

All Your Sweet Time

A Play

By

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"Man cannot abide in his pomp; he is like the beasts who perish."

--Psalm 49

*I didn't mean to take up all your sweet time,
I'll give it right back to you one of these days . . .*

--Hendrix

CAST OF CHARACTERS

LACKEY, female roadie, early 50s

BONES, roadie, late 20s

HOLLYHEAD, tour producer

SETTING

Outdoor rock stage on a Utah ski mountain for a band called Jimi Cage and the Disciplines. Summer.

SCENE 1

Music. Sounds of wild crowd, screaming, etc. Fades. A leftover scream, as if a lone fool persists. Lights half up into a morning after. Equipment, wrappers of brand name snack foods, and empty beer cans and liquor bottles are scattered about. The stage is filled. All the equipment is stamped "HOLLYHEAD PRODUCTIONS" or "JIMI CAGE."

Jimi Cage, the star, has left. LACKEY pushes a black trunk on stage, playful, almost child-like wobbly. Pinches her finger. Shakes it off. Pony tail, work boots, black jeans. Below the waist, a typical roadie. But above, a flourishing flower child, flowing top, scarf, floppy hat. Very 60s. She does everything slowly, dramatically. A box of donuts sits on top of the trunk she pushes. She pauses, looks for witnesses, and takes bite.

HOLLYHEAD

(voice comes over sound system, as if from "the board" behind the audience.)

Some night, wasn't it Lackey?

LACKEY

Here we go, mister morning person.

HOLLYHEAD

At it again this morning?

LACKEY

The worst I've ever heard.

HOLLYHEAD

Jimi's on the rise, I'm telling you. They were crazy!

LACKEY

(hearing problem)

What? Who lies?

HOLLYHEAD

Like a dream.

LACKEY

Ice cream?

HOLLYHEAD

You're losing your hearing!

LACKEY

No I'm not!

HOLLYHEAD

But you overcome the baggage.

LACKEY

(non-sequitur, as if finishing another thought)

And in my head too.

HOLLYHEAD

(louder, anxiously)

You know we leave by noon, right?

LACKEY

No shit, we leave every noon.

HOLLYHEAD

Either noon or later tonight. We have a few days this time. Depending.

LACKEY

All upending on what?

HOLLYHEAD

On whether we make it.

LACKEY

I'll take it.

HOLLYHEAD

(louder)

And if we don't get to Phoenix--

LACKEY

We'll call. Jimi Cage has us call ahead. 'Hello, yes, this is Lackey Lisa for Mister Jimi "Thinks He's Jesus" Cage calling ahead. Do you have his Water into Wine '58 vintage and three 1-pound bags of potato chips ready?'"

HOLLYHEAD

(stressed)

But due in Phoenix by tomorrow morning. We can't be late this time!

LACKEY

I know.

HOLLYHEAD

Whatever we do, we get our asses to Phoenix. If we don't show in Phoenix, we might as well go home.

LACKEY

Finally.

HOLLYHEAD

If we go home, I'll blacklist you. It'll be the end for Lisa Flowers.

LACKEY

Blacklist? I'm union, asshole. *(Aside)* Isn't that how the patriarchy works? They make lists of people they like and lists of people they put in the dark. But nobody can ever see the list. Where the fuck is the list? Am I on it? Bloody blackness, dark cities, dark work. My Mum used to say, "St. Peter's got his list, young lady."

HOLLYHEAD

Make your own list. Then pack the truck. Then check it, Lackey.

LACKEY

When did home get to be such a disaster? What would we do if we had to go home?

HOLLYHEAD

(longer pause, then remorsefully)

Home is where the next gig is. Get us out of here.

LACKEY

I've finally learned that I only like doing what I've done before over again. I've learned that about myself out here. *(With flourish)* The first woman ever to roadie. Do you know I roadied for Madonna?

HOLLYHEAD

I don't care what genitals you have, just so we get out of here. We don't get to Phoenix, we're fucked. The Hollyhead Production Company is no more. Everything I've worked for up in smoke.

LACKEY

I know! How many times you going to tell me! *(Stops, eating.)* Jesus, what are you afraid of? Like without Hollyhead Productions you have nothing that marks you from the billions—

HOLLYHEAD

Less babble, more muscle, please. *(Under his breath)* Women!

LACKEY

(Hearing him, rebelling)

Break time!

HOLLYHEAD

You just started!

