

OGUN SIZE

Ogun trying to hold it.
It's all right . . .
It's all right brother.
It's gon be all right.
I believe you.
I do.
Just go.
Go find you.
When you meet him,
Ask him if he remember me.
Ask him.
Ask.

OSHOOSI SIZE

OGUN SIZE

OSHOOSI SIZE

OGUN SIZE

OSHOOSI SIZE

Oshoosi Size leaves his brother Ogun Size
Standing in the early morning . . .

OGUN SIZE

Ogun Size sees it, how can he not, and is left alone in the
Early fore day in the morning mist. End of play.

(Blackout.)

M A R C U S ;

Or the Secret of Sweet

To my best

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Marcus; Or the Secret of Sweet has been produced as part of *The Brother/Sister Plays* in numerous productions starting in 2009 (see *In the Red and Brown Water*). *Marcus; Or the Secret of Sweet* was first produced at the Yale School of Drama in 2006 as part of its first Carlotta Festival of New Plays.

CHARACTERS

TIME

MARCUS ESHU

son of Elegba and Oba, sixteen; a
young man of color

OSHOOSI SIZE

a spirit, brother to Ogun Size

OBA

mother to Marcus; a young mother
of color

OGUN SIZE

brother to Oshoosi Size; a man of
color

OSHA

daughter of Shun and Shango,
best friend of Marcus Eshu, sev-
enteen; a young woman of color

SHAUNTA IYUN

daughter of Nia, best friend of
Marcus and Osha, eighteen; a
young woman of color

SHUN

mother of Osha, godmother of
Shaunta Iyun; a young mother of
color

ELEGUA

aunt to Ogun and Oshoosi Size; a
woman of color

SHUA OR JOSHUA

from the Bronx nee Stratford,
Connecticut; a man of color

TERRELL

a young man of color

PLACE

San Pere, Louisiana

PROLOGUE

A Dream

*The lights come up on Marcus in his bed sleeping and Oshoosi
Size standing in a pool of water crying gently at first until he
covers his mouth, doubles over, and...*

OBA

(Offstage)

Marcus . . .

(Lights out on Oshoosi. Marcus wakes breathing heavy.)

OBA

(Offstage)

Marcus!

MARCUS

Ma'am?

OBA

(Offstage)

C'mon, we gon be late!

(Shift.)

A Processional

The cast forms a funeral processional led by Ogun Size and trailed by Marcus.

OGUN SIZE

A funeral processional for Shango.

(Singing)

Walk with me Lord!

Walk with me.

Walk with me Lord!

Walk with me.

While I am on this . . .

Tedious journey.

I want you Lord. To walk

With me.

Ogun breaks down: he puts his hand to his mouth, doubles over, and cries to himself. He walks offstage. Marcus stops, stares at Ogun.

ACT 1

SCENE 1

OSHA

Marcus?

MARCUS

Ever seen a black boy stop n stare?
Like he just heard a ghost.
Or remembered a . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN AND OSCHA

Marcus!

MARCUS

. . . can't go down there.

OSHA

Why?

MARCUS

I got this feeling.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shaunta moves to leave his butt right there.

OSHA

Shaunta?

SHAUNTA IYUN

What?

OSHA

Describe the feeling?

MARCUS

Strange like, like I been here before.

OSHA

It's a funeral . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

We all been here before.

OSHA

Let's just go down so we get it over with.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Osha don't pull him girl let Marcus
Foolish self sit right here if he want.
This ain't your day. This ain't his day.
This your daddy, Shango, funeral, girl c'mon.

OSHA

No, wait, I barely know'd the n . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Osha!

OSHA

Marc . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Here she go.

OSHA

Osha steps to her best friend.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Ackin like he her boyfriend.

OSHA

Come down.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Boy holding us up . . .

OSHA

I need you to.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Ain't even his people's funeral.

OSHA

For me.

(Osha moves closer.)

MARCUS

Marcus uncomfortable . . .

All right!

OSHA

All right?

