

PLAYTHING

A PLAY BY K. JARED HOSEIN

CAST:

MANNY - Early thirties, slightly overweight, has his shirt unbuttoned down to his paunch.

DOLLY - Early twenties, thin, bad posture, sickly.

AUDIENCE #1 - Male, "everyman" kind of look.

AUDIENCE #2 - Female, "intellectual" kind of look.

AUDIENCE #3 - Male, "everyman" kind of look; brawny.

OFFICER #1 - Female, police officer uniform.

OFFICER #2 - Male, police officer uniform.

ACT ONE: STICKS AND STONES

SETTING: A simple room with two chairs and any simple living room props.

MANNY

Woman, where meh food?

DOLLY

Comin, Manny!

DOLLY enters with two plates of food in hand. She sets one down on the floor and then rests the other on MANNY's lap.

MANNY

Eh, eh! Pick it up!

DOLLY

Why?

MANNY

I say pick it up! Rest down my food FUSS! Then yours!

DOLLY picks up both plates. This time, she sets the first plate down on MANNY's lap and the other on the floor.

MANNY

Good. Now just fuh pullin that stunt, yuh eh eating until I finish eat.

DOLLY

Sorry, Manny.

MANNY

(beginning to eat)

Ah tell yuh not to say that word! Never say "Sorry!" Yuh is one chupid woman, yuh know. Yuh know that? Eh? Yuh should listen to those who are wiser than you.

Maybe yuh would learn something. You doh think so?

DOLLY

I should listen...

MANNY

Yuh bathe, Dolly? You smelling.

DOLLY

But I bathe, Manny.

MANNY

Where? The latrine? Woman, you smelling! You go make me vomit up all this food here, smelling like de damn La Basse! Smelling like the dregs of the Caroni River! Yuh smelling like how you did when I first drag you out of the La Basse!

DOLLY

I bathe in de shower, Manny.

MANNY

So yuh chupid and yuh smelly. I doh have to be reminded how smelly. When last yuh had an exam?

DOLLY

Cah remember.

MANNY

Exam time. Get out yuh pencils and yuh rulers. What is de sum of five and eleven, woman?

DOLLY looks at her fingers and begins counting them. MANNY smacks her hand.

DOLLY

Woman! What de ass yuh counting? Yuh have eleven fingers?

DOLLY

I cah remember, Manny.

MANNY

What about four and six?

DOLLY raises hands to count fingers again.

MANNY

Woman, you want meh chop off dat hand!

DOLLY puts her hands down.

DOLLY

Eight? ...Wait, wait.

MANNY

(laughing, turns to audience)

Well, allyuh ever see more!

DOLLY

(unaware that there is an audience)

Yuh know I does get nervous when you doin this and cah think straight. I swear I could do it when ah alone. Ah swear, Manny, ah swear...

MANNY

Woman, yuh does crack me up. Is chupid yuh chupid so? Woman, yuh chupid. Yuh have cattle sense. Yuh dotish. Yuh is a DUNCE. Yuh is a damn incompetent illiterate embarrassment. Ah know 3-year-olds who does still dig dey bottom and suck finger who is genius compared to you. You is not a dumbbell, you is a barbell, girl.

DOLLY

You know I never get to finish school, Manny.

MANNY

I make a joke. "You is not a dumbbell, you is a barbell." Laugh. That was a good one.

DOLLY

(begins to laugh)

MANNY

If something happen to me, who going to take care of yuh? What you goin to do? How you going to get a wuk? What you could even do for a wuk? You cah do anything.

Yuh ass have no skills, woman. Yuh totally untalented. Yuh can't add. Yuh can't subtrack. Yuh can't sew. Yuh can't cut hair worth a shit. Yuh can't spell. (beat) And even if yuh could do all those things, nobody go hire you because the health authority go shut them down. Unsanitary odours.

Yuh could take a woman out of de La Basse. But yuh cah take de La Basse out of de woman.

DOLLY

(laughing)

MANNY

Where yuh brain went, woman? Where yuh brain went when your mother borned yuh? It slide out in the afterbirth? Where it gone? You forget it in the La Basse, where a corbeau eat it and dead before it could pass it back out? I does always wonder how it have woman cupid like you and I does always imagine allyuh woman could unscrew allyuh head and take out the brain. And then use it as a washrag to clean the grime off the kitchen and scrub the toilet bowl with it. I eh know how else a brain could get so full ah shit.

DOLLY

(laughing)

That was a good one, Manny.

MANNY

(finishing his food)

I think ah know where it gone. Might be my fault. I mighta hit you with the potspoon too hard, knock out the screws from yuh head and yuh brain mighta fall in the pot. So, woman, I think I just eat it. Maybe it in one of my eleven stomachs.

DOLLY

(stops laughing)

MANNY

Woman, look. Pick up yuh food and eat. Look fly going in it! Yuh dunno flies does carry infection or you too chupid to realize that too? Or yuh does let fly go in the pot when you cookin?! I eh go put a duncyhead move like that below yuh, yuh know!

DOLLY puts her face in her palms and begins to sob. In a surprise move, MANNY sets aside his plate and wraps his arms around her. He picks up her plate and tries to coax her into eating.

MANNY

Pretty popo. Pretty popo. Eat yuh food. Ent yuh want to grow up big and healthy? Eat yuh food. Get yuh carbs and yuh proteins to grow big and healthy.

DOLLY obliges and eats.

MANNY

Good girl. Good girl. Yuh know why I does have to be hard on you so, right? (beat) Is only because ah love you, Dolly. Ah love you dearly and with every vessel in meh beating pumping heart.

DOLLY

(smiling)

I love you too, Manny.

MANNY

(laughing hysterically)

Oh Lord, woman! Yuh relly think that is why I does cuss you up so?!

DOLLY

(looking at him)

Why then?

MANNY

Yuh will always be too chupid to know! So doh even try to figure it out with yuh La Basse cattle sense! Now go wash dem wares!

DOLLY

But I ent finish eat, Manny.

MANNY

Good. I find you getting a lil fat. The least yuh could do for me is look good.

DOLLY

(smiling)

So I lookin good?

MANNY

Beautiful, beautiful! Yuh could be a movie star, girl!

DOLLY happily takes the plates and exits the stage.

MANNY

(now alone on stage, speaks to audience)

All yuh ever see a woman more chupid than she? (beat) I over love she, though. I know most of all yuh already want to shack up the judge and jury. Bring courts, bring de exorcist. Get de devil out of me. I so saw-ry, breds. All yuh doh even know the whole situation. Is not me. Is not my fault.

One time I went down to Mayaro, right, and ah was walking along de coast. And ah see this bottle fill up with some sea-water, looking like it had something in it. I dunno what compel meh but I pick up the bottle, unscrew the cap and then I feel my body going bazodee. I start to tremble up. Shake up. Catch fits. Ah even shat mehself. I is a good man. It was a demon possess me from the bottle. Ah can't help mehself anymore.

DOLLY enters the stage once again.

MANNY

Dolly, tell dem I is not a bad man.

DOLLY

Tell who?

MANNY

(pointing to audience)
Yuh dotish or what, woman? Dem! Right there!

DOLLY looks surprised, puts her palm up to her chest and gasps. This is the first time she has acknowledged the audience.

DOLLY

I doesn't notice when it have people around sometimes, nah, forgive me. (beat) You all find he does treat me bad? He not a bad man at all.

MANNY

I think they feel I lack remorse.

DOLLY

(turning to MANNY)
What that mean again?

MANNY

They feel ah have no conscience. They feel ah dunno right from wrong.

DOLLY

(gasping at audience)
No, no, no! Allyuh have it so wrong! I go tell you how I meet him. When I was thirteen, my father carry me for a drive around town.

MANNY

And then what your father do?

DOLLY

He stop by a bar to take a drink.

MANNY

Then wha happen?

DOLLY

Then he end up having another drink. And another drink.

MANNY

And what happen while the old rumcork was drinkin he backside full?

DOLLY

It had three men come and see me sitting in the backseat of the pickup. And they take me and carry me to a dark road not too far away and beat me and take turns raping me.

MANNY

(gets into a fighting stance, punches the air as DOLLY talks)

The bess part comin up.

DOLLY

And that is when Manny come and drive them away. He drive me to the hospital and he come visit me until I get out. And he tell me he go never let anything like that happen to me again.

MANNY

(does a victory pose for the audience)

And allyuh was saying I is a bad man. A no-good man.

DOLLY

No, no, he not a bad man at all! Doh go round saying dat! Doh get tie up! Ah mean, yeah, I does take a few slap once in a while but ah would take that over havin my skin black-and-blue and graze-up. This man here go always protect me.

MANNY

(putting an arm around DOLLY)

Ah want to know how many of allyuh man go rescue allyuh woman from getting attack and rape by three other man. (beat) I doh even want to see a show of hands. It go have man here who playing he big and bad he is the fuss one bussin it from a scene like that when the time come. So keep yuh blasted kiss-me-ass hands down!

