

Fall 10-1-2008

## Dialogue, 2008

Columbia College Chicago

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COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO THEATER CENTER

# Dialogue

FALL 2008



Front row: Daisica Smith, Katie Mackenzie, Rachel Staelens; Middle row: Stantasha Howard, Amber Linde, Candice Poe; Back row: Matthew Scott, Tony Smith, Tezeru Teshome, Gillian Butcher, Ashley Lauren, Eric Prather, Stanton Long

create...  
change

Columbia 

C O L L E G E C H I C A G O

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO THEATER CENTER

# Dialogue

FALL 2008

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C O L L E G E C H I C A G O

# Introduction

The Theodore Ward African-American Playwriting Contest, sponsored by Columbia College Chicago's Theater Department, has given a first production to many excellent plays by professional writers. Allowing the playwrights to see their plays fully produced on stage has often been a stepping stone to professional productions at theaters in Chicago or around the country. Two years ago we decided we wanted to expand the effect of the Contest within the Theater Department and the College. We wanted our directing students to have the opportunity to direct our students in new plays, and we wanted high school students of color to also have the opportunity to see their work onstage at Columbia. With the help of the Multicultural Program of the College and Urban Missions Program of CCAP, we were able to make that a reality,



and four young writers watched their plays in front of audiences, hand in hand with the 2007–08 Theodore Ward production in March. Student and alumni directors La Tia

Thomas, Matthew Scott, Rachael Staelens, and Andrew Williams, (under the direction of Andrea J. Dymond and with the patience and assistance of the *My Secret Language of Wishes* cast and crew) directed the plays, talked to the first-time playwrights and experienced the excitement of watching a play that had only lived on paper move to the stage. These plays on the following pages represent this first foray into producing ten-minute plays by young writers. We hope it will not be the last.

Susan Padveen

# Black Daisies

BY TEZERU TESHOME



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## SCENE ONE

*Lights up on Tessa and Viola seated on stage finishing a game of cards.*

**Tessa:** Wut' you think we gon' be doin' dis' summa'?

**Viola:** I don't know. You?

**Tessa:** Samethin' we did las' summa'... nothin.' *(Beat)* I wonda' when Uncle Henry gon' cum' back from town. He left early in da' mornin' and now da' sun is startin' set. See?

**Viola:** I ain't blind. Da' trains proly' takin' a long time. You know how strict dem' Jim Crow Laws is when it cum' ta' coloreds ridin' trains.

**Tessa:** Wanna' play sum' more cards?

**Viola:** Nah.'

**Tessa:** You gettin' ta' be real borin.' Like a ol' church lady.

**Viola:** Well you always naggin' me wit' yo' ol' black self.

**Tessa:** I ain't black. I'm colored.

## SCENE TWO

**Viola:** I'm goin' inside and don't follow me.  
*(Exits into house. Tessa begins ta' sort out cards. Uncle Henry enters.)*

**Tessa:** Uncle Henry!!! *(Leaps into his arms)*

**Uncle Henry:** Look wut' I got you.  
*(Pulls out a daisy. Hands it to her)*  
See dat'? Look how pretty it is? Jus' like you Tessa.

**Tessa:** You think I'm pretty?

**Uncle Henry:** You betta' know it. Look at you, growin' into a young lady.

**Tessa:** Dat's wut' ma' momma always said 'bout Viola. Can't wait 'till she cum' back. You excited too?

**Uncle Henry:** *(Pause)* You should put dat' in water fo' it turn black.

**Tessa:** Okay.  
*(As she exits into the house, Michael enters)*

**Michael:** 'Bout time you came back. Dose' da' shoes?

**Uncle Henry:** Yep. *(Shows shoes)*

**Michael:** *(Whistles)* Dese' sho' look 'sepensive. An' you say Clarence jus' up an' give 'em ta' you... fo' free'?

**Uncle Henry:** Yeah. He owed me a fava.'

**Michael:** I don't like dat' nigga. He always up ta' no good. I don't like him an' I don't trus' him. He wud' lie on his own momma if white folks promised him a piece of week ol' bread.

**Uncle Henry:** But dey' fit perfect tho.' Dey' jus' right.  
*(Puts shoes into bag)*

**Michael:** Well, we betta' get ta' work on dese' fields. Sun be gone fo' you know it.  
*(Uncle Henry exits into house)*  
*Lights fade on scene. End scene.*

*Uncle Henry and Suzan enter holding hands.*

**Suzan:** So...you excited?

**Uncle Henry:** Yeah. I been thinkin' 'bout it fo' I don't know how long now. I jus' gotta' tell Michael.

**Suzan:** I think its good dat' you wanna' be some-thin' else otha' den' a farmer. Dats' why I'm gon' move North ta' Chicago soon as I gets 'nuff money cuz' I wudn't want ta' raise no kids down here.

**Uncle Henry:** You want kids?

**Suzan:** Yeah...Hopefully with you one day.  
*(Henry and Suzan 'almost' kiss when suddenly Michael enters through the house. He is holding a box of records)*

**Michael:** Hey, Mz. Suzan.

**Suzan:** Hi, Michael. *(Awkward silence)* Guess I bets' ta' get goin' an' start suppa' fa' momma.

**Michael/**  
**Uncle Henry:** Bye.

**Michael:** Five months. It was somethin' else Phyllis jus' ta' up an' leave us like dat.' I knew she always wanted ta' move up North an' be a singer but dat' wasn't wut' I want-ed...happy she left it tho.'

**Uncle Henry:** Me too cuz' wit-out Memphis Slim, Roosevelt Skyes, Little Brother Montgom'ry, Blind Lemon Jeffers'n, Charlie Patta'n

**Michael:** Skip James—We sure did a number on dem' acres, tho.' I think we gon' make it through dis' devilish Depression long as we jus' stick togetha.'

*(Mr. Riley enters)*

**Mr. Riley:** Good-evenin' boys. How y'all been holdin' up?

**Michael:** Jus' fine, Mr. Riley. Thank you. But, fo' you go off talkin, I know wat you cum' 'round here fo.' I know you work fo' da' bank but I jus' can't give up my land.

