

SHORTS

SHORT PLAYS BY ROBERT O'HARA

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DOWN LOW

A LITTLE DITTY WRITTEN BY ROBERT O'HARA

(sung **BRIGHTLY** to a tune that sounds a lot like that old favorite, SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT)

A MAN IN A SUIT Appears.

MAN IN A SUIT.

DOWN LOW
I CARRY IT
I'M GONNA TELL YOU HOW IT GOES
DOWN LOW
I CARRY IT
COMIN' FORTH TO PUT ON A SHOW
I WENT TO WORK AND WHAT DID THEY SEE
ANOTHER C.E.O IN ME
IN MY OFFICE WAS MY WIFEY
SITTING NEXT TO MY HOMEY
WITH RESULTS
FROM THE TEST FOR HIV
DOWN LOW
I CARRY IT
THATS JUST HOW THE STORY GOES
DOWN LOW
I CARRY IT
COMIN' FORTH TO PUT ON A SHOW

A MAN IN SPORT OUTFIT Appears.

MAN IN SPORTS OUTFIT.

DOWN LOW
I CARRY IT.
EVEN THOUGH ITS PROBABLY NOT THAT
DEEP
DOWN LOW
I CARRY IT
ON THE COURT IS WHERE I'M TRULY ME.
I WON THE MVP AND MY MAN WAS THERE
TO SEE.
BUT HE COULDN'T SIT WITH FAMILY.
NO ONE HAD A CLUE UNTIL I BLEW KISS
TO "BOO"
AND NOW ALL THE PAPERS SCREAM WITH
GLEE

MEN IN A SUIT AND SPORTS OUTFIT.

DOWN LOW
WE CARRY IT.
AND WE'RE GONNA SING IT HOW IT GOES
DOWN LOW
THAT HOW WE LOVE
NOT TO BE CALLED OUT, HOPEFULLY.

AN ARTIST APPEARS.

ARTIST.

UP HIGH
I CARRY IT
I'M GONNA TELL YOU HOW IT GOES
UP HIGH
I CARRY IT
AND I DON'T GIVE A DAMN IF IT SHOWS.
I WENT TO THE CONCERT AND I SANG
GLORIOUSLY.
AND THESE TWO WERE THERE ON DOWN
LOW.
I SANG UP HIGH AND THEY JUMPED TO
THEIR FEET
THEN I STEP DOWN AND SAID "HELLO"

THEY ALL GREET AND SAY "HELLO"

ARTIST.

UP HIGH.

MEN IN SUIT AND SPORTS OUTFIT.

(Scared)

DOWN LOW.

All.

WE CARRY IT. AND WE'RE GONNA TELL
YOU HOW IT GOES.

ARTIST.

UP HIGH.

MEN IN SUIT AND SPORTS OUTFIT.

(Strong)

DOWN LOW!!!

ALL.

WE CARRY IT. COMIN' FORTH TO PUT ON

A SHOW.

ARTIST.
NOW YOU SEE I'M OUT.

MAN IN A SUIT.
AND I'M OUTSOURCING

MAN IN SPORTS OUTFIT.
WELL THE ONLY THING OUT ABOUT ME-

ARTIST AND MAN IN SUIT.
IS HIS OUT-FIT.

MAN IN SPORTS OUTFIT.
WITH MY M.V.P.

MAN IN A SUIT.
AND MY P.H.D.

ARTIST.
DON'T FORGET THE S.T.D.

MEN IN SUIT AND SPORTS OUTFIT.
(whisper)
SHHH-
KEEP IT ON THE D.L.

ARTIST.
**WELL OPRAH TALKED ABOUT IT. AND THE
REVEREND PREACHED ABOUT IT. BUT THE
CHOIR BOYS SAT BACK QUIET-LY.**

MAN IN A SUIT.
(EBONICS)
CUZ IT AIN'T NOBODY'S BIZNESS

MAN IN SPORTS OUTFIT.
(EBONICS)
WHERE I CHOOSE TO DO MY BIZNESS

ARTIST.
AND THAT'S WHERE THE TROUBLE BE.

ALL.
DOWN LOW

ARTIST.

THEY CARRY IT.

MEN IN SUIT AND SPORTS OUTFIT.
WE CARRY IT.

ARTIST.
I'M COMING FORTH TO SET YOU FREE!!

ALL.
DOWN LOW

ARTIST.
THEY CARRY IT.

MEN IN SUIT AND SPORTS OUTFIT.
WE CARRY IT.

ARTIST.
(SPOKEN. FINAL.)
NOW LETS STOP THIS SHIT!!

ALL.
(harmonizing)

H.
I.
V.

End.

Dirt.

Actor One in a Suit, Eats Dirt.

Actor Two in a Suit and Backpack, Watches.

Pause.

ACTOR ONE.

Sir.(Ma'am)

ACTOR TWO.

Eat.

Pause.

Actor One Continues to Eat Dirt.

Soon all the Dirt is Gone.

The Actor One looks to the Actor Two.

Pause.

The Actor Two takes A "Zip-Lock" SACK of DIRT out of his Backpack and throws it at the Man...

The Actor One looks on it in Horror...

ACTOR TWO.

Eat.

ACTOR ONE.

Sir- (Ma'am-)

ACTOR TWO.

Fuck You. Eat.

Pause.

The Actor One Opens the Sack and Starts to Eat...

The Actor One looks at the Words Written on the Sack of Dirt...then He looks up at the Actor Two

ACTOR TWO.

I was there last year... I visited the rubble... I sat with the blind...

ACTOR ONE.

I don't know what you're talking about?

ACTOR TWO.

Their soil tastes of Metal-

ACTOR ONE.

Why were you tasting the soil?

Silence.

Actor Two takes Another Sack of Dirt from his Backpack and places it on the Table...

