

FAIRVIEW

Jackie Sibblies Drury

Derek Zasky | WME
DZasky@wmeentertainment.com
212.903.1396

Cast List:

BEVERLY
DAYTON
JASMINE
KEISHA

Then:

SUZE
MACK
BETS
JIMBO

Then:

Everyone

Act One appears to be a comedic family drama.

Act Two watches Act One.

Then, Act Two pushes further into Act One and drives it forward to make Act Three.

A Quote:

“ ‘Dirty nigger!’ Or simply ‘Look, a Negro!’ ”
- from *Black Skin White Masks* by Frantz Fanon

This, reversed, is the play, in a way.

ACT ONE

*Lights up on a negro:
BEVERLY is peeling carrots, real carrots,
on a theater set that looks like a nice living/dining room
in a nice house in a nice neighborhood.*

*BEVERLY stops peeling carrots to put on music.
Music plays.
She dances her way back over to peeling carrots.
She peels until the music from the speaker goes a little
funny; feedback, or something like it.
It makes BEVERLY nervous, for a moment.*

*BEVERLY steels herself.
She glares at the speaker.
The speaker fixes itself.*

*And then BEVERLY thinks:
Everything is fine.
Everything is going to be perfect today.
Good.*

*And then BEVERLY does that thing:
she applies makeup in a pretend mirror
hung on the fourth wall.
It's a very normal thing to have happen in a play.*

*As she looks at herself,
DAYTON enters with a bunch of silverware.
He sees her.
He watches her.*

*Eventually she feels herself being looked at.
She jumps and turns to him, startled:*

BEVERLY
What are you looking at?!

DAYTON
You.

BEVERLY
Me?

DAYTON
That's right.

BEVERLY
You can't just sneak up on people, Dayton.

DAYTON
"Sneak up on people"??

BEVERLY
You say hello when you come in a room,

DAYTON
I can't sneak up on you, you're my wife.

BEVERLY
You say hello, you don't just watch a person.

DAYTON
Sneak up on – Beverly I live here.

BEVERLY
You don't just watch a person, and they don't know you're there, and you're there just looking at them.

DAYTON
But what if I just like to look at you?

BEVERLY
Can't you look at me And say hello?

DAYTON
Uh-un. Not when you look as fine as you do.

BEVERLY
Oh, Dayton. You can be sweet when you want to, can't you.

DAYTON
Come over here and give me a kiss.

BEVERLY
But Mama's just upstairs, and –

DAYTON
Ain't no one but us here now.

BEVERLY
Right. That's right.

DAYTON
Don't tell me I'm right. Show me.

BEVERLY
But I'm so behind! If I don't get these carrots ready –

DAYTON
Beverly Frasier if you don't come over here and show me what you think of me –

*She gives him a peck on the cheek.
He pulls her in for a bigger kiss.
She squeals.
They are close, and it's sweet.
But then she sees the silverware he brought.
Eyeball: what am I gonna do with this man:*

BEVERLY
And what do we have here?

DAYTON
Silverware.

BEVERLY
I asked for place settings for six. And what did you bring me?

DAYTON
Six forks, six knives, six spoons.

BEVERLY

Desert forks and butter knives and serving spoons.
What's a person supposed to eat with that?

DAYTON

... food?

BEVERLY

Oh Dayton. This is Mama's birthday.
And she was already in a mood, when she went upstairs.
Everything must be perfect or –

Phone ring sound.

BEVERLY

Don't you dare. Dayton.

Phone ring sound.

BEVERLY

Don't you pick up that -- Dayton.

Phone ring sound.

BEVERLY

Dayton!

DAYTON answers.

DAYTON

Hello?

BEVERLY

Who is it?

DAYTON

Now is not a good time.

BEVERLY

Who is it?

DAYTON
In the first round?!

BEVERLY
Who is it?

DAYTON
No one.
Just don't overspend on defense.

BEVERLY
Dayton.

DAYTON
Good, that's good – I'll call you right back.
Focus on the counting stats.

He hangs up.

DAYTON
What?

BEVERLY
Dayton, I really need you here today.
It's mama's birthday. A big one.

DAYTON
Beverly. I am here. Here I am. Trying to help you.

BEVERLY
Help me lose my mind is what.

DAYTON
Trying to help you keep it.
So, tell me, woman: what do you want from me.

BEVERLY
I want ... six forks, six knives, six spoons.

DAYTON
Alright, Beverly.

BEVERLY

I'm going to seat Mama here –

DAYTON

At the head of the table?

BEVERLY

It's her birthday.

DAYTON

It's my house.

BEVERLY

Our house. So, Mama. Me. Keisha. Tyrone. You. And Jasmine.

DAYTON

You didn't tell me Jasmine's coming.

BEVERLY

Didn't I?

DAYTON

No.

BEVERLY

Of course Jasmine is coming. She's my sister.

DAYTON

I thought you wanted this dinner to go well.

BEVERLY

Dayton, please.

DAYTON

That woman knows every thing about every body
and never has one good thing to say about anybody.
She's a one-woman FBI NSA KGB.

BEVERLY

She's family. And family is / everything.

DAYTON

Everything. I know. Shut up Dayton and get the silverware. I know.

DAYTON exits.

BEVERLY

Thank you Dayton.

You're a big help.

And bring the root vegetables you bought!

I need to get them in the oven.

And the cheese plate!

Dayton?

You bought the root vegetables that I asked you to, didn't you?!

Dayton?

Dayton!

How come he can hear me when I'm not even talking to him,
but the second I ask him for something he can't hear a thing?

A doorbell ring sound.

BEVERLY

Company's here!

And I'm not ready.

BEVERLY runs around in a last-minute scramble:

BEVERLY

Oh, I haven't even started the root vegetables, they need at least an hour!

Oh no, Dayton!

Oh my lord.

Dayton, what did I say about putting beer on my coffee table?

Like he doesn't care What we look like to people.

Dayton, where is the cheese plate?

Lord give me strength.

Dayton!?

DAYTON enters with cheese plate.

DAYTON

I'll answer the door. You finish up in the kitchen.

BEVERLY

Oh, I just wanted everything to go well today.

DAYTON

Everything's going to be fine. Don't worry.

BEVERLY exits.

*JASMINE enters with a bottle of rosé
and some flowers for Mama.*

JASMINE

Haaaaay-aaaaaaaay! How you doin' baby?

DAYTON

Oh, I'm fine, I'm fine, Jasmine.

JASMINE

Are you?

DAYTON

Yes, I'm doing well.

JASMINE

That's not what I heard.

DAYTON

(look: didn't I say this woman is in everybody's business?)

Can I take that wine from you?

JASMINE

Yes. Put it in the freezer, so it gets nice and cold. Alright?

DAYTON

Got it. And why don't you help yourself to some cheese:
we have an Aged Gouda, a Humboldt Fog, and some lovely Brie.

JASMINE

Oh wow.

I'm off dairy.

That looks nice though, doesn't it.

DAYTON
I didn't know that.

JASMINE
Mmm-hmm. Can't you tell? I think I look like a snack.

DAYTON
Does Beverly know that?

JASMINE
Well. If my sister cared to know, then she would know.

DAYTON
Alright, Jasmine. Can I get you a glass of wine.

JASMINE
I want the wine I brought.
I'll wait.

DAYTON mimes something behind her back, then exits.

JASMINE looks at herself in the "mirror."

JASMINE checks hair, outfit, teeth.

*Eventually music re-starts,
without anything onstage initiating it.*

JASMINE looks around, like "um, what."

She decides to ignore it. She looks good.

But she's hungry.

She eyes the cheese plate.

She looks around to see if anyone is watching.

She moves towards the cheese plate.

Takes a bite of cheese.

From off stage:

BEVERLY
Jasmine, you better not be eating that cheese.

*JASMINE spits out the cheese,
rearranges the wedges,
and poses, feigning calm.*

BEVERLY enters.

JASMINE
Oh, hello Beverly. That's a lovely dress.

BEVERLY
Dairy free.

JASMINE
What? Oh yes.
I look good, don't I?

BEVERLY looks at the cheese plate.

BEVERLY
Why do you always have to be Just Like how you always are?

JASMINE
You know what?

BEVERLY
What.

JASMINE
... It's a special day.
I'm here for mom's birthday.
She was a wonderful mother to you and me and Tyrone,
she has lived a long and illustrious life,
and I am not trying to disrespect that because you
trippin' over some budget Brie and some grapes.

BEVERLY
Jasmine.

JASMINE
Oh, come on girl.
You out here with some President Brie,
ain't cost more than three ninety nine,
talkin' 'bout special cheese for Mama.

BEVERLY
Please don't start with me today.

JASMINE

I didn't start anything.

You're the one who summons us all to your house
like you the Queen of Sheba,

You're the one who walked in,
no hello, no how are you,

just on me right away about some three ninty-nine cheese.

Well.

I might feel some type of way about that.

That's all I'm saying.

BEVERLY

Today isn't about you. And it isn't about me. It's about Mama.

JASMINE

I know exactly what today is about. Is she here?

BEVERLY

She's upstairs.

JASMINE

Well, let me go up and say hello.

BEVERLY

Oh, Jasmine, Don't.

JASMINE

Why are you so nervous?

BEVERLY

I'm not nervous.

JASMINE

What is there to be nervous about?

BEVERLY

Nothing. I just want everything to go well.

JASMINE

It will.

BEVERLY

It has to. It just has to.

JASMINE

Beverly, you're going to give yourself a stroke if you don't calm down. Sit down. Have a glass of wine. I brought rose.

BEVERLY

That does sound nice.

JASMINE

It's from France.

BEVERLY

I just put it in the fridge. Do you want a glass?

JASMINE

Why you put the wine in the fridge when I said put it in the freezer.

BEVERLY

You didn't say to put the wine in the freezer.

JASMINE

I know what I said.

BEVERLY

Alright Jasmine, alright. Let me get us a glass of wine.

JASMINE

Well, put an ice cube in it, since it's still warm.

BEVERLY

Alright.

BEVERLY exits

JASMINE

You don't have to take a tone with me after you get me all stressed.

And put the rest of the bottle in the freezer, so it gets cold.

You hear that Beverly?

Beverly?

Damn. That woman never listens to anybody.

KEISHA enters.

KEISHA
Hi Aunt Jasmine.

JASMINE
What the -- ?! Keisha? You startled me.

KEISHA
Oh, I'm sorry.

JASMINE
It's alright.

They do their special Auntie-Niece greeting.

JASMINE
How are you Keisha?

KEISHA
Well.
Practice ran over Again because Tanya was late Again
so Coach made everyone run a lap for every minute she was late
and she was a full seventeen minutes late
so everyone had to run seventeen laps after practice
just because Tanya is obsessed with Jaden
which is insane because Jaden is stupid as hell
I'm sorry but he is
he's just dumb
but Tanya is obsessed with him
so she waits outside the boys practice
so she can see him coming to practice
before she comes to our practice
even though our practice and the boys practice start at the same time
so Tanya is late to our practice every single day
and Erika and I are so frustrated
because we could be a really good team
if everyone would work as hard as I do
like if everyone could work as hard as Erika does
we could be a really good team
but instead it's all a waste of time

KEISHA (*cont.*)

because we're just waiting and waiting
waiting for people like Tanya to show up and then
waiting to see what our punishment for Tanya showing up late
and it's like sometimes I feel like
I'm spending my whole entire life waiting for punishment
and what kind of a life is that
do you know what I mean Aunt Jasmine
like there has to be more to life than that, doesn't there?

JASMINE

Well –

KEISHA

Where's my mom?

JASMINE

In the kitchen.

KEISHA

Where's dad?

JASMINE

Hiding from your mom.

KEISHA

Ok. Aunt Jasmine, I need to ask you something.

JASMINE

What's going on Keisha?

KEISHA

Will you please talk to my mom about me taking a year off before college?

JASMINE

Oh, Keisha.

KEISHA

Please, Aunt Jasmine? This is so important to me.

JASMINE

I know, I know.

KEISHA

Six honors or AP classes every year,
three varsity sports,
choir, debate, yearbook,
shall I go on?

JASMINE

You're a very accomplished young lady

KEISHA

And I'm exhausted.
Now, don't get me wrong. I can't wait for college.
But my soul is exhausted.
I need some time away so that I might replenish myself
and gain valuable life experience
if I am to truly flourish in academia.

JASMINE

That's very well articulated, Keisha.

KEISHA

I know! But she just won't listen to me.

JASMINE

Your mother doesn't listen to me either.

KEISHA

Please say you'll at least mention that a gap year is a good idea? Please?

JASMINE

Alright, Keisha, alright.

KEISHA

I'm going to jump in the shower.

JASMINE

You better hurry up. Your mother is in a mood.

KEISHA

Back down in a flash.