DOLLY

Why you tellin dem keep their hands down, Manny? I want to see who would do it.

MANNY

WOMAN! You think any of dem out there going to protect you when de time reach? Babes, is only me. Remember that night? I come in guns a-blazin', dahlin'. (flexes his biceps) When you fightin man like that, you go straight for de neck. Ha ha ha. And then POW! Right in the stomach! (beat) None of them goin to do that. What did the Hen do?

DOLLY

The Hen?

MANNY

Papa Hen.

DOLLY

...

MANNY

Papa Hen and Mama Hen. Pecking corn kernels from a pile of cowshit? Where is dem two cluckers?

DOLLY

They gone.

MANNY

Gone. Or flew de coop, as some would say. And they leave the lil egg behind.

DOLLY

A chickenless egg.

MANNY

A coopless, chickenless, basketless egg. Knowin all the manicou runnin wild on de farm.

DOLLY

The yellow-eye, greedy manicou.

MANNY

Sneaking around. Scampering around. The skee-amps!

DOLLY

(pauses suddenly then gets excited,
jumps around)

Ten! Ten!

MANNY

Ten?

DOLLY

Six and four make ten!

MANNY

(feigns being impressed)

Well, look at dat, it have hope for yuh after all.

DOLLY

And eleven and five make fifteen!

MANNY

(turns to audience)

Or maybe ah goat-mouth it. (beat) Woman, yuh chupid. Plain as day. Is not de end of the de world. Accept it. It have worse. It have much worse. Smile. Smile and accept it. Be happy!

DOLLY

But I happy, Manny. Yuh know, my auntie use to tell me that when I was small. "Smile," she say. "Why yuh does never smile, Dolly? Better to be happy if yuh could help it. Yuh need some sortin' out. Yuh need to fix that mouth." Them used to have this fish tank. Jus' some angel fish. That was my favourite t'ing in that house. Used to always go and look at the angel fish for hours. I know she real cared for dem fish too.

MANNY

Get on wit the story, woman.

DOLLY

One day my uncle was changin the water for the fish tank and he forget to put de fish back in properly. Yuh know yuh can't just put dem back in. Right, Manny?

MANNY

At least yuh know something. (motions impatiently) So go on, go on.

DOLLY

So the fish die. Every last man jack of dem. And my uncle take dem and feed them to de cat. And my aunt was watchin. And she was smilin. And three years later, some men rob she and kill she when she was comin outta she car. They said she dead smiling.

MANNY

A charmin story bout a charmin woman. What is de moral of dat story?

DOLLY

(smiling the widest she could)

Smile. Better to be happy if yuh could help it.

MANNY

Make de best of things.

DOLLY

De best.

MANNY

De very best.

DOLLY

It never going to be any other way.

MANNY

Them who tell you it going to be different feel they know something. Beware de preachers. Beware the people who feel they know. Beware de people who read books and feel they know everything because of dat. They dunno nothing, girl. Not one blasted thing. They go pretend like they fightin for you but when they see yuh, they runnin'. You know what they does see when they see people like we?

DOLLY

What they does see?

MANNY

A bosey-back woman and a man with he shirt open and belly hangin out. And they feel they know everything already.

DOLLY

So beware de knowers?

MANNY

Beware de knowers for they know nothing. Me and you. We share a, ahem, "delicate ecology". They hadda learn to respeck dat ecology. If it gone outta balance, it all collapses. Everyt'ing. Dead out. Wilted. Nothing left for nothing to survive.

DOLLY

I doh think anybody should interfere in other people business. Fass, macocious people.

MANNY

The people who does want to interfere is de people who feel they know. They feel they better than you. They does read book so they feel they better. So, ah say, beware de knowers...

DOLLY

(nodding)

...for they know nothing.

MANNY

Nothing bout de delicate ecology of me and you.

DOLLY

They dunno nothing bout de pleasure of smellin yuh cigarette smoke.

MANNY

...or listenin to you take a pee.

DOLLY

(laughs)

...or hearing yuh bawl up the T.V.

MANNY

The delicate ecology...

DOLLY

...of me and you. (beat) When we goin to have a baby?

They stare into each other's eyes for a couple seconds. Then a phone ringing interrupts the moment. The phone rings twice before MANNY goes to answer it.

MANNY

(answering)

Yeah. (pause) ... (Manny looks confused) ... Eh? They hang up.

As soon as MANNY puts the receiver down, the phone rings again. MANNY picks it up.

MANNY

Yeah. Hello? ... Hello? Well, talk nah! ... Steups!

MANNY hangs up the receiver. DOLLY fidgets as they wait for a couple seconds before the phone rings again.

MANNY

Yes. HELLO? HELLO? Talk nah, yuh dumb jackass! Calling my house and hangin up! Who yuh want to talk to?! ... Ah said SPEAK, yuh damn fool! I go come there and strangle yuh with this telephone cord, yuh know! I go beat you with the receiver! ... Doh laugh! Talk, doh laugh! Ah want to know who this is! ... Ah tell yuh, doh laugh! What de ass you laughin at?! ... You know, the mudass hang up again!

MANNY flings the receiver/telephone across the stage. MANNY begins pacing up and down the stage, stomping his feet, muttering incoherently.

DOLLY

(fidgets, takes slow steps back)

...

MANNY

(still pacing)

Somebody feel they could play tricks on me! Dem eh know I is a madman! ... WOMAN! Ah want to know who callin my house so! YOU was the one home whole day! Ah want to

know if they call when you was home!

DOLLY

I doh know, Manny. Nobody call...

MANNY

WOMAN! Doh play chupid with me! Ah want to know WHO de ASS calling this house! Calling this number!

DOLLY

Manny, I relly doh know...

MANNY

Ah go mash up this house, you know!

DOLLY

Manny, come nah... doh get on so... You doh want to mash up what we build over this.

MANNY

WOMAN, I own everything in this house! You din't build one shit! Doh get tie up! Who is de one who workin here?!

DOLLY

(softly)

You...

MANNY

Who is de one who bringin in one hundred percent of all de money in this house?!

DOLLY

You...

MANNY

Who is de one who cah add?!

DOLLY

Me...

MANNY

Who is a de one cah subtrack, divide, multiply, spell one shit to save they life?

DOLLY

(wailing)

Me, me, me, me, me!

MANNY

And you want to have a baby? Woman, you have to be mad! What you know bout mindin' baby? What you know bout anything? You too chupid to mind baby! You go end up killing it and two of we ugly face going to end up in de front page news!

DOLLY

No. I go take good care of it.

MANNY

Woman, you cah even take good care of yuhself! Yuh still smelling! Yuh might make a mistake and eat de baby after you push it out, like how some of them pothong does do!

DOLLY

(very despondent)

No, Manny. Yuh can't really think dat bout me. I go take care of it.

MANNY begins unbuckling his belt.

MANNY

And I go take good care of you!

As soon as MANNY wraps the belt around his wrist to lash DOLLY, a male audience member (AUDIENCE #1) stands up and walks towards the stage. He may also enter from backstage.

AUDIENCE #1

(upon entering the stage)

Look, look, I cah watch this anymore! (turns to MANNY) Brother, brother man, what you doing? Take a chill with this stupidity, nah.

MANNY

(looks flabbergasted, turns to rest of

audience)

But what de ass is this? Who is you? You feel you could just come in my house and tell me what to do? Yuh is a ass or a jackass?

AUDIENCE #1

Look brother man, lemme knock some sense into yuh head. How the woman could possibly know who it is callin on de phone? Jus' because Mr. Anonymous get yuh vex doh give yuh the right to hit the woman.

MANNY

(still flabbergasted)

But who say you could come in my house jus' so? That is trespassin', brother man. And that give me the right to hit you!

AUDIENCE #1

(holding up his palms in a surrendering motion)

Hold up, hold up! (pause) Look, hoss, we could talk this out like two gentlemen. We eh need to bring no hittin' or violence into this. (turns to DOLLY) Miss Lady, take a breather. Nobody gone hit anybody.

DOLLY lets out a sigh, says nothing and takes a couple steps back.

AUDIENCE #1

Nobody hittin nobody. Some people feel you probably need a good cuff, mister, but I is a church-going pacifist man. Isay hittin doh solve anything. And dat is dat. Violence begets violence. Yuh hit somebody and next t'ing yuh see they eh moving...

MANNY

(interrupting)

Yuh feel I go kill my wife?

AUDIENCE #1

Well, brother man, I eh saying you is a cold-blooded, vengeful murderer. But ah know yuh was plannin to hit Miss Lady there a couple lash with yuh belt buckle. And by de looks of that belt buckle, that eh no easy lash.

Lash could lead to bruise. Bruise could lead to breakage. (pause) Look, boss, lewwe just say, you mightn't mean to do anything but accidents does happen.

MANNY

Like what?