Then Another and Another... And Another ... And Another... Until the Small table is filled with Sacks of Dirt.

Actor One looks at the Sacks... Then at Actor Two... Then Back at the Sacks... Actor One Reads some of the Names on the Sacks Quietly... Then...

ACTOR ONE.

Are you insane?

ACTOR two.

I'm an American.

ACTOR ONE.

Does that Mean you're Insane?

ACTOR TWO.

I am... An American... Bombs with my name on them are imbedded in that soil-

ACTOR ONE.

I'm not eating another-

Actor Two takes out a Small Gun from his Suit Pocket...

ACTOR TWO.

Eat.

Silence.

The Actor One Eats...

Silence.

ACTOR TWO.

Some of them can no longer pee...

ACTOR ONE.

(eating)

How long do you think you can keep me here-

ACTOR TWO.

Dead babies litter the streets-

ACTOR ONE.

They will come for me and they will lock you away for-

ACTOR TWO.

Women... **Squat**... Sickened... And pray to die in order to not have to watch their children wilt-

ACTOR ONE.

This is not the way to Protest-

ACTOR TWO.

Eat! The DIRT!!

Silence.

Actor Two Eats...

ActoR TWO.

That is what you want isn't it?... That is what we came here for in the first place isn't it?... Dirt... Soil... The Middle East... Dirt... The Gulf... Dirt... Africa...Dirt... Europe... Dirt... Asia, Russia, America... Dirt...

Actor ONE.

Do you expect us to do nothing? To watch them as they amass-

ACTOR TWO.

Give up ours-

ACTOR ONE.

What?

ACTOR TWO.

Give ours up... Our Bombs... Our Nuclear-

ACTOR ONE.

You're not that naive to think-

ACTOR TWO.

Will our Nuclear Bombs stop their Nuclear Bombs-

ACTOR ONE.

Thats not the point-

ACTOR TWO.

The point is to kill

ACTOR ONE.

The **point** is to **protect**-

ACTOR TWO.

By killing MORE of them than-

ACTOR ONE.

By Not Allowing them to Be able to Threaten International-

ACTOR TWO.

Dirt!

Actor Two rushes to the Table and picks up a Sack... Actor Two Shoves the Sack into the Face of Actor One...

AcTOR TWO.

Have you been Here?

ACTOR ONE.

Yes... As a matter of Fact-

ACTOR TWO.

Without a Delegation?- Without a Secret Service?... Without an Armored Car? Have you?...

ACTOR ONE.

... No...

ACTOR TWO.

I have.

ACTOR ONE.

You know nothing of the Political Intrigues of that Country-

ACTOR TWO.

I know-

ACTOR ONE.

You could NOT **KNOW** they are Highly Classified Top Secret-

ACTOR TWO.

I **know** for the next hundred years uranium will seep into their drinking water from war-heads with my name on it-

ACTOR ONE.

This is ridiculous-

ACTOR TWO.

Convince me that any one of those were about something other than DIRT and I will let you go immediately-

ACTOR ONE.

War is much more complicated than-

ACTOR TWO.

Dirt.... Convince Me... Pick a Sack- Any Sack- Any Country on that Table and Tell me that it did not come down to Dirt.

Silence.

Actor One looks to the Sacks...

Beat.

Actor One picks up a Sack...

ACTOR ONE.

(re: Sack)

We were never even **there**.

ACTOR TWO.

Our money was... Same Difference...

Silence.

Actor One Picks up Another Sack.

This was a Holy War-

AcTOR ONE.

Fuck Holy-

ACTOR TWO.

It was a Radical Religious Sect that-

ACTOR ONE.

Fuck Religion-

ACTOR TWO.

They believed that God had-

ACTOR ONE.

**FUCK GOD!!!! DIRT!!!! WE WERE THERE BECAUSE OF THE DIRT
AND WHAT IT HAD IN IT!!!**

ACTOR TWO.

Silence.

Now you eat it...

AcTOR TWO.

Actor Two slowly Opens the Bag and Begins to
Eat...

Silence.

Do you know how they treat their women?

ACTOR ONE.

The same as we treated our Africans.

ACTOR TWO.

Silence.

That doesn't make it right.

ACTOR ONE.

Neither does Starving Them and Crippling their ability to market with the rest of the
world...

ACTOR TWO.

Actor One takes Another Sack.

ACTOR ONE.

(re: Sack)

Ethnic Cleansing.

ACTOR TWO.

Manifest Destiny.

Silence.

They Stare at One Another...

ACTOR ONE.

(angry holding Sack)

He was a Vicious Dictator who uprooted thousands of people from their homes and forced them to become refugees in their own land.

ACTOR TWO.

(force)

President Andrew Jackson.

Silence.

Actor one.

Is that what they teach you here?

ACTOR TWO.

They don't teach here... They Perpetuate...

ACTOR ONE.

(motioning to Another Sack)

You'd rather live there?

ACTOR TWO.

I'd rather they simply **Lived.**

ACTOR ONE.

We're not perfect.

ACTOR TWO.

Then stop acting like we are. Get rid of the Warheads.

ACTOR ONE.

That will never happen...

ACTOR TWO.

Then why tell others to get rid of theirs-

ACTOR ONE.

You are simplifying the issue beyond belief-

ACTOR TWO.

And you are complicating it so you **won't** have to believe... You Can't Bomb Hate-

ACTOR ONE.

Put That on a Sticker and Slap it on your Bumper were it Belongs-

ACTOR TWO.

You have to **Engage** It-

ACTOR ONE.

-If thats your Slogan you have a lot to learn

ACTOR TWO.

You see thats what I mean...

ACTOR ONE.

No I Don't see what you mean?

ACTOR TWO.