**Mr. Riley:** No. Not yo' land, da' bank's land.

**Michael:** Da' bank's land? Right now—ta'day—dis' is my land. Long as we work da' land an' keep dem' payments up.

**Uncle Henry:** *(To Mr. Riley)* He right.

**Mr. Riley:** I don't give a damn who's right or wrong. All I want is dat' promotion da' Bank promised me. I don't really give a damn 'bout dis' land or ya'll. Let's get dat' clear right here an' now. I jus' can't stand dat' y'all undeservin' niggas not only live by me but y'all got betta' soil den' me. Now, I don't know if y'all done did sum' damn voodoo or sumthin' ta' keep dat' cotton growin' tall and fat like it does, but it's growin' an' I want it. y'all hear me? Now...ta'day is Tuesday. On Thursday, dis' land will belong ta' da' bank. You hear me?

**Michael:** We not jus' gon' give up our land jus' like dat.' My great-granddaddy bought dis' land with his hard earned own money. I ain't jus gon' give it up like it was free or it was neva' ours ta' begin wit.

**Mr. Riley:** *(Boiling)* I don't think y'all know who y'all talkin' ta.'

**Michael:** We talkin' ta' da' same man who grew up on a dirty little sharecroppin' farm just a couple miles down from us. Yo' family worked dese' same fields an' picked da' same cotton mine done. Now, dat' same bank you work fo', own yo' place too. So you ain't no betta den' us.

**Mr. Riley:** I don't know wuts' gotten into ya'll, but y'all betta' hope when I cums' round' here 'gain, it's with a goddamn smile on ma' face.*(Exits)*

**Uncle Henry:** Wut you think he gon' do?

*(Michael says nothing)*

Michael.

**Michael:** I don't know. But I betta' tell da' girls not ta' stray too fa' from da' house. Same goes fo' you lil' brotha.'

**Uncle Henry:** Okay...but Michael I been thinkin' dat' maybe it's best if we...

*(Michael aimlessly exits into the house without letting Uncle Henry complete his sentence)*

*Lights fade on scene. End scene.*

## SCENE THREE

*Lights up on Henry and Suzan sitting on the porch.*

**Uncle Henry:** I don't think I can leave, now. Ma' brotha' need ma' help mo' den' he needs God's an' I can't jus' leave in da' heat of tension like dis'. An' wut' 'bout Tessa an' Viola?

**Suzan:** Dey got me—I'm like a auntie ta' dem' gurls'—an' dey' got ma' momma. Michael is a grown man. He can handle dis'—even if it's by himself. And Mr. Riley an' da' bank gon' 'ventually find sum' otha' colored folk ta' botha'...trus' me. You planned on movin' fo' too long to jus' not do it.

*(Michael enters)*

**Michael:** Wut's all dis' talkin' bout' plannin' an' Mr. Riley?

**Suzan:** Well, I guess I betta get goin'. Will I see you ta'morrow Henry?

**Uncle Henry:** Yeah.

*(Suzan exits)*

**Michael:** Wut's goin' on ta'morrow? *(Uncle Henry says nothing)* Henry?

**Uncle Henry:** Huh?

**Michael:** Wut's goin' on wit' you an' Mz. Suzan ta'morrow?

**Uncle Henry:** *(Slowly. Cautious.)* I'm gon' be on a train...I'm leavin' an' headin' ta' Chicago.

**Michael:** You playin' round,' right? Cuz' ain't no brotha' of mine gon' leave his family—'specially when dey' in da' mill' of sumthin' like dis.'

**Uncle Henry:** I'm sorry, but I'm leavin' ta'morrow an'—  
*(Michael smacks him in the face)*

**Michael:** After all I've done fo' you!!!! *(Michael raises his hand and slaps Uncle Henry. Tessa and Viola enter stage)*

You wanna—

**Uncle Henry:** I am a grown ass man!!! I don't need ta' be stayin' round' here like lil' boy! I got dreams, Michael!!! I wanna' be sumbody'! I been



readin' the *Chicago Defender* an' it say dere's tons of betta' jobs out dere fo' me. Like workin' in meat fact'ries or in rest'raunts or fancy hotels. You seen how easy dey' kill Negroes 'round here! Wut' if we next?

**Michael:** Wut' if we ain't? You a black nigga!!! Wut' you 'spect!? You say you wanna be somebody? A nigga ain't eva' gon' be a 'somebody' cuz' all a nigga know how ta' do is obey da' Bible an' pick a good bale of cotton. Wut' you gon' do wit' dat' when you go up North—huh? Who you know live up North? Nobody. You betta' stop talkin' dat' foolishness an' stay down an'—

**Uncle Henry:** An' do wut? Be like you? Womanless? Selfish? Pig headed? Stubborn?

**Michael:** Don't you talk like dat' ta' me boy. Everythin' you got is cuz' me.

**Uncle Henry:** Well I'm lookin' fo' somethin' betta. 'Cuz everything you gave me is shit.

*(Michael moves toward his brother, but Uncle Henry tenses and braces for action)*

I done told you... I'm grown.

**Michael:** Grown? Nigga, I raised you. Protected you. Everythin' you got I paid fo'... You think you betta' den' me, don't you? Huh? Tell you wut'...you go on up North; dey gon' treat you like dey' do down here: like a nigga. You jus' ain't realized it cuz' you day-dreamin' 'bout da' tall buildins,' big league baseball games an' wut' not.

**Uncle Henry:** I already paid fo' ma' ticket an' it's a one way. I've been savin' up. Cum' wit' me, Michael. I mean...how many times have I said we shud' move away from here—all us ta'geta?

**Michael:** Get da hell off ma' property.

*(Michael exits into house)*

**Viola:** You okay Uncle Henry?

**Uncle Henry:** Yeah.

**Viola:** So, you really leavin'?

**Uncle Henry:** It's where I belongs. Once I get 'nuff money goin,' maybe you an' yo' sista' can cum' up dere fo' da' summa'...maybe even ta' live wit' me.

**Viola:** You ain't comin' back?

**Uncle Henry:** No...not any time soon at least.

**Tessa:** Why? Wut' we do?

**Uncle Henry:** Nothin,' Tessa. y'all ain't did nothin. It's cuz' of people like Mr. Riley. Dangerous people like him is da' reason why I'm movin.'