AUDIENCE #1

(paces about the room)

Lewwe say that buckle gone and conneck with her eye. Or it lash just a incy-wincy too hard on she skull. Or look, what if she runnin from you and trip and hit she head on de edge of de chair here? Or a table or the wall? And then she get a concussion and go into a coma. We done know judge and jury not puttin a table in jail for dat!

MANNY

Steups! You feel you know something?

AUDIENCE #1

Brother, listen to my advice. Sound advice.

MANNY

What you know? DOLLY! (DOLLY turns to him) Remember what I say? ... Beware the knowers...

DOLLY

...for they know nothing.

AUDIENCE #1

But you seem toclaim to know a lot, yuhself, Manny. Maybe you is the one who know nothing.

MANNY

Look. Why you still in meh house? I fed up!

AUDIENCE #1

Yuh think you is the only one, brother?

MANNY

(balls up his fists)

Mister, doh let me cut yuh tail!

AUDIENCE #1

I is not yuh wife, brother man. I doh take licks. I thought we say we woulda cut out this violence scene and talk like two gentlemen?

MANNY

Yuh in my house, trespassin'! That give me de right to put some blows on yuh ass!

AUDIENCE #1

(walks off stage, then walks back and stops before entering)

Miss Dolly, ah would like to come in to have a word. I could come in?

DOLLY is silent for a couple seconds. MANNY eyes her. She sits, deep in thought, and then paces around. Finally, she speaks:

DOLLY

Yeah. (beat) Come inside.

AUDIENCE #1 re-enters.

MANNY

Woman, yuh have to be smokin' something! This is MY house! Yuh cah just invite people in here!

AUDIENCE #1

Ent she living here? She have jus as much right as you, brother man. (pauses) And it look like I is not a trespasser anymore.

DOLLY

Manny, I did jus' want him to come in so I could tell him it wrong for him to jus' go and say dem bad things bout you. (turns to AUDIENCE #1) Mister, Manny would never do dem things. You feel you know Manny. But I know him for years. Manny save my life. He say he would never let me get hurt again.

AUDIENCE #1

Excuse me, Miss, Manny mighta save yuh life. But that doh give him ownership over yuh. That doh give him the

right to lay his hand on yuh. He have no right or reason to do that.

DOLLY

No disrespect, mister, but you doh know Manny. You doh know the reasons why he does do something and why he doesn't do something, eh.

AUDIENCE #1

Yuh might be right there, miss. (beat) I want to know if you yuhself would prefer 'im to stop.

DOLLY

Stop wha?

AUDIENCE #1

Hittin yuh. Lashing you with the belt buckle. Lewwe say the Govahment offer up this proposition, right? And the proposition state, "From this day, Manny shall no longer lay a finger on Dolly." If yuh had to gone vote and yuh had to put a X by a ballot. What yuh would vote? Yes or No?

DOLLY

Ent the ballot would be secret?

AUDIENCE #1

Yes.

DOLLY

Then why I must tell you? Or anybody else?

AUDIENCE #1

Yuh doh want to say because yuh don't want Manny to hear?

DOLLY

No. Not at all.

AUDIENCE #1

Then why you hesitatin'? If you was a die-hard supporter of the incumbent, yuh wouldn't be moving so!

DOLLY

In-cum-bent?

MANNY

It mean, "the way how it is now", dumbo.

AUDIENCE #1

If yuh did like it the way it is now so much, yuh wouldn't be stickin'. Yuh would let yuhself be heard loud and proud.

DOLLY

(pacing)

Ah vote NO! NO! NO! That is meh vote! Ah would vote NO in the ballot, awright? Manny does protect me. He does provide and care for me and yuh come here playin like yuh know something...

MANNY

Beware the knowers...

DOLLY

(stops)

...for they know nothing!

MANNY

Ah guess yuh loss the election, mister.

AUDIENCE #1

Lose? I din't lose nothing. (turns to DOLLY) What if one day he hit yuh face too hard? What if he break yuh nose? What if he...

MANNY

I eh like de road you goin down, mister.

DOLLY

Mister, I had worse.

MANNY

Yuh feel I is a badjohn? Yuh find my behaviour disturbing? (beat) Boss, I is a saint. Wait til yuh hear bout the Hen. The Papa Hen.

DOLLY

I doh like talking bout that, Manny. (beat, turns to
AUDIENCE #1) Ah had worse, awright?

AUDIENCE #1

But, miss, it look like you gone from worse to bad.
(beat) I sure whatever happen long ago, whatever
happenin now eh that much different.

DOLLY

You say you sure?...

MANNY

(begins walking circles around DOLLY)
...BEWARE THE KNOWERS!...

DOLLY

...How you could know?...

MANNY

...FOR THEY KNOW NOTHING!

DOLLY

Who is you to say I not happy...

MANNY

...BEWARE THE DO-GOODERS!...

DOLLY

...I much happier now with my life...

MANNY

...FOR THEY DO NO GOOD!...

DOLLY

...Yuh dunno bout how hard it was for me when I was
small...

MANNY

...SMILE! BETTER TO BE HAPPY!...

DOLLY

And now I just smile. (beams)

MANNY

...IF YUH COULD HELP IT!

AUDIENCE #1

I feel sorry for yuh, Miss Dolly.

MANNY

Beware the ones who feel sorry...

DOLLY

...For they doh feel sorry at all.

MANNY

How much times people ever say they does feel for yuh, Dolly?

DOLLY

Too much to keep count.

MANNY

Well, we done know your ass too chupid to keep count. (turns to and smiles at audience) So much people say they feelin sorry. (pretends he's flicking T.V. channels) "Newlyweds dead in car crash. Them had dey whole life ahead of dem. I feel sorry for dem, boy. (click) Baby born hole in she heart. How de baby goin to raise all dem funds? I feelin real sorry for that baby, boy. (click) Thirteen year old girl kidnapped and raped by three man while she father drinkin in bar. Well, oh Lord God Jesus Christ in Heaven, ah have to bawl out about how saw-ry ah feelin'! (pause) Eh! Look de KFC reach! Time to stuff we face!"

Boss man, yuh KFC reach. Go and eat yuh Big Box and drink yuh Coca-Cola, wait for it to digest, take a hot shit, then re-start yuh damn dotish "sorry" cycle. We doh need it here. Go find something new to feel sorry bout. We doh like to use that word in this household.

AUDIENCE #1

Brother, that was a brave t'ing you do. Nobody eh disputin' that. And yes, yuh had the testicular fortitude to do somet'ing most of us woulda just run home from. Yuh know, "Run up de mountain, walla-walla dumplin'." And I know plenty of we does talk big and

when is time to act -- well, lewwe say, none of we
winnin a Academy Award -- that eh no secret. But I
still want to know why yuh does be hittin' de woman.
That was a question yuh never answer.

MANNY

Yuh askin' Manny why he does do what he does do?

AUDIENCE #1

Yeah. Why you does do what you does do?

MANNY

Boss. Because ah could.

There is a silence as AUDIENCE #1 turns to the
audience, perplexed, then turns back to MANNY.

AUDIENCE #1

Dat is why? Dat is it?

MANNY

Ah need another reason?

DOLLY

Sometimes I does cook de food wrong and I get beat for
it. But is okay, I does learn from my mistakes. It had
one time I wash he clothes and I forget to scrub out a
stain. And he went to work and see it and come home and
beat me. Now, I does always wash de clothes good. If he
doh do it...

MANNY

...how would she learn? (beat) You never get licks,
boss? You mean to tell me yuh father never hold yuh
down and give you two cut-tail when yuh was small?

AUDIENCE #1

(stammers)

Y-Y-Yeah but that was when I was small. Miss Dolly is
not a child. (beat) What bout when you in work? What if
yuh do something wrong? You feel is right for yuh boss
to take yuh out in de back, hold yuh against a wall and
hit you two cuff in yuh jaw?

MANNY

No, I eh go take that. (beat) But yuh already forget what I say...

AUDIENCE #1

Forget what?

MANNY

Dolly go get her cut-ass regardless. Like clockwork.

AUDIENCE #1

Why? Why would yuh still beat she?

MANNY

Because. I. Could.

There is a silence. AUDIENCE #1 takes a deep, weary breath and twists his face. He begins pacing up and down the stage.

AUDIENCE #1

(pacing about stage)

Brother man, before yuh talked about how you was strollin along the Mayaro coast and yuh find a bottle and open it. And a demon possess you.

MANNY

Boy, it had me going BAZODEE!

AUDIENCE #1

I doh believe that for one second, eh.

MANNY

Yuh doh have to.

AUDIENCE #1

But if yuh did tell it like this: That Miss Dolly here was strollin along de Mayaro coast and she find a bottle and open it and lo and behold, a spirit pop out. And the body look like a tapeworm gettin wider and wider until yuh could make out some shoulders. Yuh cah really make out the body so good. But everybody here could make out the face good-good.

MANNY

Boss, what de ass yuh talkin bout?