Arrogance. WE are NOT the GREATEST PEOPLE on the FACE OF THE EARTH... We are not the most intelligent most advanced most civilized... We are a Cog in the Wheel of Life... WE are not made its **CENTER** because we print more Money and are owed more DUES-

ACTOR ONE.

Save it for your Poly Sci Colloquium But my bumper says AMERICA- LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT.

Actor Two Raises the Gun to Actor One's Temple...

ACTOR TWO.

Is that the way you want it... Are you prepared to Leave it?...

Silence.

ACTOR one.

(end of tether)

What is it that you WANT from ME...

ACTOR TWO.

... Honesty...

You have given US Shit.. Not Honesty... Our hands are Full of MUD... And you see nothing there but Clean Palms... In one fell swoop of an Address to the Nation you eradicate the GREASE from between our Fingers.... We entered EVERY CONFLICT on that Table Dressed in Shining White Armor on a Fucking White Winged Horse bringing with us a Chronic Debilitating Case of AMNESIA **STUFFED** into our Super Power Pack...

ACTOR TWO.

You want to live in a Land where those Motherfuckas **DON'T FEAR US?**

ACTOR ONE.

YES!!!!!

SILENCE!!!!

Actor One begins to Open All the Sacks and Pour the Dirt onto the Table... Soon there is a Heap of Dirt on the Table...

SILENCE.

Actor One Stands...

Actor one.

I came here this evening to give a Talk... On Citizenship... On holding fast to the Belief that College, particularly this college... My Alma Mater... Held the Fruits of our Future... I'm leaving now... Shoot Me... Or Shoot yourself... I no longer give a Damn...

Actor One Begins to Exit... Then Stops...

ACTOR one.

There are places in this world where Evil Dwells... And you have absolutely no conception of how many there are or how far they are from you... Your country protects you from that evil... It goes places far scarier than those you collected in these Sacks... You were able to Collect that **Dirt**... Partly because they **Fear**... **Us**... They know that to harm you... Would bring our Wrath... **Hatred CAN and WILL be BOMBED**... And if you want to go and Collect... The Scraps... I. don't. give. a. Damn...

Actor One Starts Out Again...

ACTOR TWO.

(quiet)

I pray... to whatever it is out there... To whatever made you and myself... And the

oceans... And the Sky... And this Dirt... I pray to whatever Created It... That you will... Someday... Give a Damn... I beg you... Please...

ACTOR ONE.

I'm not the President...

ACTOR TWO.

You're his Speechwriter...

Silence.

ActOR TWO.

(quiet)

You color his tongue... You give emphasis... You... Capitalize... You place the **Period**... giving Finality... Do you think?... Ever... In the History of our Country... At any time in our Existence... We might have used the Wrong... **Punctuation**... I pray... To whatever gave Breath and Light to our World... That Someday... Someday Soon... You-

Actor One Exits...

Silence. Silence. Silence.

Actor Two Sits at the Table and Stares at the Dirt Mound...

End of Play.

CLUCK.

A JUDGE APPEARS.

A Black PLANTIFF Appears.

A White DEFENDANT Appears.

judge.

Alright you may proceed.

PLANTIFF

... Thank you your Honor. And so I walked up to her politely and politely said.
"Where my money?"

Defendant.

Your Honor I don't owe her any money.

PLANTIFF

Yes you do.

DEFENDANT.

No I don't. I Don't even know you Lady.

JUDGE.

Please. Don't talk to each other. Talk to me.

PLANTIFF

Thank you your Honor. Anyway. I asked her politely for my money and she look
at me and acted like she didn't know what I was talking about.

JUDGE.

Was this money a loan?

PLANTIFF

No. She stole it from me.

DEFENDANT.

I did what?

JUDGE.

Please. I will allow you to speak.

DEFENDANT.

But your Honor I DON'T KNOW HER!

JUDGE.

I said you will have your chance to talk.

DEFENDANT.

This is bullshit-

JUDGE.

Ms. Silvers **quiet**. Go on Ms. Morris.

PLANTIFF

Like I said. She acted like she didn't know what I was talking about but I could tell just from looking at her that she knew.

JUDGE.

And how was that?

PLANTIFF

Cuz she started cluckin'.

JUDGE.

Clucking.

PLANTIFF

(serious)

Yes your Honor, she clucked at me.

DEFENDANT.

I don't Cluck....

(underbreath)

"Cluck-Cluck"...

PLANTIFF

You see there your honor. She's a **Clucker**. I could tell it when I looked at her.

JUDGE.

Answer my question Ms. Morris. When did she steal the money from you?

PLANTIFF

1864.

DeFENDANT.

WHAT?

PLANTIFF

It was **1864** and you know it! Don't even try it.

DEFENDANT.

(underbreath)

Cluck-Cluck

PLANTIFF

Your Honor tell this woman to Stop **Cluckin'** at ME!

JUDGE.

Ms. Silvers please refrain from Cluckin' in this courtroom.

DeFENDANT.

Sorry your honor but its a condition I've had since birth and I can't help it.

JUDGE.

Well just please refrain from as much Cluckin' as you can ...

PLANTIFF

(disdain)

Clucker.

JUDGE.

Ms. Morris I will NOT tell you again... If you want to have me hear your case and not throw you out then you will speak ONLY to me.

PLANTIFF

Sorry your honor.

JUDGE.

Don't be sorry just Speak to ME.

PLANTIFF

Yes your honor. It was 1864 and I want my money.

JUDGE.

Are you expecting me to believe you were around in 1864?

PLANTIFF

Of course not, do I look dead to you?

JUDGE.

So please explain to me how the Defendant stole money from you when you weren't alive.

PLANTIFF

She took my peoples' money.

JUDGE.

Your peoples'?

PLANTIFF

My an-chesters...

DEFENDANT.

(laughing)

Cluck-cluck.

JUDGE.

