

BABY BLACK JESUS
PLAY THREE

A Short Stage Play

by
Vincent Terrell Durham

CAST:

DARRYL - Black, mid 20s.

RICHARD - Black, mid 20s.

Setting: Present day, Darryl and Richard's bedroom. A short time before the annual Christmas Eve dinner party given by Richard's mother.

LIGHTS UP:

(DARRYL sits on the edge of the bed, wearing a dress shirt and boxers. A pair of slacks are draped over a chair and a pair of dress shoes sit on the floor. Nine wrapped Christmas gifts sit nearby. RICHARD enters, dressed in holiday cheer for his mother's annual Christmas Eve dinner.)

RICHARD

Why aren't you dressed yet? Holiday traffic is going to be terrible.

DARRYL

Then it's a good thing I won't be in it. I'm staying home.

RICHARD

What's wrong? Are you sick? I told you that tuna fish was getting old.

DARRYL

It's not the only thing getting old.

RICHARD

What does that mean, Darryl? What did I do now?

DARRYL

The same thing you've been doing for the last two years.

RICHARD

I'm going to need you to narrow that down a little bit more for me.

DARRYL

Tell your mom and everyone else that I said Merry Christmas.

RICHARD

They're expecting you. My mom sent you that fancy invite and everything. Don't mess up my mama's Christmas Eve seating chart.

DARRYL

Her seating chart never changes. It's been the same every Christmas. My black ass sits next to your Aunt Thelma.

RICHARD

What's wrong with sitting next to my Aunt Thelma?

DARRYL

I don't sleep with your Aunt Thelma. I sleep with you. My black ass should be next to your black ass. Your mother has no problem sitting your brother and his wife next to each other. The same with your sister and her husband.

DARRYL (cont'd)

The two of them damn nearly sit in the same chair. Hot asses. Meanwhile, you sit by your mama and I sit by a woman who continues to becoming familiar with my inner thigh.

RICHARD

Aunt Thelma thinks you're cute. I think you're cute. Come on. Get dressed. What does it matter where you sit?

DARRYL

It matters.

RICHARD

What are you asking? Do you want to be all up on top of on me in front of my mama?

DARRYL

We don't need to do all that. But at least I should be sitting next. That's only going to happen if you tell your mama that we're gay.

RICHARD

We won't be sitting in that house if I tell my mama that we're gay. The woman stopped watching Don Lemon because he came out. She stopped watching the entire network.

DARRYL

But she goes to see every Tyler Perry movie that comes out. I guess your mama's only comfortable with homosexuals in dresses. I'm not sitting up in her house one more year as your best friend.

RICHARD

But you are my best friend.

DARRYL

A best friend doesn't suck your toes. A boyfriend sucks yo' toes, Richard. I'm your boyfriend not a lie.

RICHARD

Are you asking me to come out to my mama on Jesus' birthday?

DARRYL

It would have been nicer if you had come out to her before Black Friday.

RICHARD

The biggest shopping day of the year is when you think I should've come out?

DARRYL

We would have saved two hundred dollars.

RICHARD

You're delirious. Did you eat that tuna fish? I think you have botulism.

(DARRYL walks over to the gift-wrapped presents.)

DARRYL

Every Christmas has been the same. I get one gift from your sister and her husband, as a family. In return, your sister gets a gift from me *(tosses gift #1 to the floor)* and a gift from you *(tosses gift #2 to the floor.)* Her husband gets a gift from me *(tosses gift #3 to the floor)* and a gift from you *(tosses gift #4 to the floor.)* That's four gifts for them and two gifts for us. The same is true for your brother and his wife *(picks up the last gifts and drops them to the floor.)* Gift, gift, gift, gift.

RICHARD

So this has nothing to do with telling my mama you suck my toes. It's about my siblings getting extra toys for Christmas. Should I tell my sister and brother-in-law to buy you an extra gift? We re-gift that shit they give us anyway. Ain't nobody rockin' Cool Water Tommy Hilfiger jeans no more.

DARRYL

It's about telling your family who you are. It's about telling your family who I am. It's about telling your Aunt Thelma to back up off of your boyfriend's inner thigh.

RICHARD

Why now? Why tonight? Does it need to happen one day before Baby Black Jesus' birthday?

DARRYL

There's a married gay couple on ABC every Wednesday night. You could have had this conversation the first year Mitch and Cam were on television. Sit your mother down in front of that flat screen television set that you bought for her on Black Friday and start talking.