KEISHA runs upstairs.

BEVERLY enters with wine three glasses of wine.

BEVERLY

Keisha?

Was that Keisha?

I need her to help me with the pie crust.

JASMINE

I can help you.

BEVERLY

No, that's alright. I can do it.

JASMINE

You know, Keisha mentioned that she might want to take a minute before college to –

BEVERLY

My daughter is going to college.

I went to college. You went to college. Our mother went to college.

It's not a conversation.

JASMINE

I think your daughter might –

BEVERLY

Are you telling me how to raise my child?

JASMINE

Nope.

BEVERLY

You just bring this glass of wine to Mama.

JASMINE

Alright then.

Mama? Your favorite daughter is here! I brought a rosé from France!

JASMINE exits.

BEVERLY is alone. She picks up a carrot.

A phone ring sound.

BEVERLY

Every time.

Hello?

Hi Tyrone.

What do you mean your flight was rerouted?

Oh my goodness.

Well how long will it take you to get here?

Oh my goodness.

Tyrone I told you that you should have come in yesterday.

You act like you're the only lawyer at that firm.

I know. I'm sorry.

It's just it's important that you're here, important to mama.

It's important to me too.

Alright. Alright.

Well, just hurry up and get here.

*DAYTON has entered & hears the end of the phone call.
BEVERLY hangs up the phone.*

DAYTON

Who was that?

BEVERLY

My idiot brother.

DAYTON

What has Tyrone done now?

BEVERLY

He couldn't be bothered to get here early like I told him to, no and now, he might not even make it to dinner.

Oh, I just can't believe him.

He never puts the family first. He always thinks of himself.

DAYTON

Beverly, calm down.

This dinner is going to be wonderful,

because you're a wonderful cook,

and a wonderful host, and everyone here loves you.

BEVERLY

You're right. You're right Dayton.

BEVERLY (*cont.*)

Did you bring me those root vegetables?

DAYTON

Um ...

BEVERLY

Oh, Dayton, Don't Tell Me you didn't pick up the root vegetables.

DAYTON

Um-

BEVERLY

I told you that I needed assorted root vegetables.

DAYTON

I-

BEVERLY

I said assorted root vegetables and you said what's a root vegetable?

And I said anything that grows underground

and you said like what

and I said just look in the store and think about it and get some of what looks good

and you said oh no no no,

I need specific instructions so that

I don't do the wrong thing, oh no, you said

and then I said, fine,

I need four parsnips, four sweet potatoes, a turnip, a beet, and a celeriac

and you said what's a celeriac

and I said a celery root

and you said what's a celery root

and I showed you a picture

and you said that looks nasty

and I said it just looks like a root

and you said carrots don't look like that

and I said they would without genetic modification

and then we argued about the industrialization of agriculture

and its effects on our concept of what food is supposed to look like

BEVERLY (*cont.*)

and after that argument I said
do you want me to write you a list of the root vegetables I need
and you said no, you don't need to write this stuff down
and I said are you sure
and you said Beverly, I don't need to write anything down
and I said ok, but do you want me to remind you
and you said you treat me like some kind of fool
and I kept my mouth shut
and I thought I should remember to remind him anyway
and I knew that I should have reminded you
I said to myself you should remind him
and then I said to myself oh, you don't need to remind him,
he's a grown man, he knows what he said he'd do, he knows how
important this is to me, he knows everything about this dinner needs to be
perfect And Then you come in here and --

DAYTON

Ta-da!

Beat.

BEVERLY

One day, I will kill you.

DAYTON

Not today.

BEVERLY

Do you hear me?

I will murder you, one day, mark my words.

A timer beep sound.

BEVERLY

Oooh! That's the short ribs! Dayton, that's the short ribs.

DAYTON

I got it.

BEVERLY
Don't take it out.

DAYTON
Don't take it out?

BEVERLY
Just turn the oven up to four fifty, and set the timer for ten minutes.

DAYTON
Don't take it out.

BEVERLY
No. Four fifty, ten minutes.

DAYTON
Four fifty, ten minutes.

BEVERLY
I'm going to peel these vegetables.

DAYTON
1-2-3 Go Team!

BEVERLY
Yes, four fifty, ten minutes.

DAYTON
Alright, Bev. Alright.

*DAYTON exits.
A door slam sound.*

JASMINE (*off stage*)
Mama open the door.
Mama?
Fine. Be like that.

JASMINE enters.

JASMINE

That woman has lost the little bit that God gave her.

BEVERLY

Oh, Jasmine, what did you do.

JASMINE

Me? I didn't do anything.

All I did was say hello,
and Mama just went and locked herself in the bathroom.

BEVERLY

Oh my goodness.

JASMINE

I'm not even worried about it.

BEVERLY

Oh my goodness.

JASMINE

It's just mama being mama.

Always wants to be in the center of everything.

BEVERLY

If mama doesn't enjoy this birthday dinner, then –

JASMINE

Then what?

BEVERLY

I don't know. Jasmine, I just don't know.

JASMINE

Let her lock herself upstairs.

The second she thinks that we're not talking about her, she'll come down.

BEVERLY

I hope so, Jasmine. I hope so.

JASMINE

And you know our brother is the same way.

JASMINE (*cont.*)

Do whatever he need to do to be at the center of attention.

Crazy-ass Geminis.

Every single person in this family is so full of drama I don't even know how I stand it.

BEVERLY

I don't have drama.

JASMINE

Girl you got drama.

I got drama.

Tyrone drama, Mama drama, you are all like one of those movies.

BEVERLY

What movies.

JASMINE

Like, a family drama.

BEVERLY

What do you mean?

JASMINE

Like a movie.

BEVERLY

What movie?

JASMINE

Come on, girl, you know what I'm saying.

you know, one of those movies that's a family drama

where somebody dead, and what to do with the children

or somebody dead and what to do with the wife

or somebody dead and the house ain't paid for,

and there's all these people that try to help

but she can't take the help

and things get worse,

and they try to help

but she can't take the help

and things get worse,

JASMINE (*cont.*)

until, finally she takes the help that they all have been trying to give her
for the whole damn movie,
so that she get the kid
or get the kid to dance,
or get the dog
or get the dog to dance,
and then they all walk on down to the water,
with a new shirt on,
and the breeze is blowing,
and they all look out at that water,
and talk about how they're not better,
not yet,
but they're starting to be.

Mmm, mmm, mmm.

Yes, girl, a good old family drama.

A slice of life.

I love those movies.

You know, nothing big and flashy,
just watching real stories about real people.

BEVERLY

Nothing real about those kinds of movies.

Those kinds of things just don't happen in real life.

JASMINE

Don't even try to start an argument with me, what is wrong with you,
can I live?

BEVERLY

We are nothing like the people in those movies.

JASMINE

Can't I just talk about something? Damn.

BEVERLY

Well, if you're sitting there and talking,
it means that I have to stand here and listen to you.

JASMINE

Fine. I won't say one thing to you.

BEVERLY

Fine.

Beat.

JASMINE (*to herself*)

Just trying to make some conversation
about some nice uplifting movies
and she's trying to tell me that
"that doesn't happen to people,"
(*sucks teeth*)

Like nobody know somebody that dead
or got a new dog in their whole life:
"that doesn't happen that's not true."
Please.

BEVERLY

That's not what I meant.

JASMINE

I. Am not talking. To you. Ok?

JASMINE (*cont. to herself*)

Having a private ass conversation with myself
thinking through my own damn thoughts
and she trying to tell me
that what I am thinking to myself is wrong.

I'm not even talking to her.

Why she got to have an opinion about every damn thought in my head
like, damn,
let me think something stupid if I want to for a minute,
what does it even matter?

And I'm not even being stupid, I'm just thinking to myself,
and if I want to be stupid when I'm just thinking to myself,
what is it to you? Huh?

JASMINE (*cont. to herself*)

Like if I want to think about something stupid, to myself, by myself,
what is that to you?

Like if I want to think that Beverly is uppity,
and she like to put it on like she better than everybody,
but everybody know she cheap as shit,
and I want to say that to myself and not say that to anybody else,
then what's the problem with that?

Huhn? You got anything to say?

You better not because I'm not even talking to you.

Damn.

She not that bad.

Beverly's not that bad.

She's just all pent up because her man don't love her right.

BEVERLY

Jasmine.

JASMINE (*to herself*)

He don't know how to move right, you can see it from how he walk.

Walk around like his balls all heavy. Balls ain't that heavy.

Unless he got some kind of illness or something. Is Dayton sick?

BEVERLY

Are you talking to me, Jasmine?

JASMINE

Yeah. Is Dayton sick?

BEVERLY

No.

JASMINE

That's good.

But, then, why aren't you two gettin' –

BEVERLY

That. Is. None of your business.

JASMINE

You make it my business when you're acting all crazy.

BEVERLY

I am not acting any type of way.

JASMINE

Mmmhmm.

BEVERLY

I'm not.

JASMINE

Mmmmmm-hmmmm.

BEVERLY

What?

KEISHA enters, dancing.

KEISHA (*entering*)

I'm clean! And I'm starving! I feel so great!

She's doing a dance where she smells her armpits and rubs her tummy.

JASMINE

What's that.

KEISHA

It's my I'm clean and I'm starving dance.

JASMINE

You get that from your grandmother.
That woman has a dance for everything.
You remember her birthday dance Beverly?

BEVERLY

The gown.

JASMINE
That Gown.

BEVERLY
The turban.

JASMINE
That Turban.
Oooh Keisha, your grandmother was something back in the day.

BEVERLY
Her birthday outfit was a gown,

JASMINE
An Ivory gown

BEVERLY
An Ivory gown with golden threads sewn through it.

JASMINE
And a golden turban,

BEVERLY
Golden turban

JASMINE
with a big ol' diamond rhinestone at the center.
And she'd work her hands like this,
like charming the snakes out the gates,

BEVERLY
and her nails would be all,

JASMINE
and she would slither. And then pose.

BEVERLY
And slither. And then pose.

JASMINE

And work her nails. And work her eyes.
And she'd say:

(singing or talking, or some variation)
Oooooo, all the men

JASMINE & BEVERLY *(singing or talking, or some variation)*
Oooooo, all the boys
Oooooo, let them see me
Oooooo, let them see me

DAYTON *(entering)*
Mama Frasier Birthday Dance!

JASMINE & BEVERLY & DAYTON
Oooooo, the women
Oooooo, the lil' dolls
Oooooo, let them see me
Oooooo, let them see me

KEISHA joins in.

JASMINE & BEVERLY & DAYTON & KEISHA
Oooooo, I look good
Oooooo, I know I'm good
Oooooo, Let them see it
Oooooo, Pray them see it

*KEISHA looks out towards us and has a soliloquy,
which is a theatrical device where a character talks aloud
to themselves and no one on stage can hear them.*

KEISHA
It's all just ... so beautiful!
I love these women.
Joy. And Dancing and Singing!
My future just looks so big and bright,
I can't wait for it to hurry up and Get Here.
I want to know all there is to know and be all there is to be.

KEISHA (*cont.*)

But.

But I feel like something is keeping me from all that.

Something...

Yes, something is keeping me from what I could be.

And that something.

It thinks that it has made me who I am.

It's... It's just so confusing.

DAYTON

Keisha?

KEISHA

What is it, Dad?

DAYTON

Telephone.

KEISHA

For me?

DAYTON

Yes.

KEISHA exits.

BEVERLY

Dayton, is everything ready?

DAYTON

Yep.

BEVERLY

Got the real napkins?

DAYTON

Yes.

BEVERLY

Napkin rings?

DAYTON
Yes.

BEVERLY
Water glasses and wine glasses?

DAYTON
Yes.

BEVERLY
Salad fork dinner fork desert fork steak knife butter knife
soup spoon tea spoon?

DAYTON
Believe so.

BEVERLY
Alright.

Beat.

BEVERLY
Candles!!!? Did we get Candles?!?

DAYTON
Yes.

BEVERLY
Oh. Good. Everything's going to be fine.

KEISHA enters.

BEVERLY
Who was that?

KEISHA
It's nothing mom. It was just Erika.

BEVERLY
And what does she want.

KEISHA

She just wants to drop something off.

BEVERLY

What.

KEISHA

I don't know. Something ... for school.

BEVERLY

Mmm-hmmm.

KEISHA

An assignment. ... What?

BEVERLY

Keisha, I don't want your little friend coming over here and interrupting this dinner.

KEISHA

Mom, you need to relax.

BEVERLY

You know your Grandmother doesn't like that Erika.

KEISHA

Grandma doesn't have a problem with her.

BEVERLY

Oh, your Grandmother has a problem with how you two are together, you better believe that.

KEISHA

(feels her front teeth with her tongue to not say anything)

BEVERLY

Now she won't say that to you, because she wants her granddaughter to love her, but your Grandmother is a woman with some opinions. Yes. That woman has some opinions.