**Tessa:** But Daddy say dere's dangerous people everywhere.

**Viola:** But not like in da' South—right Uncle Henry?

**Uncle Henry:** Right, not like in da' South. I hope y'all gals' understand.

**Viola:** We do.

**Tessa:** Not me...Wut 'bout us? We gotta' live down here with dese' dangerous white folks while you live up North wit' good white folks. Dis' ain't fair...you gon' leave us like momma done.

**Viola:** Tessa!

**Tessa:** I'm tired of dis' too but you don't see me runnin' way! I hate you!!!

**Viola:** Tessa!

*(Tessa runs into the house)* Don't botha' wit' ha' Uncle Henry. I'll talk sum' sense into dat' gal'. But I'm sho' gon' miss you.

*(Hugs him)*

**Uncle Henry:** I'm gon' miss you too. You take care of Tessa fo' me—you hear. Make sure you tell her I said, I love her an' dat' I'm gon' cum' back fo' all ya'll—an' dats' da' truth. I hope you don't really feels da' same way she do 'bout me leavin.



**Viola:** No. I understand. If I was you, I woulda' been gon. Jus' don't fo'get 'bout us down here.

**Uncle Henry:** I won't. I can't. *(They hug once more. Uncle Henry exits stage. Viola looks after him)*

*Lights fade on scene. End scene.*



#### SCENE FOUR

*Lights come up and the stage is blank. It is the next day. Suzan runs onto stage and bangs on door. She is in a panic.*

**Suzan:** Michael!!! Michael!!!

*(Tessa and Viola open door)*

**Tessa:** Mz. Suzan? Wut's wrong?

**Suzan:** *(Frantically)* Where's yo' daddy?!!

**Viola:** He out back gettin' sum' wood fo' da' stove. Wut's wrong, Mz. Suzan? Calm down.

**Suzan:** *(More frantically)* Where's Michael?!!!!

*(Tessa runs into house. She reenters with Michael. He's carrying wood)*

**Michael:** Wut's all dis' yellin fo'?

**Suzan:** Dey' hung Henry! He dead!!! I tried ma' best ta' stop 'em. But I couldn't. It was jus' me an' him an' dey' snatched both us 'part. I tried ta' scream but dey' covered ma' mouth.

**Michael:** Get in da' house, girls.

*(They exit into house)*

You say wut' now?

**Suzan:** Me an' Henry was ready ta' go ta' da' train station. An' on our way dere', we ran into Mr. Riley an' his sons. An' dey' started ta' cuz' at us an' callin' us all kinds a niggas an' monkeys. I told Henry not ta' mind 'em. An' he kept quite 'till dey' saw his shoes.

**Michael:** Shoes?

**Suzan:** Yeah, dem' shoes he got fo' free from dat' colored fool, Clarence. Dey' said Henry stole 'em. Henry said he ain't steal 'em 'cuz dey' was a gift. But dey' ain't believe him an' dey' said no nigga got money like dat' ta' buy shoes like dat.' An' den' Mr. Riley say he saw Henry take da' shoes outta' Mr. Howard's sto.' So, den' dey' said if he wanted ta' see da' next day, he betta' give em' da' shoes back. But Henry said hell naw... Den' dey' asked us where we was goin.' We ain't say nothin' but you know how dey' is. Dats' when dey' snatched us 'part an'...an' dey' hung him... you gotta' believe me Michael, I tried ma' best ta' stop dem' but I couldn't. I tried but—

**Michael:** Dis' wut 'I wants you ta' do. Take da' gurls' ta' yo' place an' stay dere' an' jus' stay dere' 'til I cum.' You hear me? If I ain't dere' by momin'...take dem' gurls' 'way from here.

*(Reaching in his pocket and handing her some money)*

Use all dis' an' take 'em as far as you can go. Take 'em up North. Anywhere. I don't care. Jus' take em' somewhere else.

**Suzan:** Wut' 'bout you?!!

**Michael:** Do as I say, Suzan!!! Please.

**Suzan:** Michael!

**Viola/Tessa:** Daddy? Daddy!!!

*(He exits)*

*Lights fade on scene. End scene.*

## SCENE FIVE

*Lights are low. Michael enters. The house has been burnt to ashes. Mr. Riley slowly, smugly enters. Several of Riley's confederates stand in shadow around the rubble.*

**Mr. Riley:** *(To Michael)* Well ain't dis' a surprise. Dere's a smile on ma' face.

**Michael:** *(Looks around at ashes)* You burnt down our house.

**Mr. Riley:** Did I?

**Michael:** You killed ma brotha.'

**Mr. Riley:** Wit' da' help of dat' jugaboo Clarence. Yo' brotha' had it comin.'

**Michael:** You steal people's land—

**Mr. Riley:** I take nigga's land. Not people's.

**Michael:** You got no right. No heart.

**Mr. Riley:** Did I not warn you, boy?

**Michael:** Dis' ain't fair. My great-granddaddy sacrificed his life ta' build dis' house. An' you burnt it fo' no good reason!!!

*(Michael pulls out gun and shoots Mr. Riley. He falls. The other men take out their guns and aim at Michael. Lights isolate on Michael. All in shadow freeze as lights slowly fade, gunshots are heard.)*

*Lights fade on scene. End scene.*

## SCENE SIX

*This scene represents the funeral service in the church. There are two open caskets. The service is over and all the chairs are empty except for the chair Tessa is sitting in. Viola enters.*

**Viola:** It's ova'. Cum on. Lets go...Tessa do you hear me?

*(Viola sits next to Tessa and they stare at the open caskets)*

**Tessa:** I wonder if Uncle Henry still thinks movin' up North was worth it... It's like dey' da' only ones sleepin' an' I wanna' wake dem' up. Jus' look at dem.'

