

Origins

A play for one or two actors, written by Cat Hearth

Scenes:

1. *In the Beginning Was the Word, and the Word was God*
2. *And Ye Shall Know the Truth, and the Truth Shall Make You Free*
3. *Heaven and Hell*
4. *Nothing*
5. *Apple*
6. *Big Brother in the Land of Oz*
7. *Divide and Conquer*
8. *Heart*

Thanks for inspiration and ideas: William S. Burroughs, Johnny Dolphin, T. S. Eliot, Lynn Margulis, George Orwell.

*"There is only the fight to recover what has been lost
And found and lost again and again: and now, under conditions
That seem unpropitious. But perhaps neither gain nor loss.
For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business. "*

- T. S. Eliot, Four Quartets

Scene i [*This speech is said in the dark*]

In the beginning was the Word
And the Word was God - John 1:1

God is dog spelled backwards.
And Man is dog to God.
And Man is God to dog.
The Word is still God, and God is still the word.
The Word is law. Law is the Word.
The Word is money. Money is the word.
The Word is contracts. Contracts ate the Word.
"The large print giveth and the small print taketh away."
Worried. Warred. Wired. Weird. Ward. Wed. Wood. Wooed.
The Word is advertising. Advertising is the Word.
The Word is the corporation. The corporation is the Word.
The Word is the United States of America. The United States of America is the Word

Scene ii

[Lights up. Character is dressed in a business suit with hat. During the speech he gradually undresses, layer by layer, until he is completely naked, or with a sock over his genitals.]

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. - John 8:32.

I'll tell you the truth: I have nothing to hide. Though why would anyone want to pry into my musty family secrets, which probably aren't any more disgusting than anyone else's, that ever came from a clan of creatures who live in caves and enjoy smelling each other's odors?

After all, smells can't be hidden. Though they can be disguised. And we still live in caves. Now they're called houses.

What we agree not to talk about. The smelly origins. Where we came from. And should we talk about it? Or just let bygones be bygones. But we can't let bygones be bygones. The law won't allow it. But who wrote the law? We did. That is, our elders. The old men of the tribe. And their servants. All the smelly old men. White-haired. Cronies.

Peel back the layers. Oozing. The slime. Jurassic park. Orgy-Porgy. Air-conditioning to disguise the mousy smells. Under the deodorants. Because we're civilized.

I think men invented clothes. They have something to hide. Those organs, hanging out in plain view.

[Puts on African cloth with waist sash.]

The word library and the word liberty come from the same root. You can write anything you want. To write is your right. I could be sitting here calmly stashed in my corner over a decent cup of coffee and describing the most incredible sexual event. Anything I could imagine. Boy, girl, beast, any position, she licks it - spattering on the wall, front, behind, licks, hair, bellybuttons, up against your face, gooseflesh, whipping cream, as fast as your hands could write it, shoved up the ass, but it's all on paper, it's all just in your mind.

And those other squiggles on paper, those things we call the laws, and keep behind locked drawers, and doors, that have the incredible, unbelievable secrets so ancient and unknown - there are as many truths as there are truth-tellers.

We want to be stimulated. But it gets tiresome. Who's going to be the best at stimulating the tired old breast? Who's going to make those old nipples disgorge a bit more fluid?

The sperm that became you originated in your daddy's balls. He got a hard-on and came inside your mommy. The sperm swam up inside your mommy and penetrated her egg, that came from her ovary. They became a cell and that was you. That was the beginning of you. You multiplied, got bigger and formed into a human. Then you came down and out of your Mommy's cunt. That's right, you came out of her pussy. And you sucked milk out of her tits. Yes, her breasts, the boobs that we idolize and hide. The little milk machines.

Every person you see, from little babies to old people, they all have sex organs. Everybody has a cock or a cunt. Some have both, but that's another story.

We can talk about children, babies, breast feeding, childbirth, pregnancy, but not sex. Why not? It's part of the cycle. What is so bad about sex? Because it is how the bosses control people. And people can't be allowed to control themselves.

Scene iii [2 masks, 1 for each of the characters]

[Without mask] So about 5000 years ago, these 2 guys were sitting around talking:

1st guy [nasal voice]: This new agriculture thing is great - we can feed so many people, but there's one problem.

2nd guy [back of head voice]: What's that?

1st: With hunting and gathering you went out looking for something and if you found something you feasted, and when you didn't, which was often, you went hungry. But with agriculture, people have to plant the seeds, and then wait - half a year, for the payoff. How we going to keep them in line? Wait - I got an idea: we tell them if they're good and work hard, they get a reward after they're dead. And if they're bad and fuck off, they get punished after they're dead: heaven and hell.

2nd: That's the most incredibly, profoundly, wonderfully, enormously,... stupid idea I've ever heard. Do you really think people will fall for it?

1st: Why not? If we cloak it with the right kind of ceremony - people are suckers for ceremony. Besides, we'll tell them it's better than sex.