KEISHA
(looks at the ceiling)

JASMINE
Keisha, come on over here and sit with your Aunt.

BEVERLY
Keisha doesn't need to talk to you right now, Jasmine.
What Keisha needs to do is to go on in that kitchen,
and check on her grandmother's birthday cake,
and help her Mother out today.
That's what Keisha needs to do.

KEISHA
Fine.

KEISHA exits.

BEVERLY
And don't you stomp in my house if you want to keep living here.

JASMINE
Beverly, you need to calm down. Can't you see –

BEVERLY
If I don't finish chopping these carrots, I am going to lose it.

DAYTON
Bev, I think you better put that knife down.

BEVERLY
If I don't chop these carrots, who's gonna chop them? Hmmn? You?

DAYTON
Put the knife down, Bev.

JASMINE
Beverly, why don't you sit down and have a drink.

BEVERLY
I'm fine.

DAYTON
You are clearly not fine.

JASMINE
What is wrong with you?

KEISHA (*from offstage*)
Mom?! I think the cake is burnt.

BEVERLY
(*gasp*)

JASMINE
Uh-oh.

BEVERLY (*whispered or silent*)
Nooo!!!

DAYTON
Bev, it'll be fine –

JASMINE
Dayton will run out and buy a cake –

BEVERLY
I can fix it.

JASMINE
won't you Dayton?

BEVERLY
I can fix it.

DAYTON
I'll be happy to get a cake!

BEVERLY
I can fix it.

JASMINE
Why don't you just sit down and I'll get you some wine.

BEVERLY

I can fix it! Alright? Everything is fine! Everything will be just –

BEVERLY pauses, looking glassy.

BEVERLY faints, spilling carrots all over the floor.

JASMINE & DAYTON gasp in horror.

KEISHA runs in.

KEISHA

Mom? Mom!

End of Act One.

ACT TWO

Scene 1

*With the end of the on-stage glitch,
in medias res, conversationally, with overlapping text:*

SUZE

No no no no no.

JIMBO

No, but if you could choose to be a different race, what race would you be?
Do you know what I mean?

SUZE

No, I do, but.

JIMBO

No, but like,
like if you could choose to be any race you want, any race at all,
like if you could choose to be any race at all,
what race would you be? Because like,

SUZE

No, right.

JIMBO

Yeah, I think it's an interesting question.

SUZE

No, sure, it might be, someday.

JIMBO

It's definitely interesting.

SUZE

No, yeah.

JIMBO

Because I think about things like that.
Do you know what I mean?

SUZE
Yeah, yeah.

JIMBO
I actually like to think, like to think about things, you know?

SUZE
Yeah, me too.

JIMBO
So I know that's like,
That's a dope-ass question. Do you know what I mean?

SUZE
No, right.

JIMBO
Like, if you could choose to be a different race,
what race would you choose?

Dayton enters.

SUZE
I don't think you know what you mean,
do you know what I mean?

JIMBO
What?

SUZE
Like, do you see what you're asking?

JIMBO
What do you mean?

SUZE
Like I don't think you're looking at the question that you're asking,
and like actually seeing what it is.

JIMBO
Oh, come on.

SUZE

Like, I wouldn't. I just wouldn't.

JIMBO

You wouldn't choose to be anything?

SUZE

No, I would never.

JIMBO

Why not?

SUZE

Well, because you just can't change something like that.

JIMBO

Why not?

SUZE

Well, because race isn't something you can change. I mean, obviously.

JIMBO

I thought you said race is a construct.

SUZE

It is.

JIMBO

So.

SUZE

So just because it's a construct doesn't mean that it isn't real, like that's not.

JIMBO

Something can't be a construct and be real at the same time, that just doesn't make any sense at all.

SUZE

So, if you could choose, what race would you be?

JIMBO

If I could choose I would be Asian.

SUZE
Ok. Wow.

JIMBO
What?

SUZE
No, just you said that so quickly.

JIMBO
Well, I've thought about it before.

SUZE
You've thought about it before.

JIMBO
Of course I've thought about it before.

SUZE
So, like why would you want to be Asian?

JIMBO
I mean, is there something wrong with being Asian?

SUZE
No, oh my god, there's nothing wrong with being an Asian person.
Oh my god.

JIMBO
I don't think there's anything wrong with being Asian, but.

SUZE
I just meant to ask. Wait wait wait. I just meant to ask
why the Asian race is the race that you would choose, if you could.
Do you know what I mean?

JIMBO
Right right right.

SUZE
I mean, this is your question. I don't.

JIMBO
I see what you mean.

SUZE
Yeah.

JIMBO
Because, from what I've learned, it can be a really... traditional culture.

SUZE
Being Asian can.

JIMBO
Yeah, definitely.

SUZE
Huh.

JIMBO
I've come to understand that it's a traditional culture,
just from what I've read, and, you know, from women I've dated.

SUZE
Huh.

JIMBO
Yeah.

SUZE
Yeah.

JIMBO
Yeah, there are a lot of expectations.
Like, there's just so much that's expected of children from their parents.
There is so much pressure.

SUZE
For Asian children?

JIMBO
Yeah, pressure to excel, pressure to conform.
Asian parents are just like,

JIMBO (cont.)

You must do this or You can't do that.

So, if I were Asian, I wouldn't participate in that whole system.

You know?

SUZE

Like what.

JIMBO

I'd do what's unexpected.

SUZE

Like what.

JIMBO

Like I'd be Asian but I'd rebellious.

SUZE

Ok.

JIMBO

Like I'd be Asian but I'd be loud,

SUZE

Yeah.

JIMBO

and difficult,

SUZE

Yeah.

JIMBO

and fucking impolite, you know?

SUZE

Yeah.

JIMBO

Like I'd be everything that my parents would disapproved of.

SUZE
But.

JIMBO
Like, Asian people don't have to be just this one thing,

SUZE
Right, but.

JIMBO
that they can be a million things.

SUZE
Right.

JIMBO
Do you know what I mean?

SUZE
Yes. But.
I don't think that what you're saying is right.

JIMBO
You don't.

SUZE
No.

JIMBO
Don't you know any Asian people?

SUZE
I do, of course.

JIMBO
So don't you feel like they're all like so pent-up?

SUZE
No, I don't.

JIMBO
Like they're all just repressed?

SUZE

No, I don't know.

JIMBO

I mean, every Asian I know is like tortured by their parents expectations.

SUZE

I don't feel comfortable making some huge statement about every –

JIMBO

"I don't feel comfortable"

SUZE

I don't. Just grouping people –

JIMBO

Right, because you're a good little liberal,

SUZE

What?

JIMBO

So you just want to pretend that you're cool with everyone,

SUZE

I'm not –

JIMBO

cool with every race, cool with every culture,

SUZE

I'm not –

JIMBO

you're like, hello world, welcome, I value your culture,

SUZE

I'm not –

JIMBO

and because your culture is different than mine,
I don't judge it at all, everything you do to each other is fine,

SUZE
I'm not –

JIMBO
but actually, if you did that shit to me, I would flip the fuck out,

SUZE
But I'm not –

JIMBO
but since you're just doing it to each other it's fine.

SUZE
But I'm not –

JIMBO
You're not what?

SUZE
But I'm not ... Asian. So. I don't know what it's like to.

JIMBO
So just because someone is Asian they deserve to have a fucked up relationship with their family?

SUZE
I.

JIMBO
Like they deserve that?

SUZE
Ok. First.
I think it is crazy to say that every Asian person has a fucked up relationship with their family.

JIMBO
Hmn.

SUZE
Like that is a Crazy thing to say. Right?

JIMBO
Point taken.

SUZE
Like you hear how that sounds, right?

JIMBO
Yeah, but hear me out.

SUZE
Ok.

JIMBO
Because I think this is a really good, ok.
If I were Asian, I would like, take my parents to therapy.

SUZE
... Ok.

JIMBO
We'd go to group therapy.
And we'd talk about our like dependency issues of whatever.

SUZE
So.

JIMBO
And I'd be like, hey Mom and Dad, aren't we all happier now?
And they'd be like, yes, son, we are happier now.

SUZE
Ok.

JIMBO
And then I'd be like, hey all other Asians,

SUZE
Oh boy.

JIMBO
Look at me, I'm a happy Asian guy. With a happy mom and a happy dad.

SUZE
Yeah.

JIMBO
Like, I did whatever the fuck I wanted to do,

SUZE
Right.

JIMBO
and then they got mad, like Asian parents do,
and for a minute I was a typical Asian and freaked out about it,
but then, we all went to Therapy,
and we all talked about our shit,
and now we're all happy and Asian and fine.

SUZE
Yeah. I wish you wouldn't say that.

JIMBO
Say what.

SUZE
There's something about the way you say it that.

JIMBO
Asian?

SUZE
Yeah, it's just –

JIMBO
Are you kidding?

SUZE
Yeah, no.

JIMBO
But that's what they are.

SUZE
But the way you say it –

JIMBO
Like, call a spade a spade.

SUZE
No, but –

JIMBO
Call an Asian an Asian.

SUZE
No, but –

JIMBO
What should I call them?

SUZE
I don't know –

JIMBO
Like, Asian isn't a slur. Don't they call themselves that?

SUZE
Sorry, can I stop you for a second?

JIMBO
What's up.

SUZE
I think I just need you to stop talking for a second.

JIMBO
Why?

SUZE
Because I'm getting really uncomfortable.

JIMBO
What is your problem?

SUZE
[I'm sorry, but can you just shut up?]

Scene 2

Jasmine enters.

MACK

Sooooooooo. What are we talking about. What's going on.
Wait, is something happening?

JIMBO

I have posed a hypothetical question.

MACK

Reeeally.

JIMBO

It has rankled some,

MACK

Intriguing.

JIMBO

But I would like to pose it to you, if you, uh, consent.

MACK

I do. What is it?

JIMBO

Alright.

If you could choose to be a different race, what race would you be?

MACK

Hmn. Are we asking about race or ethnicity?

JIMBO

Yeah, if you could be a different race or ethnicity, what would you be.

MACK

Hmn. Like, would I have to be that race all the time?

JIMBO

Yeah you'd have to be that race 24/7.

MACK
I see.

JIMBO
Right.

MACK
Would I have like grown up as that race?

JIMBO
Um.

MACK
Or would I like,

JIMBO
Yeah.

MACK
just turn into that race like right now?

JIMBO
Let's say that you're you,

MACK
Ok.

JIMBO
but then you like magically become,

MACK
Magically?

JIMBO
like you just wake up one morning and you're a different race. Right?

MACK
Got it. And it's like in today's world,

JIMBO
Yes.

MACK
it's not in the past.

JIMBO
No. So, what would you be?

Jasmine is alone on stage.

MACK
It's interesting, you know?
Like if I was going to like Become a different race,
and I could choose that.
It would be like ... I mean based on what criteria, you know?
Like if I just think about, like, would I want to choose a race that is more
like who I actually am? To express something essential about myself?

OR would I want to choose a race that is totally different from who I
actually am. To like, try something new.

I feel like I would want to try something that expresses more of who I am,
maybe.

Do you know what I mean?

Yeah, If I could choose to be a different race,
I'd want to be latinx.

Beverly enters.

SUZE
Why would you be latino?

MACK
Is there something wrong with being latinx?

SUZE
No, oh my god, I don't mean there's anything wrong with being latino,
I'm just trying to ask why you're choosing to be latino.

MACK
Latinx.

SUZE
Right.

MACK
Well, because, honestly,
I just think it would be so fucking major to be latinx.

SUZE
No, I mean like – Do you speak Spanish?

MACK
No. Do you?

SUZE
I don't, but.

MACK
But it's like, I would love to speak Spanish. Obviously.

SUZE
Me too, but.

MACK
I keep doing this app, but it's not working.

SUZE
Oh.

MACK
I think it's hard without having people to practice with.

SUZE
Right, but.

MACK
And besides they say it's best to learn from conversation.

SUZE
Right, but.

MACK
Or, from, like, taking a lover.

SUZE
Right, but.

MACK
I would love to take a Latinx lover.

SUZE
But you've traveled to –

MACK
Where?

SUZE
To, like , Latin ... you know ...

MACK
Oh, right I see.

SUZE
Right.

MACK
I haven't.

SUZE
Ok so, I'm trying to understand,

MACK
What's the matter?

SUZE
Yeah, why would you choose to be, you know, Latinx?
Do you know what I mean?
Like, if you don't speak the language, and you've never been there,
what about it is appealing to.

MACK
Well, excuse me for even having an opinion.

SUZE
Oh, no I don't mean that.

MACK

Like, excuse me for not being as cultured as you.

SUZE

No, I'm just curious.

MACK

You know, I'm not like you, ok?

