

# The Black Flamingo

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The Black Flamingo by Dean Atta | Directed by Lisa Cazzato Vieyra, uploaded 1 April 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UdejBoQ1v8>

1.

April Evening in Cyprus

Your grandfather draws  
your attention to the news;  
the story, a black flamingo  
has landed on the island.

An expert on screen  
explaining it is the opposite  
of an albino. *Too much  
melanin*, he says. Camera pans

the salt lake full of pink



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but the eye is drawn  
to that one black body  
in the flamboyance.

2.

I Want to Be a Pink Flamingo

Pink. Definitely pink.

I want my feathers to match the hue you imagine.

I want to blend in.

Nothing but flamingoness.

David Attenborough would say,

Here we see the most typical flamingo.

Though I don't want to be the most, just typical.

A wrapping paper pattern.

I don't want to stand apart.

Nothing different about my parts.

My beak just a beak, my head just a head.

My neck, body, wings. Simply fit for purpose.

Standing on one leg, just like the rest.

Pink. Definitely pink.

3.

Another April Evening in Cyprus

Your beach towel and shorts are dry now.

Couples on mopeds ride past the house.  
The dogs walk their humans before dinner.

Your grandfather coughs violently  
And then lights another cigarette.  
Your grandmother calls you both in to eat.

The black flamingo is on the news again.  
You pick the dining chair facing the TV.  
Grandfather asks, *Why does it matter if he's black?*

Adding, *The other flamingos don't care.*  
And you are certain what he's saying is, *I love you.*

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