[Song: *The Song of Heavenly Rewards. Accompanied by a soft shoe routine with hats and canes.*]

Wait till you get to heaven, if you think sex is good.
Heaven is eternal orgasm, so do the things you should.
If you don't like feeling guilty when your Momma told you no,
Be sure to stay away from Hell, it's that and so much mo'.

Chorus: Be good not bad, do what your bosses said,
And you will be so happy when you're dead.

You're guilty when you're born, it is called orig'nal sin
So in this life you're bound to lose, it's sure you cannot win.
But if you toe the line, be a good Joe you might break even,
And when you leave your corpse behind you will wind up in Heaven.

Chorus

1st [aside, without mask]: So, 200 years ago the same 2 guys meet up in the cosmic beer hall.

1st: This religion thing isn't working so good anymore, now that people have to spend all day on production lines, we need a new angle.

2nd: You mean people don't want to go to heaven anymore?

1st: No, nowadays, modern people think they're entitled to a good time before they die. You know, democracy and all. Equality. Bill Clinton. Bill Gates. Bill this, bill that. Bill, bill, dollar bill. That's it! Equality. Money. Money is the great equalizer. Instead of promising them a reward after they're dead, we give them tokens. Money. They can buy whatever they want, if they have enough. The trick is, we only give them a little at a time, so they have to keep working, if they want more. They get addicted to it. Each dollar bill is like a little piece of heaven.

2nd: That's an even crazier idea. But what, pray tell, takes the place of Hell?

1st: What takes the place of hell? Greed. When you want something and you can't get it, you feel

like hell.

[Song: The Song of Money. Dance, as above.]

There's something missing in your life, a gaping cavity.
If you could only have that thing that you saw on TV.
You've got to have that item, nothing will stand in your way,
So work a little harder, 'cause you need that raise in pay.

Chorus: Be good not bad do what your bosses say,
And you can buy happiness with your pay.

If you don't make that money life will be a living hell,
And if you want to go buy buy you first your self must sell,
You break the law you go to jail and get fucked up the ass,
Don't be a fool so stay in school and make the grades that pass.

[Chorus] [Repeat chorus while showering audience with "happiness bills."]

Scene iv *[Dim lights - this is spoken while dancing.]*

When. There is no when. There is no body. There is no know. What nobody knows. Round and round. In and out. Through and around. Helpless and hopeless. Hoopless and hypeless through and around says who will do say never known never seen and never will and will not. Legitimate illegitimate and illegal immoral and unknown impossible unthinkable unable to live in this world that world the other world and death comes to us all he has his pride his vanity his unthinkable airs his nose in the air his knows in the hair whose nose in whose hair who never knows whose nose he don't care there and there and there and there wild he is wild he is careless he don't care he will fink he will stink he will slink away down that old path he laughs he don't give a hoot old coot he thinks he don't stink but he do who-who-who-hooo - hoot owl in the cowl listen Charlie we're always in a prison stupid guard uniform they give you those clothes they put you in you don't got no choice no chance can't say nuthin' goin' downhill gonna end up a hopeless old man already hopeless don't got nothin' in this world who cares nuthin' to tie me to this world other thoughts other thought-forms other emotions everybody floating down success or failure down and down and down and around the town all around the hopeless voiceless faceless faithless boom-titty-titty toon town where it all comes down to nothing.

Nothing no thing no face no voice no nothing whatsoever don't got nothin' never did don't care who cares why should I it's all a pile of shit anyway and never did see why should make any effort it's all got to end well boy what about the life force that's all very well for the life force but what about me I don't matter I don't care but at least oh well what the hell it's too bad dad see you in the nuthouse loss of liberty loss of nothing.

Scene v

[Sounds like Tibetan chants in background. Cuts an apple in half and removes a seed.]

See this seed. It contains the pattern and the energy to make a tree, given the right conditions. It is connected in an unbroken line back to the beginning of life, now thought to be three and a half billion years ago.

Three and a half thousand million revolutions of this planet around its sun. Thirty five million

centuries. Three hundred and fifty thousand times as long as human civilization has existed. The DNA in you- that molecule which contains the complete pattern for creating and maintaining your body, found in every one of your trillion cells- is not very different from what is in this seed. You are also connected to the very beginning of life, through your bellybutton which was connected to your mother; hers was connected to her mother and so on back to the beginning, the first molecule that learned to build a wall around itself and replicate itself...

For the first two billion years there were only bacteria - cells without nuclei. Bacteria have an interesting lifestyle. Very promiscuous. They can have sex just about anytime, without reproducing. They can exchange genetic material: genes. It's like 2 computer hackers exchanging software over the internet:

"Hey, man, I got this great new gene from Harry last week. Makes you resistant to penicillin."

"Oh cool, man, can I have a copy?"

"Sure, man, trade you for some of that new chlorophyll."

All the DNA of all the cells in your body, if uncoiled and stretched out end to end, would reach from here to the moon and back - over a million times. Just one body. That's a lot of redundancy. Life is information.

Where do I begin and end? [*Breathes*] New material enters with every breath. Old material leaves. What you breathe out, I breathe in. At what point does that become me? [*Bites apple*] When I eat, when does that food become part of me? When it enters my mouth? After I swallow? When does the shit and piss and blood, sweat, and tears stop being me?

