

YOUNG WATER

By

Greg Vovos

For Cleveland Public Theatre's Pandemonium 2007

CHARACTERS

JIM: A soon to be first-time father

PAMELA: A soon to be first-time mother

10-YEAR-OLD JIM: Jim at 10 years of age

BELLHOP: An old soul, Hitchcockian, time immemorial, he makes the rules

SETTING

The Paradise Hotel

NOTE

Other actors may be used for the other “younger” Jims as well, but it is up to the discretion of the director. And, if the director wants the same actor to play the 10-YEAR-OLD JIM, that’s okay too.

**TO PRODUCE THIS PLAY
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LIGHTS UP as a BELLHOP helps JIM with his luggage.

BELLHOP

Is there anything else I can get you?

JIM

Do you offer room service?

BELLHOP

We have everything to meet your needs.

JIM

I could really go for a beer.

BELLHOP

I'm sorry we don't have that.

JIM

But you just said you had everything —

BELLHOP

Everything perhaps, but not anything. Besides alcohol is not permitted at the Paradise Hotel. Neither are drugs. I find any mind altering substances on your person and I'll boot you right out onto the street. Is that understood?

Now, what do you want more than anything else in the world? Just name it and I will provide it.

JIM

What I'd really like is for you to help me find myself.

BELLHOP

A water it is.

The BELLHOP produces a water and hands it to JIM.

JIM

What am I supposed to do with this?

BELLHOP

You're to drink it. Good evening, Sir.

JIM is confused. The BELLHOP starts to exit.

JIM

Oh, and would you make sure I'm not disturbed.

BELLHOP

I'll see to it personally. Enjoy your stay.

JIM begins to drink the water and the BELLHOP exits. As he exits, The BELLHOP holds the door open for PAMELA, a very pregnant woman, who enters and disrupts JIM.

PAMELA

I hope I'm not disturbing you, Jimmy.

JIM

How did you find me?

PAMELA

I followed you, of course.

JIM

Pamela, I would really appreciate a little space tonight.

PAMELA

I'm sorry. I hope me and your soon-to-be-born son aren't getting in the way of you and your floozy's secret rendezvous.

JIM

I'm not having a rendezvous with a floozy. I'm having one with myself!! To find myself.

PAMELA

What does that mean? (*Scoffs*) Find yourself?

JIM

It means I want to find me before I stopped recognizing myself, before the picture of me in my mind stopped looking like the guy that I see in the mirror every morning. Somewhere along the way, I lost myself. I want to find that time. And then, I'll fix it. Because if I don't find me I certainly can't be a father to any baby.

PAMELA

Well, that's great, Jim. But I hope it doesn't take you too long because I've gone into labor.

JIM
What? When?

PAMELA
Moments after you ran screaming out our front door.

JIM finishes the water.

JIM
I gotta pee.

JIM runs to the bathroom.

(Frantically) If you're really in labor then how can you be so calm?

PAMELA
Controlled breathing, positive visualization and knowledge in the fact that this can go on for another 30 hours. Besides, it's not like my water broke yet so you can just relax.

JIM comes back out. He looks different, younger.

What happened to you?

JIM
Me? What happened to you?

HE touches her.

You're pregnant! When did this happen?

PAMELA
I'd wager to guess about 36 weeks ago. Why do you look younger?

JIM
What has happened to this marriage??? We used to communicate! Now, suddenly you show up on the verge of giving birth without so much as even discussing with me that you want to start a family??

PAMELA
Don't be ridiculous. Let's go.

BELLHOP enters.

BELLHOP
For you, Sir.

BELLHOP gives JIM water.

Is there anything else I can get you?

JIM
Yes, I'd like—

BELLHOP exits.

Look, Pamela, I don't know what's going on here, but—

PAMELA
Oh My God!!

JIM
What?

PAMELA
I think my water just broke.

Her water has indeed broken.

JIM
What??

PAMELA
My water! My water must've broke! Do something!!!!

JIM
Right.

JIM drinks the water he is holding.

Damn this water goes right through me.

JIM runs to the bathroom.

PAMELA
Jim!!! Get back here.

PAMELA sits down on the bed.

Bring some towels or something.

We should call someone who cares. Where is the phone?!?!

What's that smell? Something's burning!

JIM walks out of the bathroom, smoking a joint. HE is stoned and HE is younger.

JIM
Hey, what's happening?

PAMELA
What do you think you're doing?

JIM
Oh, you know, I'm just riding the waves. Riding the waves of life.

