

Pretty Flamingo

by  
Michael Cornetto

(c)Copyright 2008 Michael Cornetto (mcorretto@hotmail.com)

EXT. TRAILER HOME - NIGHT

NOTE: ALL VOICES ARE V.O. UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

The moon moves behind an endless dark cloud.

Warm yellow light spills from the trailer's windows onto the yard, which is filled with every imaginable lawn ornament. They cast long shadows.

Then the warm light is extinguished and any shadows meld into the general darkness.

But one sole light breaks through the blackness. A bare bulb in a wire lantern held aloft by the ceramic hand of a lawn jockey, JOCK.

JOCK  
My favourite time, the beginning  
of my watch.

His impassive weathered black face stares forward.

JOCK  
From dusk until dawn I stand in  
my appointed spot. Eight hours  
watching the yard from my post,  
eight hours guarding her.

Before him, past his lantern, near a mailbox and turned slightly away is a fluorescent pink plastic flamingo, MING.

JOCK (O.S.)  
She's beautiful isn't she? Her  
name's Ming, like an antique  
vase, only rarer. -- Not a reason  
in the world I'd wish to be  
anywhere else. It's my dream job.

He stares forward.

JOCK  
But the trouble with dreams is  
that eventually you're gonna wake  
up. It's unavoidable. And so it  
was that one day my lamp went  
out.

CUT TO:

BLACK

JOCK  
The dark can be a lonely place --

EXT. TRAILER HOME - LATER

The lantern flickers on, illuminating Jock's face.

JOCK  
But it doesn't compare to seeing  
that those you love are missing.

Before him, past his lantern, only a mailbox.

JOCK  
Guard. I mean those you guard. --  
MING!

Jock waits for a response but an evil-sounding chuckle pierces the silence. His lantern illuminates some bushes and they rustle.

JOCK (O.S.)  
Ming? Is that you? Come out where  
I can see you? -- MING?!

A whisper.

WHISPER (O.S.)  
I have the answers you seek.

The light illuminates a blank stretch of lawn.

JOCK (O.S.)  
Tell me then!

WHISPER (O.S.)  
Come closer...

JOCK  
The most important rule for a  
lawn ornament is never move from  
your appointed spot.

WHISPER (O.S.)  
Closer...

JOCK  
But if Ming went and broke that  
rule in order to get herself  
lost, then I was just going to  
have to break that rule in order  
to find her.

The light moves across a blank stretch of lawn.

JOCK (O.S.)  
So for the first time ever, I  
left my post.

Into view, a white pedestal; a greenish mirrorball, ORB,  
sits at the top and glaringly reflects Jock's light.

JOCK (O.S.)  
What in the hell are you?

WHISPER/ORB  
I am the Orb. I see all and I  
know all.

JOCK  
Then where's Ming?

ORB  
 In good time my friend, in good  
 time. First there is something  
 you must do for me.

JOCK  
 Alright, I'm listening.

FADE TO:

BLACK

MALE VOICE  
 No, Senor. Please! I will pay  
 him! Please Senor. No! Please!

The sound of crunching porcelain then a male voice screams.

FADE TO:

EXT. TRAILER HOME - LATER

A Mexican, MEX, with sombrero, poncho and a donkey at his  
 side looks like he's taking a siesta, but he moans and  
 whimpers.

MEX  
 I would have paid him, Senor...

A broken porcelain leg lay on the ground before him.

Jock is a short distance away, he does not face Mex.

JOCK  
 I felt for the Mexican, I really  
 did, but I didn't do anything to  
 him that a bit of glue and some  
 tape won't fix. And if it means  
 finding Ming...

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE TO:

EXT. TRAILER HOME - LATER

Jock stands in front of the Orb, the reflection of his face  
 stares back.

JOCK  
 I've done as you asked.

ORB  
 I know. And you've done very  
 well. On my team a man like you  
 could go quite far. For your next  
 task...

JOCK  
 My next task?!