I assume you mean your ancestors.

PLANTIFF

Thats what I said, my an-chesters.

Silence.

JUDGE.

Ms. Silvers do you have any idea what this woman is talking about?

PLANTIFF

No.

JUDGE.

And you say you've never seen her before in your life.

DEFENDANT.

Your honor this woman came up to me out of the blue in the middle of the street and started yelling at me about giving her her money. Cluck-cluck. I told her to leave me alone and she insisted on har-cluck-cluck-rassing me for the next 10 minutes. The cops came and she told them I stole her money and she'd take me to cluck-cluck court to get it back if she had to. I thought she was a homeless person at the time. But then I see that she actually went through with it and now I'm here.

Silence.

JUDGE.

You two know that I could hold you both in contempt of court and throw you in jail for wasting the court's time and money like this.

PLANTIFF

Your honor this **clucker** know she owes me my **Reparation monies**.

DEFENDANT.

She's crazy.

PLANTIFF

Shut up and go **cluck** somewhere.

DEFENDANT.

Cluck-cluck.

JuDGE.

Ms. Morris how do you come to believe she owes you Reparations.

PIANTIFF

Your honor I was sitting in my Livingroom minding my own bizness and watching Public Obsess channel 477.234 they said that White Folks owed me my **Reparations** monies and I had been meaning to **Reparate** my kitchen and bedroom for the last couple of years but I couldn't find the money and this show said she had it.

JUDGE.

Ms. Morris?

PLANTIFF

Yes your honor.

JUDGE.

Have you ever been examined by a Mental Care Physician?

PLANTIFF

My daddy was crazy but that was about as close as I got.

DEFENDANT.

Your honor may I say something?

JuDGE.

If you must.

DEFENDANT.

I think she might be mistaking me for some of my cluck-cluck cousins.

JUDGE.

How is that?

DEFENDANT.

They use to own Mules.

JUDGE.

And what does that have to do with anything-

PLANTIFF

That there proves it your honor! Right there from out of her own **clucker** - Them **mules** was suppose to be given to my peoples way back before all this started and if she or them other **cluckers** would have come out with it at the time when they promised it to us we wouldn't be here today with her trying to **cluck** her way out of it-

DEFENDANT.

(violent)

CLUCK YOU!

PLANTIFF

CLUCK ME? NAW CLUCK YOU CLUCKER!!

JUDGE.

That's it! I want you both out of my CLUCKING Courtroom CLUCK-CLUCK.

SILENCE.

**THEY LOOK AT THE JUDGE WHO TRIES
TO HIDE THE RECENT CLUCK.**

PLANTIFF

Ooooo Uh-Uh... You mean to tell me that you a **Clucker** Too Your Honor?????

DeFENDANT.

I knew I recognized you from the Cluck Convention.

JUDGE.

I am not a **CLUCKER!**

PLANTIFF

I want my **Reparations** on my Kitchen and Bedroom. And if she don't have it then I know this Clucker better find a way to turn back that Cluck-Cluck Clock and get me my 40 Okras and a Mule.

DEFENDANT.

Them Mules are all Dead by now... And how are you expecting to digest some Okra from **1864?!!!**

PLANTIFF

I'm gonna sit right down and chew on them 40 Okras at my newly Repaired Kitchen Table and be happy about it. Thats how.

JUDGE.

Alright you two Alright I'm ready to Rule.

DEFENDANT.

Your Honor!

JUDGE.

Quiet!!!

Silence.

JUDGE.

Ms. Morris. You have some nerve to come into my courtroom asking for Reparations to your Kitchen and Bedroom when you know that you have neither the conviction nor the strength of your an-chesters' **fingertips** in your whole entire body. You haven't a clue as to what they went through and by simply watching television and hearing that you are owed something that you did not earn is not only sickening but down right reprehensible. I could see if you were looking for Reparations to your Education or your children's Education but what are you going to do after your Kitchen and Bedroom are **Repaired**.

PLANTIFF

I'm gonna eat and sleep in comfort, what would you do?

JUDGE.

That was a rhetorical question Ms. Morris **be quiet!**

DEFENDANT.

Cluck-cluck.

JUDGE.

You don't get off so easy either Ms. Silvers. If you Cluckers promised Ms. Morris' peoples them 40 Okras and a Mule then you need to own up to it and give it to them. But since her peoples is dead and she can't prove that your specific clan of cluckers owed her folks the Reparations, she will therefore have to bring a Cluck-Cluck Class Action Suit against all the Cluckers on behalf of her An-chesters.

PLANTIFF

Thank You.

JUDGE.

BUT. The Reparations will not be for your Kitchen and Bedroom Ms. Morris. That money will go towards Books and Computers and College Tuitions and Job Training and Child Care and Housing Loans and the like.... Do I make myself clear... Your an-chesters didn't envision their hard sweat and labor to equal new

place settings at your Kitchen table or new wall paper in your Bedroom. That is the Ruling of this Court. Now you two get the CLUCK OUT.

The Two Women Leave. Devastated.

judge.

Next Cluck on the Clucket.

The JUDGE looks around once again. He covers his Mouth.

judge.

(underbreath)

...cluck-cluck... cluck-cluck...

**The JUDGE Makes his Way Off... Clucking.
End of Play.**

MOVIE

A MAN Stands using his Cellphone in Front of a Cinema.

Sounds of Various Light to Heavy Street Crowds coming and going to and from the Cinema.

The MAN Waits.

Soon. He takes out his Cellphone. He Dials.

Then.

Man.