RICHARD

She doesn't watch ABC anymore because of Mitch and Cam. Go look in the mirror. We are not Mitch and Cam. We both grew up in Black churches. Grew up hearing that we were wrong. Our families believe that people like us are sinners. And now you want me to tell my Pentecostal mama on the night we put the new-born King into the manger that we suck each other's toes. She'll drop Baby Black Jesus on his head.

(DARRYL'S cell phone rings and he answers it.)

DARRYL

Hello... Merry Christmas, Mom... No, I'm not going this year. His Aunt Thelma will have to find somebody else to rub up on.... Yeah, sure. He's right here. Hold on.... Love you too. *(holds out phone for RICHARD)* It's my mother. She doesn't think we're wrong.

RICHARD

Merry Christmas, Mom.... Nah, he's just feeling some kind of way. He's going.... Of course we're driving out to your place on New Year's Day. It wouldn't be the same without your black-eyed peas and collard greens.... It'll be good to see you too.... Okay, I'll do that for you..... Love you back. Merry Christmas.

(RICHARD hangs up the phone and hands it to DARRYL and kisses him tenderly on the cheek.)

DARRYL

What's that for?

RICHARD

Your mom wanted me to kiss you Merry Christmas for her.

DARRYL

The most your mama ever asked me was to pass you the salt. I guess my mama's Baby Black Jesus is more progressive than your mama's Baby Black Jesus.

RICHARD

My mama's Baby Black Jesus is pretty damn progressive. My sister had two kids before she walked down the aisle. Baby Black Jesus accepted that. My brother is married to a white woman.

DARRYL

Then go find yourself a knocked-up white woman to take to your mama's house.

(RICHARD pulls out his cell phone and punches in a number - hard.)

RICHARD

Merry Christmas, Mom. I'm gay. Darryl's gay. We're gay together.... It's me, Richard.... Yea, this is how I'm doing this.... I know it's Baby Black Jesus' birthday. Let him know we're gay too.

(DARRYL'S cell phone begins to ring and he answers it.)

DARRYL

Hello.

(DARRYL listens to the person on the other end of his phone, while Richard continues his own conversation.)

RICHARD

Put Aunt Thelma next to you and me next to Darryl..... Yes, of course it's something we need to talk about, but let's save it for after Christmas.

DARRYL

Just a minute.

(DARRYL holds out the phone for RICHARD.)

DARRYL (cont'd)

It's for you.

RICHARD

It's my mama. Isn't it?

DARRYL

It sure ain't Baby Black Jesus' mama.

RICHARD

Mom when you get sent to my voice mail it means leave a voice mail. It doesn't mean to call me on Darryl's phone..... I'm not raising my voice to nobody, I'm not calling you a nobody Ma'am.

(DARRYL begins to finish dressing.)

RICHARD (cont'd)

Your cornbread will just have to go into the oven twenty minutes late then.... We haven't left yet.... I won't get there any sooner with you screaming at-- (*noticing Darryl getting dressed.*) Hold on, Mom.... Hold on. (*to DARRYL*) Are you coming?

DARRYL

You have until Martin Luther King Jr. Day (*raising his voice in hopes Richard's mother will hear*) to tell your mama I suck yo' toes.

(*RICHARD takes an extreme action in raising his cell phone up and away in hopes of preventing his mother from overhearing Darryl's final comment.*)

RICHARD

Bye mom. See you soon.

(*RICHARD tries thank DARRYL with a hug, but Darryl playfully rejects the gesture.*)

DARRYL

Hug my black ass after they put the MLK floats away. Help me get these presents together please. Leave that one with the blue ribbon. That's my mother's gift to you.

(Both DARRYL and RICHARD begin gathering up the gifts. RICHARD picks up the blue ribbon gift and reads the gift tag.)

RICHARD

Merry Christmas, Son. Love, Mom. *(beat)* Hey, Babe.

DARRYL

What's up?

RICHARD

Don't take all those gifts.

DARRYL

They belong to them.

RICHARD

I know, but just grab two for my sister and her dumb husband and two for my brother and his white wife. They'll come from us as a couple.

DARRYL

Are you sure?

RICHARD

I'm sure that I love you. And you don't deserve to be sitting in my mama's house as a lie.
But listen, you will still need to buy my mama a Christmas gift. Gay couple or not the
woman is still going to want two gifts at Christmas, Kwanza, her birthday, Groundhog's
Day--

*(DARRYL wraps RICHARD up into his arms and kisses
him hard on the lips.)*

RICHARD (cont'd)

Saint Patrick's Day, Chinese New Year, Fourth of July--

DARRYL

What about your Aunt Thelma?

RICHARD

I'm going to tell that heifer to back up off of my man. Your inner thigh belongs to me.

(The two men kiss again.)

FADE TO BLACK.

FIN DU JEU