AUDIENCE #1

See, I does go to church. Ah doh take on everything they say. See, they like to talk bout devil plenty. Say devil get in this one and devil get into that one. 'Is de devil make 'im do it.' 'De devil does get into she come Carnival time, yuh know!' (shakes his head) Blue devil. Red devil. Devil music.

I doh buy into de devil talks. I does say, "Allyuh doh want to believe horrible things could come from this world. No, no, it have to come from another world. It hadda be alien. It hadda be from de evil beyond." Anybody who know me know I does talk so on most days. And then on some days ah does hear and read bout people like you. And I does say to mehself, "Nah, boy. It just cah be. Humans relly that capable? Dey really that bad-mind?" (pause)

You is the devil spirit who possess de woman from de bottle, brother man. And it so fitting, eh. Spirits. Ghosts. That so fittin for you. Cuz what ghost does do? They mudass does scare people. (beat) And ah think ah could conclude this woman here go relly need a professional priest to free she soul from yuh terrifying paranormal baboo ass.

MANNY

(laughs hysterically)

Oh Lord, boss man! Yuh should see yuh face! Ah need to ketch meh breath! (looks at DOLLY) Laugh, girl! Laugh it up! He crack a joke! Yuh eh hear de joke? Laugh!

DOLLY

(joins in the laughter)

That was a good one!

MANNY

Yuh better take off yuh shoes when yuh go back home, boss man! And walk through de doorway backwards too! Ah mean, yuh know what ghost does do, right? (beat) (mockingly) They mudass does scare people! Ah mean, yuh

eh want to wake up in de middle of de night and see me hoverin' above yuh bed!

MANNY runs up to AUDIENCE #1 and groans like a ghost: "OOOOO-OOOOHHH!" DOLLY laughs loudly.

AUDIENCE #1

(shaking his head, facing the ground)

Allyuh sad.

MANNY

Bring de holy water! Bring a bucket brigade full ah it!
Bring de holy fire truck! Aim de hose right at me!

AUDIENCE #1

Allyuh need professional help, boy. God help allyuh.

AUDIENCE #1 begins dejectedly walking towards the stage exit. MANNY, dragging DOLLY behind him, race up behind him and raise their arms like two spooks and yell: "OOOOOOO-OOOOOHHHH!" as if frightening him away.

MANNY

(still jeering as AUDIENCE #1 exits)

And doh forget, when yuh find de professional help, de priest and de holy water bucket brigade, look in de bedroom mirror and say BLOODY MANNY three times to summon meh jumbie ass!

MANNY picks up the telephone from the ground and sets it back to its original spot before he flung it in his previous rage. DOLLY speaks while he is doing this:

DOLLY

That man was chupid, eh?

MANNY

(raises eyebrows, turns to audience)

Now that is wha yuh call the pot callin the kettle black! (turns to DOLLY) Woman, you not in no position to be callin anyone chupid. Doh delude yuhself. That is like de worm pitying the bird.

DOLLY

What that mean?

MANNY

(throws arms up in exasperation)

Nevermind! (pause) Ah still want to know who was callin my house, woman! Is who I think it is?

DOLLY

Why you think I lyin to you?

MANNY

Because you is one dutty, foul-mouth, lying jamette! And if I ketch you lyin to me, I going to scrub your mouth with soap like de last time! (beat) Which one does taste better? Dove or Rexona?

DOLLY

Manny...

MANNY

Doh "Manny" me! (beat) Say your times tables! Four times one is...

DOLLY

Four.

MANNY

Four times two is...

DOLLY

(hesitates)

I doh know.

MANNY

And you think you could fool me? What you have in yuh whole head, I have more in my li'l toe.

DOLLY

Manny, yuh know I din't finish school...

MANNY

Woman, yuh was too chupid for school! It was a friggin'

embarrassment! Why yuh din't just study?

DOLLY

School was too hard...

MANNY

Yuh head was too hard.

DOLLY

I should go back and finish?

MANNY

(laughing)

Woman, you have to be crazy! You go be sittin in a lil musty room with a bunch of chirren who be laughin their tail off whenever they see you! Say, look at that big horse doh know she two times tables!

A woman in the audience (AUDIENCE #2) stands up.
She begins walking towards the stage, saying:

AUDIENCE #2

Excuse me! Excuse me! I, for one, think Dolly should go back to school if she really wants to!

MANNY

(looking at AUDIENCE #2)

Who is you to tell we what to do? Who is you? Another knower? Another big-eye come to macco we business? Woman, rock so and gone from here nah.

AUDIENCE #2 doesn't enter the stage yet. She and MANNY speak:

AUDIENCE #2

But Manny. It seems your main problem with Dolly is that she doesn't have an education. Right? What if she actually got an education?

MANNY

Big woman like she go back to school? (laughs) Ah could see it now. She dey with the lil chirren saying she A-B-C's and sucking penny-cool. Maybe yuh willing to buy she a lil pink lunchkit for she.

DOLLY

I know meh A-B-C's, Manny.

AUDIENCE #2

Mister, I teach basic and preliminary English and Mathematics to adults who didn't have the opportunity before. One year with me and Dolly will be able to add, subtract, divide, multiply.

DOLLY

(excited)

Relly? One year?

AUDIENCE #2

Not even so much. Just a few months!

MANNY

Sorry. We not buyin'. Gone find another house, schemer-woman.

AUDIENCE #2

You're not buying because I'm not selling. (beat) What if I want to offer to do it for free? You wouldn't like that, Dolly?

MANNY glares at DOLLY.

MANNY

Dolly. This woman feel she know something. Remember what ah tell yuh... Beware de knowers...

DOLLY

She could help meh be smarter for you, Manny. Ent that is how you want me to be? (beat) I doh want to be a embarrassment to you anymore. (turns to AUDIENCE #2) Come inside, come inside! I want to hear more bout this school!

AUDIENCE #2 enters the stage. She shakes DOLLY's hand and smiles.

AUDIENCE #2

There are a lot of women who turned their lives around

just by getting an education, Dolly. An education is such a powerful tool these days. It could lift you up from any hopeless depths you think you're in. Wisdom could really light up any darkness. We could make every arrangement for you to learn what you need to learn.

MANNY shakes his head.

DOLLY

Manny, Manny! Imagine if I could add and subtract! Ah would pass all the exams!

AUDIENCE #2

(smiling)

You wouldn't like that, Manny? Imagine she could add, subtract and spell anything. You don't ever have to be frustrated about her being unskilled and uneducated ever again! Now that don't sound like a real good deal to you?

MANNY

No. (beat) Dolly, you cah go. This woman only lookin to scam we.

DOLLY

But Manny...

MANNY

Ah say doh "Manny" me! What ah say is final!

AUDIENCE #2

But Dolly is a grown woman, Manny. She could make decisions for herself. She doesn't need your permission to go.

DOLLY

If Manny doh want me to go, I cah go.

AUDIENCE #2

Darling, you could be anything you want to be. What do you want to be?

DOLLY

I did always wish I was a dancer...

AUDIENCE #2

Well, look at that! There are plenty dance classes all over the place! Two hours per week.

MANNY

She cah go those either.

AUDIENCE #2

With all due respect, Mr. Manny, she doh need your permission about how to live she life.

MANNY

(fumes)

"With all due respect"? Listen, yuh connivin' smart-mouth cunny, who yuh feel yuh talkin to? Doh let me buss a slap in your tail!

AUDIENCE #2

(stands up strong)

You ever hear bout Phase IV? (beat) You ever had a jalapeno pepper? You know the hot peppers we eat here? Those peppers is "boy". Jalapenos is "man". And a two second blast of Phase IV is twice the "man" that is jalapenos. They say Phase IV is specifically made to repel grizzly bears. A two second blast would leave them twistin in the wind, wondering why it smell like a sweaty mule that jus' piss itself.

You think you could take the "jammin'" better than a grizzly bear? And I could work a can of that like is high noon. Yuh want to see it?

MANNY stays quiet.

AUDIENCE #2

Ah thought so. (beat) So unless you want me to burn yuh yellow eyeballs right out of yuh sockets, you will damn well conduct yuhself around me!

MANNY sits down, folds his arms and lets out a "steups".

DOLLY

You wouldn't relly do tha'?

AUDIENCE #2

(laughing)

Ask my ex-husband!

DOLLY

(confused)

Why?

MANNY

You see how chupid she is! You really feel yuh could teach she anyt'ing? It come a time when yuh have to realize some t'ings just not meant to be! She have to realize she will never be anything except meh own personal Kunta Kinte!

AUDIENCE #2

You, shut up!

DOLLY

(dejected)

No. No. He right. The time for dem t'ing long gone. I doh have no time for dance classes. I doh have no time for school. (beat) Who go take care of de house? Who go cook? Who go iron? Who go scrub de floor?

AUDIENCE #2

(pointing at MANNY)

What 'bout him? You mean to tell me two or three days of the week he cannot help himself? He needs you to be here to change his diapers too and powder up his bottom?

DOLLY giggles at the comment. MANNY looks extremely annoyed, glaring at both of them, shudders a little, but says nothing.

