Jackson moves toward the table, very calmly)

HARRY

You're a bloody savage. Why'd you strangle him?

JACKSON

(As Friday): Me na strangle him, bwana. Him choke from prejudice.

HARRY

Prejudice? A bloody parrot. The bloody thing can't reason.

(Pause. They stare at each other. Harry crouches, tilts his head, shifts on his perch, flutters his wings like the parrot, squawks) Heinegger. Heinegger.

(Jackson stands over the table and folds the umbrella) You people create nothing. You imitate everything. It's all been done before, you see, Jackson. The parrot. Think that's something? It's from The Seagull. It's from Miss Julie. You can't ever be original, boy. That's the trouble with shadows, right? They can't think for themselves.
(Jackson shrugs, looking away from him) So you take it out on a parrot. Is that one of your African sacrifices, eh?

JACKSON

Run your mouth, Harry, run your mouth.
[p. 56]

HARRY

(Squawks): Heinegger . . . Heinegger . . .

(Jackson folds the parasol and moves to enter the upturned table) I wouldn't go under there if I were you, Jackson.

(Jackson reaches into the back of his waistband and removes a hammer)

JACKSON

The first English cowboy.

(He turns and faces Harry)

HARRY

It's my property. Don't get in there.

JACKSON

The hut. That was my idea.

HARRY
The table's mine.

**JACKSON**

What else is yours, Harry?

*(Gestures) This whole fucking island? Dem days gone, boy.*

**HARRY**

The costume's mine, too.

*(He crosses over, almost nudging Jackson, and picks up the ice pick) I'd like them back.*

**JACKSON**

Suit yourself.

*(Harry crosses to the other side, sits on the edge of the wall or leans against a post. Jackson removes the hat and throws it into the arena, then the parasol)*

**HARRY**

The hammer's mine.

[p. 57]

**JACKSON**

I feel I go need it.

**HARRY**
If you keep it, you're a bloody thief.

(Jackson suddenly drops to the floor on his knees, letting go of the hammer, weeping and cringing, and advancing on his knees toward Harry)

**JACKSON**


(He rolls around on the floor, laughing) Oh, Jesus, I go dead! I go dead. Ay-ay.

(Silence. Jackson on the floor, gasping, lying on his back. Harry crosses over, picks up the parasol, opens it, after a little difficulty, then puts on the goatskin hat. Jackson lies on the floor, silent)

**HARRY**

I never hit any goddamned maintenance sergeant on the head in the service. I've never hit anybody in my life. Violence makes me sick. I don't believe in ownership. If I'd been more possessive, more authoritative, I don't think she'd have left me. I don't think you ever drove an ice pick through anybody's hand, either. That was just the two of us acting.

**JACKSON**

Creole acting?

(He is still lying on the floor) Don't be too sure about the ice pick.

**HARRY**

I'm sure. You're a fake. You're a kind man and you think you have to hide it. A lot of other people could have used that to their own advantage. That's the difference between master and servant.

[p. 58]
JACKSON

That master-and-servant shit finish. Bring a beer for me.

(He is still on his back)

HARRY

There's no more beer. You want a sip of Scotch?

JACKSON

Anything.

(Harry goes to the Scotch, brings over the bottle, stands over Jackson)

HARRY

Here. To me bloody wife!

(Jackson sits up, begins to move off) What's wrong, you forget to flush it?

JACKSON

I don't think you should bad-talk her behind her back.

(He exits)

HARRY

Behind her back? She's in England. She's a star. Star? She's a bloody planet.
(Jackson returns, holding the photograph of Harry’s wife)

**JACKSON**

If you going bad-talk, I think she should hear what you going to say, you don't think so, darling?

(Addressing the photograph, which he puts down) If you have to tell somebody something, tell them to their face.

(Addressing the photograph) Now, you know all you women, eh? Let the man talk his talk and don't interrupt.

**HARRY**

You're fucking bonkers, you know that? Before I hired you, I should have asked for a medical report.

[p. 59]

**JACKSON**

Please tell your ex-wife good afternoon or something. The dame in the pantomime is always played by a man, right?

**HARRY**

Bullshit.

(Jackson sits close to the photograph, wiggling as he ventriloquizes)

**JACKSON**

(In an Englishwoman's voice): Is not bullshit at all, Harold. Everything I say you always saying bullshit, bullshit. How can we conduct a civilized conversation if you
don't give me a chance? What have I done, Harold, oh, Harold, for you to treat me so?

HARRY

Because you're a silly selfish bitch and you killed our son!

JACKSON

(Crying): There, there, you see . . .?