**Viola:** We gon' be okay Tessa.

**Tessa:** How you know?

**Viola:** You seen how many people came today? We got all dese' people dat' love us. Besides...we got each otha.'

**Tessa:** And wut' if we next?

**Viola:** Dey 'don't want us. Wut dey' gon' do wit' you or me? *(Long Pause)* It's no good if you jus' sit here sad.

**Tessa:** I know. But I jus' can't move yet. I wanna be with dem' a bit longer fo' dey go in da' dirt.

**Viola:** Okay. *(Walks up to caskets and kisses each of them. Exits sniffing)*

**Tessa:** Can't believe dis.' Everythin' happened so quick...Member dat' time you gave me daises, Uncle Henry, an' you said dey' looked jus' like me—pretty? I ain't neva' heard no one but my momma say dat'—not even ma' daddy...I was happy. An' I told ma'self dat' it's okay if she neva' cum' back, cuz' I gots you...I feel so bad, Uncle Henry. I shuda' hugged you an' said bye an' I love you. But instead, I jus' ran away from you. I'm sorry. I hope you an' God'll forgive me... You heard 'bout daddy? He killed Mr. Riley. He did it fo' you, I know he did. He felt da' same as I did 'bout you movin' up North. He ain't want you to go. I heard him cryin' dat night you told him da' news. But, daddy, I got sum' good news—I gots good news fo' both ya'll—me, Viola and Suzan gon' head up North next week. Wit da' money you gave ha' an' wit' da' money she 'ready gots, we gon' leave. Dat's wut' y'all wanted right? I'm so sorry, Uncle Henry.

*(Walks up to caskets. Kisses each one. As she exits, lights fade to black on scene)*

THE END

*Tezeru Teshome is a student at Roger C. Sullivan High School.*

# Work Before Truth

BY STANTON LONG

## SCENE 1

*(Josh is at work in his office talking on the phone)*

**Josh:** Yes Jeffery... between the hours of 6:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M.... come in and I'll go over the documents with you. ...Ok see you then, good bye.  
*(Hangs up the phone, and begins typing on the computer. The secretary pages him off stage)*

**Secretary:** Excuse me Mr. Porter.

**Josh:** Yes.

**Secretary:** Mr. O'Neil says he wants you in his office right away.

**Josh:** Ok, thank you.

*(Josh gets up and walks to Mr. O'Neil's office)*

**Josh:** Man I hope this isn't anything bad, I don't think I did anything.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Come in.

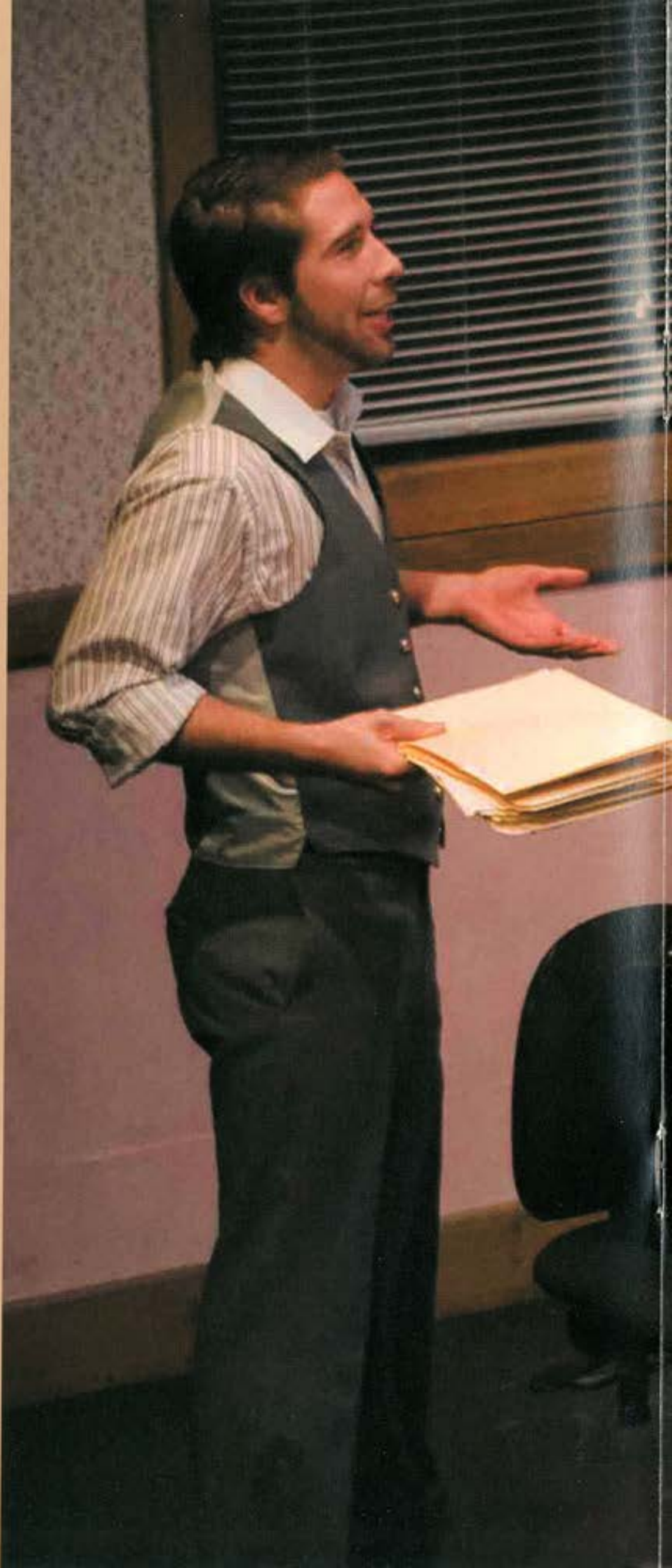
*(Josh walks in slowly trying not to seem nervous)*

**Mr. O'Neil:** Why such the soft knock, I want strong aggressive lawyers, not soft, can barely hear their knocks on the door lawyers.

**Josh:** Yes sir, sorry sir.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Sit down Porter

*(Josh sits trying to look O'Neil in his eye to hide the nervousness but feels uncomfortable)*





**Mr. O'Neil:** Porter.... Porter.... Ummm about these couple of cases. We both know that you weren't...

**Josh:** Mr. O'Neil I can explain you see I...

*(Mr. O'Neil speaking in a very nonchalant way)*

**Mr. O'Neil:** I don't think I was done speaking, Porter.

**Josh:** Yes sir, sorry sir.

**Mr. O'Neil:** That was very rude, Porter.

**Josh:** Sorry sir.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Now we both know that you weren't performing to your full potential these last couple of cases. We barely got by with the arguments you were giving. I didn't bring you in this firm to give mediocre performances. Now I'm putting you on the Johnson case, and Judge Wright is on that one. He is one of, if not the, toughest judge right now. I'm trusting you to prevail. Am I expecting too much out of you?