SUZE

I'm just curious.

MACK

I didn't grow up with like Money to like Travel.

SUZE

I didn't grow up with money to.

MACK

I didn't grow up with money to go to like
Language Immersion Summer Camp, or whatever.

SUZE

I didn't.

MACK

Like, I haven't actually left the country,

SUZE

I didn't.

MACK

except to go to like, Canada once, which isn't even a different country,

SUZE

I'm sorry.

MACK

except politically.

SUZE

I'm sorry.

MACK

I know you are sweetie, it's fine.
I'm not mad, I'm just passionate.
Because it's like, you know that
you don't have to go to another country
to experience Latinx people and culture.

SUZE

Of course not.

MACK

It's not like you have to like go to some like village or something.

SUZE

Of course not.

MACK

They are in our country too.

SUZE

Of course.

MACK

And that's what's amazing – it's like because they're here,
it's like their identity is being made here.
Like, most people are just what they are,
you're like, oh, that person is Black that person is Asian,
but with Latinx people it's like,
they're like making it right now and it's intersecting with gender
in like this amazing way, that is really really really ...
it's just politically good, you know?

[And not just politically good, it's like muy caliente
in the streets and in the sheets.
Do you know what I mean?]

Scene 3

Keisha enters.

BETS

So what are you talking about?

MACK

Ohmigod.

Thank god you're here.

I can't wait to hear how you're going to answer.

BETS

Me?

MACK

Yes. Ready?

BETS

For what?

MACK

Ok, they're asking ...

If you could choose to be a different race, what race would you choose?

Do you understand the question?

BETS

Yes.

MACK

So what do you think.

BETS

But I am frustrated by this question.

MACK

But it's like you can choose.

BETS

Because, I – no, let me finish –

I need to talk to know what are my thoughts,

MACK
Sorry.

BETS
Because this question,
it is everything that is wrong with America.
In any other place this question would be a question that is fun
and charming to consider,
but in America, this question, what race, it is a very boring question,
because everything in America is race, race, race,
all the people talk is race, race, race
and no people are saying nothing new about race,
So with this question, "what race can you choose, what race do you want?"
the question is interesting, maybe,
but the answer is boring, because it must be always the same.
Always
"oh, race is not important, I have no opinion, teach me" or
"oh, I choose this race, because my guilt, oh, I feel so bad,
and I earn the – the problem of that race, it is mine. I deserve this."
You say nothing, or You say sorry.
That is all that you say.
It is so boring.
I have nothing to say.

MACK
Oh.

BETS
Unless.

MACK
What?

BETS
Hmm.

MACK
Unless what.

BETS
Unless, I can change my race to be.
Something that is interesting, maybe, is to be a Turk.

MACK
I'm sorry, what?

BETS
A Turk. Oh, my English.

MACK
I don't know what that is.

BETS
You don't have this: Turk?,

MACK
No I don't think so.

BETS
coming from Turkmenistan, or some place like that.
Uzbekistan. Kazakhstan.

MACK
Oh, ok.

BETS
Because, well, we travel a lot, and when I was a girl,
we went to there on holiday.

MACK
To Turkmenistan.

BETS
To all of them, all around. We travel a lot.

MACK
Wow.

BETS
It is quite lovely in these places.
The landscape in these places –
flat flat flat, just, you look and a what, a boulder, with a little snow.
That is all that is there.

MACK (*sotto voce*)
Oohhh.

BETS
But in that, it gives a point to look at, and if you focus, you see the sky and it is beautiful.

MACK(*sotto voce*)
Yaaas.

BETS
And the people, living all together in their little houses.
Their life is difficult, but they have so much, so much joy.
It is inspiring, no?

MACK
Mmmm.

BETS
I think so, yes.

MACK
Mmmmmm.

BETS
They are so proud, these people.

MACK
Wooow.

BETS
The strength of the personality that comes out of that place.
It is very, um, very pleasing to me.
To have that.

MACK
But ... aren't they ... um.

BETS
What is the question?

MACK

Are those people a different race than you are?

BETS

Of course.

MACK

They are a different race.

BETS

Of course.

MACK

Yes. Of course. It's just, I wouldn't have ...

BETS

Tell me.

MACK

I just wouldn't have categorized you and them differently that's all.

BETS

Well, that is ridiculous.

MACK

Right.

BETS

The food is different, the culture is different,
the look of the people is different.

MACK

Right.

BETS

That is what race is, no?

MACK

No, you're right.

BETS

Americans are obsessed with race.

MACK
You're right.

BETS
Obsessed.

MACK
You're right.

BETS
But they don't know what this is.

MACK
Totally.

BETS
You think Turk is not a race?

MACK
No it is. They are. It is.

BETS
Of course it is.

MACK
No, you're right.

Scene 4

Jasmine exits and Beverly starts to peel carrots.

SUZE
I'm sorry, but no.

BETS
What.

SUZE
That's crazy.

BETS
What is crazy.

SUZE
That's just. Choosing to be a different European race
isn't choosing to be a different race.
Obviously.

Beverly picks up the phone

JIMBO
But you haven't answered.
Everyone else has answered.
I asked you, first, and you've talked shit about every other answer.

SUZE
I haven't talked anything –

JIMBO
But you haven't picked anything for yourself.
You're just avoiding the question.

SUZE
I'm not avoiding the –

JIMBO
So. If you could choose to be a different race, what would you choose?

SUZE
Well.

JIMBO
If you know so much about everything, what would you choose?

SUZE
I'd be African-American.

JIMBO
Oh, ho ho.

SUZE
For different reasons than anyone has.

JIMBO
Really.

SUZE
Yeah.
I'd be African-American.

Dayton enters.

JIMBO
Bullshit. I call bullshit.

SUZE
Why are you saying that.

JIMBO
Because it's fucking hard to be African-American, and I don't think you really mean it.

SUZE
I do mean it.

JIMBO
So, if I like kidnapped you, and locked you in a room, and like dyed your skin.

SUZE

That would not make me African-American.

JIMBO

If I did that, what you'd be stoked?

SUZE

That's not what it would be like.

JIMBO

So you'd be stoked.

SUZE

That's not – that's offensive and not –

JIMBO

Oh! So you wouldn't be stoked?

SUZE

No, if you Kidnapped me, and like Spray-painted me with like Dye, no, no that wouldn't make me super happy. Because that would be traumatizing.

JIMBO

I know but –

SUZE

And I can't even believe that I am saying this but, like being African-American isn't like just dying your skin.

JIMBO

I know but –

SUZE

And it's like, I would choose to be African-American, actually. Because I was raised by. My family, we had ... but she was more than that, she was this lovely ... Her name ...
(*quavering*)
Her name was Mabel.
And she ...
I'm sorry.

SUZE (cont.)

I just loved her.

Because, my parents,

they were great – they're great parents, but
they aren't warm people. They just aren't.

I can see now that they were ... reserved.

But when I was a kid, I ... couldn't understand why they didn't.

Anyway.

The person in my life who expressed love to me
in a way that I could feel it,

that was Mabel.

She was the person who was there when I got home from school, she was
the person who was there for me when I was sick or when I was hurt,
she was the person who would play games with me and who I'd talk to
about boys.

Mabel was my person.

It's like, she made everything I ate until I was like in college, basically.

It's like, I grew up eating corn bread and collard greens.

Like food that people don't even really eat, you know?

Like I grew up on that kind of food.

My parents were like, who is this girl, we don't understand this at all.

Because it's like,

if that's what ties you to a person, food and love and feeling like,

if that's the thing that bonds you to a person,

if that's what helps you to be what you're meant to be,

if that's how you're raised.

Like the things from your childhood;

the people, the food, the culture of your ...

you know... I just, I feel like she is my family.

Mabel is my ... she's my mom.

She's my heart.

And that's ...

It's complex.

With Dayton Entering on his Ta-Da!

JIMBO

But it wouldn't just be you being black with what's her name, Mabel?

SUZE

Don't say her name like that. You don't get to –

JIMBO

It's not like you'd go black for Mabel
and then be normal the rest of the time.

SUZE

What is your point.

JIMBO

You'd be black 24/7.

SUZE

So?

JIMBO

So.

SUZE

So?

JIMBO

So. What would you do?

SUZE

What do you mean?

JIMBO

If I was black, I'd like live in it, and I'd experience it.

SUZE

Of course I'd experience it too.

JIMBO

I wouldn't just like hide in my childhood hidey-hole, or some shit.

SUZE

I wouldn't try to hide anything.

JIMBO

So what would you do?

SUZE

Well. I mean, I'd try to help people!

JIMBO

Oooh! She'd help people?!

SUZE

Of course I'd try to help people. With life skills.
You know, fiscal responsibility,
and family planning, like retirement planning, setting up a 401K,
Things we take for granted.
How to go on a job interview. How to get a mortgage.

JIMBO

Sounds fun!

SUZE

Well, not everything is fun.

JIMBO

Woo-fucking hoo.

SUZE

Inherited poverty isn't very fun.

MACK

But you know, not all black people are poor.
Like.
There are plenty of rich black people.

SUZE

I know.

Jasmine enters.

BETS

Like Michael Jackson. He is very very rich.

MACK

Well ... yes. Yes, he was.

BETS

And the other one. The sports guy.

MACK

There are a lot of –

BETS

The famous one. You know.

MACK

Okay ... Do you mean like ... Michael Jordan?

BETS

No, not that one.

MACK

Like ... Magic Johnson?

BETS

No, not this Michel Jackson sounding names.

MACK

I don't know, there are a lot of famous black athletes.

BETS

But Very famous, very rich.

This is an interesting kind of black to be.

MACK

Hmmm. Like ...

BETS

The one ...

The one who kill her wife.

MACK

Oh.

Do you mean ... OJ Simpson?

BETS

Yes! He is very very rich.

MACK

Yes. He was.

BETS

And very funny.

MACK

I guess he was. Before the –

BETS

Of course, before, before.

Did you see this movie?

MACK

What movie?

BETS

Oh, this is a very funny movie,
OJ Simpson is chased by all the people,
he is with the police and they chase him and chase him.

MACK

It's a movie though? Because that sounds like –

BETS

No, no it is a movie, yes, they chase and chase and chase
and they beat him up,
and he is very hurt, in the hospital,
and it is so funny, in the hospital he tells the man
that they chase him for drugs, they hurt him for drugs,
you know, common story for these people, it is obvious,
but he is in the hospital,
so the man think he is asking for drugs because he have pain,
and the man give the, um – he press the button,
and OJ say "No! Wait! Listen!" and he lay back like.

SUZE

I don't think that is OJ Simpson.

You're clearly thinking of a different African American Actor

It's something called Racial Blindness.

It's like if you aren't raised around people of a certain race,
your brain is less –

you're not able to distinguish individual features,

so you're more likely to confuse different people of the same race.

BETS

It is OJ Simpson in this movie. Maybe I don't say it well, my English –

SUZE

It's not your fault, it's Racial Blindness.

BETS

I don't have that.

SUZE

It's why lots people mistake one African-American for another –

BETS

I don't have that.

SUZE

I'm not saying you're racist.

BETS

The Juice is Loose, I know OJ Simpson.
I am not confused. He is a very rich black person.

SUZE

Fine.

JIMBO

But I wouldn't want to be a rich black person.

You know?

It wouldn't be ... very authentic.

I'm just thinking critically about it and,

Don't you think that once a person has enough money, their race just kind
of disappears and they're just rich?

Like, if I'm going to be black, I'd want to be a normal black person,
to like have that experience, of like going to da club, you know?

Gettin' rowdy.

MACK

Oh my god.

You'd just want to be black so you could say the N-word.

JIMBO

That's not what I meant.

MACK (*sing-song*)

You wanna say the N-word. You wanna say the N-word.

JIMBO

I mean, sure, I'd fucking say it if I were a black person.

I can say it now, if I want to.

I can say whatever the fuck I want, I don't give a fuck.

BETS

Who cares what you call her or her, say what you, want who cares?

In America you are obsessed with race,
and you never never never think about class.

The rich profit from the racism. The poor get nothing from it.

But I'm not so interested in this, you know, ghetto type of kind of thing.

JIMBO

Well, if you want to be a real black person,
then you have to be a poor black person.

MACK

No that's more of a gender question than a class question.

Like maybe you'd have to be poor if you wanted to be a black man,
but if you wanted to be a black woman, you could be like ...
a fabulous entertainer.

Like, that would be amazing, to be like:

Hair! Body! Voice!

Like black women are ... fierce.

I think there could be something really ... empowering,
being a black woman.

Like look at the way they talk to each other.

Beat.

There's just so much ...attitude.

Beat.

Like she's just so sure of herself.

Beat.

I just love that. Do you see what I mean?

Beat.

BETS

I do. I do.