ORB  
 Surely the information you seek  
 is worth more than one broken  
 leg.

JOCK  
 You son of a...

Jock tips the pedestal using his lantern arm. The Orb rocks  
 in it's cradle.

ORB  
 Wait! If I break then you'll  
 never find your precious Ming.

Jock stops.

JOCK  
 Then you have very little time to  
 tell me where she is.

He pushes forward again.

ORB  
 In the east! You'll find Ming in  
 the east!

Jock releases the pedestal and it drops back into it's  
 appointed place. The orb rocks sharply back and forth in  
 it's cradle.

ORB  
 I see an unhappy ending.

The orb hangs on the edge of its pedestal.

ORB  
 One that could easily have been  
 avoided.

The Orb goes over the edge.

It takes a long time for the Orb to make his final journey,  
 but it's one trip that may truly be called a smashing  
 success.

The hundred pieces that once were the Orb lay at Jock's  
 feet, glittering as they reflect his shining lantern.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE TO:

EXT. TRAILER HOME - LATER

Jock stands alone.

JOCK  
 The east side of the lawn. The  
 wishing well district.

At the edge of his light radius, a wishing well.

JOCK  
 I've heard stories about this  
 place. It's a place where your  
 dreams come true -- for a price.  
 Where strung out cherubs looking  
 for a quick wish end up --

Closer, two Cherubs(CHER and ROB) perch on the well's edge.

CHER  
 Grant you a wish, mister?

ROB  
 Or maybe you might like our two  
 for one special? Hmmm.

CHER  
 Stop trying to horn in on my  
 deals, will ya?

ROB  
 But he's got a free...

CHER  
 Shut up!

ROB  
 Make me!

CHER  
 I'd never find a gag big enough!

They titer with glee.

JOCK  
 Quiet! Please! I'm not interested  
 in wishes. I'm trying to find  
 someone. Her name's Ming --

CHER  
 What a coincidence. My name's  
 Ming --

ROB  
 I'm Ming! I'm Ming too!

CHER  
 You're a whore!

ROB  
 Well, you're a slut!

CHER  
 And you're a --

JOCK  
 QUIET! I shouldn't have come  
 here. Ming would never have come  
 to this place.

CHER  
That's right, Mister "I'm not interested in wishes". You ain't going to find your girlfriend here. But I got some news for you buddy. Wish or no wish, you ain't going nowhere till you pay up.

ROB  
You tell him!

CHER  
I am. Pay up mister!

JOCK  
Pay up? (He laughs) Sorry, but I'm out of here.

Jock turns but on the ground behind him is a gang of cherubs, each individual holding a rope.

CHER  
Get 'em cherubs.

The ropes fly, they tangle around Jock; his lantern arm is the first captive.

He turns trying to escape. The cherubs are tugged by their ropes but they manage to remain in their place.

Then Jock tips over and falls to the ground. The victorious cherubs cheer as they surround his bound body.

Cher perches near his face.

CHER  
We know how to get what we want.  
To the whirlygig!

The cherubs huzzah. Jock is dragged away.

EXT. TRAILER HOME

The WHIRLYGIG is a dangerous looking contraption composed of many sharp looking pinwheels. They whir as the spin quickly in the wind.

Still bound. Jock is face to face with the monster and connected by rope to cherubs on either side of the machine. He moves ever so slowly forward as they pull.

JOCK  
That double-crossing Orb got what he deserved, I should have known better than to trust him.

He slides closer to the machine.

JOCK  
He knew just how to get rid of me. He sent me straight into the hands of these blood-thirsty cherubs.

Jock envisions the Orb.

ORB  
In the East! --

A dizzying array of pinwheels approach.

JOCK  
Or did he?

A closer vision of the Orb showing the curved reflection of Jock's face.

ORB  
East! --

The sharp whirring objects near.

JOCK  
How could I be so stupid? Only a  
idiot lawn jockey or a mirror  
would confuse --

Pointy spinning metal inches from his eye.