SHE starts her labor breathing now.

PAMELA
Are you smoking a joint? Get that away from me.

JIM
Relax, baby. It's all good.

PAMELA
I'M ABOUT TO GIVE BIRTH HERE!!!

JIM
That's right. That's the way to think. Give birth to a new way of thinking. A new world. A new dimension. The sixth dimension.

PAMELA
A BABY! I'M ABOUT TO HAVE YOUR BABY!

JIM

Oh, honey. You're moving a bit too fast here. I'm trying to find myself right now. I don't have time for a baby.

PAMELA

Bellhop!! Bellhop!!!

JIM

Your voice is beautiful, Moonflower. Like a mother cardinal singing Led Zeppelin to her young.

PAMELA shrieks in pain.

(Correcting himself.) No, it's like a kitty cat. A little kitty cat getting its precious little paws slammed in a car door. Crazy shit. When I lose myself then I can find myself. Dig? You too. Lose yourself and then find yourself. Hey, are you pregnant?

BELLHOP enters.

BELLHOP

What did I tell you about this?

PAMELA

Bellhop! Help me!

BELLHOP ignores PAMELA and snatches the joint away from JIM.

JIM

You are the bellhop that opens the doors of perception.

BELLHOP

I should throw you out onto your keister, but as I am a benevolent bellhop I will provide you with this cool crisp water instead.

BELLHOP exits. JIM drinks the water.

PAMELA

Water! Water!

JIM

Yes, it is water. The coolest crispest most refreshing water I have ever tasted in my life.

PAMELA gets up from the bed and hobbles over to JIM and grabs him by the collar.

PAMELA

Listen to me. I am about to give birth to your son. If you don't do something to help me get through this I will rip your arms out of their sockets and shove them down your throat so you never drink another drop of water again. And why do you look so young?! I think I'm hallucinating from the pain, but God you haven't look this good in —

PAMELA screams in pain and falls to the ground.

JIM

Wooooo, man. Buzzkill. Hey, are you pregnant? Pregnant women make my bladder weak.

JIM walks toward the bathroom.

Babies are trippy.

JIM goes into the bathroom.

PAMELA

It's okay, baby. Mommy will bring you into this world by herself if she has to and she will take care of you all by herself since your father has apparently turned into a complete CHILD.

JIM, now about 10-12 years old, comes out of the bathroom.

JIM

Excuse me, lady. But are you all right?

PAMELA

Who are you? How'd you get in here?

JIM

I'm Jim. Have you seen my mom?

PAMELA

My god, you do look like him, but —

BELLHOP enters.

BELLHOP

(To Jim, in his best Lerch voice) You rang, Sir?

JIM

No.

BELLHOP

Nonetheless, I anticipate your every need. Drink this water!

PAMELA jumps up.

PAMELA

Do not drink that water!

JIM

Why not?

PAMELA

Because – Because it's –

BELLHOP

Madame, what is your name?

PAMELA

What difference is it to you?

BELLHOP

The difference to me is that you are not even on our register; and as such you are not a guest of this hotel and I seriously doubt –

PAMELA LETS OUT THE LOUDEST YELL UNTIL THIS POINT!

PAMELA

Oh my god it's coming!

BELLHOP

And I seriously doubt that that baby is registered either. Therefore, I will have to ask you both to leave since this gentleman has not paid for either of you.

PAMELA

We're not going anywhere.

BELLHOP

Then the gentleman must pay me \$300.

PAMELA
300 bucks?!?

BELLHOP
Of course. There's the penalty for the extra persons and the pregnancy tax. Sir, I am waiting for my \$300.

JIM
Why should I pay it?

BELLHOP
She's your wife, is she not?

PAMELA
Of course, I'm his wife. Pay him, Jim.

JIM
I don't have that kind of money. If I had that kind of money, I'd buy myself a nice BMX bike, the kind with the pads on the handlebars and on the bar for my crotch so I don't bust my nuts. I'd also get myself some nails. A lot of nails. Six rolls of duct tape. And a bunch of whiffle balls –

PAMELA reaches into JIM's wallet and pays the BELLHOP.

PAMELA
(To Bellhop) Now, call an ambulance.

BELLHOP
I'm sorry, Madame, but at the Paradise hotel we do not allow admittance to emergency personnel.

PAMELA
But--

BELLHOP
Drink your water, Young Man.

BELLHOP exits.

PAMELA
Don't!

JIM
Why not?

PAMELA
Because every time you drink that water, you get younger. And right now you're my only hope and if you get any younger than you are now, I might be delivering you.