MACK

It's like ... "you can't tell me what to do!"

BETS

"You don't know who I am!"

MACK

"I'm out here living my best life"

BETS

Oh, I like that.

*Keisha enters and now their conversation happens to line up with characters on stage.
For the most part:
SUZE links with Keisha,
JIMBO links with Jasmine,
MACK links with Beverly,
BETS links with Dayton*

SUZE

Are you people insane? You have no idea what you're talking about.
You don't you have no idea what it would be like to be African-American.

JIMBO

Why are you freaking out?

SUZE

I'm not freaking out, but you just have no idea what you're talking about.

JIMBO

You think you'd be a good black woman?
That is hard for me to imagine, like
can you imagine her being a black woman?

MACK
Not really.

JIMBO
Not at all.

MACK
Like, not at all.

JIMBO
If she was black
She would be like the most uptight black woman that has ever existed.

MACK
Sorry, but you're not very cool.

JIMBO
She's the opposite of cool.

MACK
Like, the way you hold your body is just so ...

JIMBO
She's so stiff

MACK
Very rigid.

JIMBO
Like you're all in your head all the time,
and you don't know how to be chill.
Like most black people are really chill.

MACK
And they're really fashionable.

JIMBO
There's this way they dress, there's an attitude,

MACK
And like their hair, is always done,

JIMBO
There's a swagger, and a
and you're not like --

MACK
I reaaaally wish I knew, like how they
diiiiid their hair.

JIMBO
Oh Yeaaaah, like when it's all like
twiiiiisted up and stuff?

MACK
Yeah.

With Dayton's entrance:

BETS
I just love it when they dance!
Like: Ooooooh, the women

MACK
I know! Ooooh, cha-cha-cha-cha

BETS & MACK
Ooooh, they can dance.
Yeess (Yaaaas), they love to dance.

BETS & MACK & JIMBO
Yeess (Yaaas)(Yeeaah), black people sing

SUZE
But –

BETS & MACK & JIMBO
Yeess (Yaaas)(Yeeaah), black people dance

SUZE
But –

BETS & MACK & JIMBO

Yeess (Yaaas)(Yeeaah), black people love

SUZE

But –

BETS & MACK & JIMBO
to siiiing and dance around!

The shift into Keisha's aside

SUZE

But being black isn't just about singing and dancing and ... hair.
That's part of it, but that's not all of it.
This history of oppression and inequity, it is in everything.
Mabel loved me and I loved her, but there was always this –
membrane between us.

Keisha sees us.

SUZE (cont.)

When we walked down the street, I knew what people thought.
And it made me so self-conscious.
And that's really terrible.
Like if I could have just loved Mabel,
and had it not be like a Thing.
Not have this like external thing make that love ...
make me ashamed of that feeling.
Like if I could just be my authentic feeling ... that would be.
I think it would be amazing.

The shift out of Keisha's aside & Dayton's line:

JIMBO
You'd be a terrible black person

SUZE
What are you talk—

JIMBO
Terrible.

SUZE
Me?!

JIMBO
Yup.

SUZE (*As Keisha exits*)
They would love me if they met me.

MACK
Hold up, are you a dancer?

BETS
Well,

MACK
Got those real dance moves.

BETS
Well,

MACK
You a freak.

BETS
Well,

MACK
Don't lie to me, I know you dance.

BETS
Yes.

MACK
I knew it, me too times a million, I love dance, I live dance, I dream dance.

BETS
Don't we all?

MACK
Alright.

Beat.

MACK
Bitches, this a Dance Party.

BETS
Yes!

MACK
Par-tay. Like it's nineteen ninety nine.

Keisha enters.

MACK
We have to.

SUZE
Have to do what, have like a dance party?

MACK
It is happening.

SUZE

Why would we have a dance party?

MACK

Why?

SUZE

I don't dance. Dancing ... feels weird.

MACK

Mmm-hmmm.

SUZE

I'd rather talk ... what?

MACK

Girlfriend, I can't even. Your little life is so so tragic and introverted and repressed.

SUZE

Stop, I just don't dance.

MACK

You know you're Sexually repressed if your hips don't move.

SUZE

I'm not repressed or like introverted.

MACK

Oh, you're Sexually like a problem, yes that is clear all together, you better believe that.

SUZE

...

MACK

Now I know that you won't dance because you are afraid that you're bad at it, that people will see that you have no rhythm and think "Ooof. That woman is bad at Sex."

SUZE

...

JIMBO

I dance like a boss and I can fuck all night.

MACK

Mmmn.

What this one needs to do is to try to be in her body,
and explore her sexual consciousness,
and let her Body take control.

That's what this one needs to do.

SUZE

Just stop.

MACK

And then you'll realize dancing helps you to keep on getting laid.

JIMBO

And if you like doing black things you might be –

MACK

That is not what I'm talking about ok, I am saying that dancing –

BETS

That dancing is sensual and fun –

MACK

If you don't love your body, who's gonna love it? Hmmn? Truth.

BETS

Put the hands on the hips.

JIMBO

Seriously, why does dancing feel like so damn good?

MACK

I know.

BETS

Can we start to dance now?

JIMBO

Want to hear my moves?

(does a little beat box type sound)

MACK

(gasp)

JIMBO

Fo' sho.

MACK

Niiiiiiice.

BETS

But for the music –

JIMBO

Dancing like without a beat is like,

MACK

I have a mix,

JIMBO

not even dancing.

MACK

A like dance mix.

BETS

I will put on the radio.

MACK

I have a mix.

JIMBO

Why don't you play your mix and we'll get this started.

MACK
Wait wait wait wait wait –
She’s going to faint now.

BETS
Is she?

MACK
I think so ...

*BEVERLY faints, spilling carrots all over the floor.
JASMINE & DAYTON gasp in horror.*

MACK (*cackling*)
The carrots!

KEISHA runs in

MACK
“Mama? Mama!”

SUZE
Is she ok?

JIMBO
Of course she’s ok.

MACK
She’s fine. Look, she’s like
“Oh my god, I can’t believe I ruined my beautiful dinner.”

BETS
The dinner is not so beautiful.

SUZE
It’s lovely.

BETS
And these horrible chairs, so bizarre.

SUZE
There’s nothing wrong with them.

MACK
I'd never noticed them.

BETS
They have no taste, this family.

MACK
They are a little –

JIMBO
And her, with the wine.

SUZE
Keisha seems so upset.

JIMBO
I bet she is.

SUZE
What is that supposed to mean.

JIMBO
No, just that she's –

MACK
He's so possessive of her.

BETS
Who?

MACK
Dayton.

BETS
Is he?

MACK
He's like, "don't give wine to my woman."
That's controlling, isn't it?

BETS
I hadn't noticed that.

SUZE
She Just fainted.

MACK
"I don't let my woman drink."
It's like the 50's.

Keisha exits.

SUZE
She wants some water. Just ask for water Beverly.

JIMBO
Where's she running to, Beverly?

SUZE
Let someone help You for a change.

MACK
I bet she's going to call Erika?

BETS
Who is Erika?

MACK
Her *friend* from *school*.

BETS
I don't understand.

JIMBO
Yeah, who is Erika?

MACK
Keisha's *Friend* from *School*. Oh my god.

SUZE
She was just getting the cake out of the oven.

MACK
You have no idea what it is like to be a teenage girl.

BETS

Why did they burn the cake?

MACK

"That cake is on fire, honey."

SUZE

It wasn't on purpose.

JIMBO

It's a cake walk!

SUZE

Shut up.

JIMBO

It is.

SUZE

Shut up.

You are the worst.

JIMBO

You love it.

BETS

Where does she take the cake to?

SUZE

I don't know. Outside, I guess.

Dayton talks to Beverly:

JIMBO

Wait, and I love this, he's like;

MACK

What?

JIMBO

"I've heard people say.

Too much of any-thang is not good fuh ya baby."

MACK

(makes that sound of like a synthesizer bell with echo)

JIMBO

“But.

I don’t know about that.

As many times as we’ve loved, and”

MACK

(makes that sound of like a synthesizer bell with echo)

BETS

I don’t know this song.

JIMBO

“shared love, and
made love.”

MACK

(makes that sound of like a synthesizer bell with echo)

BETS

No. I don’t know it.

JIMBO

It doesn’t seem to me like it’s enough.

It’s not enough.

BETS

I don’t know it.

JIMBO

“There’s just not enough of it.”

*JIMBO & MACK sing different parts of
Can’t Get Enough*

BETS

No, I still, I don’t know it.

MACK

Really?

BETS
No.

MACK
You'd love it.

BETS
Why.

MACK
Because it's ... well. People like.
People like seduce their lovers to it.

BETS
Oh!

MACK
Yeah.

BETS
Can we hear it?

MACK
Of course.

SUZE
Can we not?

BETS
What is your problem?

Dayton exits.

JIMBO
And where's he gone now, Beverly?

SUZE
To buy a cake.

JIMBO
I don't think so.

SUZE
For the grandmother's birthday. Obviously.

JIMBO
Why are you being so prissy.

SUZE
Prissy?!

JIMBO
Yeah, you're like a girl.

SUZE
Girl?

JIMBO
Like, if you think you could be black woman,
you need to be able to be a fucking man, and like step up.

SUZE
What.

JIMBO
Like you should be like I'm going to be black, and if someone has
something to say about it, then, like step up.

SUZE
What does step up ... sorry, what does step up mean?

JIMBO
What do you mean.
It means step up.

SUZE
Step up on what?

JIMBO
Step up.

SUZE
Step up to what?

JIMBO
Just like, step up.

SUZE
For what?

JIMBO
I can't tell you how to step up. You just step up.

Jasmine shouts:

BETS
"Fine, mama! Fine! I will run off with Antoine.

MACK
Um ... What?

BETS
"He play the base and he love me!"
She would say something like that, I think.

MACK
Well, she is fabulous.

BETS
She's the interesting one. The one with romance.

MACK
She's the best dressed one, I think.

BETS
Oh, I agree.
Oh, oops!

MACK
She's like "I'm not drunk, I didn't even spill my wine."

BETS
She? Spill wine?

MACK
Of course not.

BETS

I love that. She wrings the most from this little life she has.
Oh no. Why is she taking the things from the table.

SUZE

She's not stealing them.

BETS

I didn't say she was stealing.

MACK

She is not made for housework.

BETS

Is she leaving?

MACK

Oh no.

BETS

Where is she going?

JIMBO

Where's she gone to, Beverly?

SUZE

Will you stop saying that?

BETS

I hate it when she leaves.
It is so boring when she is gone.

SUZE

What are you talking about.

MACK

I know. These two are like, blech, so boring.

SUZE

They are the heart and the soul of the whole –

BETS

I like the grandmother best. She has some glamour around her.

SUZE

The grandmother is the heart and the soul of the whole family –

BETS

She's back!

MACK

Welcome back!

BETS

Yay!

MACK

Get yourself a drink, girl!

BETS

Fill it up!

MACK

"Let's get our drink on!"

JIMBO

"And our smoke on! And go home with,"

BETS

"And put on some jazz!"

Jasmine turns music on.

SUZE

What?

MACK

Sorry, No.

JIMBO

I hate jazz.

BETS

Have you ever been to the festival at Montreaux?

MACK

No.

BETS

Really? You should. It's very good.

Very good jazz.

Now, to sing jazz, that is a good reason to be a black.

SUZE

You have no idea what you are talking about.

BETS

I might want to be a black.

SUZE

You don't.

MACK

I'm not even listening to you guys anymore.

I'm just watching them dance.

BETS

Yes, we are missing the dancing.

JIMBO

I'm not missing a fucking thing.

BETS

I would love to dance like this

With you know –

MACK

With hips and shoulders.

BETS

Yes, hips and shoulders.

It is hard to say.

Hips and

MACK
Shoulders

BETS
Shoulders

MACK
Yes, shoulders.

JIMBO
I don't trust that one.

MACK
Which one.

JIMBO
That one.
It's like she's working too hard to seem nice, you know.

BETS
Oh thank god they cover the table.

SUZE
There's nothing wrong with the table.

BETS
There is something wrong with all of this.

Dayton enters with a cake.

JIMBO
It's another cake walk!

SUZE
Jesus Christ.

MACK
And what IS a cake walk anyway?

SUZE
It's racist.

MACK

I know that. But what *is* it.

BETS

Why is it racist?

SUZE

It's a racist dance where black people pretend they have easy lives.

JIMBO

That's not what a cake walk is.

BETS

But they burn the cake.

SUZE

It's a racist dance where black people pretend to have easy lives, so we don't feel bad about how bad their lives actually are.

JIMBO

A cake walk is just when black people pretend to be rich white people.

MACK

But that sounds ... why is that racist?

JIMBO

It's not, actually.

SUZE

Yes it is.

