

That Day God Visits You

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Note The pronoun “s/he” is pronounced “ze” and spelled that way in a number of works

CHARACTERS

SAM African-American anatomical female who knows s/he’s a man
 MOM African-American woman, Sam’s mother
 DAD Off-stage, Sam’s Dad
 NEIGHBOR African-American gay, queer anatomical male in beard, dress, heels

SAM Really wanna know where I’ve been, Mom? I shouldn’t say but keep eyeballing me to sit like a lady legs crossed and explain myself, I’ll tell you exactly where I’ve been all this time and what I’ve been up to. Screwing this sexy, hot chick under a shattered lamplight across the street from this dump of a palace you call “home”. I can smell her better than see her, can you? If not, lemme describe: large, gazelle-like eyes; angular cheekbones framed by a shit-smearred brick wall that makes her distinct, dynamic, a trap. Drawing me closer and closer, I’m thinking, “Black Jesus, watch how we groove” with every tiny, nervous, burning, hopeful step as I come closer and closer to our moment of synchronicity. Face-to-face, I can’t breathe. HUUUUUUUH—I’m breathing—HUUUUUUUH, finally, my demons are out there. She leans her head back into the light, I see her pain. It’s like...like blue rain falling from a purple sky. Raindrops smear make-up down her cheek like a dirt path. She crying? Still, I won’t stop fucking her, know why? I’m on a mission. What mission? Make her surrender, yup, orgasm is the only time I can get close to a biological woman without feeling scared. Plus, she loves me banging her up against that brick wall, are you kidding? She’s not damaged ‘cause she was never perfect, or fragile, or a delicate lotus flower, or some dumb bitch on her knees, or any of that role-playing bullshit they make us believe about women on TV. Naaaaah, here is a lady—maybe she’s lesbian, maybe queer, maybe bisexual, maybe a gender-bender non-conforming whatever, maybe straight-acting on a queer planet, maybe a Pitbull princess, maybe she’s a Black woman who knows she’s white or a white man who knows he’s a Black woman claiming freedom. I dunno. All I do know is identity, like freedom, is complicated, messy and ever-changing. All I do know is freedom is a terrifying, risky place on this woman’s body. Tits dancing, she’s creaming at the tip of my erection. Orgasm. She’s totally free in that orgasmic moment while I’m thinking, “I wish God gave me a penis. So she can taste me exploding inside her, with her, for her, instead of me plowing two fingers in and out of her pussy at a ninety-degree angle and calling that my “erection” instead. But I’m trapped. Trapped inside this body, trapped inside these four walls, trapped inside this chair inside this house answering your sick questions designed to trap me even more. So, watch, I’m taking two steps from this chair in your direction, holding my hands in the air like a common criminal ready to give it all up. Now Mom rewind, ask me again where I’ve been or what I’ve been up to and I will tell you more truth than the two of us can handle. Go. Ask.

MOM You want a sex change operation?

SAM Yup.

MOM To become a man?

SAM That's right.

MOM Get out.

SAM Not a problem, I'll go for a walk. Bryant Park is sweet this time of night. Meanwhile take your time, mull shit over in your brain so when I get back—

MOM Don't come back.

SAM What do you mean?

MOM What do you mean what do I mean?

SAM Where am I supposed to go?

MOM Let me tell you something: Nothing you say or do will make your father come home, know why? 'Cause he don't love you.

SAM Liar!

MOM Why ain't he here? And why am I? No sex change into his son will make your—

SAM I'm not transitioning so my father—

MOM Pack your shit 'n' leave my house or I'll pick up that fucken phone right now, speed dial the police so they lock your Black tail behind bars and—

SAM Where will I go?

MOM Fuck it, go back to them streets with your lesbian whore, I don't care. I don't care what happens. All I care about is getting to work tomorrow morning, being there on time with a fresh mind on a full tank of sleep so the few marbles I do possess between my ears stay intact where they—

SAM I don't have a place to stay!