AUDIENCE #2 grins at the realization of a new thought trend:

AUDIENCE #2

(walks circles around MANNY, speaking a mocking deep dialect like his)

But aye boy, if something happen to she, who going to take care of yuh? What yuh goin to do? How yuh goin to live life? What yuh could even do to help yuhself? You cah do anything. Yuh ass have no skills. Yuh totally untalented. Yuh can't cook. Yuh can't iron. Yuh can't wash clothes. Yuh washing a plate ten time and it still eh clean. (beat) Yuh eh t'ink is time yuh give Jackie she jacket and start appreciatin' she more?

DOLLY

Manny does go out and work hard. Whole day he goin'. Is my job to be there when he come home to make him end de day good.

AUDIENCE #2

That is not a job, sweetheart. I know when you do a job, you receive a pay cheque...

MANNY

Who does pay de bills?

AUDIENCE #2

And you mean to tell me you see him as an employer?
(beat) You know what he called you? He called you a "Kunta Kinte". Kunta Kinte was a slave. A slave that the masters beat and cut off his right foot when he tried to escape. That is what he sees you as. How does that make you feel?

DOLLY

Is silly you t'ink Manny would cut off my foot.

AUDIENCE #2

Honey, he wants to cut off both. He wants to make sure you go nowhere.

DOLLY

That is because he love me.

AUDIENCE #2

That is not love. Love is letting the person you love do what they want to do. He doesn't want you to dance. He doesn't want you to go to school. How is that love, Dolly?

DOLLY

Maybe sometime the things you want to do and the things
that good for you is two different thing...

AUDIENCE #2

Who fed you that line?

DOLLY

Manny...

AUDIENCE #2

I can go get the brochures for the classes right now.
Don't you want to take the classes?

DOLLY

Manny say I cah go...

AUDIENCE #2

Do you want to go?

DOLLY

I doh know. Maybe is not good for me.

MANNY

WASTE AH TIME!

DOLLY

It go be a waste ah time, I think.

AUDIENCE #2

So you don't want to learn to add and spell?

MANNY

Teachin she to add and spell would be like teachin a
dog to sniff he own bottom!

AUDIENCE #2

Let her answer!

DOLLY

(hesitant)

Those things too hard for me. It too late now.

AUDIENCE #2

It is not too late! I taught women ten and twenty years older than you!

MANNY

I already say SHE CAH GO!

AUDIENCE #2

Dolly. I know you want it. People will always do what they want. What Manny is trying to do is trying to convince you don't want it and that is the only way people don't do things they want to do -- When somebody have them convince themselves that they don't want it. (beat) I know you want it.

MANNY

Dolly cah come out to play today!

DOLLY

Too much trouble. I have de house to mind... I have Manny to mind...

AUDIENCE #2

What if you didn't have Manny to mind? You would do it?

MANNY

She not goin' NOWHERE!

DOLLY

It would be too lonely...

AUDIENCE #2

There are worse things than being alone but it often takes years and years to realize that. And most often when you do, it is too late and there is nothing worse than "too late". (beat) It is not too late. You could escape all this, Dolly. You could be happy.

MANNY

(pacing around)

Dolly, I tell yuh. She jus' like the other man. They does come here feelin like they so good and prim and proper. They feel they know something. You feel you really capable of learnin schoolwork this age...

AUDIENCE #2

...She IS capable!...

MANNY

Woman, you not going to learn one fart. And this schemer-woman here jus going to get fed up with you and throw you back in the La Basse. You goin to listen to some jagabat who feel she could jus jumbie the scene jus' so, or the man who stick by yuh side through the good and de bad. The man who save yuh life.

Why, for once in yuh god-forsaken life, Dolly, yuh doh make a "educated" decision?

AUDIENCE #2

You think he loves you, Dolly?...

DOLLY

...He love me...

AUDIENCE #2

(exasperated)

...You think he really loves you? He is what we call a "sadist", Dolly. He only loves how he feels when he insults you...

DOLLY

(on the verge of tears)

...No. That is nuh true. He love me. He really love me. You cah tell me he doh love me...

MANNY

...Who you going to listen to, Dolly?...

AUDIENCE #2

...Are you happy, Dolly?...

MANNY

...Smile, Dolly! Show she how happy yuh is!

DOLLY

(pretend-smiling widely)

...I happy...

AUDIENCE #2

...What bout the fish tank, Dolly? All the fish died.
You think your aunt was happy when all the angel fish
died?...

DOLLY

(hesitant)

...No...

AUDIENCE #2

...But your aunt was smiling. Just like how you smiling
now. People can smile and be sad at the same time,
Dolly...

DOLLY

(still smiling)

...But I happy...

MANNY

...She tryin to tell you that you not happy. Yuh ever
see more?...

AUDIENCE #2

...Dolly, happiness is not when someone insults you and
tells you that you "chupid" and then tells you to put
on a big smile after. That behaviour is not normal.
(beat) When was the last time Manny ever tried to do
something nice for you? And compare that to how many
times he has insulted you.

DOLLY

He does just want me to be better...

AUDIENCE #2

Dolly, love is 'bout accepting people for who they are!
If he loved you, he would see past all your
imperfections and accept you for who you are! He
wouldn't ask you to change! That is not love. That is
not happiness.

Happiness is when the person wants you to go to school

and wants you to be a dancer because when you were small, you dreamed about being a dancer. Happiness is when you realize if you try hard at something and realizing you could actually do it! Happiness is like when you first read poetry by Maya Angelou:

"You may write me down in history With your bitter, twisted lies, You may trod in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise,"...

AUDIENCE #2 and MANNY begin walking circles around DOLLY.

MANNY

...This jagabat feel like she know something about you. She feel like she know how you grow up and could tell you how to live now. Beware de do-gooders for they do no good...

AUDIENCE #2

(still reciting)

"Just like moons and like suns, With the certainty of tides, Just like hopes springing high, Still I'll rise,"...

MANNY

...These people is nothing like you and me. They cah help you. They only could claim to. But they goin' to throw you away when they realize they cah do one shit...

AUDIENCE #2

"I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide, Welling and swelling I bear in the tide, Leaving behind nights of terror and fear, I rise,"...

MANNY

...These people go through life easy. They does grow up with nothing to bother them. Every lunchtime they have a feast. Every night they sleep like babies...

AUDIENCE #2

"Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave,"...

MANNY

And then when they talk to yuh, they want yuh to shout out words that mean nothing to yuh...

AUDIENCE #2

"I rise! I rise! Still I rise!"

They stop pacing around DOLLY. DOLLY sits on the floor, puts her face in her palms and begins to cry.

MANNY kneels beside her and wraps his arms around her neck tenderly.

MANNY

And when they dead, they does go quiet-quiet in dey sleep. Dey want everybody to be like dem. Dey want to tell everybody else dey behaviour is jes' "not normal". (beat) We not one of dem. We go never be. We could never be.

DOLLY looks at him and wipes her eyes.

AUDIENCE #2

(at a loss for words)

You can still get away from all of this, Dolly. It is not too late.

DOLLY

(half-sobbing)

I cah do that. I sorry. I just cah do that. (beat) I doh want to go to school. I would jus' be wastin' your time, wastin' my time, wastin' everybody time...

AUDIENCE #2

(interrupting)

Hun, you won't...

DOLLY

...I cah do it. (beat) I want yuh to leave. I had enough for tonight. I tired.

AUDIENCE #2

But...

MANNY

We want yuh to leave!

AUDIENCE #2

(disappointed)

I hope you could see for yourself that you don't need to suffer like this, Dolly. (beat) That it's not too late to get out.

DOLLY

Go, please...

AUDIENCE #2 casts a long weary gaze at the audience before exiting the stage. She doesn't turn back. MANNY and DOLLY remain in the same positions on the floor, with his arms swathing her neck.

As AUDIENCE #2 fully exits, MANNY's arms gradually and subtly begin to tighten and constrict DOLLY's neck as he speaks:

MANNY

That woman feel she know so much. What I say? Beware de knowers. For they know nothing. Beware the do-gooders. For they can do no good. (beat) And you was considerin to go with she? Woman, yuh eh see you chupid for days? What make you so, eh? Is all that La Basse filth creep through the pores in yuh scalp in seep in that space where yuh brain supposed to be? Or is that they put a goat to breastfeed you that turn you so?

What it is? Eh? You feel you could survive out dey without me? Is a cruel world, woman. They go skin you up and string you upside-down like a pink bloody chicken. Yuh really think any school could fix you? Yuh eh know yuh cah teach an old bitch new tricks?

At this point, DOLLY begins to gag as MANNY's grip is so tight that he is almost choking her.

DOLLY

(softly)

Manny, you hurtin me.

MANNY

Hurtin you? Woman, you doh know what hurt is. You lucky I doh put you to kneel on some thumbtacks. Or I doh use your arm as a ashtray.