**Josh:** No sir.

**Mr. O'Neil:** *(Smiling)* Good.

*(The phone rings... the secretary pages him)*

**Mr. O'Neil:** You can go now Porter.

**Josh:** Ooh, yes sir.

*(Josh walks back to his office relieved that he didn't just get fired, when he opens the door the phone rings)*

**Josh:** Hello.

**Carol:** Hi honey. *(Josh's wife)*

**Josh:** Hi honey, what's going on?

**Carol:** Are you on your way yet?

**Josh:** No honey, I'm working.

**Carol:** Did you forget about dinner tonight?

**Josh:** Ooh that's right. Ok I'm on my way right now.

**Carol:** Hurry up.

*(He begins packing up his stuff when Mr. O'Neil walks in.)*

**Mr. O'Neil:** Porter... ooh leaving so soon.

**Josh:** Ooh... yeah... see, me and my wife have this thing and she's pushing me to go home, is that ok?

**Mr. O'Neil:** Oh yeah it's fine with me, but I'm surprised that you think your thing with your wife is more important than work. I mean you live with her for Christ sake. I would think you would dedicate everything to your work especially with your performance being so weak and all. Now am I ok? Yes. Should you be ok with that? No.

**Josh:** You know what, now that I think about it, I forgot to finish up a couple of things.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Good, and while you're at it, have this on my desk by 10.

*(Throws the documents on his desk, looks at the picture of Josh wife, starts to walk out the door, then turns around.)*

**Mr. O'Neil:** Prove that you should be here Porter.

*(O'Neil leaves. Josh sits back at his desk. The phone rings, Josh looks at it and puts his head down.)*

## SCENE 2

*(Josh comes home from work and walks in the door. Carol's sitting on the couch, watching T.V.)*

**Carol:** You know, I'm not even mad that you didn't show up. To be honest I even expected it. But no phone call, a page, an e-mail, a smoke signal, something to let me know that you weren't coming, so I wouldn't be waiting for you all night.

**Josh:** Sorry, I was just caught up in work...

*(Carol gets up and walks away)*

**Josh:** Umm excuse me. I know you're mad and all but it's rude to walk away from me when I'm talking to you Carol.

**Carol:** Whatever Josh... you know I'm really getting tired of you putting me last Josh. You're basically picking me up and tossing me to the side Josh.

**Josh:** How many times do I have to burn this in your head, I have to work, things aren't going that great at the office. Can you get off my heels?

**Carol:** Get off your heels? Josh, you're not here so I can get on them. You know Josh...

*(Josh's phone rings)*

**Josh:** Hello... yes... ok sure...yes I'll have it on your desk by morning...yes...yes sir...ok see you tomorrow, ok, bye.

**Carol:** You know that was rude.

**Josh:** It was Mr. O'Neil. Carol what do you want me to do?

*(The name O'Neil sounds familiar to her.)*

**Carol:** O'Neil?

**Josh:** Yeah... what?

**Carol:** Nothing. Josh we need some understanding around here. I have needs, Josh and my needs require the attention I need from my husband.

**Josh:** I know Carol.

**Carol:** You do.

**Josh:** Yes honey.

**Carol:** Good, then we'll start with me riding to work with you tomorrow

**Josh:** Ok... you know I'm leaving at 6:00.

**Carol:** That's fine.

**Josh:** Ok

## SCENE 3

*(They get off the elevator.)*

**Josh:** Alright honey I'll see you at home tonight.

**Carol:** 8:00 right?

**Josh:** What 8:00?

**Carol:** What do you mean what, Josh you promised.

**Josh:** *(laughs)* I'm playing honey, 8:00.

**Carol:** Ok.

*(They kiss and Carol watches Josh walk to his office.)*

**Carol:** Bye honey.

*(Josh waves and enters his office. Carol begins to leave but bumps into somebody she once knew.)*

**Carol:** Oh my god Allen.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Carol, wow how are you doing?

**Carol:** Good, good you know, taking care of stuff at home.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Yeah, god how long has it been?

**Carol:** I haven't seen you since college. How have you been?

**Mr. O'Neil:** Good, working, I work here actually.

**Carol:** Really, then you must know Josh.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Josh?

**Carol:** Yeah Josh Porter.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Oh Porter yeah, I'm actually his boss.

**Carol:** Really, oh my god you're the Mr. O'Neil he's been talking about.

**Mr. O'Neil:** I would assume he's been talking about me.

**Carol:** We've been talking about you actually, about the long hours he's been putting in here.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Yeah, but you know it's for his own good, right? Hard work is going to result in his success.

**Carol:** I understand that, but there's hard work and then there's out right being mistreated.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Mistreated. How am I mistreating him?

**Carol:** You're going to really stand there and play dumb?

**Mr. O'Neil:** What... Oh Carol please, I'm over you.

**Carol:** Really?

**Mr. O'Neil:** Yeah really. And besides I didn't even know you two were together, to supposedly give him that mistreatment.

**Carol:** Right. Well whatever the problem is, it needs to be resolved soon. If you haven't noticed Josh has basically been the face of this firm. He's the reason you have these topnotch clients even considering coming here. You need him whether or not you want to admit it to yourself...

**Mr. O'Neil:** Carol...

**Carol:** No. I'm not done Allen. Now I want him out of here by 8:00 tonight, or I will make sure he's out of here for good.

**Mr. O'Neil:** You think you have that power?

**Carol:** Oh I know I do. 8:00 tonight Allen.  
*(She begins to walk away, then turns around.)*

**Carol:** Oh, how did you like the picture? The picture that's in Josh's office that you keep looking at. Yeah didn't know we weren't together my ass.  
*(She leaves and O'Neil is by himself.)*

## SCENE 4

*(It's 8:00 and Carol comes to pick up Josh. Josh comes out his office.)*

**Josh:** Hey honey.

**Carol:** You remembered. *(they kiss)*

**Josh:** Yeah I did. Surprisingly O'Neil didn't come into my office to give me any extra work.

**Carol:** Really. That's good. Well, ready to go?

**Josh:** Yeah.  
*(They begin to walk out and then they bump into O'Neil.)*

**Josh:** Oh, hi Mr. O'Neil.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Porter.

**Josh:** This is my wife Carol, Carol this is Mr. O'Neil.

**Carol:** Hi.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Hello.

**Josh:** We were just heading out.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Yes of course. See you tomorrow bright and early.