SHAUNTA IYUN

All right. Shoot let's . . .

(Cast, offstage, sings.)

Oh when the saints
 Oh when the saints
 Go marching in . . .
 Hmm.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Ain't this about a . . .
 Now we done missed the damn burial.
 What's wrong with you?

MARCUS

Shaunta . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

I want to know.

MARCUS

I told you I'm tired.

OSHA

You ain't say that.

MARCUS

I . . .

OSHA AND SHAUNTA IYUN

“I . . .”

SHAUNTA IYUN

You got a secret!

MARCUS

No, I . . .
 I'm just dreaming.

OSHA

Like sweet dreams?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Or beautiful nightmares?

MARCUS

Just a dream . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

What's in it?

OSHA

Who in it?

SHUN

(Offstage)
 Osha!

SHAUNTA

Ma Shun!

OSHA

Mother of Osha . . .

MARCUS

She can't stand Marcus.

SHUN

Shun enters.

Staring at her daughter like, "She must've lost her . . ."
 Through clenched teeth, "motherfuckinmind!"
 Girl! How many times, too many, have I
 Told you to stay away from hanging as you
 Calls it with that boy, sweet Marcus, huh!

MARCUS

See.

SHUN

That's all I ask.
 That's all I say. See him in school, at home
 Hang with your other *girl* friends. I says it time
 And time a . . . But I look up and here you go
 Again down the way from the ceremony putting
 Your fallen father in the fucking floor and you
 Sitting here sipping on time and sunshine with
 Candy Marcus! Lord! If it ain't one thing it's
 Another. Osha, girl, if you don't get your ass over here!
 Ooh!

OSHA

Kisses her teeth:

Stch.

I gotta go yall, she trippin.

SHUN

Oh I'm trippin uh, I'm falling? You wait
 Till we get to this house Osha see how fast
 I can get down.

Exit Shun holding hard to her stubborn child.
 I done told you he just
 Like his dead damn daddy, Legba.

SCENE 2

MARCUS

(To us)

Marcus stares.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Uh.

MARCUS

Huh?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Forgive her she buried her man today.

MARCUS

I'm used to it.

SHAUNTA IYUN

I'm used to it.

MARCUS

He been saying it since . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Is it true?

MARCUS

That I'm like Legba . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Was he sweet?

MARCUS

Wait a . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Are you sweet, Marcus Eshu?

MARCUS

Marcus stung, steps back.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Marcus?

MARCUS

I heard you, Shaunta.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Seem like you ain't never gon confess it.
 Surely not to Osha. You know she like you,
 Huh? You know she think, "We best friends
 Better lovers!" I ain't Osha. I am just your
 Friend. You can tell me.

MARCUS

Wonder where that come from, calling somebody sweet!

SHAUNTA IYUN

They passed it down to us!

MARCUS

What?

SHAUNTA IYUN

BlackMoPhobia.

MARCUS

Girl you crazy . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Passed down from slavery.
 Say the slave owners get pissed if they find
 Out they slaves got gay love.
 That means less children, less slaves . . . less.

MARCUS

Shaunta . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Think about it Marcus . . . Where else it come from?
 We just naturally mad at gay folk? Come on!
 Imagine it: how they got "down" back then?
 Round here niggas think they got it hard on the "down low."

MARCUS

Don't say that word . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

What about back then?
 Two slaves one dark, and one light, one house
 And the other field. They see each other one day.

That sparkle in they eye, they begin to gather
 Together when they can, hide their love from the light.
 Dark kisses in the midnight hour, with shackles for love
 Bracelets, chains for promise rings. One night
 Master come up on them in their secret spot 'cause
 Some handkerchief-head other slave, jealous or holy, went
 Off and told, "I seen't so and so House and so and so Field
 Slave down together in the quarter."

MARCUS

You think slaves was snitchin?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Nosiness is primordial, snitching inevitable.

