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FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID

Based upon the novel by
Philip K. Dick

Dramatized
by
Linda Hartinian



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LINDA HARTINIAN

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PHILIP K. DICK

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(FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID)

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FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID

**A Play in One Act
For Four Men and Seven Women, Extras***

**JASON TAVERNER
HEATHER HART
HERB
MARILYN MASON
KATHY NELSON
McNULTY
FELIX BUCKMAN
ALYS BUCKMAN
RUTH RAE
MARY ANNE DOMINIC
WOMAN**

VOICE OVERS: AL BLISS, RECEPTIONIST

***EXTRAS: (Non-speaking) EDDIE, NURSES,
WAITERS, POLS, WAITRESSES**

**TIME: The Future.
PLACE: Los Angeles and Las Vegas.**

FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID was first presented by Mabou Mines at the Boston Shakespeare Company Festival Theatre on June 18, 1985. The roles of Felix and Alys Buckman were played by Christopher Martin and Ellen McElduff. The role of Kathy Nelson was played by Karen Young with the rest of the cast remaining the same for the New York City premiere on June 3, 1988.

Directed by Bill Raymond.

FELIX BUCKMAN	Frederick Neumann
ALYS BUCKMAN	Black-eyed Susan
JASON TAVERNER	Greg Mehrten
HEATHER HART	Ann Shea
KATHY NELSON	Susan Berman
HERB	David Brisbin
RUTH RAE	Ruth Maleczech
McNULTY	Terry O'Reilly
MARY ANNE DOMINIC	Honora Fergusson
WOMAN	Honora Fergusson
EDDIE	Paul Clay

Music composed and performed by Tom Noonan,
Scenic Design by Linda Hartinian, Lighting Design by
Anne Militello, Costume Design by Gabriel Berry, Sound
Design by L. B. Dallas, Video Design by Paul Clay, Addi-
tional Music by Bill Spencer.

FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID

SCENE: *As the AUDIENCE enters they see a WOMAN sitting in a piece of a room set on a small turntable. She sits in the corner with windows on either side, in an easy chair reading a book. As she reads, the light changes from dawn to dusk—from left to right—in forty second cycles. The sound of day and night accompany the changing light.*

House lights out. Music up. The sound and music become intense. The set begins to revolve while a fragmented voice is heard giving the dedication:

VOICE OVER. The love in this book is for Tessa.

The music fades and is overtaken by the sound of rockets. The sound builds and a low thick cloud of fog creeps along the stage. HERB walks left to right across the stage carrying three large silver model rockets flying in formation. As he passes through her space the WOMAN looks up from her book and watches him. The lights on the WOMAN fade out. The roar subsides and ALYS floats out to C smoking a cigarette while lying on an enormous polar bear rug. With her on the rug is a small TV and a little tray with drug paraphernalia. ALYS turns on her

TV and the lights come up on JASON and HEATHER standing at microphones. Laugh track and music.

JASON. Heather and I have just one more number especially for you. (*JASON and HEATHER sing JASON's new #1 hit song.*)

[All music from the original production is available].

JASON. I'll tell you what happened to the coffee pot. The rats dragged it off.

(More laughter and applause. Lights up on HERB.)

HERB. On Tuesday, October 11, 1988, The Jason Taverner Show ran thirty seconds short. A technician, watching through the plastic bubble of the control dome, freezes the final credit on the video section, and then points to Jason Taverner, who has started to leave the stage.

JASON. Keep all those cards and V-letters coming in, folks, and stay tuned now for "The Adventures of Scotty, Dog Extraordinary."

HERB. The technician smiles; Jason smiles, and then both the audio and the video click off. Their hour-long music and variety program, which held the second highest rating among the year's TV shows has come to an end. And it has all gone well. (*Lights fade out on HERB.*)

JASON. Where'd we lose half a minute?

HEATHER. Baby bunting, it's all right. Thirty million people saw you zip your fly tonight. That's a record of sorts.

JASON. I zip up my fly every week. Or don't you catch the show?