(He wipes the eyes of the photograph) You're calling me names, it wasn't my fault, and you're calling me names. Can't you ever forgive me for that, Harold?

HARRY

Ha! You never told him that, did you? You neglected to mention that little matter, didn't you, love?

JACKSON

(Weeping): I love you, Harold. I love you, and I loved him, too. Forgive me, O God, please, please forgive me. . . .

(As himself) So how it happen? Murder? A accident?
[p. 60]

HARRY

(To the photograph): Love me? You loved me so much you get drunk and you . . . ah, ah, what's the use? What's the bloody use?

(Wipes his eyes. Pause)
JACKSON

(As wife): I'm crying too, Harold. Let bygones be bygones . . .

(Harry lunges for the photograph, but Jackson whips it away) (As himself) You miss, Harold.

(Pause; as wife) Harold . . .

(Silence) Harold . . . speak to me . . . please.

(Silence) What do you plan to do next?

(Sniffs) What'll you do now?

HARRY

What difference does it make? . . . All right. I'll tell you what I'm going to do next, Ellen: you're such a big star, you're such a luminary, I'm going to leave you to shine by yourself. I'm giving up this bloody rat race and I'm going to take up Mike's offer. I'm leaving "the theatuh," which destroyed my confidence, screwed up my marriage, and made you a star. I'm going somewhere where I can get pissed every day and watch the sun set, like Robinson bloody Crusoe. That's what I'm going to bloody do. You always said it's the only part I could play.

JACKSON

(As wife): Take me with you, then. Let's get away together. I always wanted to see the tropics, the palm trees, the lagoons . . .

(Harry grabs the photograph from Jackson; he picks up the ice pick and puts the photograph on the table, pressing it down with one palm) [p. 61]

HARRY

All right, Ellen, I'm going to . . . You can scream all you like, but I'm going to . . .
(He raises the ice pick)

**JACKSON**

(As wife): My face is my fortune.

(He sneaks up behind Harry, whips the photograph away while Harry is poised with the ice pick)

**HARRY**

Your face is your fortune, eh? I'll kill her, Jackson, I'll maim that smirking bitch . . .

(He lunges toward Jackson, who leaps away, holding the photograph before his face, and runs around the gazebo, shrieking)

**JACKSON**

(As wife): Help! Help! British police! My husband is trying to kill me! Help, somebody, help!

(Harry chases Jackson with the ice pick, but Jackson nimbly avoids him) (As wife) Harry! Have you gone mad?

(He scrambles onto the ledge of the gazebo. He no longer holds the photograph to his face, but his voice is the wife's)

**HARRY**

Get down off there, you melodramatic bitch. You're too bloody conceited to kill yourself. Get down from there, Ellen! Ellen, it's a straight drop to the sea!

**JACKSON**
(As wife): Push me, then! Push, me, Harry! You hate me so much, why don't you come and push me?
[p. 62]

HARRY

Push yourself, then. You never needed my help. Jump!

JACKSON

(As wife): Will you forgive me now, or after I jump?

HARRY

Forgive you?

JACKSON

(As wife): All right then. Goodbye!

(He turns, teetering, about to jump)

HARRY

(Shouts): Ellen! Stop! I forgive you!

(Jackson turns on the ledge. Silence. Harry is now sitting on the floor) That's the real reason I wanted to do the panto. To do it better than you ever did. You played Crusoe in the panto, Ellen. I was Friday. Black bloody greasepaint that made you howl. You wiped the stage with me . . . Ellen . . . well. Why not? I was no bloody good.
JACKSON

(As himself): Come back to the play, Mr. Trewe. Is Jackson. We was playing Robinson Crusoe, remember?

(Silence) Master, Friday here . . .

(Silence) You finish with the play? The panto? Crusoe must get up, he must make himself get up. He have to face a next day again.

(Shouts) I tell you: man must live! Then, after many years, he see this naked footprint that is the mark of his salvation . . .

[p. 63]

HARRY

(Recites): "The selfsame moment I could pray; and . . . tata tee-tum-tum The Albatross fell off and sank Like lead into the sea." God, my memory . . .

JACKSON

That ain't Crusoe, that is "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

(He pronounces it "Marina")

HARRY

Mariner.

JACKSON

Marina.

HARRY
JACKSON

"The Rime of the Ancient Marina." So I learn it in Fourth Standard.

HARRY

It's your country, mate.

JACKSON

Is your language, pardner. I stand corrected. Now, you ain't see English crazy? I could sit down right next to you and tell you I stand corrected.

