

A Mile in His Moccasins

By

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### Cast of Characters

Dave:

Latino

Jim:

Caucasian

### Scene

a campground in NJ.

### Time

late night.

*Two men sit on a log by a campfire, wearing business casual attire and plastered smiles. They stare ahead in silence.*

JIM

(overly polite and pod-person-like)  
Secaucus is lovely this time of year! "Are you comfortable with my perspective" on Secaucus, Dave?

DAVE

(equally polite and pod-person-y)  
I am comfortable Jim!

JIM

Oh, good.

*Beat. They smile and stare.*  
Ahhh... Feels terrific getting out of the city.

DAVE

I concur with that excellent opinion you just shared, Jim!

JIM

Glad to hear it Dave! "Being on the same page with your colleagues is a crucial component to building a healthy work environment."

DAVE

Indeed it is, Jim!

JIM

"We shouldn't run away from the tough discussions, but rather we should..."

TOGETHER

(leaning forward at the torsos)  
...Leeeeeaaan forward, leaaaaaan into them."

JIM

What an honor this weekend has been, connecting with co-workers whom I respect! Co-workers such as yourself, Dave!

DAVE

I respect you too, Jim!

JIM

Wonderful Dave! "The only thing more satisfying than respect is..."

TOGETHER

...muuuutual respect!"

JIM

"Despite our many differences, when it comes to the really important things in life,...

TOGETHER

...we're actually quite the same."

JIM

(turning to him with seriousness)

I want you to know that I value what you continually bring to the table Dave.

DAVE

(equally fervent)

And I want YOU to know that I find the very act of being at the same table with you to be enormously gratifying Jim.

JIM

(looking deep in his eyes)

Appreciative of your kinship.

DAVE

(returning the deep eye contact)

Empowered by your comradery.

*They break eye contact and return to smiling and staring straight ahead. The men look desperate.*

DAVE

How 'bout a beer Jim?

JIM

Boy, I'd love that Dave!

*Jim reaches into the cooler.*

JIM

Well, wowie Dave! Looks like we have some... diverse, uh... "cervezas"? in this here cooler!

DAVE

Oh yeah? What kind we got in there, Jim?

JIM

Well, let's see here, Dave. We've got Bud...

DAVE

Mm.

JIM  
Bud lite...

DAVE  
Mm-hm.

JIM  
Sapporo...

DAVE  
Sure.

JIM  
Neeeeee-gro Modelo...

DAVE  
'Course.

JIM  
.... Oh! And uh, my personal favorite... "Deuce Equus."

DAVE  
I think you mean "Dos Equis" Jim. A fine beer! Toss me one when you get a moment, will ya?

JIM  
(Drops the "act." Honestly freaking out)  
Shit, I mispronounced it???? I'm sooooo sorry Dave!!!!

DAVE  
(also dropping the polite facade)  
...for what?

JIM  
You're Lah-Thino!! I should've asked you how to pronounce this clearly ethnic beer before just opening my mouth and speaking its name like-like-like I have any right to dooooo that, like-

DAVE  
It's cool Jim-

JIM  
No, Dave! I don't think that it is cool! And I want you to know that I know that! What gives me the right to-to-to-?

DAVE  
Jim? Chill.

JIM  
I won't chill! This beer is from your Lah-Thino motherland, which I- a Caucasian person- know very little about, and--

DAVE

Pretty sure Dos Equis is Mexican-

JIM

I would never want to offend you-

DAVE

I was born in the East Village-

JIM

Or-or-or alienate you or-

DAVE

JIM?!

JIM

Yeah Dave?

DAVE

Could you just hand me the beer please?

JIM

Sure. Yes. Here you go Dave, here's your beer.

*He carefully hands him the beer.*

DAVE

Thank you.

*Dave drinks. A lot. Jim looks into the cooler,  
then back at Dave, perplexed.*

JIM

Hey Dave?

DAVE

Yeah Jim?

JIM

Would you mind if - and please feel very free to say no to this- but would you mind if I had one of those "Dahs Eck-eezeseses" as well? Of course- if you're more comfortable with me having - say a bud or a bud lite under my Caucasian circumstances, I'd certainly understand your position Dave, and I'd be happy to-

DAVE

Go for it!

JIM

Ya sure? Because please know that I don't for one second pretend to understand the La-thiiiiino experience, I just hate budweisser and-

DAVE

DRINK THE BEER DUDE!!! Fuck!

JIM

K.

*Jim cracks open a Dos Equis and chugs. Silence*

JIM

I'm sorry man. Diversity Day fucked with me. It fucked with me so bad.

DAVE

Diversity Day fucked with us all.

JIM

I don't know who I am anymore. I don't know who you are. I've never been so uncomfortable in my life! I mean, if this is what team-building feels like? Then just fuckin fire me! Seriously, someone please axe me now!!!

DAVE

Don't say that too loud, they might just do it.

JIM

Fine! I can't take 3 more days of this!

DAVE

Me neither.

JIM

Ya know, it's just Secaucus. We can see the skyline from here. Let's start walking. Toward the light man. Let's just... start walking.