(into phone)

... Have you heard from her?... No... I- No... see I told her this was gonna happen. Shit... No her being here in a moment won't help me. The movie started. The movie already started. Yeah. They said there wasn't gonna be any previews. They were just gonna start. Because its really long and they want to get all these damn- Yeah. **4:20** Yeah its now **4:40**. I told her Yeah i told her **4:20** so meet me at the theater at quarter to **4** because I knew everybody would be trying to see this movie and- she- yeah she called at **4** talking about she's on her way and i'm like "take a cab" but she wanted... Yeah... You see I'm getting pissed because I knew this was gonna happen thats why i'm not gonna do this anymore she will just have to wait until the shit comes out on Video or DVD or somethin- I don't care. Yeah. **4:20 4:20 4:20 4:20** I keep telling you. What? What does that-? What are you talking about how is that-? How would me telling her it was at **4:00** have mattered? The movie is at **4:20**. I know but- Yeah. So I'm suppose to tell her the wrong time so she'll be here at the right time? This is some bullshit- Yeah I'm standing right in front of the movie theater she can't miss me. She couldn't have gone inside I've been out here for- And anyway she doesn't have a ticket how is she gonna be inside the theater already. She isn't holding my seat She's fuckin'-

A WOMAN comes in with on her Cellphone.

Woman.

(into phone)

LATE? Thats not funny. No thats not funny. Let me see hold on.

(she looks to the Time Schedule)

No it's starting in like 10... minutes. Yeah. Yeah. I don't have to go in right now I already bought the tickets online so I'll just go up to the machine when you get here. The machine they have here. Yeah. You just go up and put in the credit card and yeah. Its general seating it doesn't matter when I get the tickets but- I said its

general seating and so I can get the tickets when you get here since we can't go inside anyway until then... Inside the **theater** where the movie is playing you sound like...are you? where are you? Where is that? What are you- No. I said 34th and 8th...No not- not 3rd. Yeah NOT 3rd. I said 8th...Well thats all the way on the other side of the- What?... What does it matter if I go in get the tickets right now you're not gonna get here in time to- I said **3rd** I mean no I said **8th**- I KNOW WHAT I SAID. No you heard me wrong because I know what I said- okay i'm just telling you- No i'm not saying that you're lying- i'm just saying I know what I said but I don't know what you heard... Fine look forget it. No fine. No- Forget it. What do you mean its playing at- What? So what?... What does that mean its playing at 34th and 3rd as well I BOUGHT TICKETS TO 34RD AND 8TH. ONLINE. YEAH!! I'M NOT YELLING. I'm just- I'm just saying- You're- You're kidding right? So you wanna go see the movie there and you want me to see the movie here? Yeah well. What about our **date?** I Said- Okay whatever I know what I said 3rd- **8th I mean...** No I think no you're right if- No you're right, if I go to this one and you go to that one at least we'll only be losing one ticket but- But I thought we were- No. Fine. I'll go here and you go there. Fine. No its fine. Yeah I know I'm sure I can find someone to buy- yeah its okay. Okay I'll call you when its over- yeah. yeah... good-

WOMAN 2 Enters on her Cell.

Woman 2.

(laughing loud)

-bye.

She hangs up and the Phone Immediately Rings.

Woman 2.

Yeah? Hey i'm just about to go into a- Hey whats- what are you crying about? What?... I don't know it just sounded like you were- okay, well i'm just about to go in and see- how did you know?.. Yeah its suppose to be really funny and- yeah somebody told me that he was amazing in that part and- what? oh... I guess it was you- look I have to run because I think- why are you crying... no- you're crying why are you?- Look Jess I can't- What? Yeah its a funny movie and don't want to miss the opening so- yeah. Yeah. No its okay... But... Okay... Call me I know you were the one who told me about it but its about to start and I'll call you later... Yeah... WHY ARE- I CAN TELL YOU'RE CRYING JESS WHATS WRONG? You're not going to ruin my movie whats- What do you mean you're with Todd what are you talking about he's- What?... What?..... WHAT?????..... I can't- WHAT?????... What????... What???? I don't even-.... WHAT!!!!!!????? I'm gonna throw- I think I'm gonna throw up I think- You guys are at a movie together?... You're at a movie with my boyfriend?...What Movie?- no I Mean I don't care what Movie... Why are you at a movie with my-STOP FUCKING CRYING AND

SAY IT!!!... Where is he?... Does he know you called me?... Okay you're gonna fucking stop crying because you're suppose to be my fucking sister and you are at fucking movie with my boyfriend and you know that he thinks its me and thats some low down dirty- I don't care if you're- and I'm a- he's going to- of course he's going to fucking think its me and you know – (under breath) **because** we joked around about me doing that one of these days... me and Todd we joked around about it- I threaten him he wouldn't know the **difference**- you know we joked around about it I told you - yes I told you I told you he wanted me to dress up like a man and we joked around about it... Fuck you you knew! ... you're suppose to be my fucking **twin sister** and- then why are you calling me and telling me this if you're- **what are you saying?!!!!** I can't believe this- how can you be in love with my- **I don't care if he only loves you as a MAN I can't believe you!!!!!!**... He doesn't know its you- **he thinks its me!** You **Idiot!**... Because he wouldn't cheap on me thats why!... What????... What?????..... WHAT?????????..... Wait- What??????... wait wait wait wa wa wa wait WHAT?????..... I'm pregnant-

MAN 2 Appears.

Man 2.

Two?... I thought there was going to be three of us. Well why isn't he coming? Oh. I didn't remember that. I heard it was stupid. No I heard that they thought they were really saying something interesting and it was an interesting idea but I heard it was stupid. I'm going to see the new one with the uh the guy-that guy who does those tricks with his- yeah. I think this is like part 14... No that was- that was like part 5. Yeah. No because you remember in part 3 when he chased her up the stairs and she fell out the window and he jumped out on her and they fought and then that cat came walking by and then that other cat came running up to the car that was sitting at the end of the block?... Well that fire hydrant that was across the street from that car... no the other one... No there were two fire hydrants and yeah- no that was part 3 that was not part 4 it couldn't have been because in part 5 when they were on that other planet and he showed up he was carrying that cat- the first one that ran by in part 3 and- no he wasn't really dead... No she only cut off his head and his lower half of his body in part 1... His torso was still alive...yeah- thats exactly why in part 12- EXACTLY... You saw that too... Yeah but I heard it was stupid... Well that was the only thing that was good about it I heard... The rest is suppose to be stupid-

MAN 3 Appears.