When I hear a new idea, does that become part of me? If I'm part of an organization, is that organization part of me? Is my bank account me? My children? My web page? If I write a book, is that me?

Where do I begin and end?

Time is fuzzy too. I began with the union of an egg and sperm. But was that me? It was only potential me. When I was born? But my body was the same, it just moved to a different place. My body is different now, but it is me. A different me, connected by memories. Even death is fuzzy. It used to be you were dead when you stopped breathing. But people have been revived after stopping breathing. After the heart stopped beating. Nowadays it's when your brain stops registering activity. But there's lots of people walking around with their brains in a deep freeze. People are being frozen, in hopes of living again in the future.

AIDS is a disease of not being able to tell what is me and not-me. It's a disease of the immune system. That's what the immune system does. Senses what is not-me and attacks it.

In some diseases, like diabetes, the immune system gets carried away and starts attacking parts of the body. Gets mixed up about what is me and not-me.

Diseases of identity.

Scene vi

We love big brother.
He's a wiz of a wiz because
Because because because because because
He sets up the Monopoly game
On the back porch
With play money held down by stones.

The games go on for days, years, lifetimes.
We forget it's a game.
And the object of the game is to play the game.
The object of the game is to pass the time
(Pass the time, please)
To pass the life.
I can't play, I'm taking the day off.
I'm taking the year off
I'm taking the life off.
I play in my spare time, my spare life.

The object of power is power
The object of torture is torture
The object of laws is laws.
(Laws have mercy)
The object of jail is jail
The object of execution is execution
The object of war is war
The object of police is police
The object of voting is voting.
There is no cause because because because,
No effect.

The wonderful things he does
La, la, la, la, la, la, la.
We're off to see Big Brother.

I write the laws.
I pronounce the sentence.
I handcuff the wrists.
I close the cell door with a clang.
I close the switch that allows that
Wonderful electric current to flow through
The body of a man.
I vote, I campaign, I am the elector and the elected.
I design the clothes and wear the clothes.
I own the corporation, manage the corporation, and work for the corporation.
I pay myself, fire myself, and go out on strike, against myself.
I starve to death and gorge.
I'm celibate and sexual.
You are all my children and I am yours.
I am the sperm rushing to meet the egg, also myself.
I am on the point of death.

Scene vii [to the accompaniment of a drum solo]

Lessening of freedom for any part of society means a lessening of freedom for everyone. People don't see it that way. "It's them, not us." But people have short memories, and the ratchet effect is used.

Crack down a little bit here, a little more over there. Each time a little more power to the politicians. Fear is the motivator. It's the same with taxes. a half percent here, a quarter percent there. Each increment is not noticed. And people have short memories.

Terror - mass hysteria. fan the flames. Then the people will run to the politicians, demanding, "Save us! Write new, stricter laws!" And the politicians will comply, for a price, of course. The price is power.

The more they get, the greedier they become.

When will they figure out that you can't stop people from doing things by forbidding them? Are they really that dumb? Or just blind... Or they're into the game. The duality. Us against them. Good guys against crooks. Cowboys against Indians. The moral majority against the immoral minorities. The war against drugs. The war of who against drugs?

There has to be a war because that's the best way for the power-mongers to justify their power.

Paper. The paper world. Our life in paper. We have laid out our lives in paper. Our paper life. Paper - pape - pope - papa. Paper is our papa. Our daddy.

It's the contract, the word. The word is God. Once more. God save the word.

Police state. A state of paranoia. So many laws that no one can be sure they're not breaking a law.

The main excuse for stricter laws is: "Protecting our children," which translated, means "controlling our children," which translated , means "controlling us." Us. We, the people.

Control systems. Color coded. Bar coded. Eliminate the in-betweens. Fill in the blanks.

Necessary in an agricultural culture. Necessary in a production-line culture. But that's on the way out. Computers make mass customization possible. Individuality is in again. Manipulation of information at high speed. A new Renaissance.

Scene viii

So many people dying of heart disease - that is of broken hearts.

Why? Whoever pays attention to their heart? Never pay it any attention, yet expect it to work unflaggingly, selflessly, for your whole life! Poor thing. No wonder it goes on strike in the end. Neglected organ... And then doctors think they can fix it with a knife, as if it's just a mechanical thing. Just a pump.

Everybody's got one.

Give your heart some love. Heart's are like dogs. Pet them and they'll love you for it.

Heart food.

Throw your heart out in front of you and run to catch up
Grasp your heart firmly and climb up on top.
Hold tight.
Your heart is the original
Flying carpet.

It's warm.
It beats its wings.
It's full of blood.

It soars like an eagle seeing vast vistas of mountain desert sea
It dives like a sperm whale holding its breath to miles down
Till the pressure is like steel.
It gallops along the plain endlessly never tiring.

Can my heart take off like a rocket never to return?
To play with the sun and laugh with the planets
To whirl around in the distant dance of Galaxies?

The end.