**Josh:** Yes sir.

**Mr. O'Neil:** Nice to have met you Carol.

**Carol:** Yes, you too.  
*(O'Neil walks off.)*

**Josh:** He's scary huh?

**Carol:** Not really.  
*(They walk off.)*

THE END

*Stanton Long is a student at  
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# Black Rose

BY STANTA'SHA HOWARD



14

## SCENE 1

*Black Rose is sitting in the schoolyard; narrator (Aries) is down stage left facing the audience, Apollo is in the distance.*

**Aries:** The Collision of my soul discarded in a maze of thoughts.

A thornless black rose blooms in the east of all the confusion, with sparkling dewdrops stinging her petals.

Smells of fire burning deep down within it thoughts of happiness, suspended, highly reprehended is sadly recommended in a small, small place called home.

Opening a hole to a bottomless pit, where angels shoot their spit into hell's blazing fire.

Terrible secrets are hung in the open, (tendency of a hot desire).

**Aries:** In a whisper a voice came to Black Rose softly, at this moment she knew her life was going to change, forever. This is where our story begins. *(Turns around and watches the scene.)*

**Apollo:** *(Sneaks up behind Black Rose, but is not seen. Then speaks to Black Rose.)* You've heard a lot of things from lots of people yes?

**Black Rose:** *(Looking around)* Yes, I guess so. *(Black Rose has a flash back of what Ms. Swarez said the previous period.)*

**Black Rose:** *(Flashback)* What about me? *(The teacher has a heavy accent and is not seen, but her voice is heard. Black Rose is now sitting on the floor with her book looking at it while talking to Ms. Swarez.)*

**Ms. Swarez:** You? You are terrible student. What do you wish to be as you grown (sic)?

**Black Rose:** I don't know. Well I like to paint, draw and stuff like that. I also like to sing and write. Hum, I guess I could be an artist. Yeah I want to be an artist.

**Ms. Swarez:** I am very fond of the arts, but you artist? Ha ha ha! *(Ms. Swarez has to stop herself from laughing for a moment.)* You are more like...a...a...Burger shack worker or bum or hey, maybe even pro-sti-tute! *(struggling to say the word.)* Not a artist. *(Continues laughing then fades. Ending the flash back.)*

**Apollo:** With all of the discouraging things that people say to you, why do you try so hard to please? If you ask me it's stupid. They just put your face in dirt and make you eat it. So why make them happy. If I were in your shoes I would probably let life go.

**Black Rose:** Oh yeah? Well FYI nobody asked you any thing. And what's with the "let life go?" Only someone depressed or suicidal would do that, and I'm not either, so I don't know what you're talking about. I'm in my prime years; this is the beginning for me.

**Apollo:** Ah, but yes it is the beginning, beginning of the end for a peach soul. I can see it now.

**Black Rose:** See what?

**Apollo:** I can see you. You are tired of being oppressed, and shunned, and most definitely tired of having nothing. You have nothing left poor child. Your hopes are filled with false wishes. You're all alone. Nobody loves you but me. You have nothing.

**Black Rose:** Be optimistic, the absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence. Just because there is no one to love me now does not mean there won't be.

**Apollo:** I never said there wouldn't be anyone to love you. Look, all I'm saying is that those who have done you wrong must pay. Do you not agree?

**Black Rose:** Yes...I agree. It is kind of unfair that I suffer all the time and they go unpunished. So I would say definitely yes.

**Apollo:** Well let the games begin then.

**Aries:** *(Facing the audience again. She is holding a dead black rose and looking at it.)* Our Black Rose setting the Muffler's cat on fire, bombing her boarding school, and poor Ms. Swarez caught a paintbrush to the eye in her sleep, so much for teaching. Oh don't worry, Black Rose never got caught, She was too meek. No one thought she could ever do something like that. She was considered too much of a punk. She got her revenge but it didn't make her feel better, if anything she was more alone now than ever. All hope doesn't fail yet another voice came to Black Rose. This time it was different.

## SCENE 2

*(Black Rose is sitting on a bed in her room crying. Aries walks in the room humming a tune then singing.)*

**Aries:** *(Hopeful tune, uplifting)* And I pray—some day

We'll see eye to eye  
Holding hand to hand  
And we'll be free  
Like the ocean blue.  
Why are you crying?

**Black Rose:** Who cares fuck off, man, leave me alone.

**Aries:** You see, if I didn't care why would I ask you? *(Aries looks at Black Rose to get a reaction; Black Rose looks back at her, but is still silent.)* Ok, I'm sick of playing games with people like you. I thought you out of all people would like a bit of company, but I guess I thought wrong. Sooo I'll just go, excuse me.

**Black Rose:** No, Wait. What do you mean you thought me out of all people would need some company? How dare you say that like you know me. You don't know me.

**Aries:** You're wrong. I know you like the hair on my auntie's lip. I know enough about you to say that you took the lives of that cat and those children. *(Then Aries pulls up Black Rose's chin so that Black Rose is looking at her.)* People who you thought you could punish. Except for Ms. Swarez. She would have been better off dead though.

**Black Rose:** Who told you this?

**Aries:** You did. When I asked why you were crying and you looked up. At that moment I saw in your tears what you had done, and the "fuck off" part. Yeah that really gave you away. You see the Muffler's cat can't come back. Those children will never have a home, and as for Ms. Swarez, I could give her an eye patch, peg leg, and a parrot, and call it a day. I'm sorry sweetie I didn't like her much.

**Black Rose:** Hehe, me neither. I mean she was always so mean to me. I never could understand it.

**Aries:** You know what? Your reputation is terrible but you're not like that at all. Hum...we have to fix that. I guess that's my assignment.

**Black Rose:** Stop it. Stop talking in riddles what do you mean assignment? Are you like an angel or something?

**Aries:** I can't explain that now, there's no time. You still have time to be better, to live bet-



ter, and surpass the consequences.  
Because you'll be a better person.

**Black Rose:** Stop it. You don't know me you don't feel what I feel on a daily basis. Those people, the ones you feel so sorry for, they made life hell for me.

