

**BABY BLACK JESUS
PLAY FOUR**

A Short Stage Play

by
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CAST:

DARRYL - Black, 20s -30s.

RICHARD - Black, 20s-30s.

Setting: Present day. Darryl and Richard's mostly empty apartment.

LIGHTS UP:

(DARRYL sits on the floor taping up a cardboard box in an empty apartment. Another box sits near him with a black CD case on top of it. RICHARD enters carrying a cardboard box which reads RICHARD'S SHIT.)

RICHARD

Thanks for labeling my box.

DARRYL

You're welcome. I think we should still be civil.

RICHARD

I'm about to head out. You almost done?

DARRYL

I just need to finish taping up this last box and take them out to my car.

RICHARD

Do you want a hand?

DARRYL

No, I got it. I'm not in a rush to leave. I'm going to miss our apartment. I'm going to miss how big it was. The place I found downtown is a shoebox, but it's close to work and it's cheap.

RICHARD

I'm sorry. I wish I could have given you more time, but my mom was eager for me to move back home. Get things straight with the family again.

DARRYL

Pun intended?

RICHARD

No. No, pun intended.

(RICHARD notices the CD case on top of the box. He puts down his box and grabs the CD case. He begins flipping through the pages of CDs.)

RICHARD (cont'd)

Hey, did you see this? Are these Diana Ross CDs yours or mine?

DARRYL

Those are all yours.

RICHARD

There's over a hundred CDs in here.

DARRYL

One-hundred and ten, which is a one-hundred and ten less than there was. I kept all the doubles. I just assumed they were mine.

RICHARD

We had two-hundred and twenty Diana Ross CDs?

DARRYL

We are two gay black men. Of course we had two-hundred and twenty Diana Ross CDs. All gay black men are required to purchase at least two Diana Ross CDs a year. Based on our age and how long we've been buying or downloading Diana Ross music we should have two-hundred and thirty-seven Diana Ross CDs. So we're actually seventeen Diana Ross CDs short, which makes us terrible at being gay black men.

RICHARD

Then it's a good thing that I stopped.

DARRYL

Stopped being gay, or stopped being Black?

RICHARD

Stopped being gay. You should try it. It's not that hard.

DARRYL

It would be as hard as it is to stop being Black, but some people have tried both. Let me know how it works out. It's probably better if you leave those CDs out on the curb with the other trash. If your mother finds you with one-hundred and ten Diana Ross CDs, she might think your conversion therapy didn't work.

RICHARD

It's called church.

DARRYL

I heard it called that too.

RICHARD

I warned you to leave it alone. So what you had to pretend to be my best friend three or four holidays out of the year. At least you were in my mama's house. My family fed you. They laughed with you. They let you be the fourth in our Spades game. They don't do that with everybody. So what they didn't know. You and I knew what we had. Two hundred and twenty Diana Ross CDs knew what we had. Inside this apartment we knew we had a relationship. Was it so important that everybody else know?

DARRYL

Yes, it kind of was. Who did you take to your senior prom?

RICHARD

Tamika Wallace.

DARRYL

Did she ride in the trunk of your car to the prom? Did you sneak her in through the back door? Ask her to hide behind the bleachers and you'd come dance with her every once in a while? Or did you pick her up in your shiny black car and bring her back to your mama's house? Did you introduce her to your brother and sister, your Aunt Thelma? Did you take lots of pictures? Was your arm around her waist or higher up around her shoulders? How many times did they ask the two of you to kiss for the camera? Why didn't you just drive to the prom? Why was it so important that your family know about Tamika Wallace?

RICHARD

It's not the same thing. People have expectations. My mother spent her entire life thinking that her son would fall in love and bring home some cute little chocolate girl for her to hate over the next thirty-six years.

DARRYL

She got the hate part right.

RICHARD

She got the girl part right too.

DARRYL

Screw you.

RICHARD

I'm sorry. My mother grew up in a different time.