JIM
Is that why my clothes are so big?

PAMELA
YES!

JIM
Are you saying this water is like the fountain of youth?

PAMELA
Exactly!

JIM
I do feel like an old soul. (*Considers.*) I don't believe it.

PAMELA
Well, then drink it. And then see what happens.

JIM considers drinking the water.

Go ahead. Drink it, Big Guy.

JIM
But if you're right then I might---Well, it took me all my life to get this tall. In fact, I just got this tall in the last year. For eleven years I was the shortest guy in my class. You know, there's only so many short jokes a man can take before heads start to roll.

PAMELA
Put down the water and help me deliver my baby.

JIM
Why me??

PAMELA
Because you're the father.

JIM

I'm a father!

PAMELA

Well, you were, yeah, are, I don't know. I guess.

JIM

I always hoped I would become a father.

PAMELA

You did?

JIM

Yeah, of course. My dad's a dad so I want to be a dad too.

PAMELA

You weren't exactly happy ten minutes ago when you found out the baby was coming.

JIM

I wasn't?

PAMELA

Nope.

JIM

Oh, I know why.

PAMELA

Why?

JIM

I'm probably so busy with my job as president of the United States that I'm worried I won't have enough time to be a good father.

PAMELA shakes her head.

You mean, I'm not president? But I have all this money in my wallet. I guess I'm not smart enough to be president.

PAMELA

This pillow is smart enough to be president. As George Bush.

JIM

(Excited) Ooooh, did I become a welder? That is awesome!

PAMELA

No.

JIM

(Suddenly very sad.) Oh.

PAMELA

Are you okay?

JIM

Maybe that's why I don't want to be a father. I'm not president and I'm not a welder so I don't want to face my son. What am I?

PAMELA

I didn't realize that existential crises could start at such a young age.

JIM puts the water to his mouth.

What are you doing?

JIM

I'm going back to the beginning. It's my only choice. Maybe I did something wrong. I knew I shouldn't eat so much bologna and raw spaghetti but I just can't stop myself.

Besides, I don't know if I'm ready to be a father. I mean, look at me.

PAMELA

So you're just going to abandon your son?

HE offers her the water.

JIM

Maybe you should try it. Come back with me. You could start your life all over again.

PAMELA

I can't do that.

JIM

Why not?

PAMELA

The baby! I can't risk the baby.

JIM

But you could have a new life! Maybe a new baby with a new husband.

PAMELA

I don't want a new life, a new baby or a new husband.

JIM

You're really my wife?

PAMELA

Yes.

JIM

Wow. You're really pretty. I scored big time with you.

PAMELA laughs. The BABY is coming.

PAMELA

Oh, boy. The baby's really coming, Jim.

JIM

Now? But I haven't--

PAMELA

NOW!

JIM

(frantic) What do I do??? I don't know what to do!!

PAMELA

DO SOMETHING!!!!!!

JIM throws the water to the ground.

JIM

I can catch the baby. I am the shortstop on my baseball team. Dang, I wish I brought my glove!!

SHE yells. HE grabs the bedspread.

So you'll really let me be the baby's father?

PAMELA

You are the baby's father.

JIM
I should probably first ask my mom if it's all right.

PAMELA
Too late!!

THE BABY is born. JIM catches it in the bedspread.

JIM
Wooooo. That is so weird.

PAMELA
Let me see him.

JIM holds the baby up for her to see.

He's beautiful.

JIM
Wow. Cool.

PAMELA
Put him on my chest.

HE does.

JIM
Oh boy. Now what?

PAMELA
Cut the cord.

JIM
The cord?

PAMELA
The umbilical cord. Do you have something—

JIM
Yeah, I got my Boy Scout knife.

JIM pulls out the knife; cuts the cord and stands.

Wow, I don't feel so good all of a sudden. I think I'm going to be—

JIM runs to the bathroom and throws up.

JIM comes out and he looks like he did at the beginning of the play.

JIM

You know, Pamela, I was just looking at myself in the mirror and I think I found—

Oh my god. The baby's beautiful. He looks just like you.

PAMELA

You think so?

JIM

Yeah.

PAMELA

I can see you in him.

JIM

Amazing.

PAMELA

What?

JIM

When I look in his eyes I can find...us...all of us.

THE BELLHOP enters carrying a garden hose.

BELLHOP

Is there anything else I can get you?

JIM and PAMELA look at the BELLHOP. LIGHTS OUT.

END OF PLAY