HEATHER. Thirty million. And then there's the residuals.

JASON. I'll be dead before the residuals on this show pay off.

HEATHER. You'll probably be dead tonight, with all those fans of yours packed in outside there. Just waiting to rip you into tiny squares like so many postage stamps. Goddamn them. Aren't they breaking some law, loitering or something?

JASON. You shouldn't be an entertainer. You don't like them. You secretly think they have bad taste.

HEATHER. They're dumb.

JASON. They're ordinaries.

HEATHER. Don't say that word.

JASON. They're ordinaries and they're morons. Because ...because that's what it means to be an ordinary. Right? You really do hate them.

HEATHER. Yes. And so do you.

JASON. Get in the flyship. Let's go to Zurich.

(A film of a night flight over Los Angeles is projected onto the stage. JASON and HEATHER perform a romantic ballroom-style dance routine while ALYS watches them and smokes. The phone rings; JASON goes to video phone monitors.)

MARILYN *(on video)*. Jason?

JASON. Yeah. *(To HEATHER.)* It's Marilyn Mason.

HEATHER. Who the hell is Marilyn Mason?

JASON. I'll tell you later. *(To MARILYN.)* Yes, dear. What is it? You sound terrible. Are they evicting you again?

HEATHER. Get rid of her.

JASON (to HEATHER). I will; I'm trying to, can't you see?

MARILYN. I have to see you. Otherwise I'll kill myself and the guilt will be on you. For the rest of your life. And I'll tell that Heather Hart woman about us sleeping together all the time.

JASON. I'm on my way to Switzerland for the rest of tonight.

MARILYN. It'll take you five minutes to get over here. I just want to talk to you for five seconds. I have something very important to tell you.

JASON. What can you tell me in five seconds that I don't already know? Tell me now.

MARILYN. I've done a lot of thinking about us. And in particular about that last audition.

JASON. Okay. (JASON hangs up. MARILYN's image continues to watch JASON for a moment then flickers out.) I'm glad you never ran into her; she's really a...

HEATHER. Bullshit. I didn't "run into her" because you made damn sure you saw to that. Does she have nice boobs?

JASON. Actually, yes. But I did my part of the bargain; I got her an audition...two auditions. The last one was six months ago and I know goddamn well she's still smoldering and brooding over it. I wonder what she wants to tell me.

HEATHER. She's probably in love with you. Don't be gone long or so help me I'm taking off without you.

JASON. Leaving me stuck with Marilyn?

HEATHER. You've got it.

JASON. I'll be right back. (JASON leaves. HEATHER turns the video back on and watches the following scene

take place in MARILYN's apartment on the video monitor for a moment then runs offstage.) Start talking. You want another audition? Is that it? (MARILYN shakes her head no.) Okay; tell me what it is.

MARILYN. I have something for you. Here you are.
(MARILYN throws the contents of a plastic bag onto JASON. JASON pulls a small gelatinous creature off his neck.)

JASON. Not bad. You almost got me, you fucking little tramp.

MARILYN. Not almost.

(Video monitors go out. ALYS gives herself an injection and gently floats offstage. Black out. JASON is wheeled onstage by two NURSES. HEATHER enters holding an enormous bouquet of roses.)

HEATHER. I knew something was wrong. I didn't wait for you in the skyfly; I came down myself right after you.

(HEATHER exits. NURSES hang JASON upside down and leave him. Lights up on HERB.)

HERB. He felt the pressure of her love as she squeezed his fingers and then there was nothing. No Heather, no hospital, no staff, no light, and no sound. It was an eternal moment and it absorbed him completely. Light filtered back, filling his closed eyes with a membrane of illuminated redness. He opened his eyes, lifted his head to look around him. To search out Heather or the doctor. He lay alone in the room. No one else. A bureau with a cracked vanity mirror, ugly old light fix-

tures jutting from the grease-saturated walls. He was not in a hospital room.

JASON. This is a hotel room. A lousy, bug-infested cheap wino hotel. No curtains, no bathroom.

