

BLACKTOP SKY  
by Christina Anderson

*About the play (from Yale School of Drama):*

Klass, a homeless, young Black man, sets up residence in the courtyard of a housing project where Ida Peters lives. Triggered by a fatal confrontation between a local street vendor and the police, Klass and Ida quickly develop a precarious bond against the backdrop of a restless neighborhood. Inspired by the Greek myth "Leda and the Swan," *Blacktop Sky* examines the intersection of love, violence, and seduction.

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*IDA – Female, young, African-American*

*About this scene:*

IDA is with her boyfriend, WYNN. A few days earlier, IDA had an unsettling altercation with KLASS, a young man who lives on the bench in the courtyard of their apartment. She has not told WYNN about the incident.]

IDA

Don't matter anyway. Everybody sees everything, but they don't care.  
Everybody is always out, in the streets. Day and night.  
People on stoops, leaning on cars, hanging out of windows.  
You can't get away from nobody.

*[turning to indicate buildings as she speaks]*

Building 1 see?

There's Mr. Wheeler smoking up, reading the paper.

Building 3:

Sasha is on the phone running her mouth.

Building 4: Mrs. James is greasing her scalp.

Building 2: my mama is sitting up there sleeping.

[...]

Four buildings make up this project.

And every building got seven floors.

And every floor got 11 windows going across it.

All those windows facing down to this courtyard, those benches.

So Mr. Wheeler was smoking.

So Sasha was talking bullshit.

Mrs. James was sitting by the window, listening to the radio.

But nobody said nothing to me.

Am I crazy?

Nobody asked me anything.

I don't know if I'm crazy. Don't know if I'm making shit up.

[...]

Am I cracking out?

Sitting up in my dingy ass apartment, hiding out from what? From who?

Something I made up? Must've. Had to have made it up cause nobody said nothing.

It wasn't nothing.

Nothing for me to sprint pass these benches every day.

This is the only way out to the street, Wynn.

When I leave my building I have to cross through here to get to the street.

Every other exit is blocked by a fence with a thick chain and fat padlock

keeping it shut.

I can't even choose how I come and go.

WYNN

Ida, did something happen to you?

IDA

I'm glad I met you downtown at a movie theater.

Nowhere near here cause otherwise I'd only see all this when I look at you.

But I don't. I don't, Wynn. And that's why I like you. That's why I need you.