

Adventure Cabaret

Identification, please. #2

[3:15]

Same actors as in #1. Woman is driving, checks her mirror, siren is heard, she pulls over and stops, the imposing cop walks up to her driver's side door.

Woman: It's you again. You want *more* identification?

Awkward silence.

Policeman: You know, it isn't easy being a cop. Most people hate you right up until the time they need your help, and after you give them your help, they just go right back to hating you. It's awful. But I do identify as a cop because I chose to be one, because I believe in the role. I am here to help people. I am here to help prevent needless damage and pain and sorrow. I am here to save people, even putting my life on the line to do so.

And people think cops are stupid. I have a degree from UC Berkeley in French literature, with straight A's. I could have done anything, but I chose to be a cop, for reasons of morality and setting a good example.

Yes, I am a black man. But do I identify as black? No. Do I identify as a man? No. I used to identify as a human being, but now I only identify as a being—just a being in human form, yet another accident of nature. I could have been born as a polar bear or a frog or a willow tree...or as a cormorant. Perhaps we could have gone flying and scuba diving together, Olga. But no, I just happened to be born as a human being, for better and for worse.

Two stagehands come out, with a beautiful satin robe. When the policeman puts his arms out, they slip the robe onto him in one seamless move. He removes his hat and mirrored sunglasses and hands them to the stagehands, who exit with them.

But most of all, I identify as a dancer. Sometimes when I am home alone I put on a beautiful satin robe and perform tender dances while imagining that I am a famous French dancer named Pierre. I dance slowly and beautifully by myself and say "Je m'appelle Pierre. Je suis de Paris." At the end I always sit down and cry for a long time.

I'm not feeling sorry for myself. I'm just so sad that I will never know what it is like to be anyone other than me. Every person I see, I wonder what it would be like to be them. Every animal I see, I wonder what it would be like to be that animal. And since I met you, I have wondered what it is like to be you, Olga. I wish more than anything that I could know, even for a few seconds, what it is like to be you.

You know what I mean?

Pause.

Olga: Officer, may I exit the vehicle?

The policeman makes a gesture of permission. Olga gets out of the car, and stands a few feet from the policeman.

Olga: What's your name?

Policeman: Arthur

Olga opens her arms to him.

Olga: Come here. Come on, get over here.

The policeman steps toward her. She puts her arms around him. He begins crying in her arms. Gradually the crying stops. Olga holds him by the shoulders, looking straight in his eyes.

Olga: Let's be friends. *(shaking him in a friendly way)*
We...are...gonna...be..friends! *(she chucks him on the arm)*

Olga gets back in the car, and is ready to drive off.

Olga: Thanks so much for this experience! Pull me over any time...Pierre!
(She blows him a kiss, and drives off.)

The policeman is still for a moment, then begins dancing slowly, back toward his car offstage.

Policeman: Je m'appelle Pierre. Je suis de Paris.