MARCUS

Huh.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Master tie and tether the lovers in front of e'rybody,
 Talking bout "sending a message." Placing weights
 On the their private portions. Lashing into the skin that
 they just held

To tight moments ago. Skin that was just kissed now
 Split ope' from th' slash of dis white man hands.
 When the wounds right he run down get some sugar
 Prolly pour it on so it sting not as bad as salt but it get sticky
 Melt in the singing Southern sun. Sweetness draw all the
 Bugs and infection to the sores . . . Sweetness harder to
 wash. It
 Become molasses in all that heat and blood and . . .

MARCUS

Marcus draws air . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

That's what you dreaming about Marcus?
 That's what got you waking up sweating?
 You wake up scared that somebody gon catch on or . . .

MARCUS

I wake up missing my daddy.

SHAUNTA IYUN

You see him
 In your dream?

MARCUS

No, that's how I know I miss him.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shaunta leaves it for now.
 All right Marc, all right.

SCENE 3

OBA

Marcus! Marcus . . .
 Enter Oba calling for her son . . .

MARCUS

Whom she babies . . .

OBA

Marcus!

MARCUS

Yes, Mama?

OBA

Baby . . .

MARCUS

OBA

Where you been? I was up and down
Looking for you.

MARCUS

Sorry, I didn't feel like going to the grave.

OBA

Why, what's wrong baby?

MARCUS

I got this . . .

Mama, stop calling me baby.

OBA

But you my baby

MARCUS

Mama . . .

OBA

Marcus, you feeling all right? You got up
Two three times in the night last night.
You having movements?

MARCUS

Tell me about my daddy.

OBA

Oba's face.

Huh.

The father is in Heaven and all is right

MARCUS

No, Mama, I know all that. The Bible talks to
Me about all that but I'm talking bout my real
Daddy. Tell me bout Legba.

OBA

Why?

MARCUS

'Cause I'm asking. 'Cause you never do.

OBA

Ooh, it's hot out here, let's go.

MARCUS

It's always hot. You notice that every summer.
Some same reason it gets hot.
Shrugs.

OBA

Have you . . . Who you talking to?

MARCUS

Ma'am I'm just saying every time we get near
Bout this conversation it gets hot or the meter
Running or the chickens burning. All the time,
Every time, something starts to happen too long
When I mention the name Elegba.

OBA

Huh . . .

MARCUS

I just want to know about him.

OBA

What you need to know?

MARCUS

Am I . . . like him?

OBA

Some traits we gets from our peoples are
Sleeping . . .

MARCUS

The way I act.

OBA

Sometimes it's better to let sleeping traits lie.

MARCUS

Was he . . .

OBA

What, Marcus, what?

MARCUS

OBA

Oba looks to the ground.
Lord.

MARCUS

Mama I . . .

OBA

I tell you this Marcus. I don't know what all the
Sudden got you on this search to find out your father
But if it's got relation to the reason why you locked
In the bathroom but not using it . . .

Or that long stare I see you, I see you, giving over
Eric down the way, you best pray on it. Think to it.
Some things are better buried. Some things left better
Unsaid. Ain't nothing sweet about a soft son.
She takes a breath.

Pick your face up off the floor, baby, and let's go.

MARCUS

I'm gonna . . . I'm gonna walk.

OBA

Huh.

She leans in.

You find your way home tonight.

When you come in you make sure you check that lil
Funky attitude at the door. You got school tomorrow.
Senior year or not. Funeral or none.
Oba exits.

A Day Dream

MARCUS

Ever had so much on your mind you forget what
You wanted to think about?
That's when it's dangerous.

Your mind starts playing on those
 Things you want least to wander
 Like school.
 Like Latin.
 Starting the second year in that class
 And it's impossible to focus.

TERRELL

Enter.

TERRELL AND BOY

The boyz.

MARCUS

In this class of language there are boys from
 All the teams. Focus.

TERRELL

They sit behind Marcus.

MARCUS

From basketball to track, varsity to junior.

TERRELL

Whispering:
 "Marcus!"