HARRY

Sorry. Where were we, Mr. Phillip?

JACKSON

Tobago. Where are you? It was your cue, Mr. Trewe.

HARRY

Where was I, then?
Ahhhm . . . That speech you was reading . . . that speech . . .

HARRY

Speech?
[p. 64]

JACKSON

"O silent sea and so on . . . wreathed in mist . . ." Shall we take it from there, then? The paper.

HARRY

I should know it. After all, I wrote it. But prompt . . .

(Harry gives Jackson his copy of the paper, rises, walks around, looks toward the sea) Creole or classical?

JACKSON

Don't make joke.

(Silence. Sea-gull cries)

HARRY

Then Crusoe, in his desolation, looks out to the sea, for the ten thousandth time, and remembers England, his wife, his little son, and speaks to himself:

(As Crusoe) "O silent sea, O wondrous sunset that I've gazed on ten thousand times, who will rescue me from this complete desolation? Yes, this is paradise, I know. For I see around me the splendors of nature. The ferns, the palms like silent sentinels, the wide and silent lagoons that briefly hold my passing, solitary reflection. The volcano
wreathed in mist. But what is paradise without a woman? Adam in paradise had his 
woman to share his loneliness . . . loneliness . . .

\textbf{JACKSON}

\textit{(Prompts): . . . but I miss the voice . . .}

\textbf{HARRY}

\textit{(Remembering): "But I miss the voice . . .}

\textit{(Weeping, but speaking clearly) of even one consoling creature, the touch . . . of a 
hand . . . the look of kind eyes . . . Where is the wife from whom I vowed . . . never 
to be sundered? How old is my little son? If he could see his father like this . . .
dressed in goatskins and mad with memories of them?"}

\textit{(He breaks down, quietly sobbing. A long pause)}

[p. 65]

\textbf{JACKSON}

You crying or you acting?

\textbf{HARRY}

Acting.

\textbf{JACKSON}

I think you crying. Nobody could act that good.

\textbf{HARRY}
How would you know? You an actor?

JACKSON

Maybe not. But I cry a'ready.

HARRY

Okay, I was crying.

JACKSON

For what?

HARRY

(Laughs): For what? I got carried away. I'm okay now.

JACKSON

But you laughing now.

HARRY

It's the same sound. You can't tell the difference if I turn my back.

JACKSON

Don't make joke.
HARRY

It's an old actor's trick. I'm going to cry now, all right?

(He turns, then sobs with laughter, covering and uncovering his face with his hands. Jackson stalks around, peers at him, then begins to giggle. They are now both laughing)

JACKSON

(Through laughter): So . . . so . . . next Friday . . . when the tourists come . . . Crusoe . . . Crusoe go be ready for them . . . Goat race . . .
[p. 66]

HARRY

(Laughing): Goat-roti!

JACKSON

(Laughing): Gambling.

HARRY

(Baffled): Gambling?

JACKSON

Goat-to-pack. Every night . . .
HARRY

(Laughing): Before they goat-to-bed!

JACKSON

(Laughing): So he striding up the beach with his little goat-ee . . .

HARRY

(Laughing): E-goat-istical, again.

(Pause)

JACKSON

You get the idea. So, you okay, Mr. Trewe?

HARRY

I'm fine, Mr. Phillip. You know . . .

(He wipes his eyes) An angel passes though a house and leaves no imprint of his shadow on its wall. A man's life slowly changes and he does not understand the change. Things like this have happened before, and they can happen again. You understand, Jackson? You see what it is I'm saying?

JACKSON

You making a mole hill out of a mountain, sir. But I think I follow you. You know what all this make me decide, pardner?

[p. 67]
HARRY

What?

(Jackson picks up the umbrella, puts on the goatskin hat)

JACKSON

I going back to the gift that's my God-given calling. I benignly resign, you fire me. With inspiration. Caiso is my true work, caiso is my true life.

(Sings) Well, a Limey name Trewe come to Tobago. He was in show business but he had no show, so in desperation he turn to me and said: "Mr. Phillip" is the two o' we, one classical actor and one Creole, let we act together with we heart and soul. It go be man to man, and we go do it fine, and we go give it the title of pantomime. La da dee da da dee da da da da da . . .

(He is singing as if in a spotlight. Music, audience applause. Harry joins in) Wait! Wait! Hold it!

(Silence: walks over to Harry) Starting from Friday, Robinson, we could talk 'bout a raise?

(CURTAIN)

Next section

Previous section

Notes

[p. nts]

Note from page 21: 1 A Judas effigy beaten at Easter in Trinidad and Tobago.
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