DOLLY

Please. It hurt. I sorry, Manny. I so, so sorry.

MANNY

I tell yuh we doh use that word in this house! (beat) Smile, girl! Smile! Ah want to see a smile on that red face! Smile if yuh could help it!

DOLLY

(struggling and coughing)

Ah cah help it!

All of a sudden A BURLY MAN unexpectedly storms the stage, catching MANNY off-guard and knocking him over. A fight ensues off-stage as DOLLY rubs her neck and catches her breath. She runs off-stage also. CURTAINS CLOSE. END OF ACT ONE.

ACT TWO: BROKEN BONES

SETTING: THE SAME ROOM.

CURTAINS OPEN as it is revealed the burly man (AUDIENCE #3) is tied to a chair, putting up some struggle to get out. He has tape over his mouth and is unable to speak.

Only MANNY is present on-stage with him, sitting on a chair opposite his. He is sifting through a WALLET, presumably belonging to AUDIENCE #3.

MANNY

(shaking his head, still looking through the wallet)

Somebody put obeah on me tonight, boy. Is just one thing after de other tonight.

(turns to audience)

I cah believe I let that battyman hit me. Big fella. I barely ketch a glimpse. That skettel big but fass-no-ass.

(turns to AUDIENCE #3)

But you eh get so lucky, eh, partner? What you come for, eh? Money? You is de one who was callin this house? You want to find out if anybody home? So yuh could come rob we?

MANNY takes a picture out of the wallet and shows it to AUDIENCE #3.

MANNY

This yuh wife? (looks at the picture, raises his eyebrows) She ugly, boy. Tha's your chirren by she there? They ugly too. Now this is a ugly family, boy! Wife lookin like a damn mangy pothound. What a dog, boy.

MANNY laughs and pulls his chair closer to AUDIENCE #3's chair.

MANNY

Yuh ever wonder what dog does dream bout, partner? I say they does be dreamin bout bones. Diggin up or chasin after some bone. Maybe she does dream bout your bones. Maybe when ah finish with you, I could toss she one of your bones. I go have to make sure she wag she tail and jump high for it first. What you say bout that?

MANNY rips off the tape from AUDIENCE #3's mouth.
AUDIENCE #3 coughs and hacks.

MANNY

What make yuh think yuh could get de best of me, eh?

AUDIENCE #3

Doh say nothing bout my wife, boy.

MANNY

(laughs)

Just doh leggo she on me, eh. I does fraid dog-bite!

AUDIENCE #3

Fadda, you deserve more than dog-bite for de shit you doin!

MANNY

I bet that is not even yuh wife. I doh even think a animal would let you lick it cunny.

AUDIENCE #3

Fadda, I crazy, yuh know!

MANNY

You crazy?! (beat) Well, partner, talk to Dolly and ask she how she does cah find me sometimes. Sometimes the whole of Friday to Sunday I does jus' be lyin in one spot. And Dolly does be lookin for me. Yuh already see how small this house is. And she dotish self does cah even find me sometimes.

Who is de crazy one in dat story? Me or she? (beat)
Partner, you feel you strong? Two streets down it have

a black one-eye who get shoot in he tail and stab in he stomach. I try to poison he ass twice and you know... the mudass still living! Now dat is crazy!

AUDIENCE #3

Yuh know why I here? Yuh feel I come to rob you?

MANNY

Poor man does rob poor man nowadays.

AUDIENCE #3

Ah was jus' watchin and I had a thought run through meh room. A stinkin old barroom and a line of drunkards, eyes yellow, breath smellin like the dregs from a old brewery. And it have these men bring up a ole story. Yuh know, one of dem tragedies that doh seem so tragic thirty years later.

And is bout a couple. A man who use to beat he wife and he eventually kill she with a cutlass. And then he gone and down a whole bottle of Gramoxone. And it have this one ole man who suddenly bawlin out, "BOY! Ah did know dem two, yuh know! Ah mean, ah was right dey when it happen! Right deyyyy, boy! Allyuh doh believe me? Ah tellin allyuh..."

MANNY

And god help yuh if yuh ever become that ole man, ent?

MANNY gets up from the chair, pockets the wallet and stretches. He turns to the audience and speaks:

MANNY

Allyuh doh give up? Is de same ole nancy-story with all ah allyuh? (faces AUDIENCE #3) So, brethren, yuh ass itchin because yuh want to do some good in de world? What ah say bout do-gooders? They could do no good!

AUDIENCE #3

Yuh cah get away with it forever. Yuh goin to get what comin to you. Mark meh words, fadda, yuh goin to get it.

MANNY

Tha's a threat or a promise? (beat) You relly think you could make a difference? Well, breds, yuh wrong. Yuh couldn't be more wrong. It have nothing you could do. It have nothing nobody could do.

AUDIENCE #3

Keep thinkin that, fadda. Every dog get his day. One day you go be sorry.

MANNY

What you wah do me, breds? You sittin there like a chain-up dog just barkin'.

AUDIENCE #3

Doh be surprised if one night yuh wake up with yuh throat slit.

MANNY

(laughing)

Who goin to kill me? You? You want me to unchain yuh, lil doggie? From where I standin', you is just a pompek skinnin' up your teeth. You could kill me wit dem lil pompek teeth? Wha' you want to kill me for? I so bad one time?

AUDIENCE #3

Fadda, assholes like you doh even deserve a quick death like dat. Assholes like you need to be sent to jail. And be force to drop de soap. Over and over again.

MANNY

Eh heh? Because ah what? What they goin to hold me for? I eh breaking no law. I eh do nothing illegal. Eh? What charge they go hold me for? I violatin' some right to send meh wife dancing? You forget I save she life? If it wasn't for me, she go be dead all now. They woulda find she naked corpse in some backwood with a fracture arm and a 'kerchief stuff halfway down she throat.

AUDIENCE #3

Well, yes! Take win, fadda! Yuh is de man now! Yuh is de Superman! Yuh is de saviour of all young girls! I bet yuh was vex they didn't give yuh a medal and a

trophy for dat, so yuh decide to take one for yuhself
-- the girl you save! And you make sure to clear out a
spot on your shelf for she!

MANNY

(fuming)

Why you doh shut yuh fleckin' mouth! What you know? Yuh
know what was a thought I had the other day? When I was
small, I see two blackbirds on a wire. And jus' so one
of de birds get hook up somewhere near a generator and
it get shock. And it fall off the wire.

Yuh know what de moral of dat story is? Some things
just born to dead. Some things jus' have no purpose.
Jus' like you. Cuz what de ass you could say you ever
do?

AUDIENCE #3

And what is your purpose, Manny? Eh? Eh, fadda? Yuh
purpose is to save lil girls from gettin rape?

MANNY

Some things just born to dead!

AUDIENCE #3

Jackass, ah ask yuh a question! That is yuh purpose?
Yuh feel you so good? Yuh feel just cuz yuh do
something good, yuh is the Lord God Saviour Jesus
Christ Buddha Dharma Prophet Muhammad?

MANNY

I know I better than all ah allyuh in here!

AUDIENCE #3

Cuz yuh do something good? (beat) But Manny, ah thought
it was you self who say: Beware de do-gooders, for they
could do no good! Ent you is a do-gooder? Mr. Superman?
Mr. Saviour? Swoopin' in like Batman to save de day!

MANNY knocks over the chair and bawls. He paces
around the room wildly.

AUDIENCE #3

It look like yuh do something good, fadda. It only look

so. But it turn out yuh couldn't do anything good after all. At de end of the day, yuh is just another one of dem "do-gooders".

MANNY inexplicably calms down suddenly. He stops pacing and takes a breath. He goes over to the telephone and dials three digits. He speaks into the receiver:

MANNY

Hello? Yes, officer. Ah need a squad car here as soon as possible. I caught mehself a criminal. The spider gone and catch heself a fly for allyuh. My address is (inaudible). (pause) Yes, he nice and secure. He eh going nowhere.

(pause) What is dat? (pause) Why it go take a while? (pause) Allyuh have no squad car? What if ah had shoot him? Allyuh woulda have squad car, ent? Steups! Well, jus' hurry up! He stinkin up my house!

MANNY hangs up. He looks at AUDIENCE #3 and grins.

MANNY

Yuh was talkin bout jail, breds? And droppin' soap? (beat) Yuh know, I does play cricket sometimes. You know how much balls we loss cuz ah me? My cricket bat right in my bedroom. Good hardwood. And de only reason I eh hit you WHACK in de head is because I feelin dead tired. But maybe ah go reconsider.

AUDIENCE #3

Well, it look like meh time up, ent? Time for meh ass to face de music.

MANNY shudders violently as if he is being shocked. He then tilts slightly as if he is about to fall, then begins to laugh.

MANNY

Bird on the wire.

AUDIENCE #3

End of de line for me. Yuh done gone and hang meh jack.

MANNY

Damn right. That would teach yuh not to interfere in people matters.

AUDIENCE #3

Yuh really can't do no good, Manny. Yuh was right about de do-gooders.