MARCUS

And every Monday while the pop-quizzes line
 The desks.

TERRELL

"Eh Marcus!"

MARCUS

The boys all lean in a lil closer.

BOY

"Sup!"

MARCUS

Trying to pick up the answers that Marcus slinging
 Down.

TERRELL

"Marcus Eshu . . ."

MARCUS

They make propositions.

TERRELL

"Eh . . ."

MARCUS

Whisper in hushed, teacher-can't-hear tones:

BOY

"Let me see!"

MARCUS

Their heads yank and mouths smile.

TERRELL

"Marc . . ."

MARCUS

Motioning for me to move my head . . .

TERRELL

"Move your hand . . ."

TERRELL AND BOY

"Move!"

MARCUS

Whispering:

TERRELL

"Marcus . . . Marcus!"

MARCUS

Focus.

TERRELL

But see all they want are the answers to
The test . . .

MARCUS

Focus . . .

TERRELL

Answers that will make it easier to get back to track and
field . . .

MARCUS

Focus . . .

TERRELL

But Marcus' mind is wishin their heads were yanking and
Their mouths were asking . . .

MARCUS

Focus Marcus . . .

TERRELL

To, "Let me come over . . ."

MARCUS

Focus.

BOY

"Let me step closer . . ."

MARCUS

Focus.

MARCUS , TERRELL AND BOY

"Let me!"

TERRELL

Terrell and the boys fade
Like an early evening mirage.

SCENE 4

ELEGUA

Enter Elegua walking as fast as she can for near seventy.
She runs into . . .

(*Marcus stares off.*)

ELEGUA

Move boy.

MARCUS

Ms. Elegua.

Marcus moves his hand to hide his . . .

ELEGUA

Huh. She moves. Sick . . . Sick . . .

MARCUS

Ma'am!

ELEGUA

To death of funerals. Sick of em. I'm down there
 Trying to pay respect to the fallen soldier and these
 People having an argument ova who was his better friend.
 I say, "Don't seem like none of you too good 'cause while
 He was off in the war yall was over here trying to get his girl."
 But I ain't say much, see, that's when I turns to Ogun,

I say . . .

MARCUS

Ogun's down there still . . .

ELEGUA

Yeah chile. I say,
 She hits the air.
 "Ey let's go." "Okay." He standing there
 Crying his one last cry. Lord.

MARCUS

He coming back?

ELEGUA

Who cares! I know, I ain't going to no more funerals with him
 Crying ass. Making all that . . .

MARCUS

He takin it hard?

ELEGUA

Eh what the . . . I know Oba raised you better than to
 Keep cutting off elders.

MARCUS

Marcus apologetic.

ELEGUA

Yeah, he taking it hard.
 That's what he do, take everything to heart since
 Oshoosi left.

MARCUS

Who?

ELEGUA

Ogun's brother.

MARCUS

Your daddy's best . . .

MARCUS

Marcus shakes his head.

ELEGUA

Now wait a minute
 This ain't no Keith sweat song, where you
 Say no n I say yes. Your daddy's best was Oshoosi, Ogun's
 Brother. How you don't know that?

MARCUS

It's a lot I don't know.

ELEGUA

Huh, I bet it ain't, wait.

MARCUS

What I'm waiting on?

ELEGUA

Hmmmm huh. Well I wish I had the time patience
Or want withal to fill you in fella but I gots to go
This here heat make your titties sag further South
Than Violet.

MARCUS

Wait! Please . . .

ELEGUA

It's all right boi. Sometimes your mouth the last
Place words wanna go . . .

MARCUS

Was he sweet?

ELEGUA

Good evening to you too.

MARCUS

Heavy breath.
Was my daddy sweet?

ELEGUA

Ask your mama.

MARCUS

When I do she . . .

ELEGUA

Throw it off talk about something else.

MARCUS

Yeah.

ELEGUA

Your daddy liked girls enough to have you.
That ain't enough for you?

MARCUS

Yeah but . . .