LACKEY

Well, where's Bones? I can't do this by myself.

HOLLYHEAD

Probably passed out.

LACKEY

Probably lost in town. He's lost more than any asshole I've ever worked with. Lost his money in Vegas. His dream in L.A. His brain in San Francisco. His job in New York. His wife in Philly. A regular American trip, that guy. I'd recommend some psychological counseling for him. And he's only 29!

HOLLYHEAD

I know. Can't we drop him? Maybe conveniently forget him here?

LACKEY

You know what he does in the truck? Reads signs out loud, over and over again, like he's finding himself every mile, "Food, 5 miles." "Gas, Next Exit." "Stop Here for Pie!" . . . I'd stop for a pie!

HOLLYHEAD

Fuck pie. Pie's overrated.

LACKEY

You'd like a piece of my pie, wouldn't ya? Maybe if you ceased the commentary, I'd have a chance of surviving this tour. My Mum may be dying. She only tells me she's fine, but I don't think she's fine. I think she's dying of something. She went to Rome, I think she caught something in the Vatican. Maybe the guilt on that time she lost me in the zoo and let me wander around the snake house is killing her.

HOLLYHEAD

If you don't start workin', I'll come down there myself.

LACKEY

Then where would you be?

(Pause.)

HOLLYHEAD

Gone!

LACKEY

A voice of darkness in the darkness. (*Holds up a donut*) An ass in the universal hole.

HOLLYHEAD

Eat me. Pack the truck, please.

(*LACKEY eats the donut.*)

LACKEY

I have to wait 'til Bones comes back.

HOLLYHEAD

Why?

LACKEY

He's got the truck. We can't pack without the truck.

HOLLYHEAD

Bones has the truck? Where does he have it? It's *my* truck, goddammit!

LACKEY

He took it last night.

HOLLYHEAD

He can't take it! It's *my* truck! Jeezus, like the time my son took the Pontiac—
(*he stops, not wanting to recall too much*)

LACKEY

I know. It's all *yours*. You own our whole fucking world.

HOLLYHEAD

He fucks up my truck, I'll kill him. He's on the hook, like the rest of us.

LACKEY

I know. Contracted like a disease to Jimi Cage and his World Tour. How long I been at this, Hollyhead? You think it's my first rodeo?

HOLLYHEAD

Too long.

LACKEY

Forever almost. (*To herself*) But I'm almost through with this crap, I'll tell you.

HOLLYHEAD

You haven't even started to begin yet!

LACKEY

I'm finished though. My last tour, I swear. The last fucking go-round. This is it. My sister's got a cabin in Maine for us.

HOLLYHEAD

What's that?

LACKEY

Can't you listen? I'm talking to myself down here.

HOLLYHEAD

Why I even talk to you is beyond me.

LACKEY

Everything's beyond you. You're a producer.

HOLLYHEAD

What year did you stop thinking, '68 or '69?

LACKEY

What year did I meet you?

HOLLYHEAD

I think today we'll pop you open and see how your nostalgia's aged.

LACKEY

I like thinking about what's gone.

HOLLYHEAD

Why are you always reliving everything? That's no way to live.

LACKEY

What else is there?

HOLLYHEAD

So you almost did the Stones. Big deal. The Sixties are over, Lackey, it's nothing but a bad trip that wound up passed out on the floor of a disco.

(LACKEY gives him the finger, heads off.)

You forgot the trunk.

(LACKEY stops. Looks at trunk.)

LACKEY

That trunk? There's something wrong with that trunk. I'm leaving it there for now.

HOLLYHEAD

Ah. Good call. There's a plan. I'm sure it will get to Phoenix on its own.

LACKEY

(With a flourish)

I will, I promise. I will confront the inanimate world later. Let it rot! Now it is time to relieve myself. The Female Instrument demands its due!

HOLLYHEAD

Ok, I'm coming down there!

(LACKEY hurries off, taking with her a few drum sticks)

HOLLYHEAD

(HOLLYHEAD comes down from back and up on stage. Puffed black hair. Chic black leather music exec, coifed hair, expensively casual, silver jewelry, etc. Air of self-made success. Although there is no obvious signifier, they mentally live in different eras. Offstage rummaging.)

Always full of words, empty on delivery. She will this, she will that . . . will we, won't we . . . Is there another will on the fucking way? . . . Going to die early from making a living.

(He stops and takes out a photo. It affects him. Puts it back. Exits. Fade.)