

...the Sincerest Form of Flattery

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Synopsis

While pausing to assess their bearings on their Journey to Ecclesia, Creature of Few Words and Bookman encounter a pair of travelers who are incapable of taking anything seriously.

Characters

BOOKMAN	Man with a huge book. Kalliper's companion and Keeper of Stories.
CREATURE OF FEW WORDS	The Art Dragon, Kalliper. Wears a mask.
MOCKERS x 2	Transients supremely uncomfortable with the idea of taking anything seriously.

Setting

The Road to the Fair City of Ecclesia: A clearing along a well-traveled road, running thru an old forest. A scattering of decent-sized rocks and fallen logs are available for sitting, etc... There is NO sign indicating either the name of this road or the distance to the city.

Time

Any Time Period. Preferably day, (though not necessarily).

Minimal Setting Options

This piece could easily be performed black box.

Approximate Running Time: 8-10 minutes

(Lighting/Sound: Lights Up or Curtain Rise. The peaceful sounds of a quiet forest accompany the appearance of the Road to Ecclesia. No signs are visible.)

Enter BOOKMAN and CREATURE OF FEW WORDS. They are traveling towards Ecclesia.

BOOKMAN

(Slows, looking around. Eventually stops mid-stage.)

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Keeps going.)

BOOKMAN

You're sure this is the road to Ecclesia?

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Stops and looks back.)

BOOKMAN

This is the right direction? Right?

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Wanders slowly back towards BOOKMAN.)

BOOKMAN

Not that I'm doubting you, of course... But...

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Looks at BOOKMAN expectantly.)

BOOKMAN

You could be wrong. It does happen occasionally.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

...

BOOKMAN

Not that this is necessarily one of those times—

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

How often am I wrong?

BOOKMAN

Very rarely.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

...

BOOKMAN

Extremely rarely.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

...

BOOKMAN

But that's not never!

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Starts wandering around, exploring the area.)

BOOKMAN

You're probably right. This has to be the road to Ecclesia. The sign said it was, and the principle of Object Permanence can be thus applied: The road has neither divulged newer purpose, nor diverted from its original path, and it has neither, split, forked, T'ed, nor interacted in any way with any other road since we first set foot upon it. Therefore we MUST still be traveling under the influence of the last sign we passed, and likewise, we must ALSO therefore still be traveling the right way.

(Looks to CREATURE OF FEW WORDS.)

Well...?

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

Sound reasoning.

BOOKMAN

Yes. Indeed. They could mark it more frequently. To reassure travelers.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

Need we reassuring?

BOOKMAN

Occasionally... Leastwise, I do. Apparently...

Enter MOCKERS. They are traveling away from Ecclesia.

BOOKMAN

Greetings Travelers!

MOCKER 1

Greetings Travelers!

BOOKMAN

Do you hail from Eclesia?

MOCKER 2

(To MOCKER 1)

Do you hail from Eclesia?

BOOKMAN

My friend and I seek that fair city.

MOCKER 1

My friend and I seek that fair city.

BOOKMAN

(To CREATURE OF FEW WORDS)

I told you we were going the wrong way! We must have missed a turn...

MOCKER 2

(To MOCKER 1)

I told you we were going the wrong way! We must have missed a turn...

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Approaches MOCKERS cautiously, examining them with interest.)

BOOKMAN

Are you ignoring me again?

MOCKER 1

Are you ignoring me again?

BOOKMAN

Hey!

MOCKER 2

Hey!

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Scrutinizes MOCKER 1.)

MOCKER 2

(Begins mimicking CREATURE OF FEW WORDS.)

BOOKMAN

You're copying me!

MOCKER 1
You're copying me!

BOOKMAN
Stop that!

MOCKER 1
Stop that!

BOOKMAN
This instant!

MOCKER 1
This instant!
(Begins blatantly mimicking BOOKMAN's body language. Mimes holding book. Does a fair job, but not an amazing one.)

BOOKMAN
A little help here?

MOCKER 1
A little help?