**Aries:** Oh Black Rose, you are so wrong. Life isn't this hard. Every thing will be ok if you just listen.

**Black Rose:** What did you call me?

**Aries:** Black Rose. It's your name.

**Black Rose:** If you knew me you'd know no one ever gave me a name. I'm always referred to as Some Girl. No one cares for me so why should I care.

**Aries:** Everybody has a name.

**Black Rose:** Not me. I don't have anything, not even a name. After all the praying, and the tears many times before, God chooses now to send an angel to lecture me on HOW TO BE HOLY. He chooses now . . . when I don't need him.

### SCENE 3

*(Aries walks DSL.)*

**Aries:** I tried to see, but it wasn't long before that first Voice came back. *(Aries turns around and goes back to the scene.)*

**Aries:** NO sweetie you don't understand.

**Black Rose:** Understand what? Understand the simple fact that HE, your God, sits on a soft white cloud, watches our lives, and only intervenes when he wants to? *(Apollo walks behind Black Rose, Standing proud.)*

**Apollo:** Very wise of you girl to call an ace an ace and a spade a spade, IN GOD'S GAME. Oh hello Aries.

**Aries:** Apollo, this mess has your name all over it.

**Black Rose:** How do you know each other?

**Aries:** No one ever really knows how two friends become enemies. Maybe it's because we have different views about God.

**Apollo:** He used you as a test.

**Black Rose:** Who?

**Apollo:** Her God, He used you. You're her assignment. A sorry, unloved girl to save, just the recantation needed to earn sparkly new wings.

**Aries:** Black Rose don't listen to him his words are poisonous.

**Black Rose:** You know for a moment I actually thought someone cared.

**Aries:** No, no I care. I care about what happens to you.

**Apollo:** The only thing you can do to show God that you have the better hand is to take away the life that he gave you. He didn't give you anything with it any way; it was a gift in vain. *(Apollo takes a knife out of his pocket and hands it to Black Rose.)* Here this will ease your pain. A little cure for the itch, if you will.

**Black Rose:** Perhaps I could do my self a justice and just get it over with. *(Black Rose puts the knife to her neck)*

**Aries:** No wait you can't! *(Black Rose lies on the bed and slices her neck. Aries picks up a Black wilted rose and candle. Then turns to the audience to speak)*

**Apollo:** My job is done. *(Apollo leaves)*

**Aries:** I tried to tell her God has a Purpose for everyone. Her light was too dim to shine, too dim to see. She didn't listen so that she could hear God. Even though HE HEARD HER. I still got my wings, but they didn't save a life. That's why I'm here to keep history from repeating itself. *(Aries walks back and sets the rose and candle next to Black Rose. Black Rose gets up and holds the items then Aries puts her hand on Black Rose's shoulder, and begins to sing.)*

SONG: *(Hopeful tune)*

When you close your eyes do you see?  
You and me flying free free  
Open up your mind believe in your dreams  
Be the best that you can be  
And I pray some day we'll see eye to eye  
holding hand to hand and we'll be free  
like the ocean blue.

THE END

*Stanta'sha Howard is a student at  
Roberto Clemente High School*

# Adam and Christian

BY MICHAEL DIGGS



## SCENE 1

**Narrator:** This is Adam, he is a rockstar and a rapper, he has just finished performing in front of thousands of his fans on stage. His fans are all buying into his music, because of his gimmick. They do not know that it is just a gimmick, his fans believe that his actual life is in his music, but in reality what he sings and raps about is not what he is actually about. He knew that this character he portrays would make him a successful music artist. But unfortunately for Adam, he has just had a falling out with his little brother Christian. Christian is a news anchor, and he is one of the few that knows of Adam's actual life.

**Alice:** Are you sure you want to go through with this?

**Christian:** Yes. Adam should have never humiliated me the way he did.

**Narrator:** Christian requested that he may report Adam's secrets.

**Christian:** Good Evening. Rapper/rockstar Adam Killings is known for many things that went on in his life that aren't true. His real name is Adam Rivers and he did not grow up in any bad "hood". He is also not the only child. I know these things because I am his brother. We grew up in a nice neighborhood in West Newbury, Massachusetts, not in Brooklyn. Here's one of my high school yearbooks. This is a picture of me when I was a sophomore at Soft Grove High. Here's Adam when he was a senior. This school is West Newbury and Adam graduated from it. This proves that he did not grow up in Brooklyn or go uneducated and teach himself, like he has claimed.

## SCENE 2

**Adam:** *(In thought)* How could he do this to me? What's gonna happen with my career?!

*Adam goes into a blind rage and destroys his room.*

### SCENE 3

**Alice:** Something wrong?

**Christian:** I feel bad about what I did.

**Alice:** Maybe it won't be so bad.

**Christian:** The people that actually listen to his music care about that stuff. Some feel they can relate. I'm sure he saw the story, I'm gonna go apologize to him, but in person. You mind waiting here, or would you like to come with me?

**Alice:** I'll wait here, just don't be too long.

*After sharing a kiss with his girlfriend, Christian heads to the door, but when he opens the door, Adam is standing at it.*

**Christian:** Adam!?

**Adam:** What the hell is wrong with you?

**Christian:** I did it to get back at you, for what you did to me.

**Adam:** You piece of crap! Do you realize what you have done?!

**Christian:** I'm sorry, I didn't realize what I was doing.

*Adam knocks Christian to the floor with a right hook.*

**Adam:** Don't talk to me anymore. I am no longer speaking to you.

*Adam storms out of the house.*

**Alice:** He'll get over it eventually.

**Christian:** I don't think so.

### SCENE 4

**Narrator:** That night Christian drank a lot of alcohol. He drank and drank and drank until he passed out. He fell into a coma. While he was in this state he dreamed about the good time he, Alice, and Adam had.