Man 3.

Black folks in our house. I Know I know I know... I Know I know I shouldn't have but I know but- There are going to be Black folks in our house. And we're going to have to deal with that. No its not, you know- its not that it's like...

(looking around)

Oh some movie she's- she's suppose to be here by now but- yeah... I'm-Thats what

I just said there are going to be Black Folks in our house and- Yeah. No I'm not kidding... So do you think we should take it down?... Well I- yeah we got it in Africa but we never imagined- no we never imagined we'd have a black person over at our house and they'd- see it - No- Thats what I mean this is the first time that we're going to have Black folks over... at the house...I do too... Yes I do too... - well I just don't know I don't know what- you know.... These black- no these black these are **smart black folks** who are going to know- i'm positive- i'm positive- I'm **positive** they're going to know its from **Africa**- Well what if they're offended? They might be no they might be I mean- yeah... exactly... yeah they're very dark exactly in the picture its just its just the one that we gravitated toward I was there and exactly- its **dark** they're dark people and thats why we- exactly. Thats why we liked it and I don't think we should take it down because it might offend them but I'm just not sure if this is exactly the conversation I want to be getting into with my fiancé's parents... In front of you guys... Mom have you been hearing a word of what I- Mom I said they're **smart**... They're going to know..... I Could do that.No thats not stupid at all- because I could I could do that and- yeah- No Mom thats a really good idea. I'll tell them... Its Greek. I'll tell them it's Roman... Classical. And **Ancient**. So it couldn't ... right it couldn't be... African... Thats a good idea...no.... Thats a **really** good idea Mom... Thanks.

THE BEAUTY IN QUEENS (JACKSON HEIGHTS)

THE SETTING IS an apartment in the HIGH-RISE section-8 PROJECTS OF JACKSON HEIGHTS, QUEENS, NY...

AN OLD BLACK WOMAN WEARING A HOUSE DRESS SITS IN A ROCKING CHAIR...

SHE HOLDS A BUCKET OF COLLARD GREENS IN HER LAP AND SHE PROCEEDS TO SEPARATE THEM...

NEXT TO HER SITS A PHONE...

SHE ROCKS...

SILENCE.

SOON.

A YOUNG BLACK WOMAN ENTERS WITH A BUCKET OF WATER...

SHE BEGINS TAKING THE GREENS ONE BY ONE FROM THE OLD WOMAN and washing them...

THE YOUNG BLACK WOMAN SPEAKS IN HIGH CLEAR CRISP **british**

THE OLD BLACK WOMAN SPEAKS IN LOW GUT-BUCKET GHETTO **EBONICS**

YOUNG WOMAN.

Did the phone ring while I was in the loo?

Silence.

YounG WOMAN.

Ma-Ma... Did the phone ring?

Silence.

YouNG WOMAN.

Are you still angry with me Ma-Ma...

Old woman.

I don' tol' you I ain't answerin' nuthin' yous gats ta' say til' you start back ta' talkin' lak a human person... You sound lak a gat damn fool'

YOUNG WOMAN.

Ma-ma don't you know what day it is?

OLD WOMAN.

Hell yeah I know what day it is HEIFA!!!

YOUNG WOMAN.

Ma-Ma-

OLD WOMAN.

I'm not yo' fucking "MA-MA"... I'm yo' gat damn MAMA!! WHY ARE YOU TALKIN' LIKE THEM WHITE FOLKS OTHER THERE IN THEM EUROPEY LANDS FO' FOOL!!! YOU AIN'T NEVA' EVEN BEEN 'DERE...

SILENCE.

THEN.

YOUNG WOMAN.

Ma-Ma... Did the phone ring...

Silence.

The old woman sucks her teeth and turns back to her greens...

The young woman lifts the RECEIVER and checks the dial tone... Finding that it still works she hangs up and resumes washing the greens...

Soon.

A young black son enters DRESSED in fubu, Sean john, tommy hilfiger or some other designer POOR AFRICAN-AMERICANS SPEND EXORBITANT AMOUNTS OF MONEY TO WEAR...

The young black son speaks with a spirited **irish** accent...

Young son.
Top of the Day Mums...

YOUNG WOMAN.
Good Morning Son...

Silence!!
The young woman and the young man look to each other in shock...

Young sON.
I thought we'd had this one settled Mum...

YOUNG WOMAN.
I thought so too son.

YOUNG SON.
Irish

YOUNG WOMAN.
British

YOUNG SON.
No mum

YOUNG WOMAN.
Yes son

YOUNG SON.
Irish was what we settle on

YOUNG WOMAN.
It was British as I remember son...

OLD WOMAN.
(scowl)
What the Fuck is Going On HEAH!!!! I Want you Two out of My House Now!!!

OLD WOMAN THROWS DOWN HER BUCKET OF GREENS...

YOUNG WOMAN.
This is my house Ma-Ma... You were to be put in a home but I spared you... and you'd do best to remember that before you go raising cain again... you

understand?...

YOUNG SON.

Top of the Day Granny...

OLD WOMAN.

(low pissed)

I'm not your fuckin' "granny" you little punk...I'm yo' "big mama"...

YOUNG WOMAN.

Son what are we going to do... We can't all have different dialects...and Ma-Ma refuses to erase hers... She's down right stubborn that one is...

OLD WOMAN.

Fuck off...