JIMBO

It's just that we think that everything black people had to do back in the day is racist now.

SUZE

That is because everything was racist back in the day.

JIMBO

No, everything is racist now, which means that nothing is racist now.

BETS

I am not racist.

SUZE

Yes, you kind of are.

BETS

I am not.

MACK

She is not.

SUZE

Everyone is racist.

JIMBO

It's like if you want to say that everything is racist, that means that nothing is, do you see what I mean?

BETS

I am not a racist. You do not say this to me.

JIMBO

It's like this movie.

SUZE

I'm saying that I am racist too, okay, it's not just you.

MACK

I don't even understand what point you're trying to make.

JIMBO

No, but it's like this movie.

SUZE

No, just that race is a construct, but it's a very

JIMBO

Will you all just shut the fuck up and listen to me?
I'm trying to make a fucking point. God damn.

The family starts setting the table.

JIMBO (cont.)

Because like, did you guys see the movie
where these college kids go abroad and –
The movie – it's a series.

And in the first one, the college kids,
they go abroad to like, Europe.

They're like doing that
with the backpack

and like drinking and weed and hanging out and you know
they meet some girls real cute and blonde and it turns out the girls
are like friends with these crazy rich people
Or maybe the girls Are the crazy rich people?

I don't remember but somebody's homicidal and super rich and so
the college kids are in this foreign prison.

And it is filled with rich people that have like
these like killing people fetishes and

fucking people up fetishes

like really weird stuff and everything's all brown and bloody and everyone
is dirty and screaming and the college kids are all crying and scared
because they hadn't been anywhere like that before.

Shitting themselves, you know.

Of course their scared.

But it's weird because,

because nobody thinks about how all the crazy rich people
got into that, you know?

You don't just have a whole hobby about torturing people
on accident.

You don't just fall into that shit casually, you know.

Like, you don't build your whole life around brutality by mistake.

You have to want that.

You have to plan that.

And people don't think about that.

But I think about that.

My mind works different.

And in the movie, the college kids are sold to the crazy rich people
and they kill them in like intense and brutal ways.

And, That's basically the movie.

JIMBO (cont.)

And it's like Awesome.

Like one of the rich crazy people has this fetish
that is like cutting peoples fingers off with chainsaws
or some shit

and so he's doing that with the chainsaw

vrrr-ng-ng-ng-ng

and he slips in blood or something

and decapitates himself

with his own chainsaw.

And it's obvious what that means.

Do you know what I mean?

It means he's the victim of his own damn thing.

Like he's the victim of his own shit,

Like, we're all the victim of our own shit, right?

Like, Of course he is.

And it always happens, it's always like that.

Like that just keeps happening in different ways in the whole series,

And that's why they're all like a little bit actually good, you know?

Yeah, like there's a good moral thing going on,

like educating people,

and being like

Whatever the fuck you come up with to do to somebody else

it always ends up getting used on you.

And that shit is moral you know?

You know what I'm saying?

He's the victim of his own fucking fetish.

And it's like. I'm not some mindless fucking person, like

I can't just do something, I've got to think about it.

You know I can't just listen to something I have to hear it you know.

And make it.

Like I make a movie in my mind of what I do every day.

You know?

I make a movie in my mind of what I do every single day.

Like I hear my music underneath me.

And I know my function in it.

Like I'm not just doing what I'm doing

I know what I'm doing, you know what I mean?

Like I can see it clear as fucking day,

the movie that I make in my head of what I'm doing,

JIMBO (cont.)

like I am outside of my own body,
and I see myself, and my actions,
and I see how everybody fucking looks at me,
and I know what everybody fucking thinks about me.
Like they don't even realize how thoroughly I understand
every single fucking thought in all their heads.
Like I'm making the movie, mother fucker,
I know what you're fucking thinking
and I know what you're fucking seeing,
because I am in control of all of it.
Of all of it.

So it's like, yeah, I know

I fucking know

I know that I'm not the hero of my movie.

I'm making the mother fucking movie,

this is my fucking movie

so I understand that I'm not the hero of my movie,

I am fucking aware.

I am fucking aware.

And I keep making the movie,

and I root against myself,

and I keep making the movie,

and I keep being victorious,

and I keep winning everything,

I win everything,

and I keep winning Because I'm the villain of this movie, mother fuckers

do you see what I mean,

like, fuck yeah I'm the villain

and I'm bigger and meaner and faster and I fucking own that

and I'm fucking owning that every day

and I'm smarter and richer and I fucking dominate

that's who the fuck I am

that's who the fuck I am

and it's like I love to root against myself

because every fucking person is rooting against me too

like every other ...

yeah, every other fucking thing

every other fucking person, or race, or whatever the fuck,

every other thing, they're all rooting against me,

all of them are rooting against me,

JIMBO (cont.)
and I fucking Know that shit,
I know that
and I love it
I fucking love it
because you know what?
All those mother fuckers are watching my fucking movie.
And rooting for whatever the fuck they want
in my fucking movie.
Like, you want to make me the villain?
That's fine because you're in my fucking movie motherfucker.
And it's a good fucking movie.
Like, my movie is dope as shit and fucking deep.
All these mother fuckers in my movie know what the fuck is up.
They need me to be the villain.
Do you know what I mean?
They fucking need me to.
They're fucking gagging for it.
All these fucking people,
they wouldn't know what the fuck to do if they couldn't root against me.
They'd be fucking lost without me,
do you know what I mean?
Hey.
Do you know what I mean?
HEY.
I'm talking to you fuckers.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I FUCKING MEAN?????!!

End of Act Two.

What happens on stage after BEVERLY faints in Act 2

KEISHA runs over to BEVERLY.

BEVERLY says she's fine.

KEISHA & DAYTON help BEVERLY off the floor, while she's insisting that she's fine.

JASMINE pours a glass of wine for BEVERLY ... and a glass of wine for herself.

JASMINE brings wine over to BEVERLY.

DAYTON gives her a look and asks JASMINE to get BEVERLY a glass of water.

JASMINE gives DAYTON a look and says that she knows what's best for her sister.

KEISHA remembers that the burning cake is still in the oven, and runs into the kitchen.

DAYTON says he knows what's best for his wife.

JASMINE and DAYTON start to argue, and BEVERLY asks for water.

JASMINE and DAYTON both say I'll get it and start towards the kitchen.

KEISHA comes bursting out of the kitchen holding a smoking cake pan with oven mitts. She does not stop and heads straight for the front door.

All wave away the smoke.

JASMINE goes to the kitchen to get BEVERLY a glass of water.

BEVERLY takes DAYTON's hand and tells him that she loves him, and that she just wants the day to go well.

BEVERLY holds DAYTON and says a monologue that is something like "Did I ever tell you about my ninth birthday party? Well, it was supposed to be great and my dad had planned it all perfectly, it was a cowboy clown birthday with a hay bale and water pistols and games, and I was so excited, but then no one I invited came, and the clown showed up drunk, and so it was just me and my dad eating birthday cake with the clown, and my dad told me something essential about life, and it was the best birthday I ever had."

BEVERLY and DAYTON have a moment.

JASMINE interrupts it with a glass of water and is like do you want it or not.

KEISHA is like Dad you need to get a cake.
BEVERLY and DAYTON are like oh, boy, here we go again (but they do it with a look, instead of saying it)
BEVERLY takes the water and takes a sip.
DAYTON grabs his wallet and car keys and goes out to buy a cake.
BEVERLY goes over and starts picking carrots up off the floor, and asks JASMINE to help.
JASMINE looks at her outfit and is like I'm not getting on the floor in this.
KEISHA goes to help.
BEVERLY feels a little woozy.
KEISHA is like, mom, you just fainted, don't bend over, I've got it.
JASMINE leads BEVERLY over to sit and gives her a glass of wine, and pours herself another glass.
BEVERLY asks JASMINE if she's had enough wine.
JASMINE says that she's fine, and says something about their mother.
BEVERLY is like our mother can hear you.
JASMINE is like good! and repeats what she said shouting up the stair so mama can hear it.
BEVERLY is like don't even start with her, you're drunk.
JASMINE is like I am not drunk and sits down, slightly missing the corner of what she's sitting on and falls on the floor.
BEVERLY is like, omg are you ok?
JASMINE is like look, I didn't even spill my wine, I'm fine.
KEISHA is like, omg, you guys are crazy, what should I do with these carrots I've picked up.
JASMINE is like I know what to do with them, and is like hold my wine, and she takes the carrots, cutting board and whatever else out the front door.
KEISHA is like JASMINE is cray and BEVERLY is like JASMINE is cray
and JASMINE comes back in dusting of her hands and is like, work is done for the day, I thought this was supposed to be a party.
BEVERLY is like, did you just throw my cutting board on my front lawn?
And JASMINE is like, YUP., and turns on some music.

And BEVERLY is like I can't believe I have to go out and get my cutting board, oh, And my knife.

And JASMINE is like leave it, it'll be there tomorrow.

And BEVERLY recognizes the song, and is like I love this song, but also JASMINE you are crazy and I'm still mad at you.

And JASMINE is like you love me, we're sisters.

And KEISHA is like, oh now I know what song this is!

And they all do a dance to it, like an electric slide-type dance.

And KEISHA is like I dance so much better than you old ladies.

And BEVERLY is like, who are you calling old, I can get down, uh uh uh

And JASMINE is like I didn't know you still had it in you.

And BEVERLY is like, yeah, putting it down, uh uh uh.

And JASMINE is like yeah, uh uh uh.

And KEISHA is like double time uh-uh uh-uh uh-uh.

And DAYTON comes in with car keys and cake from the store and is like he-ey it's a partay let's get stoopit.

And BEVERLY is like at least put the cake down.

And DAYTON is like oh I can dance with this here cake and does like the roger rabbit or something while holding the cake.

And everyone's like whooo!

And everyone goes back into the electric slide-type dance.

And they dance all over the space, and start to get the table set for dinner.

In some order, and with lots of other things happening, They dance and set the table,

JASMINE pours KEISHA some wine, and BEVERLY takes the wine away from KEISHA,

They dance and get the centerpiece and candles,

JASMINE moves the centerpiece and BEVERLY moves it back and JASMINE moves it again and BEVERLY moves it back again,

They dance and put out plates of food and bowls of food, and DAYTON dances over to the TV and dances while watching the big game and BEVERLY dances the remote control away from him and he dances dejectedly back into the kitchen to help,

*and they dance and put out a whole other set of plates of
food and bowls of food,
and they dance and dance and smell the food, everything
smells so good and dancing is so fun,
and maybe at one point there is a conga line of fake food
filling up the table,
and the fake foods get stranger and stranger,
piling up on top of each other, threatening for overflow
the table, it's so fun and joyful,
and eventually they're finally done bringing out food
so they dance themselves to their seats,
and all sit down at the table for dinner.*

End of Act Two.

ACT THREE

BEVERLY

Mama?

Mama? Can you come down here please?

We're ready for you.

A new song starts. Entrance music.

"Mama" comes to the top of the stairs.

It is SUZE. The woman who has been listening.

She's wearing her normal clothes, and on top of them, something like an ivory gown with golden threads.

And on her head, a gold turban with a rhinestone.

All look at her.

She looks at them.

She Descends The Staircase.

And takes a seat at the table.

Eventually:

BEVERLY

Oh, Mama, you look beautiful. Doesn't she look Beautiful, Jasmine?

JASMINE

Oh, yes. Just gorgeous.

BEVERLY

Do you think you might give us a little dance today, Mama?

DAYTON

Let the woman be.

BEVERLY

I'm not bothering her.

JASMINE

Happy birthday mama.

BEVERLY

Should we say grace? Let's join hands.

BEVERLY (*cont.*)

Keisha, take your Grandmother's hand, what's the matter with you.

KEISHA does.

BEVERLY, JASMINE and DAYTON bow their heads.

KEISHA looks at SUZE.

SUZE looks at all of them, and at us; she can't help it, she's just so happy to be here.

BEVERLY

Thank you, heavenly father, for bringing us together,
For giving us all that we have,
For hearing our pain and hearing our joy and guiding us through our lives
as best you can, Dear Lord.
Thank you for the roof over our heads,
for the floor under our feet,
Thank you watching over us,
for listening to our prayers,
for hearing our fears,
for guiding us in accordance with your divine plan.
Thank you, Heavenly Father, for giving us this food,
that will nourish our bodies, just as you nourish our souls.
Amen.

DAYTON & JASMINE

Amen.

BEVERLY

Alright, let's eat!

DAYTON

This all looks amazing, Bev.

BEVERLY, JASMINE and DAYTON start serving themselves.

BEVERLY

Thank you Dayton.

DAYTON

You've outdone yourself. Don't you think so, Jasmine?

JASMINE

Well, I haven't tasted it yet.

BEVERLY

Mama, do you want me to fix you a plate?