DARRYL

But she's not still living there. Does she look for the colored only bathroom when she's shopping at Macy's? No, so she is able to live in this time when she chooses to. Drive her ass to the library and make her read some books about it. Have her watch a PBS special on what to do when your child comes out as gay. She could have moved in with us for a month, so she could see just how sinful our lifestyle was. I don't pick up my clothes. You yell at me about it. I say I'll do better. I don't do better, and you yell at me again. Imagine her disgust at the globs of toothpaste you leave on the bathroom mirror. Can your mother's God really be mad at such wickedness?

RICHARD

I miss my mother's God.

DARRYL

You miss a God they say hates you?

RICHARD

No, I miss the God whose love is steadfast and unchanging. Proverbs 8:17 "I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently, find me." I need to find him again. Do you know there's six songs that I've sung every Sunday since I was three. I haven't sung those songs once since we moved in together.

(RICHARD starts singing This Little Light of Mine.)

RICHARD (cont'd)

This little light of mine - I'm gonna let it shine - This little light of mine - I'm gonna let it shine - This little light of mine - I'm gonna let it shine - let it shine - let it shine - let it shine.

DARRYL

Your church is ironic as fuck. You're about to go back to hiding your little light.

RICHARD

I miss sunrise service, 11 AM service, midnight service, Easter Sunday. I miss my church. I miss seeing beautiful Black women in big ass hats. I miss Mr. Johnson catching the Holy Ghost and doing splits up the aisle. I miss our stained glass window of Baby Black Jesus. My mother's God says I can't have those things if I love a man.

DARRYL

Find another church. Find another God. There's an entire group of people who actually think Baby Black Jesus is White, and some of them don't mind homosexuals. We might even get lucky and find some that don't mind Black homosexuals, but you can't go back to pretending. You can't go back to hiding. You can't go back to being something that you're not.

RICHARD

Baby White Jesus doesn't know me, and none of those people in those churches would have loved me longer than the people in my church have already loved me. Those beautiful Black women under those big ass hats have loved me every day of my life. Mr. Johnson and his Holy Ghost self has loved me since I was three. Baby Black Jesus has loved me before I was even me. Do you know what I would do not to lose that love?

DARRYL

Yes, I'm watching you do it. I'm listening to you talk about people who love you, but you haven't mentioned me. I love you, and I ain't asking you to put out your light. I want your light to shine. I want our light to shine.

(DARRYL starts singing This Little Light of Mine.)

DARRYL (cont'd)

This little light of mine - I'm gonna let it shine - This little light of mine - I'm gonna let it shine - This little light of mine - I'm gonna let it shine - let it shine - let it shine - let it shine.

(RICHARD closes the CD case and places it back on top of the box.)

RICHARD

Do you mind if I don't take these?

DARRYL

No, but Diana Ross might be disappointed.

RICHARD

I better get going.

(RICHARD goes to pick up his box. DARRYL works to extend their time together.)

DARRYL

There was an earthquake in Turkey today. 6.5 or something like that.

RICHARD

7.0. It was on NPR. Fifty-two people dead and a lot more missing.

DARRYL

Do you think your mother's God is over there?

RICHARD

Yes.

DARRYL

Do you think her God might be too busy to notice if you were to kiss me?

RICHARD

God is infinite. It's impossible for him to be too busy. God is everywhere all the time.

DARRYL

(defeated)

I'll make sure all the windows are closed and everything is locked up.

(RICHARD doesn't want to lose the opportunity. He walks towards DARRYL.)

RICHARD

But sometimes those seismometers are wrong. That earthquake might be worse than what they're reporting. There could be a lot more people in need of help. A lot more people praying to him.

(RICHARD wraps his arms around DARRYL'S waist.)

RICHARD (cont'd)

My mother's God is probably answering a thousand and one prayers and can't be bothered about two men kissing.

(RICHARD and DARRYL kiss.)

(RICHARD releases DARRYL and picks up his box. RICHARD exits.)

(DARRYL places the CD case on the floor. "Touch Me In The Morning" by Diana Ross begins to play. DARRYL picks up his two boxes and exits.)

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF PLAY