HERB. The pain in his chest had vanished, along with so much else. All his identification cards were gone. Cards that made it possible for him to stay alive. Cards that got him through pol and nat barricades without being shot or thrown into a forced-labor camp. *(JASON picks up a phone and dials. Still upside down.)*

AL *(voice over)*. Bliss Talent.

JASON. Listen, I don't know where I am. In the name of Christ come and get me; get me out of here; get me someplace else. You understand, Al? Do you?

AL *(voice over)*. Who am I talking to?

JASON. Jason Taverner.

AL *(voice over)*. I don't know you, Mr. Taverner. Are you sure you have the right number? Who did you want to talk to?

JASON. To you. Al. Al Bliss, my agent. What happened in the hospital? How'd I get out of there into here? Can you get hold of Heather for me?

AL *(voice over)*. Miss Hart? *(Laughs.)*

JASON. You are through as my agent. Period. No matter what the situation is. You are out. *(AL hangs up. JASON dials another number.)* I'll kill the son of a bitch. I'll try Bill. He's always in his office.

RECEPTIONIST *(voice over)*. Wolfer and Blaine, Attorneys-at-law.

JASON. Let me talk to Bill. This is Jason Taverner. You know who I am.

RECEPTIONIST *(voice over)*. Mr. Wolfer is in court today.

JASON. Do you know who I am? Do you know who Jason Taverner is? Do you watch TV?

RECEPTIONIST *(voice over)*. I'm sorry, Mr. Taverner. I really can't talk for Mr. Wolfer or...

JASON. Do you watch TV? *(RECEPTIONIST hangs up. Dial tone.)*

HERB. He looked at his watch; it read ten-thirty. So what? It could be a thousand years off, for all he knew. He read the date. October 12, 1988. No time lapse. This was the day after his show and the day Marilyn had sent him dying, to the hospital. *(JASON is pulled off the stage.)*

JASON. I can't live two hours without my ID. I am not like other men. I will get out of this, whatever it is. Somehow. I can buy phony ID cards. A whole wallet full of them. A public entertainer with an audience of thirty million. Among all those thirty million people, isn't there one who remembers me? If "remember" is the right word.

(As the set closes around him, we find KATHY at her light table. JASON, looking rumpled, enters with EDDIE.)

HERB. He left his hotel room once more, walked downstairs and up to the desk. A middle-aged man with a thin mustache was reading a copy of *BOX* magazine; he did not look up but said, "Yes, sir." *(HERB exits. JASON gives a bundle of money to EDDIE. EDDIE leaves.)*

KATHY. Hi. I'm Kathy.

JASON. I'm Jason.

KATHY. You gave him five hundred dollars to bring you here?

JASON. My suit isn't usually this rumpled.

KATHY. It's a nice suit. Silk?

JASON. Yes.

KATHY. Are you a student? No, you're not; you don't have that pulpy pasty color they have, from living sub-surface. Well, that leaves only one other possibility.

JASON. That I'm a criminal, trying to change my identity before the cops and nats get me.

KATHY. Are you?

JASON. No.

KATHY. What do you need? Driver's license? Police-file ident card? Proof of employment at a legal job?

JASON. Everything. Including membership tab in the Musicians' Union Local Twelve.

KATHY. Oh, you're a musician.

JASON. I'm a vocalist. I host an hour-long TV variety show Tuesday night at nine. Maybe you've seen it.

KATHY. I don't own a TV set anymore. Is it fun?

JASON. Sometimes.

KATHY. My husband always used to tell me I have no sense of humor. He was killed in a surprise attack by students.

JASON. How much is it going to cost me to get my full set of ID?

KATHY. I charge people what they can afford. I'm going to charge you a lot because I can tell you're rich. Okay? Or am I wrong? Tell me.

JASON. I have five thousand dollars on me. I'm a world famous entertainer.

KATHY. Gee, I wish I had heard of you. Did I say something stupid?

JASON. No. (*He reaches out towards KATHY. She screams.*)

KATHY. I'd rather people didn't touch me.