ELEGUA

Listen if'n you looking for them black or white
Wrong or right answers from me honey you got
The wrong one. I just point out to you the obvious
And hope like hell you stop questioning me bout
Things I don't even much know how to explain.

MARCUS

You know how to explain dreams?

ELEGUA

Huh.

MARCUS

What?

ELEGUA

All the years I been in somebody church
 And this the first time I feel like there's a fire shut
 Up in my bones.

MARCUS

I saw Ogun crying.

ELEGUA

Huh.

MARCUS

And it reminded me of this dream I keep having . . .

ELEGUA

When your daddy was little,
 He run around here talking about his dreams.
 And at the time . . . At the time all seem right with it.
 Every now and then somebody catch the number off
 Something he say but it ain't never catch hold of nothing
 Serious. And then one day, one . . . huh.

MARCUS

Ms. Elegua?

ELEGUA

Go head tell me your dream.

MARCUS

All of it?

ELEGUA

Nah everything but the good part.

MARCUS

There is this man. He always in the rain . . . And he saying
 things to
 Me. Light at first
 Then so hard I can barely hear. Hard rain.
 Rain so hard it look like it's coming from the
 Ground it's hitting that hard. And he keep . . .
 He keep telling me . . . Things . . .

ELEGUA

MARCUS

You okay?

ELEGUA

Fine. What he saying? I' th' dream, huh?

MARCUS

I on't remember when I wake up.

OGUN SIZE

(Offstage)
 Aunt Elegua!

ELEGUA

Elegua straightens up.
 You ain't never seen him before?

MARCUS

No.

ELEGUA

And he ain't trying to freak you like you like it?

MARCUS

No.

ELEGUA

You want him to?

MARCUS

Maybe.

ELEGUA

Huh.

MARCUS

What?

ELEGUA

Shhh!

Keep listening to the man in your dreams.

SCENE 5

OGUN SIZE

Ogun Size enters.

Aunt Elegua!

Calling for his Aunt. Elegua!

ELEGUA

I hear you. You see I'm standing right
Here.

OGUN SIZE

Where'd you go?

Yall all right?

Fine.

ELEGUA

Huh.

MARCUS

OGUN SIZE

What you, what you two up to?

ELEGUA

Nothing.

ELEGUA

Uh-uh.

MARCUS

Uh-huh.

OGUN SIZE

ELEGUA
We was just talking about old times.

MARCUS

Old times.

ELEGUA

I was just telling Marcus here . . .

MARCUS

She was telling me . . .

ELEGUA

How you and Oshoosi and his daddy were friends.

OGUN SIZE

I mean we wasn't friends . . .
I mean he and Shoosi were . . .

MARCUS

So you knew my daddy Ogun?

OGUN SIZE

Yeah I knew him . . . but he was . . .

ELEGUA

Close.

MARCUS

Close?

OGUN SIZE

Close to my brother . . . My brother Oshoosi.
They was . . .
Marcus how you getting home?

ELEGUA

Reckon the same way he got here!

MARCUS

What you mean "close"?

OGUN SIZE

Nothing.

ELEGUA

Swat. Eh!
You need to worry bout your ailing auntie who

Getting tapped like a natural resource by these
Lisquitos! Swat.

OGUN SIZE

Oh . . . I'm sorry Aunt Ele you ready to go.

ELEGUA

Nah I'm sitting here hitting myself 'cause I'm
Into it! C'mon here!

OGUN SIZE

You sure you don't want a ride home Marcus?

ELEGUA

Elegua shaking her head.
Let it lone now.

MARCUS

Thank you. I'ma walk.
Marcus looks to the sky.

ELEGUA

Gon head Marcus. Keep your head up.
Out the side of her mouth:
Hold to that dream.

A Mirage

MARCUS

Wanna watch while I try and put two and two
And get more than four? All I remember in that
Dream is . . . light and water and a man. And there

In the sky is the moon, and if I walk a lil further
 I'll find water . . . maybe even the man
 Stupid . . . No . . . shrugs. Huh. Maybe I find . . . Huh.
 Marcus moves.