YOUNG WOMAN.

See what I mean?

yOUNG SON.

Its alright Mum...Most folks can't really make out the difference all they know is that there **is** a difference and thats good enough... I've been reading up on it... They let the British and the Irish in just the Same... And As long as you or I answer the phone we'll be alright... You got that granny?... Let mum or meself answer the ringer alright?

Silence.

Young sON.

Good then...

The Young son goes to the phone and lifts the RECEIVER... He checks the dial tone...

YoUNG WOMAN.

I've done that already son... It works for now...

YOUNG SON.

Have you checked as I told-

YOUNG WOMAN.

Yes son... Every hour on the hour I've checked since yesterday...

YOUNG SON.

Because it could be turned off at anytime mum...

I know son... YOUNG WOMAN.

Like the electricity YOUNG SON.

Yes son YOUNG WOMAN.

And the Hot Water YOUNG SON.

Yes son YOUNG WOMAN.

And the Gas... YOUNG SON.

Son. I know... YOUNG WOMAN.

Just making sure... YOUNG SON.

Silence.

Young son turns to old woman.

Young sON.

We're moving today granny. You excited?

The old woman lets out a fart through her mouth...

Eat me. OLD WOMAN.

Ma-ma! YOUNG WOMAN.

Another fart sound from her mouth...

YouNG SON.

Don't you want to get out of the projects granny?... Don't you want to be able to see the sunshine clearly instead of it creeping around a piss smelling brick wall... We're **moving** granny...

YOUNG WOMAN.

Guess **where** Ma-ma...

YOUNG SON.

Yes Guess Granny...

Silence.

Then they can't retain their excitement...YOUNG
WOMAN AND SON EXCLAIM!

BOTH.

BROADWAY!!!

YOUNG SON.

All the applications for Black Families have been taken up for the next 10 decades
by Mr. Wilson...

YouNG WOMAN.

You remember Mr. Wilson Ma-Ma? He had that white daddy but never wanted to
talk about it?...

Young sON.

Well they gave him ALL the spaces that was suppose to be for the Black Families
they gave them ALL to Mr. Wilson you see...

YouNG WOMAN.

For the next **10 Decades** Ma-Ma really!!

YOUNG SON.

And now he gets to tell everybody about all the wonderful times him and his family
spent HOURS UPON HOURS UPON HOURS

YouNG WOMAN.

UPON HOURS!!

YOUNG SON.

Sitting on those back FENCES in Philadelphia

YOUNG WOMAN.

Chicago I thought?

YOUNG SON.

No Philadelphia I think

YOUNG WOMAN.

Are you sure it wasn't D.C.?

YOUNG SON.

Detroit maybe... Wherever!... In any case Mr. Wilson now has a monopoly on the Black Spaces on Broadway...

YOUNG WOMAN.

He's friendlier they think don't they?... He makes a good neighbor they think?... Well we could tell them some stories about kind and gentle Mr. Wilson like the time his black mama took to boiling that grease in that skillet and racing after his white papa you remember Ma-Ma?

YOUNG SON.

(his accent slowly losing accent...)

Now he's content with telling stories about Chasin' Chickin's off 'a Fences givin' Guitar and Piano Lessons after Joe Turner up and Left his Mama Rainy for King Hedley cuz she didn't wanna catch them Two Trains Running Back to Jitney with her Gems of the Ocean around neck that she forgot take off when she was Playing Radio Golf... Mr. Wilson's Sho' Gat all'Dem Black Slots Booked...

YOUNG WOMAN.

Son. Your Accent!

YOUNG SON.

(Irish Again)

Oh... Top of the day Mum...

YOUNG WOMAN.

Goodmorning Son.. See Ma-Ma... Son found out that all it takes to move to Broadway these days is a little... **Accent...** And since your last Stroke you can't **TAPDANCE** anymore Ma-Ma ...

The old woman **taps** her feet on the floor in defiance, trying to prove she's still got what it takes.

YOUNG WOMAN.

Well not like you use to anyway... so our chances of moving to Broadway with YOU are pretty Slim aren't they?..

YOUNG SON.

Granny. Last week I went there... I went to see all those fancy building lined up and

down Broadway you know the ones in the papers... and **Inside** there were all these **families**... Just like ours... But they all spoke **Funny**... And I asked one of the men from the House of Ushers what exactly this meant and he said... "Son you have to change the Way you talk... Because its not about what you say anymore... Any ol' Stupid Story will Do...Its about the **Accent** you use to say it"... He told me lots of families just as **Boring** as ours have made it to Broadway... They just sound different that's all...

YOUNG WOMAN.

Hence the Change...

YOUNG SON.

This man from the House of Ushers told me the Secret.. The Secret to moving to Broadway... "**Accent Equals Access**"... and that stuck with me as I was looking through those fancy homes on Broadway... And then I saw it granny... In one of the Houses, I don't remember but there was one with the name of some Peanut Butter Company on it. I saw this old nasty White Woman rocking in a Rocking Chair and a young nasty White Woman was running around her washing dishes and I thought immediatly of you Two... I said to me self...They're just as dull as me family... I have a Granny... Who Rocks...I have a Mum... Who Washes... All I need now is the Accent...So I sent a letter to Shubert Realty Incorporated and they promised to call me today and tell me which Broadway House they're gonna transfer us into...

YOUNG WOMAN.

(big...Chekovian)

We're **moving** Ma-Ma... **To BROADWAY!!!**

SILENCE.

OLD WOMAN MAKES SEVERAL
GESTURES WITH HER HANDS...

THE YOUNG WOMAN AND SON LOOK TO
EACH OTHER...

YOUNG WOMAN.

What does that mean Ma-Ma?

Old woman makes a square with her hands...

YounG SON.

Is that some sort of **box** Granny?

YOUNG WOMAN.