JASON. Is that valuable? (*JASON points to a large painting of a dead man pierced through the face with arrows by Orozco.*)

KATHY. If it was the real thing. You're anxious for me to get to work on your ID.

JASON. Yes.

KATHY. Two thousand dollars. Sit down and keep me company. You can tell me about your career as a successful TV personality. It must be fascinating, all the bodies you have to walk over to get to the top. Or did you get to the top?

JASON. Yes, but there's no bodies.

KATHY. Here's your driver's license. Now I'll get started on your military service-status chit. That's a little harder because of full-face and profile photos, but I can handle that. (*KATHY turns on some photographic floodlights. JASON strikes a pose.*) You're all lit up. You're glowing in some sort of phony way. (*KATHY takes Jason's picture.*) Who are you really?

JASON. I told you I'm Jason Taverner. The TV personality guest host. I'm on every Tuesday night.

KATHY. Sorry... I shouldn't have asked. I don't want to get to know people I'm making cards for... but... I'd sort of like to know you. You're strange. I've seen a lot of types but none like you. Do you know what I think?

JASON. You think I'm insane.

KATHY. Yes. Clinically, legally, whatever. How have you survived up until now? (*JASON doesn't answer.*) Okay. (*KATHY finishes Jason's ID cards.*) I want your signature five times, each a little different from the others

so they can't be superimposed. (*Whispers.*) Eddie is a police fink.

JASON. Why?

KATHY. Why? For money, the same reason I am.

JASON. Goddamn you. And he's already...

KATHY. Eddie hasn't done anything yet. (*JASON picks up a pencil to throw at her. KATHY holds her hand on her face in pain.*) That hurts! Look; calm down and I'll show you. Okay? A purple dot on the margin of each. A microtransmitter, so you'll emit a bleep every five seconds as you move around.

JASON. Why did you tell me? After doing all the for-
ging...

KATHY. I wanted you to get away.

JASON. Why?

KATHY. Because you've got some sort of magnetic quality about you; I noticed it as soon as you came into the room. You're...sexy. I can see why you imagine you're a TV personality; you really seem like you are.

JASON. How do I get away? Are you going to tell me that? Or does that cost a little more?

KATHY. God you're so cynical, I guess I don't blame you. Well, first of all, you can buy Eddie off. Another five hundred ought to do it. Me, you don't have to buy off...if, and only if, I mean it, if you stay with me for awhile. You have...I respond to you and I just never do that with men. Will you?

JASON. I'll just leave.

KATHY. You've already got a microtransmitter planted on you. (*KATHY begins to raise her skirt a little at a time.*)

JASON. I doubt it.

KATHY. It's true. Eddie planted it on you.

JASON. Bullshit.

KATHY. But suppose it's true. It could be. Stay with me one night. Go to bed with me. Okay? That's enough. I promise. Will you do it, for just one night?

(EDDIE appears, KATHY drops skirt.)

JASON. Okay. *(JASON goes to pay EDDIE off.)*

KATHY. Get that over with and him out of here. Screwdrivers. *(KATHY makes screwdrivers for JASON and herself. EDDIE stands nearby.)*

JASON. What do you get from him that you don't get from human beings? *(EDDIE leaves.)*

KATHY. He's very good with flies. And I don't have to ask myself about him, should I turn him in to Mr. McNulty? Mr. McNulty is my pol contact. I give him the analog receivers for the microtransmitters, the dots I showed you...

JASON. And he pays you.

KATHY. My husband's alive. He's in a forced-labor camp in Alaska. I'm trying to buy his way out by giving information to Mr. McNulty. In another year he says Jack can come out. And come back here.

JASON. It's a terrific deal for the police.

KATHY *(to the AUDIENCE)*. I love Jack and he loves me. He writes to me all the time. You're more magnetic than Jack. He's magnetic, but you're so much, much more. Do you think a person can love two people equally? My therapy group says no, that I have to choose. They say that's one of the basic aspects of life. Did you know I was in a psychiatric hospital for eight weeks? Morningside Mental Hygiene Relations in Atherton. It cost a fortune. I made a whole lot of