SUZE looks at her.

BEVERLY

Alright, then. I'll get all your favorites.
Keisha, what's the matter.

JASMINE

Why aren't you eating baby?

KEISHA

It's not ... Um. I'm just confused. I guess. I'm just a little out of it. I-

BEVERLY

Drink some water.

KEISHA

Yeah. I'm gonna, just sit down for a second.

JASMINE

You are sitting down.

KEISHA

Yeah. Just a second.

KEISHA sits on the floor and watches SUZE.

JASMINE

What's the matter with her?

BEVERLY

I don't know. Teenagers.
Is this enough food for you Mom?
Dayton, do you think this is enough?

DAYTON

It's fine, Beverly.

BEVERLY

Okay, here you go. Do you want me to cut it up for you, Mom?

DAYTON

She can do it, can't you Mama Frasier? Just let her be, Bev.

BEVERLY

You're right. Sorry Mama. Ok everybody, let's eat.

They pretend to eat.

DAYTON

Mmmm, mmmm, MMMM! Dang, Bev!
You outdone yourself this year, boy.

BEVERLY

Is it alright?

DAYTON

It's delicious, isn't it Jasmine.

BEVERLY

I was worried that the potatoes would be too salty.

JASMINE

They are a little salty.

DAYTON

Well, I like 'em.

JASMINE

They're very tasty.

DAYTON
Delicious!

JASMINE
When you get a bite of something less Flavorful with them,
it all balances out.

BEVERLY
What do you think, mama?

Beat.

DAYTON
Mmmm, Mmmm, Mmmm. Good.

BEVERLY
Dayton, you're going to choke.

JASMINE
Can you stop worrying over everybody?

DAYTON
She has a point Bev, you gotta relax.

JASMINE
If you don't relax, how's anybody supposed to even try to enjoy
this food you've prepared?

DAYTON
Take it easy, Bev.
Let's all just take a minute and calm down and eat.

*They all pretend to eat.
KEISHA has an aside:*

KEISHA (*aside*)
I just feel like something is wrong.
I have a pit in my stomach and my heart is –

SUZE (*to KEISHA, aside*)
I felt the same way when I was your age.

*KEISHA jumps up, startled because
SUZE has entered her aside.*

SUZE (*cont.*)
I was your age once.

KEISHA
What – what –

SUZE
Oh, Keisha, I understand you, more than you realize.
I've known you since you were born.

KEISHA
(*glares*)

SUZE
Alright. That's alright.
But you can talk to me. I'm here to listen.

*SUZE makes a vague hand gesture, like a conductor.
The music comes back on.
The conversation picks up where they left off.*

JASMINE
I'm telling you, if you load up your fork,
you get a bit of that salty food on there
with the food that isn't seasoned,
and it all balances out.

BEVERLY
Come over here and get a plate Keisha.
I thought you were hungry.

DAYTON
Let the child alone, Bev.

JASMINE
Is there any butter in the potatoes?

BEVERLY
Oh. There is.

JASMINE
Well that's dairy, isn't it?

BEVERLY
It is.

Their eyes meet – a showdown. JASMINE relents.

JASMINE
I just wish I'd known.

Beat.
Doorbell sound.

DAYTON
Keisha, will you get the door.

Beat.

BEVERLY
Keisha?

JASMINE
I'll get it.

BEVERLY
Keisha, what's the matter?

KEISHA
I'm fine.

DAYTON
Your mother needs you today Keisha.

JASMINE enters.

JASMINE

It's Tyrone. He made it after all.

*JIMBO makes an entrance with music, stunting.
On top of his clothes, a baseball cap and some sneakers.
Maybe a chain? He raps along to his entrance music for
us and the family, and he might try to get the crowd on
their feet. The whole entrance should probably end with
a bad-ass pose.*

JIMBO

How you doin' mama?

Sorry I'm late, y'all.

JASMINE

It's not a problem.

DAYTON

Hey there Tyrone.

JIMBO Dabs.

DAYTON

Yup, alright.

JASMINE

We're all so glad you're here.

BEVERLY

We didn't wait for you to start, since I didn't know if you would make it.

JIMBO

Well, I did.

BEVERLY

Yes, you did.

DAYTON

Beverly.

JASMINE

You must be so tired from your flight.

JIMBO

I'm fuckin' spent.

SUZE

Tyrone. Language.

JIMBO

Sorry mama.

What's up with Keisha?

BEVERLY

She's just resting for a moment. I don't think she's feeling well.

JIMBO

I bet she isn't.

BEVERLY

What is that supposed to mean?

JIMBO

How you doin' Keisha?

JASMINE

Keisha, your uncle said something to you.

JIMBO

What's the matter Keisha?

SUZE

Leave Keisha alone.

DAYTON

Can I get you a glass of wine, Tyrone?

JIMBO

Let me get a beer.

BEVERLY
With dinner?

DAYTON
Oh, sure, I think we have a few in the fridge, don't we Beverly?

BEVERLY
I'll check.

JIMBO
Dope dope dope.

BEVERLY exits.

JASMINE
So, Tyrone. How is work?

JIMBO
What?

JASMINE
Do you think you're going to make partner?

JIMBO
I don't know.
Why isn't there music on?
Isn't there supposed to be music on?

SUZE
That's enough, Tyrone.

JIMBO
Come on! I want to dance!
Five, six, seven, eight:

*Upbeat music comes on.
JIMBO starts dancing.
JIMBO gets SUZE up and dancing.
Somehow they know the same dance.
They do that thing – like an exaggerated wave,
and JASMINE & DAYTON jump up and join in.
KEISHA marks it.*

BEVERLY re-enters with a bottle of beer, and joins in while holding a beer.

BEVERLY
What's all this?

JIMBO
We Frasier's love to dance.

DAYTON
You Frasier's do love to dance.

JASMINE
We Frasier's love to dance.

BEVERLY
We Frasier's love to dance.

JIMBO
No no no. This isn't the kind of beer you'd have.

BEVERLY
What do you mean, Tyrone?

JIMBO
Don't you have like ... I don't know a forty or something. Like a Colt45?

BEVERLY
... Let me check.

BEVERLY exits.

JIMBO
This is fun.

Doorbell sound.

JIMBO
I bet it's that girl from Keisha's school.

SUZE
Alright now, Tyrone.

JASMINE
What girl?

SUZE
Maybe you don't need that beer.

DAYTON
I'll get it.

*DAYTON gets the door; music shifts to MACK's music.
MACK enters, choreographed within an inch
of all of our lives.
There might be a costume reveal.
There is at least one wig reveal.
There probably isn't a death drop,
but if there were, it would make sense.
Maybe a final pose, and hold for applause ...*

MACK
(to SUZE & JIMBO)
Was that too much?
I didn't want her to be boring.

JIMBO
No, that was dope.

MACK
Thank you.

SUZE
You guys are ruining everything.

MACK
Oh my god, relax.
(cont. to ALL)
Hello.
I am Erika,
a seventeen year old African American girl of non-Hispanic origin.
I am five foot six and one hundred and thirty pounds.
I play basketball with Keisha.

BEVERLY enters with forty of Colt 45.

BEVERLY
Oh. Hello Erika.

MACK
Hello Beverly.

DAYTON
Erika, do you want to stay for dinner?

MACK
I wouldn't want to intrude.

DAYTON
It's not a problem –

BEVERLY
Well thanks for stopping –

MACK
I wouldn't want to impose.

JASMINE
Mama, you don't mind if Erika stays, do you?

SUZE
Me?

JASMINE
It's your party, mama.

MACK (*to KEISHA*)
I have what you asked for.

KEISHA
...

MACK
You know. The, um, "assignment."

KEISHA
...

MACK

That you told your family that we talked about on the phone.

He presents an envelope.

KEISHA

I didn't ask for anything.

JIMBO

Beverly, what is that now?

BEVERLY takes the envelope.

KEISHA

Mom!

MACK

That is for Keisha!

JIMBO

What is going on with your daughter?

BEVERLY

What kind of "assignment" is this?

JIMBO

Aw sheet.

JASMINE

Don't ask her, open it.

KEISHA

Aunt Jasmine.

BEVERLY

Don't start Jasmine.

JASMINE

I'm not starting anything.

DAYTON
This is ridiculous. Give it here.

JIMBO
Open it, Damon.

SUZE
Dayton.

JIMBO
Right.

JASMINE
What is it.

DAYTON
It's – it's –

MACK
No! Don't say it.
Keisha, I didn't want it to come out this way.

JIMBO
It's a pregnancy test!

KEISHA
What?

MACK
What?

BEVERLY
What?

SUZE
No!

DAYTON
What do you need that for Keisha?

KEISHA
I don't – I don't – I don't –

JIMBO
Oh, Keisha.

MACK
It is a love letter!

JIMBO
It is a pregnancy test!

It is a pregnancy test.

JASMINE
Oh my lord.

BEVERLY
Keisha. Baby. Are you pregnant?

KEISHA
Mom, no.

DAYTON
Keisha.

KEISHA
It's like literally I don't –

JIMBO
Who's baby is it?

KEISHA
I am not pregnant.

MACK
Oh, Keisha.

KEISHA
I'm just – I'm not pregnant.

JASMINE
But how do you know?

KEISHA

Because I'm not – there's no – I don't understand what's happening right now.

MACK

Because she and I –

BEVERLY

I'm so disappointed in you.

KEISHA

But I'm not –

MACK

Because she and I are –

SUZE

Oh, Keisha, just tell your mother and I what happened. We'll forgive you.

MACK

You are ruining everything.

JASMINE

You better take that test, Keisha.

KEISHA

But I'm not pregnant.

DAYTON

Can't you see that your mother is hurting?

JASMINE

You better go on up to the bathroom and take that test.

KEISHA

But –

JASMINE

If you ain't done nothing wrong, then you don't have anything to worry about.

KEISHA shuts her mouth, takes the test, exits.

JASMINE
Mmmn.

BEVERLY
I don't believe it.

JASMINE
Mmmn mmmn mmmn.

BEVERLY
I just can't believe it.

JASMINE
Mmmn mmmn mmmn mmmn mmmn.

JIMBO
It is what it is.
Babies having babies.

MACK
Grandma Frasier is going to have something to say about this.

SUZE
I love Keisha unconditionally.

MACK
Not you. Her Grandma Frasier.

*Sultry Jazz plays.
A mama surrounded by haze at the top of the stairs.
A bigger, golder turban.
A bigger, golder everythang.
It is BETS, with a cigarette.
She slithers, then poses, then slithers, then poses,
enjoying the dance and the spotlight.*

SUZE
What the fuck.

JIMBO
Language.

SUZE
Shut up.

MACK
She's fabulous.

BETS
I am!
Hello everyone!

SUZE
And what are you doing?

BETS
Living!

SUZE
Mmmn.

BETS
Loving!

SUZE
Mmmn.

BETS
Out Loud!

MACK
I love it.

BETS
Living, how do you say ... my best life?

MACK
Qween.

BETS
Can I tell you something?
I want to tell you something.
Can I say it in a special light?

SUZE
No!

A special light.

BETS
Thank you.
Yes.
As the black woman, the world tell me: shhh.
Don't be so proud.
Don't be so sexy.

MACK
(snaps)

BETS
The world tell me that I am too much.
Too loud.
Too aggressive.
Always.
Too sassy.
Always.
They fear me because I feel too much. I think too much.
But you know what?

MACK
You tell 'em, honey.

BETS
I am too much. Too much for those who are Not Enough.

KEISHA re-enters.

KEISHA
Who is she?

BETS
I am your grandmother.

KEISHA
But –

BETS
Shall we do a little dance?

BETS & MACK start Mama Frasier's birthday dance.

JIMBO
We're past all that.

BETS
But –

JIMBO
What does the test say?

KEISHA
I don't want to say because everyone's going to freak out.

JASMINE
Oh my lord.

KEISHA
I'm not pregnant.

JASMINE
It's positive.

KEISHA
Yes, but I'm not pregnant.

BEVERLY
Let me see that.

BETS & SUZE (*in unison*)
You better let your mama (mother) see it.
Stop it.
This is my –
Stop it.
Stop.

JASMINE
Let me see the damn test.

BEVERLY
What does it say.

JASMINE
It's – it's –

JIMBO
It's positive. Like I said.

BEVERLY
Oh my lord.

DAYTON
Let me see that.

KEISHA
Dad – it's not.

DAYTON
My little girl. My baby.

KEISHA
Daddy I'm not –
I can't be. Erika and I haven't even – and –

MACK
I thought we were –

KEISHA
Get away from me.

MACK
You're so cruel.

BEVERLY
You lie to me.

KEISHA
Mom.

BEVERLY
You running around doing who knows what with who knows who –

KEISHA
Mom, I'm not –

BEVERLY
Stop it Keisha. Just stop.