JOCK  
I wish -- I wish I had gone west  
instead of east!

CHER  
Wait! Did he just say wish?

ROB  
He did, he said wish! He's got a  
free one.

CHER  
Shit! There goes tonight's  
entertainment.

The cherubs groan.

CHER  
Granted.

EXT. TRAILER HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jock stands in front of some bushes that block the walkway to the side door.

JOCK  
They say that every individual  
has one free wish to use as they  
please, but that most everyone  
uses theirs for the wrong reason.

He scans the area with his light.

JOCK  
I'd say that I used mine wisely --  
MING?



A moan comes from behind the bushes.

                          MING (O.S.)  
No! No more, please!

Then an evil-sounding chuckle.

                          JOCK  
Ming?! Is that you?

Jock runs toward the bushes.

                          JOCK  
Hang on Ming, I'm coming.

Behind the bushes is a cement walkway. Stairs lead up to the side door. Ming lies at the bottom of the stairs, her surface marred with deep scratches. Jock stands near her.

                          MING  
No! No! Please!

                          JOCK  
Ming? It's me, Jock.

                          MING  
Jock? -- Oh, Jock. I knew you'd come. You've always looked out for me.

                          JOCK  
What happened to you?

                          MING  
It doesn't matter. All that matters now is that you're here. I know everything will be alright if you're watching me. You'll stay, won't you?

                          JOCK  
Of course Ming, of course I will.

An evil-sounding chuckle and Jock turns. Six garden gnomes stand behind him; they brandish various garden implements. Their gnome leader, MEL, smiles.

                          JOCK  
Garden Gnomes. They're small, mean, and armed. They take what they want and they don't mind getting their hands dirty in the process.

                          MEL  
We want the bird.

                          JOCK  
They did this to Ming.

                          MING  
(sobbing) I'm sorry I got you involved -- so sorry...

JOCK  
It's alright, I'll take care of  
those bastards. Somehow.

Jock moves forward. The gnomes do too. Six more gnome  
appear out of the darkness.

MEL  
You're way out of your league  
buddy.

The gnomes murmur and chuckle in agreement.

MEL  
Make it easy on yourself, get out  
of the way, we gots no use for  
you.

One of the gnomes covertly leaves rank and heads toward  
Ming.

MEL  
Alls we want is that luscious bit  
of pink over there.

JOCK  
There's no way on this good green  
lawn that I'm letting you  
anywhere near Ming. And tell me--

Jock knocks the covert gnome away with a swipe of his  
lantern.

JOCK  
Are all of you gnomes such  
idiots?

MEL  
Kill the fucker.

Jock is besieged as the gnomes surround him, the sounds of  
garden implements breaking plaster then

The porch light snaps on.

MEL  
Shit! Everybody beat it! It's the  
big guy!

The gnomes scatter. Jock does too.

JOCK  
Ming, stay still. I'll be right  
behind these bushes.

Jock pushes against the far side of the bushes as the porch  
door opens. Dressed in a flannel robe, belly hanging out,  
the midriff of the BIG GUY appears in the doorway.

BIG GUY  
Who's there?

The midriff walks down the steps.

BIG GUY  
I heard you! I know you're here.

At the bottom of the stairs. CRUNCH.

BIG GUY  
Awww, son of a bitch. Goddamn  
kids! STAY THE HELL OUT OF MY  
YARD.

Then the midriff stomps back up the stairs and closes the side door. The porch light goes out.

JOCK  
Ming! Ming he's gone, so are the  
gnomes. I can take you back to --

Jock turns the corner of the bushes and then stops. It begins to rain, drops cascade down Jock's face.

JOCK  
Oh, Ming.

From above, Jock's circle of light illuminates both himself and Ming, who lies at the bottom of the stairs. Her neck is broken beyond repair.

JOCK  
I wish my lamp never went out --  
I WISH MY LAMP NEVER WENT OUT!

FADE OUT.