BOOKMAN
(Looks at MOCKER 1 suspiciously.)

MOCKER 1
(Grins.)

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS
(Begins mimicking MOCKER 2's mimicking.)

MOCKER 2 and CREATURE OF FEW WORDS
(Drift across stage, mirroring each other in various ways.)

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS
(Tricks MOCKER 2 into poking him/herself in the face.)

MOCKER 2
Ow!
(Recovers and begins again, warily increasing the distance between them.)

BOOKMAN
I think you and your friend should be going.

MOCKER 1

I think you and your friend should be go—

BOOKMAN

Stop it!

MOCKER 1

Stop it!

BOOKMAN

Arrete!

MOCKER 1

Arrete!

BOOKMAN

Desist and Cease!

MOCKER 1

Cease and Desist!

BOOKMAN

...Desist and Cease.

MOCKER 1

...Cease and Desist.

BOOKMAN

I said Desist and Cease.

MOCKER 1

I said Cease and Desist.

BOOKMAN

If you're going to Mock me at least do it properly.

MOCKER 1

If you're going to Mock me at least do it well.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Tricks MOCKER 2 into poking him/herself in the face again.)

MOCKER 2

Ow!

Ow! BOOKMAN

Ouch! MOCKER 1

Desist— BOOKMAN

Cease— MOCKER 1

Damn it! BOOKMAN

Curses! MOCKER 1

You— BOOKMAN

You— MOCKER 1

—are really starting to annoy me. BOOKMAN

—are really getting on my nerves. MOCKER 1

Yes, you are. BOOKMAN

Yes, you are. MOCKER 1

I am going to put this down and strangle you! BOOKMAN

I am going to—
(Laughs.) MOCKER 1

Calm yourself. CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

MOCKER 2

Calm yourself.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

You should be proud.

MOCKER 2

You should be proud.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery...

MOCKER 2

Imitation is the sincere—heh, ah, um... eh, heh heh.

(Stops mimicking CREATURE OF FEW WORDS.)

Flattery.

MOCKER 1

(Horried. Laughs nervously, then overly loudly.)

Sincerity! Hah! Ah, ha. Ha... No... Nope. No sincerity here. No, none at all. Eh, heh.

Not even a jot. I think we've lingered long enough. Have fun in Ecclesia, Sir. Really must be going. Terribly sorry. Oh, look at the time. Ecclesia's back the way we came. Good day!

Exit MOCKER 1

MOCKER 2

(Stares after MOCKER 1, then looks at CREATURE OF FEW WORDS.

Laughs uneasily.)

Eh, heh heh... Sincerity. Heh heh. Flattery! Heh...

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Stares at MOCKER 2.)

Enter MOCKER 1

MOCKER 1

None of that now!

(Grabs MOCKER 2 and pulls him/her away.)

Exit MOCKER 1 and 2

BOOKMAN

(Stares after MOCKERS.)

Well... That was... Interesting.

(Pauses. Then...)

Sincerity...

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

Flattery.

BOOKMAN

Thanks for that. I wouldn't... Actually have strangled that... Person.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Comes over and stands beside BOOKMAN. Mimics BOOKMAN extremely well.)

BOOKMAN

So, we are going the right way.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

So it would seem.

BOOKMAN

Ecclesia lies yonder!

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

Object Permanence does not lie.

BOOKMAN

Are you mocking me?

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Mimes opening BOOKMAN's book and begins writing in it.)
What do you think?

BOOKMAN

(Watches with confusion at first. Then interest...)
Do I really look like that?

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

Yes. You do.

BOOKMAN

Fascinating...
(Walks around CREATURE OF FEW WORDS thoughtfully, watching from every angle.)
Huh. Flattery.

CREATURE OF FEW WORDS

(Stops 'writing' and looks up at BOOKMAN.)
Sincerity.

BOOKMAN

Indeed...

(Opens book and produces a quill. Stands next to CREATURE OF FEW WORDS and begins to write.)

(Fade to Black)

FINIS