MOM That's the least of your worries if you ask me. What happens when a lunatic slits your throat? Leaves you f or dead in a dark alley, then what? Who identifies your body? Or—and this is the real issue that should sink in if nothing else does—Do you think they care if a masculine Black woman is murdered? That's reason to celebrate. Local Red Neck racist (trigger-happy) cops, ask them how much they love diversity in a Black masculine woman. But you go ahead, test the fucken system, become a man, become a Black man—what do you call it?—transitioning, yeah Boo, but not in my house. Do it out there in them streets with your lesbians, and your whores and your sex-starved lunatics who will slit your throat after they rape you at least twenty times tonight. Who cares? I sure as shit don't, fuck it.

SAM I'm sorry.

freaking Mom out to death which is perfectly understandable so I don't blame her for that but I figure you could deal with it better than her so could you please please pretty please let me stay with you 'n' Carol for a few months before and a little while after the surgery so I can heal...peaceful...heal in peace pretty pretty please Dad?...Hello? I love you. Daddy?, are you there?

[The umbrellas fold]

He hung up.

[Sam sinks slowly to the floor]

SAM I will not let them kill me. I will not let them kill my dream.

[Sam sinks to the floor]

SAM I will not let them kill me. I will not let them kill my dream.

[Sam sinks]

SAM I will not let them kill me. I will keep my dream alive, even if it's a tiny spark. I can't let that spark die out. 'Cause that spark could start the fire that lights up my life. I will not let them kill me....

NEIGHBOR You talkin' to me?

SAM I will not let them kill my dream.

NEIGHBOR Who, Baby?

SAM My parents.

NEIGHBOR Kill?

SAM Yeah, they want—Who are you?

NEIGHBOR Get up, c'mon, stand.

SAM For what?

NEIGHBOR Stand up, c'mon. 'Cause you could use a hug right now.

SAM Who the fuck are you?

NEIGHBOR Your community, can't you tell? I'm a compassionate, gay Black man who knows exactly what it's like to be mistreated and misunderstood. Guess what? I got apple pie with whipped cream if you're hungry 'n', frankly, you looked starved for more than home cooking. Got a spare bed with clean sheets too. You're more than welcome to stay.

SAM How much?

NEIGHBOR For you? Free of charge. How long? Long as you need.

SAM Why?

NEIGHBOR Look at you. Beaten down, shoulders slumped in a corner, soaking wet all alone in the rain mumbling to your poor lonely self about killer parents. I can't let that go on. Plus, somebody might—

SAM Rape my ass? Or you want that for yourself, Bitch?, my tight Black ass we're talking about. 'Cause I've been eyeing you eyeing me like a priest on a four year-old and lemme tell ya somethin', it ain't happening.

NEIGHBOR Excuse me?

SAM No way never will I give my Black ass for dukey sex with a nigger faggot no matter what he's offering. Read my lips: I don't need your pie or your whipped cream or your warm sheets or your comfy, cozy bed so fuck off.

NEIGHBOR Who hurt you so bad you can't accept good?

SAM There ya go, keep that bed and them sheets and your therapeutic psychobabble for somebody good.

NEIGHBOR Who hurt you?

SAM Don't take another step.

NEIGHBOR Who hurt you?

SAM I wouldn't come any closer if I were you....

NEIGHBOR I don't want to hurt you...

SAM I'm not afraid of nobody, hear me?, nobody...

NEIGHBOR I've been hurt....

SAM I'm warning you...

NEIGHBOR I know what that's like....

SAM I'm not responsible for whatever happens next...so I'd fuck the hell off if I were you.

NEIGHBOR I see no reason to inflict more pain. But at some point you'll have to dump your past to trust somebody. Here, take my hand.

SAM *[Directly to the audience]* I did. Slowly, I took his hand. *[Sam takes his hand slowly]* And he—that beautiful, complicated, generous, brave, bold, gay Black man set me free. Stripping clean the layers of self-hatred that come with being a survivor. In high heels and full beard, he taught me how to be man enough to be woman enough to be human enough to be. That day God paid me a visit. Think about that. You.