JIMBO (*sotto voce*)
Shit's about to get real.

BEVERLY
Coming in my house
sitting at my table
eating my food
looking me straight in my face
and lying to me.

KEISHA
Mom –

BEVERLY
And I couldn't see it because you're my daughter and I love you,
but the scales have fallen from my eyes,

MACK (*sotto voce*)
Mmn-hmm.

BEVERLY
and now I don't even recognize you.

MACK (*sotto voce*)
Poof, be gone.

BEVERLY
You are not the daughter I raised.

KEISHA
No I am, Mom. I'm–

BEVERLY
My daughter wouldn't throw her whole future away.
My daughter would go to college, get an education.

SUZE (*sotto voce*)
Poor Keisha.

KEISHA
I'm going to college.

JIMBO
Then whatchu gonna do with your baby, Keisha?

SUZE
I'll take care of the baby.

JASMINE
You've already raised your family, mama.

BETS
My children have grown! It's my time to shine!

JASMINE
You've earned your rest.

BETS
I want to sing jazz!

SUZE
No, Jasmine, talk to me.

BETS
You are boring.

SUZE
I'm not boring. I just want ...
I wanna take care of the baby.

KEISHA
There is No Baby.
I am going to go to college.
I just want to find myself before I go –

JIMBO takes out a stack of bills and eviction notices.

JIMBO

There ain't no money for college, Keisha.

BEVERLY/JASMINE/SUZE/BETS/DAYTON

What?

JIMBO

That dream is dead. Dead!

KEISHA

What are you talking about.

DAYTON

What's that you've got there?

JIMBO

Don't pretend that you don't know.

JIMBO hands them to DAYTON.

BETS

What has Dayton done now?

DAYTON (*reading the bills*)

Past due. Past due.

BEVERLY

What?!

JASMINE

Oh my goodness.

DAYTON

I don't understand this.

BEVERLY

But I've seen you make the payments. The mortgage payments.
Every month.

DAYTON

I pay my bills.

JASMINE
Where's the money gone, Dayton?

SUZE
We're not losing the house, are we?

DAYTON
We are not losing the house.

JASMINE
Dayton, where's the money gone?

DAYTON
I don't know!

SUZE
We started off with nothing. Worked for everything we had.
I worked my fingers to the bone, cleaning other people's houses,

BEVERLY
But you never –

SUZE
just so, one day, I could buy my own.

BEVERLY
You never worked as a maid, Mama.

SUZE
And just like that. It's gone.

BETS
What on earth was that?

JASMINE
Where did all the money go?

JIMBO
Gambling.

JASMINE
No.

JIMBO
Yup.

JASMINE
Who?

BETS
Dayton.

DAYTON
What?

BETS
It must be.

JASMINE
Of course.

SUZE
No!

BETS
Yes.

JASMINE
When did it start?

MACK
What's gonna happen to Keisha?

SUZE
What have you done to this family?

BETS
What's going to happen to us all?

JASMINE
When did the gambling start?

DAYTON
It's not gambling, it's just fantasy football. I don't understand this.

JASMINE

Then where did all the money go?

BETS

If it's not gambling, it's drugs.

JASMINE / SUZE / JIMBO / MACK / DAYTON / BEVERLY
Drugs!

BETS

It's a common story.

SUZE

Who's on Drugs?

MACK

... Jasmine!

JASMINE

You better take my name outta your mouth, Erika.

MACK

Sorry, I don't know why I thought, it can't be Jasmine.

JIMBO

Is it ... Beverly?

Most gasp, and look at BEVERLY.

BEVERLY

Me?

JIMBO

I knew she was hiding something.

DAYTON

Oh, Beverly.

BEVERLY

I'm not – what drugs?

JASMINE
You have been acting funny.

BETS
She fainted!

SUZE
She's just tired.

JASMINE
She's been on edge, making mistakes,

BEVERLY
I have not!

JASMINE
She's been slipping.

SUZE
She's not on anything, is she?

BEVERLY
I'm not mama.

DAYTON
This is serious Beverly.

JIMBO
Who's been giving you drugs, Bea?

SUZE
She's a strong woman, trying to provide for her family, not some –

BETS
Crack woman!

SUZE
Please don't finish my sentences.

BEVERLY
Dayton, I don't know what this is all about.

DAYTON
Stop lying Beverly.
Just stop.

MACK (*sotto voce*)
Ooooooh.

DAYTON
Have you been lying to me for so long?
So long that it just comes naturally to you?

JASMINE
Well it's not just her, Dayton, is it?

SUZE/BETS/MACK/BEVERLY
(*gasp!*)

KEISHA
What?

JIMBO
Damn.

DAYTON
What are you talking about.

JASMINE
I knew it.
I just knew it.
Dayton is sick.

DAYTON
I'm not sick.

JASMINE
Lost the house, Beverly's on drugs, all this stress.
Come on now.

DAYTON
I'm not sick.

MACK
I think he is.

JASMINE
Oh I know he is.

MACK
What do you think he has.

JASMINE
Dayton what do you have?

MACK
Is it diabetes?

JASMINE
You got diabetes, Dayton?

MACK
Or worse!

JASMINE
Worse?

MACK
Like heart disease.

JASMINE
You gonna have a heart attack, Dayton?

MACK
Or, worse.

JASMINE
No!

MACK
Something venereal.

JASMINE
Oh my goodness!

MACK
Like syphilis.

JASMINE
You got syphilis, Dayton?!

DAYTON
Syphilis?!

SUZE / BETS
Lord lord lord!

DAYTON
I don't have syphilis!

JASMINE
How could you.

MACK
Who have you been sleeping with, Dayton?

JIMBO
What?!

DAYTON
Beverly I haven't –

JASMINE
Don't you talk to her.

JIMBO
How dare you!

DAYTON
But I haven't –

BEVERLY
Why, Dayton, why?

JIMBO
How dare you cheat on my sister!

*JIMBO throws food at DAYTON.
DAYTON ducks and it hits BETS.*

JIMBO
Mama!
Mama I'm sorry –

BETS
What kind of a son throws food at his mother on her birthday?

FOOD FIGHT.

KEISHA

I need to ask you something.

SUZE

Of course. Keisha. You can ask me anything.
You know that don't you.

KEISHA

I know that you think you know what's best for me –

SUZE

I do, Keisha.

KEISHA

But –

SUZE

I've known you since the moment you were born.
I have watched you.
I brought you here and I watched you grow. Blossom.

KEISHA

But –

SUZE

Make beauty, out of ... out of nothing,

KEISHA

Please –

SUZE

despite such hardship,
I'm so sorry that you've had to go through that,
but I've watched you find such strength,
and I'm in awe of you and what you've accomplished,
I'm so proud of you and I am so happy for both of us,
for all I've done to make you who you are.
Oh, Keisha.
You don't know what it means to me.
To see this lovely girl who I have watched for her entire life,

KEISHA

No.

I have known You for My entire Life.

SUZE

Keisha.

KEISHA

Stop.

*Everything stops, or gets let go.
ALL listen to Keisha.*

KEISHA

Please, stop.

I know what you're going to say because ...

Because you have told me every story I have ever heard.

And I ... I need you to listen.

Because I need to ask you something.

SUZE

Alright, Keisha. What do you want to ask me.

KEISHA

I ...

I don't know.

I can't hear myself think.

I can't hear anything but you staring at me.

SUZE

I don't know what you're asking me to do Keisha.

KEISHA

I think I need to ask you ... to not be here.

Or to let me not be here?

SUZE

You're not making sense. Maybe you should sit down.

KEISHA

I don't need to sit down.

I need to ask you to leave so that I can have some space to think.

KEISHA (*cont.*)

I can't think in the face of you telling me who you think I am
with your loud self and your loud eyes and your loud guilt –
I can't hear myself think.

SUZE

I don't know what I did to make you treat me this way.
All I've done, all I've ever done, is to try to be good to you.

KEISHA

Stop telling me that.
Stop telling yourself that.
Please.

SUZE

You're not telling me what you want me to do Keisha.

KEISHA

I know. Because I don't know. I just want to ...
I want to know what that space is.
What that space would be like.
For me.
Without.
Without you –
what should I call you.

SUZE

Hmmn. What would you want to call me?

KEISHA

Not Grandma.

Beat.

SUZE

That's. That's fair.

KEISHA

I'd call you.
Not Grandma.
I'd call you.

SUZE
You'd call me white.

KEISHA
I'd call you white. Yes.
Do you mind that?

SUZE
Why would I mind that?

KEISHA
I don't know.

SUZE
Do you want me to leave?

KEISHA
... no.
But do you think I could ...
but what if I could ...

SUZE
What if you could what?

KEISHA
What if we all could ... what if we all could ...

SUZE
Could what?

KEISHA
It would be too hard.

SUZE
We all could what?

KEISHA
And the same people who are always caught in between
would be caught in between.

SUZE
What if we all could do what?

KEISHA

Do you think I can ask them that anyway?

SUZE

Ask them what?

KEISHA

To switch?

SUZE

To switch what?

KEISHA

Do you think that I could –

What if I could?

But if I could ask the folks who call themselves white to come up here,
do you think they would?

Could I ask them to come up in here,
so that we could go down out there?

Do you think I could ask the folks who call themselves white to do that?
To switch for a little while?

How should I ask them, if I could?

Could I say

“Hi, white people.

Come here, white people. Come on up here.

If you’re physically able to.”

*KEISHA steps through the fourth wall.
It’s as simple as that.*

Could I say

“Come up here folks who identify as white,
you know who you are.

you can choose to come up here
to where I’ve always been, where my family has always been.

Sit on the couch.

Make yourself a plate.

Look out from where I am.

And let me and my family go out to where you’ve always been.”

Could I say that?
Could I ask them that?
How should I ask?
If I asked would they do it?
How long would it take?

Would it help if I told them that the show is ending?
Would it help white people to come up here to where I've been
if I tell them that we'll all leave soon?
That there are things in motion already?
That we are all going to leave anyway?
Could I tell them that those seats are not theirs,
even though they paid for them?
That no one can own a seat forever?
That no one should?

Could I say
"See, there's Terri.
She's our stage manager.
She's amazing.
She's white.
She's coming up here.
You can come on up here too.
Leave your coats. Leave your bags. Leave your things.
Just stop worrying about your things, for a minute
and worry about where you can go
what you can do to make space for someone else for a minute,
if you could."

Do I sound naïve?
Does that matter?
Do I have to keep talking to them
and keep talking to them
and keep talking only to them
only to them
only to them
until I have used up every word
until I have nothing left for
You?

I've been trying to talk to You.
This whole time.

Have you heard me?
Do I have to tell them that I want them to make space for us
for them to make space for us?
Do I really have to tell them that?
Do I have to tell them why I want them to go up there
for them to go up there?
Why I want them to sit on the sofa
and sit on the chairs
and sit on the carpet
and touch the walls
and touch the fake food
and touch your own face pretending to look in a mirror
but really looking into the lights?

They're bright aren't they?
Should I tell them that the lights are there to help people see them not to
help them see anything?
So I can be out down here with all my people of color?
With all my colorful people?
And we can be all of us together alone?
And if I were to go out down here with my colorful people,
could I tell us a story?
If I were out down here, just us, I'd want to tell us a story.
A story about ending.
Or about leaving.
Or about remaining.
And how they're all the same thing if the same people do them.
But that's not the story I want to tell us all.
If I could tell the story I want to tell us,
my people,
my colorful people,
you would hear it
if I could tell it,
and it would be something like
a story about us, by us, for us, only us.
But that's not telling the story.

If I could tell the story I want to tell it would begin like this:
Once upon a time, there was a bright little girl who knew that if she
worked twice as hard as –
No.
That's not what I wanted to tell.

Once, there was a little boy born with the deck stacked –
No.
Once, there was an exceptional –

It's difficult because I've already heard so many stories.
It's hard to find the one I'd wanted to tell.
It would be something like ...

Once ...
not once,
not at all once.
Many many many many times,
there was a person who worked hard,
a person who tried to work hard,
and tried to do their best,
and tried to do well by their family,
and tried to be good, and tried to do better.
Many many times they tried this.
And so.
The person became who they always were –
who we all always are –
A Person Trying.

So they tried and they tried and they looked around
at the mountains of effort that they had built with their trying
at the piles of half built bests
at the heaps of family
at the hills of good enough hills and better next time,
and as they looked around,
as they took in the view,
they saw what they had done to make the life that they had lived.

And they looked to the left and saw what you had done
to try to make the life that you have lived,
and they took in that view.

And they looked to the right and saw what you had done
to try to make the life that you have lived,
and they took in that view.

They took it all in.
And in in their estimation
they found all of it,
their view over all of it,
the sum of all of it,
to be fair.

End of Play.