MANNY

(pacing around, musing)

Maybe we had a lil scuffle when I ketch yuh in de house. The police eh go mind a few lil cut and bruise here and there.

AUDIENCE #3

What yuh woulda hit me with?

MANNY

(still pacing)

It coulda happen in the kitchen. The top drawer only have tablespoon and teaspoon but I coulda yank it out and beat yuh over de head with it. The drawer below dat have forks. Stab yuh in the arm with dem. The drawer below dat... I think a rollin pin. Well, partner, one swing of dat and yuh brain cave in.

Or even one of de Carib bottle in de fridge. Swing it. WHACK! Yuh skull fracture. Beat yuh with the fan, pull out de blade and slash yuh chest with it.

AUDIENCE #3

What bout de bat?

MANNY

(stops pacing)

De bat? Yuh is a battyman or what?

AUDIENCE #3

Pompek barking again. It seems yuh have de bat, Manny, but yuh have no balls.

MANNY

(angry)

Wha yuh say?

AUDIENCE #3

Ah hear that bat is not hardwood at all, boy. Ah hear yuh wicket fall down long time now.

MANNY

What dotishness yuh talkin'?

AUDIENCE #3

Ah jus' sayin' I hear game after game does pass and Manny does be battin' for nil. (beat) When was the last time yuh score a run?

MANNY

...

AUDIENCE #3

Yuh want to know what I think you is, partner?

MANNY

Wha?

AUDIENCE #3

A... big... fat... DUCK!

MANNY begins breathing hard, fuming to himself. He paces up and down angrily and then mutters and yells:

MANNY

But what de ass is this, boy? This man feel he could jus' come in my house and try to humiliate me. (beat) Where this damn blasted woman? DOLLY! WHERE YUH DAMN BLASTED SELF!

DOLLY emerges from off-stage.

MANNY

(furious)

WOMAN! Where de ass you was this whole time?

DOLLY

(timid)

Ah was bathing, Manny...

MANNY

So long you bathing! And you still smellin like de La Basse!

DOLLY

But I bathe real good...

MANNY

Woman, ah want to know who does be talkin' bout me!

DOLLY

I doh be talkin to anybody to know, Manny...

MANNY

Woman, doh play cupid! Ah know you does be chattin' it up with that neighbour. Tha' old horse-face. I know she doh like meh head. I want to know what she does be sayin' bout me!

DOLLY

She doh be sayin' nothing, Manny. We doh really be talkin bout you so...

MANNY

The horse-face does be brayin' bout me! If yuh see the bad-eye she does be givin' me!

AUDIENCE #3

Dolly, why yuh does be takin' this shit from he? (beat, turns to MANNY) Aye yuh damn jackass, how de woman go know who does be sayin' what bout you?

MANNY

Somebody runnin dey mouth bout me!

AUDIENCE #3

Manny, yuh eh know yuh is de laughing stock? Everybody does be talkin bout you. You feel nobody know yuh business? Boy, everybody know.

DOLLY

No, he not! Doh say that! Doh get him angry!

MANNY

Who does be talkin'?!

AUDIENCE #3

Everybody know the cricket scores at de end of de day,
Manny. And ah mean everybody!

DOLLY

Please stop.

AUDIENCE #3

If that is why yuh hate woman, Manny, ah feel yuh
should just try a man instead. Maybe that is more of
your t'ing...

MANNY

(pacing about the room)

Dolly, ah want names.

AUDIENCE #3

Dolly, I know yuh doh like him when he get like this.
But I want to tell yuh something. It have nothing like
a man who go change jus' so. Most man is own-way. Woman
does want to believe man is like weather. They go get
sunny. They go get rainy. It not so. The truth is: Yuh
get a bad man, he going to be bad all de time. It
always goin to be dark clouds when you with he.

DOLLY

Is not dark clouds with Manny. You have it wrong.
Sometimes it does rain but de rainbow does come out the
next day.

AUDIENCE #3

A rainbow is jus' somet'ing for show, Dolly. Is jus'
some'ting yuh could look at and wish yuh could touch.
Is somet'ing yuh wish yuh could catch a lil bit of and
keep in a bottle.

MANNY is still pacing around, muttering
incoherently about who could be talking about him
behind his back.

DOLLY

No! It does have good days!

AUDIENCE #3

Dolly, I doh think you know what a good day is!

DOLLY

That not true!

AUDIENCE #3

He is a disease, girl. He is a cancer, eating away at yuh soul. One day it going to be too late. He woulda take over yuh whole body, yuh whole soul. Doh let him do that.

DOLLY

Who goin to take care of me!

AUDIENCE #3

Me. I go take care of yuh.

MANNY stops in his tracks. He slowly glances over to AUDIENCE #3 and DOLLY.

AUDIENCE #3

Yuh know my cricket scores better than he own.

DOLLY looks suddenly nervous.

MANNY

(yelling)

Wait. Wait. Wait. WAIT! WAIT! WAITWAITWAITWAITWAIT!

AUDIENCE #3

Dolly. When de police come, jus' tell dem you pressin no charges. And I go take you home by me and yuh go never have to see this goon again.

MANNY begins jumping up and down, stomping the ground, yelling:

MANNY

WAITWAITWAITWAITWAIT! (beat) What de MUDDA-CUNT is this?! What de FUCK, what de CUNT, what is this I

CUNTING HEARING?!

DOLLY

I dunno... I dunno... I dunno what he talkin bout.
Mister, please stop sayin' dem things. Yuh go cause
trouble. I doh want no trouble.

AUDIENCE #3

(to MANNY)

Well, Manny, yuh thought yuh did know somethin' bout
yuh marriage. But as yuh said, beware de knowers... for
they know nothing.

DOLLY

Manny, he causin' trouble. I dunno what he talkin bout.
He talkin a pack ah shit!

MANNY

Shut yuh mudda-cunt! De two ah allyuh!

AUDIENCE #3

Ah love she, Manny. I cah deny it. Ah utterly in love
with she...

MANNY

Somebody going to get dey skull crack tonight!

AUDIENCE #3

And it does break meh heart to see she livin' like
this. And one day ah would grow to be an old man in a
bar talkin bout she, my face permanently twist-up from
drinkin too much Scotch. Talkin bout the man I leave
she with. (beat) And I doh want to be that ole man.

MANNY

De black belt going to dance tonight!

AUDIENCE #3

Dolly, I would treat yuh so good. I would never beat
yuh. I would never hit yuh. Unlike he, I could please
yuh all yuh want...

DOLLY slaps AUDIENCE #3 and yells:

DOLLY

Shut up! Yuh talkin a pack ah shit! Stop dat nonsense!

AUDIENCE #3

Ah would die for she, Manny. Would you die for she?

MANNY

(panting heavily)

Dolly, come here. Come here NOW, woman!

DOLLY slowly approaches MANNY, wincing and quietly whimpering.

MANNY

(suddenly calmed down)

Dolly. Yuh remember? Would yuh be prepared to give yuh life for me?

DOLLY

(whimpering)

Yes.

MANNY

Cheat, blackmail, sell drugs, corrupt de innocent for me?

DOLLY

Yes.

MANNY

Betray yuh country with acts of sabotage for me?

DOLLY

(wipes her nose)

Yes.

MANNY

Kill yuhself for me. Go to hell for me.

DOLLY

Yes.

MANNY

(turning to AUDIENCE #3)

Yuh would never have she. She never going nowhere.

AUDIENCE #3

It have two stories. The first is the story of a man. A wicked man. The second story is the story of a man. A man who existence make the world a worse place each day he in it. (beat) They is both de same story. Is de same man. They is both the story of your life.

MANNY

She not goin nowhere.

AUDIENCE #3

In these two stories, the man never believe he was a wicked man. Nobody does ever believe dey is a bad person. A truly wicked person. And even though the man was wicked, he only used to tips over de law. Maybe bend it a lil. But never break it.

MANNY pulls out AUDIENCE #3's wallet from his pocket. He shows DOLLY the picture from the wallet.

AUDIENCE #3

Dolly, it not too late...

MANNY

See this woman, Dolly? Ah fuck she. Ah does fuck she everyday. Ah does skin-up she cunt and lick it every lunchtime.

DOLLY begins to cry. MANNY puts the wallet away in his pocket.

MANNY

She not goin nowhere. See. She stayin right here.

AUDIENCE #3

(in utter contempt)

Yuh would be stickin' yuh t'ing in a long-dead woman then, asshole. (beat) Yuh is one sick asshole, boy. You doh deserve to go to jail for what yuh did. Yuh deserve to go to be kill and send to hell. And then get kill again in hell and have dem send yuh to whatever below

hell.

MANNY

She not goin nowhere. Nobody could take she away. She stayin right here.

DOLLY

I not goin anywhere...

AUDIENCE #3

I does be callin the house jus' to hear she voice. But yuh paranoid ass does never let she pick up.

MANNY picks up a chair and pelts it across the room.