*Beat.*

DAVE

It was all such bullshit.

JIM

Right?!??!

DAVE

Guys I thought I knew turned into friggin pod people...including you, including me!

JIM

I know!!!

DAVE

...spewing all that politically-correct,  
polite-as-fuck, empty-as-hell-

JIM

SO uncomfortable!, wasn't it?!!

DAVE

We would've been better off if we just hashed things  
the fuck out.

JIM

You think?

DAVE

Seeking consensus is bad. Real things happen when  
people disagree. People gotta trust that they can  
really go at it with each other, and they won't be  
destroyed by it. They'll be better for it.

JIM

Hmmm. I dunno bout that. I dunno if "going at it"  
would've been the best approach either.

DAVE

See?!! That's the problem with you people! You want  
everything to be so "nice" that you end up acting like  
complete assholes!

*Beat.*

JIM

My "people", Dave? Hm. Ok. Back up. Lemme- lemme put  
myself into your shoes for a second. Ok, yes. I'm there  
now. Alright, if I were Lah-thiiiino like you-

DAVE

Tino! Tino! Tino! Pronounce the goddamn "T" or I'll  
smack a bitch!

JIM

Whoa! Did you just call me a bitch? Wait, no! I thought  
was saying it in an "ethnically accurate" fashion!

DAVE

You were saying it in douchebag fashion!

JIM

No no no, come on, I looked it up! There's a-a-a...  
lispy thing you guys do when you try to pronounce "T"s!



DAVE  
The, uh- "lispy" thing "we guys" do happens with  
Castillian spanish-speakers. Like in Spain!?

JIM  
Right! And you're Spanish!!!

DAVE  
No, I'm Columbian.

JIM  
Which is in Spain!!!

DAVE  
Have you actually ever seen a world map motherfucker??

JIM  
Yes? I have????

DAVE  
Ignorance, ignorance, ignorance...

JIM  
You think I'm ignorant???

DAVE  
Yes. You are.

JIM  
So - Wait. I'm sorry, what exactly is your sudden  
problem with me?

DAVE  
Let's start with your ridiculous white-boy pants!

JIM  
My "white-boy" pants?

DAVE  
You always wear those goddamn tapered legs! You look  
like you're hunting feral cats!

JIM  
Ok...?

DAVE  
No no no, you know who you look like? That  
pimpley-faced, pansy-ass white guy we all grew up with  
who performs magic tricks outside the 7-11 while eating  
cheetohs and chugging pepsi from a 2 liter bottle, his  
mullet blowing in the breeze!

*Beat.*

JIM

WHO? WHAAAAT??

DAVE

It's a new era Jim! An era where men's pants go over their shoes!

JIM

Fine DAVE! I'll take that into consideration next time I go shopping!

DAVE

PLEASE DO!!!!

*Beat.*

JIM

I'm confused. If I can look past the fact that you're -

DAVE

What, La-thiiiiiiiiino????

JIM

Yes! Then why can't you look past the fact that I'm-

DAVE

I don't want you to look PAST it, cocksucker!

JIM

Alright, you're twisting my words now. I apologize that I don't always have the-the-the- words for... I just don't get a lot of practice with- YOU'RE THE ONLY COLORED FRIEND I HAVE!!

*Beat. Such silence.*

DAVE

Colored friend?

JIM

Yes! You're a colored person!

*Beat.*

Aren't you?

DAVE

I am a person OF color.

JIM

Oh my god! Are you fucking kidding me right now? What's the difference dude? A-a-a- a preposition????

DAVE

There's a BIG difference actually, dude!

JIM

I'm sorry, I just don't have the words-!

DAVE

How about these words? "FUCK OFF JIM!"

JIM

Fantastic! "FUCK OFF DAVE!"

*Silence*

*They sit and stare like the beginning, but the smiles are gone.*

JIM

Dave. Come on man. This is-- This is clearly a very confusing topic, and-and-and it's sensitive and-

*Beat. Dave stares ahead, won't make eye contact. Look, I don't wanna get too hung up on this stuff. Do you?*

*Beat. Jim suddenly makes a decision. He juts his torso forward sharply and freezes.*

DAVE

What are you doing?

JIM

I'm leaning.

DAVE

Why?

JIM

...forward, I mean, I'm leaning forward. Uh- I'm hoping we can-

*Beat.*

Tell me we didn't destroy our friendship today.

*Dave stays upright. No one makes eye contact. Dave? Buddy?*

DAVE

I'm not sure.

JIM

'Cause that'd be the last thing I'd ever want. You're my- I love you man. Truly.

*Jim continues to lean forward, waiting.*  
Fuck. Ok...

*Jim starts to straighten. Dave's arm shoots out.*

DAVE  
Wait.

*Dave leans forward to match Jim's angle.*

JIM  
Dave, I-

DAVE  
You know what? Let's not talk right now. Let's just...

*Beat.*

JIM  
...yeah.

*Together, they lean forward a few inches more.*

*Lights out.*