*Christian, Adam, and Alice as children.*

**Adam:** If I beat you again, that dog tag is mine.

**Christian:** Okay.

*Adam and Christian race to the end of the park. Adam wins the race.*

**Adam:** You're so slow, grandma could beat you.

*Christian reaches his dog tag to Adam.*

**Adam:** You can keep it. I didn't even really want it. I just wanted to motivate you.

*Alice and Billy enter. Alice greets Christian with a kiss.*

**Billy:** Hey I told you not to ever kiss my sister again!

**Alice:** I kissed him.

*Billy shoves Christian. Adam immediately shoves Billy to the ground.*

**Adam:** Take it somewhere else.

### SCENE 5

*Adam leaves a message on Alice's phone.*

**Adam:** Last night was great. Call back as soon as possible. This is the greatest love I have ever had in my life.

*Adam hangs up with a sinister grin.*

### SCENE 6

**Narrator:** After being unconscious for a month, Christian wakes up, and sees his mother.

**Christian:** How long was out?

**Ms. Rivers:** 4 weeks. I was so worried. I thought you were a social drinker, not an alcoholic!

**Christian:** Mom, I felt so bad about what I did to Adam, that I tried to drink the problem away. I know that it was dumb. Who else came to see me?

**Ms. Rivers:** Alice was here a few times.

**Christian:** Adam never came?!

**Ms. Rivers:** No. I never saw him. He sounds so angry when I try to speak with him about you. He is really upset.

**Christian:** I know. I just wish he would forgive me, and forget it. Anyway me and Alice are perfect and I want to propose.

**Ms. Rivers:** Really?!

**Christian:** Yes. I am ready for full commitment.

*She removes her ring and hands it to Christian.*

**Ms. Rivers:** I would have given it to Adam. But you know how he is. I don't think he will ever want to marry.

**Christian:** When I get out I'm gonna go see her. But first I have to set things right with Adam.

*He reaches for the phone and calls.*

**Christian:** He didn't pick up.

## SCENE 7

**Narrator:** Christian arrives at Alice's home.

*Alice opens the door.*

**Alice:** Christian!

**Christian:** While I was unconscious I dreamed about me, you, and Adam, and I want us to always be together!

*Christian takes a knee and pulls the ring out.*

**Christian:** I want you to marry me.

*Alice's eyes become watery.*

**Christian:** What's the matter? Too soon?

**Alice:** I have something to tell you.

**Christian:** What is it?

**Alice:** When you were out. Me and Adam started seeing each other, and we slept with each other.

**Christian:** What!

**Alice:** I'm sorry. I am in love with Adam, and he told me he has loved for a long time.

*Christian cries.*

## SCENE 8

**Narrator:** Christian lay in his bedroom, thinking about what happened, and what the future holds for him and his two closest friends.

*Christian's phone rings.*

**Christian:** How could you?

**Adam:** I did it to get back at you. Do you remember what you did to me? We're still not even, either.

## SCENE 9

**Narrator:** Christian's desire to set things right was still alive. So he made his way to Adam's mansion. When he got there the mansion was in flames.

*Christian makes his way inside and rescues an unconscious Adam.*

## SCENE 10

*Christian's house.*

**Adam:** What happened? Why am I here?

**Christian:** You could have died, what happened?

**Adam:** I'm not sure. It's none of your damn business anyway. I'm out of here.

**Christian:** Where will you stay?

**Adam:** I could stay with mom... or Alice.

**Christian:** She didn't tell you that she left? She's out of town right now.

**Adam:** Well I have friends, unlike you.

**Christian:** All the friends I ever wanted or needed were you and Alice.

*Adam makes his way to the guest room and waves Christian off.*

## SCENE 11

*Adam grabs a pillow and tries to suffocate Christian in his sleep. Christian fights out of the hold and the two fight each other until Adam delivers a powerful blow to Christian's face, knocking him to the ground.*

**Christian:** *(In tears)* I'm sorry for what I did! I just want us to act like brothers again! I'm tired of fighting and backstabbing! Let's put everything behind us! Let's forget the hurtful things we have said and done! Please forgive me, I have already forgiven you!

**Adam:** You deserved it! I hate you and I will never except your apology!

**Narrator:** Deep down Adam felt terrible. So bad that he resorted to something crazy.

*Adam leaps out the window.*

## SCENE 12

**Narrator:** When Adam jumped out of the window and landed on the ground, he did not die. But a hit to the head on the way down knocked him unconscious, he was out the whole night. While he was unconscious he dreamed about the good times he, Christian, and Alice have had.

*Adam, Christian, and Alice as teens.*



**Alice:** What are you two doing? Shouldn't you be in class?

**Adam:** Principal Daniels gave me and Chris detentions last week, so we ended up missing the Finger Eleven concert. We came up with the idea of setting up that bucket of syrup over the door. Now it isn't smart to stand here and wait, but I just got to see the look on his face when it comes down.

**Alice:** Christian, he actually got you to go through with this?

**Christian:** Here he comes.

*Principal Daniels opens the door and gets soaked in syrup. Adam and Christian burst in laughter.*

### SCENE 13

*Adam wakes up.*

**Adam:** I dreamed about you two.

**Christian:** How do you feel?

**Adam:** I feel fine, I can't remember anything though.

**Christian:** You're actually speaking to me, I guess this means we're okay, you forgive me?

**Adam:** For what?

**Christian:** Nothing, I was just saying something.

**Alice:** I'm so glad you're okay.

### SCENE 14

*Adam scores the last shot to win a 1 on 1 basketball against Christian.*

**Adam:** Nothing has changed I see.

**Christian:** Whatever.

**Adam:** Did you see what they were saying about me on Mtv? The secret got out somehow.

**Christian:** Really?

**Adam:** Yeah.

### SCENE 15

**Narrator:** Adam pondered about his leaked secrets for hours.

*Alice knocks on the door. Adam answers.*

**Adam:** Hi Alice, you looking for Christian?

**Alice:** I came to see you.

**Adam:** Oh, what's up?

**Alice:** Adam do you remember what you told me?

**Adam:** About what?

**Alice:** You told me that you have always loved me, but you would never express this because of Christian.

**Adam:** Ha! Are you serious? Was I drunk or something?

**Alice:** Actually... nevermind.

**Narrator:** Alice leaves in disappointment. She realizes that Adam's words from before were not genuine. Meanwhile Adam thinks long and hard about what she has said. Suddenly everything flashes before his eyes.

### SCENE 16

**Adam:** I know what happened.

**Christian:** You do?

**Adam:** Yes, but my feelings have changed. I love you and I forgive you. I'm sorry for everything I did.

**Christian:** I am too.

*The two hug.*

THE END

*Michael Diggs is a student at Walter Peyton College Prep.*