AUDIENCE #3

Ah raped Dolly, Manny. I come over the other day and I hold she down and fuck she... (beat) She struggle plenty with she frail self but she eventually give up. She would never tell yuh. She was too shame.

MANNY

Dolly, dat true?!

DOLLY

No!

AUDIENCE #3

She wasn't shame cuz she get rape. She was shame she mighta like it. And that she want more. She had forget how it felt.

MANNY

Dolly, this man rape yuh?!

DOLLY

He talkin a pack ah shit!

AUDIENCE #3

It was like 'round 11 o' clock. And she was sleepin on de couch. And I come in quiet-quiet. When she see me, she scream and I lift she up and carry she to de bedroom...

DOLLY

He talkin shit!

AUDIENCE #3

...And when ah was done wit' she, she just lie down there with this look in she eyes. This mix ah shame and bliss. She body twitchin. And I jus leave she so. Body twitchin like she get shock. (beat) Maybe it was a shock she did need.

MANNY

Nah, boy! Yuh goin to get it now! Yuh feel yuh could jus come and talk shit so?!

AUDIENCE #3

She did need it. (beat) And is not just once it happen. It become a weekly t'ing, boss. Every week for three months. Every time she fight it. And every time she feel shame.

MANNY

I goin to break yuh fuckin skull!

AUDIENCE #3

Go get your bat nah, yuh battyman.

MANNY storms off-stage and returns with a cricket bat in hand.

DOLLY cowers and cries.

DOLLY

Manny, I scared!

MANNY

Yuh want a test match, jackhole?

AUDIENCE #3

How much runs you think you could score with a whack to meh head?

MANNY

How much yuh think?

AUDIENCE #3

Hit a six, nah.

MANNY

I go bat it right out of the stadium.

AUDIENCE #3

Ah doh think you could do it. Ah think you is just one big fat duck.

MANNY

Yuh head goin to look like a crack egg.

MANNY positions himself to hit AUDIENCE #3 in the head with the bat.

AUDIENCE #3

Swing it! Bat it into de Gulf of Paria!

MANNY hesitates.

DOLLY

Manny, I frigh...

AUDIENCE #3

(interrupting)

Bat it across the Leeward Islands! Bat it! BAT IT! What happen? Look at yuh, yuh could barely lift de bat! Swing it! Swing it, yuh batty...

Before she could finish, MANNY swings the bat. It connects with AUDIENCE #3's head hard. He bends forward and falls over. He is dead.

DOLLY bawls. MANNY looks at the body. He is silent but remorseless.

All of a sudden, SIRENS BLARE from outside.

MANNY

(muttering)

Shit.

OFFICER #1 AND OFFICER #2 speak from off-stage.
OFFICER #1 is female. OFFICER #2 is male.

OFFICER #1

This is de house where dey beat up de burglar?

OFFICER #2

We comin in. This is de police.

They both enter the stage. As they notice the body
on the floor, OFFICER #2 rushes over to inspect
the body. They speak:

OFFICER #1

What de ass happen here?

OFFICER #2

(kneeling, inspecting the body)

Yuh kill de man?

MANNY drops the cricket bat.

MANNY

(muttering)

He wanted to rape meh wife.

OFFICER #1

Who kill 'im?

DOLLY begins crying hysterically.

MANNY

He try to rape meh wife.

OFFICER #2

What goin on here? (he suddenly turns to the audience)
Anybody could tell meh?

There is a silence. Then, all of a sudden,
AUDIENCE #1 stands up from the crowd.

AUDIENCE #1

He kill him! He hit him WHACK with de bat right in he
head!

OFFICER #2

(taking out a pen and notepad and
beginning to write)

The man try to attack de couple?

AUDIENCE #2 stands up from the crowd.

AUDIENCE #2

No! De man was tie up de whole time!

MANNY

He wanted to rape meh wife! He rape meh wife! These
people talkin a pack ah shit!

OFFICER #1

(asking DOLLY)

Miss, that true? Did that man rape you or try to rape
you?

DOLLY

(crying)

No! That is a lie!

MANNY looks flabbergasted. OFFICER #1 goes over to
MANNY.

MANNY

She lyin! He rape she! He rape she!

OFFICER #1

Sir, I'm afraid you have to come back to the station
with us. (turns to OFFICER #2) Secure de area. Make
sure nobody touch anything.

MANNY

But she lyin!

OFFICER #1

Sir, I would advise you not to talk.

DOLLY

I never get rape! Doh take my Manny away!

MANNY

Woman! How yuh chupid so?! Yuh eh understandin what goin' on here?! Yuh tying up everything!

OFFICER #1

Sir! I would advise you not to talk!

OFFICER #1 takes out a PAIR OF HANDCUFFS.

OFFICER #1

Sir, please turn around.

DOLLY

It wasn't he fault! He is a good man!

MANNY

Fuck 'way with allyuh! I eh do nothing! It was self-defense! The man break in my house and attack me and rape my wife!

DOLLY

He jus' come in de house and attack Manny!

OFFICER #1

Sir, please turn around and I would advise you to save de speech for the station.

MANNY remains quiet. Then all of a sudden, he grabs DOLLY and holds a knife to her throat.

OFFICER #2 gets up and stumbles a little. Both OFFICERS become extremely alert.

MANNY

Yuh eh takin' meh! Yuh cah take meh! I eh do nothing! This is some kinda set-up scene! All ah allyuh does be talkin bout me behind my back, PLOTTIN shit against me!

DOLLY

Manny, I scared...

OFFICER #2

Sir, put the weapon down.

OFFICER #1

Sir, we doh want trouble. We just want to carry you to the station to get your statement on everything that happened.

MANNY

I tell allyuh what happen! The man break in meh house, he attack me, I attack back, I tie him up, he rape meh wife!

DOLLY

Mannyyyyyy...

OFFICER #1

Sir, you just makin' things worse for yourself.

MANNY

She only alive because of me!

OFFICER #2

Sir, put the weapon down! Yuh doh want to do anything stupid!

MANNY

Allyuh feel I wouldn't do it? Allyuh goin to take me down to de station and throw me in jail! I know what everybody does be plottin'!

DOLLY

Manny, it hurtin...

At the same time, THE PHONE RINGS, distracting MANNY.

OFFICER #1 uses this distraction to her advantage, pulls out her pistol and fires a shot at MANNY. He falls to the ground, unmoving.

DOLLY is deathly silent, trembling, as the PHONE rings four more times before it stops.

The OFFICERS look at each other. OFFICER #2 goes to inspect the body and nods at OFFICER #1, confirming the death. DOLLY looks on in horror, muttering incoherently as her knees tremble.

She kneels beside MANNY's dead body and kisses its cheek. She wraps her arms around it.

OFFICER #1 tries to pull her away.

OFFICER #1

He gone, miss. He gone. It over. We have to get you to the station. Please get up. He gone. It have nothing we could do.

DOLLY

(shuddering)

Allyuh kill him.

OFFICER #2

(to OFFICER #1)

Get she to the car. I go see to securing the area. I'll call some others to come down.

DOLLY

(in weak whispers)

Allyuh kill him. Allyuh kill him. Oh god, allyuh kill him. Oh Lord, he gone. Oh god, allyuh shoot him and kill him. Oh god, he dead.

OFFICER #1

(tugging at DOLLY's clothes)

Come on, miss, let's get you to the car.

DOLLY obliges weakly and follows OFFICER #1's lead, still weakly whispering:

DOLLY

(in a crescendo)

Oh god. He gone. My Manny gone. He gone, he gone, he gone, he gone. He dead. Allyuh kill him. Allyuh take him away! ALLYUH KILL HIM! KILL HIM! HE GONE!

DOLLY begins clawing at OFFICER #1, who immediately lets go. DOLLY rushes back to MANNY's body, pushing OFFICER #2 aside.

DOLLY wails. The OFFICERS just watch. DOLLY, with

her eyes full of resentment, looks at the officers
and hisses:

DOLLY

I go sue allyuh! Manny never attack allyuh and allyuh
shoot him!

OFFICER #1

He had a knife to your throat! Your life was in danger!

DOLLY

Look at allyuh! Pretendin' to know something! Manny
would never hurt meh! He love meh! Allyuh just come and
shoot 'im dead jus' so! Shame on allyuh! I goin' to sue
allyuh!

Both OFFICERS let out an exasperated sigh. DOLLY
cuddles the body.

Both OFFICERS look at each other for a while. They
give each other slight nods. They turn back to
DOLLY and point their weapons at her.

They each fire ONE SHOT at her. DOLLY falls dead.

OFFICER #2

What you really think bout that? Ah want to know your
thoughts.

OFFICER #1

Dotish woman. A chupid woman and a dotish man.

OFFICER #2

Come, lewwe prepare we story.

OFFICER #2 walks off-stage, followed by OFFICER
#1, who can be heard muttering:

OFFICER #1

Some people really too chupid to survive in this world.

(CURTAINS CLOSE)