I hope this isn't one of your lewd jokes Ma-Ma really...

Old woman makes square smaller **then BIG!**

YouNG WOMAN.

BIG!!!! A BIG BOX Ma-Ma?!!!

YOUNG SON.

Big box?

Old WOMAN shakes her head. She again makes a small square...

YouNG WOMAN.

Small

Old woman makes big square.

YoUNG SON.

BIG...

Old woman nods...

She makes one hand into a tiny hole and uses a finger from her other to insert and remove into the hole over and over...she makes sex noises...

YouNG WOMAN.

Fucking?

Old woman nods...

Young sON.

Big Fucking?

Old woman nods...

She begins moving her hands as if she's throwing some Playing cards at the two...

YouNG WOMAN.

Poker?

YOUNG SON.

Gin Rummy?

YOUNG WOMAN.

Big fucking Gin Rummy?

OLD WOMAN.

DEAL!!!! YOU IDIOTS!!!! BIG FUCKING DEAL!!!!

SILENCE.

THE PHONE RINGS...

SILENCE.

FEAR.

THE OLD WOMAN REACHES FOR THE PHONE AND LIKE LIGHTING THE YOUNG SON GRABS HER BY THE ARMS AS THE YOUNG WOMAN SLAPS HER HANDS OVER THE OLD WOMAN'S MOUTH...

THEY BOTH "SHHH!!!!" THE OLD WOMAN...

THE PHONE RINGS AGAIN...

THE YOUNG SON SITS IN THE LAP OF THE OLD WOMAN ON TOP OF HER HANDS...

WITH HIS NOW FREE HANDS HE ANSWERS THE PHONE...

YOUNG SON.

(phone)

Top of the Day?...

The old woman struggles against the two holding her...

YOUNG SON.

(phone)

Yes this is he?...I am the man of the house yes...No just me Mums me granny and meself... Me papa ran off one day looking for a job... I suppose he got it because he never returned... Well... Me Granny... She's A **Rocker**... Yes?... You've heard of her?

The old woman struggles some more and the

young son uses his free hand to help hold his mother's hands over the old woman's mouth **tighter...**

YOUNG SON.

(phone)
Me Mums?... Well...

YOUNG WOMAN.

(quick)
I can wash...

YOUNG SON.

(phone)
She's a Washer... And MeSelf?... I Write... I'm a Writer...

YOUNG WOMAN.

(quick)
A damn good one too...

They smile at each other... Not noticing that the old woman has turned blue...

YOUNG SON.

(phone. Smiles.)
Really? You mean it?... Limited Engagement?... But there is no **star** living here... We don't have a **star** here...No we haven't a television neither... Who is that? You do?...

YOUNG WOMAN.

What son what?

YOUNG SON.

(phone)
To play meself?... To live in the Broadway house with us and play me self?... But I am meself?... No I don't believe **he** could play meself Better... I like playing MeSelf! Yes you said he's a **star** but-

YOUNG WOMAN.

Son!...

YOUNG SON.

(phone. Smiles.)
Okay... Yes!!... Thank you Mr. Shubert... next week?...a meeting?! Yes of course...Yes one second...

The young son covers the RECEIVER... He turns to the young woman...

YOUNG SON.

(whisper)

He wants to talk to you... You ready Mums?

YOUNG WOMAN.

Yes son...

He hands her the phone...

YOUNG WOMAN.

(phone)

Goodmorning Mr. Shubert... Yes this is she... Why thank you... Yes I'm very proud of my boy... Yes I've heard of her... Yes... Well are you quite sure? I mean is **she** the right age to be playing me?...She wants to **Stretch**?... Yes, I see... **He has?**...

YOUNG SON.

What mums?...

YOUNG WOMAN.

(whisper...covering phone... To SON)

The Mr. Wilson Foundation has agreed to lease a Sublet...He wants to throw us a Housewarming party in our Backyard...

YOUNG SON.

(delight)

Really? We're gonna have a Backyard Mums!! On Broadway?... Will it have a FENCE and CHICKENS?!!!

YOUNG WOMAN.

(phone)

Yes I'm still here Mr. Shubert... Yes really?... Furnished?... Oh my god I don't know what to say...

The young woman covers the phone again and whispeRS to the young man.

YOUNG WOMAN.

(giddy)

They've agreed to completely furnish our Broadway house with the Hansberry Raisin Collection... And he's offering me the Lead **MAID** role. She's a deaf mute.

YounG SON.

(elated)

I can't believe it mums... Can this really be happening?... Deaf-mutes win so many awards.

She turns back to phone.

YOUNG WOMAN.

(phone)

Next week yes... Chop chop... We will Mr. Shubert yes... Me Ma-Ma?... You'd like to speak to her?... Well...

The young woman and son... just now notice that the old woman is **dead**... they take their hands off the old woman's mouth... They look to each other...

The young man takeS the phone away from his mother...

YouNG SON.

(phone)

Mr. Shubert... I'm sorry to tell you but me Granny passed just this morning... yes... apparently she was surprised by a sheer shock of joy...something she'd never felt before and her heart couldn't take it poor thing.. She was really looking forward to moving... It was painless... **SHE** was interested in me granny's part really????... Well I could write something I suppose... Of course we could bring her Rocker with us we'd be glad too... No, thank **you** sir thank **you**... It's a pleasure to finally hear from you sir... It has always been me dream to move to Broadway... The Lights the Accents the Homosexuals... Its a dream deferred come true... I will... Thank you...

He hangs up the phone...

The young woman and young son look to the dead old woman...

They go to each other and hug strongly...

They look into each other's eyes through tears...

Both.

(joy)

BROADWAY!!!! HEAR WE COME!!!

END.

“Plays take a long time to get to New York these days - unless they happen to be Irish or English,”

—edward albee, 2001