SCENE 6

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shaunta Iyun enters.
 Marcus!
 Where the hell you going?

MARCUS

Out by the waters.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Uh Marcus . . .

MARCUS

Wanna come?

SHAUNTA IYUN

It's dark!

MARCUS

So that mean, no?
 Marcus moves to . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Wait . . . uh Marcus

MARCUS

Huh?

SHAUNTA IYUN

What star is that near the moon?

MARCUS

Venus.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Oh. And what's the closest planet to the sun?

MARCUS

Mercury.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Thanks and are you sweet?

MARCUS

What!

SHAUNTA IYUN

Damnit . . . almost.

MARCUS

Shaunta!

SHAUNTA IYUN

I let you off easy earlier but come
 On now. We got to talk about this.

MARCUS

Why?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Because I wanna know.

MARCUS

Stop wanting . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

And you need to say it.

MARCUS

Marcus looks away.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Marcus you out here at this hour wandering
Where? Near the waters?
What you trying to find? What you running
Away from?

MARCUS

I ain't running from . . .
I told you there is . . . a dream keeping me up.
I told it to Ms. Elegua and she say . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Wait a minute.

MARCUS

It's got all this rain in it . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Ms. Elegua . . .
The same lady who used to chase
Osha around the projects with a lighter
Talking bout, "I burn your choochie hairs!"

MARCUS

I know . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

This the same lady who smell like Dewar's
White Label at communion.

MARCUS

Shaunta Iyun . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

The same chick . . .

MARCUS

She say . . . She say my daddy used to dream too.
That his dreams meant something. Maybe
Mine do too.

SHAUNTA IYUN

What?

OBA

(Offstage)
Marcus!

MARCUS

Oh shit it's my mama!

OBA

Marcus Eshu!
Oba enters
Marcus!
Calling for her son . . .

MARCUS

Shaunta Iyun . . . ?

SHAUNTA IYUN

No.

MARCUS

Please!?!?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Lord!

MARCUS

Marcus hides in the night.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Oh, I don't know.

OBA

I thought you said you seen him.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Earlier today, at the funeral.

OBA

Huh.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Sad funeral.

OBA

Oh yeah it was.

SHAUNTA IYUN

I mean I ain't one to cry but Shango was
Such a hero, you know? Going off to fight
That fight in Iraq.

OBA

It's true.

SHAUNTA IYUN

They say that fighting in the Middle East
Ain't neva gon stop Ms. Oba what you
Think?

OBA

Well . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Yeah.

MARCUS

OBA

Where is he?

SHAUNTA IYUN

I mean they been fighting like that since
 The times of Abraham. Ain't neva been
 Peace between them. You a Bible-beating
 Woman you know.

OBA

Hold on Shaunta . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Oh I'm sorry did I say that out loud.

OBA

Yes you did!

SHAUNTA IYUN

You know my mama raised me to speak
 My mind. You raise Marcus like that?

OBA

I told Marcus . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

'Cause he seem like he always scared to
 Say how he really feel. He ever come to
 You and tell you some secret about him?

OBA

Um. No. I mean not since he was a child.

SHAUNTA IYUN

But if Marcus told you something . . .
 Something was hurting his heart, you would
 Listen right? You would hear him.

OBA

Huh. Why you . . . you know some secret about
 Marcus?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Oh. Oh no I was just asking. I mean . . . he
 My best friend but he can be so secretive
 Sometimes. Once he told me that he thought
 Maybe he had dreams . . .

OBA

Dreams?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Yeah, yeah like his daddy.

OBA

To herself:

I wonder which dream his daddy give im.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Ma'am?

OBA

Nothing. Let me go find this boy.

SHAUNTA IYUN

So loud:

Oh All Right. You Be Careful Ms. Oba
 AND IF I SEE MARCUS TONIGHT I WILL
 Make sure to tell him you say, "GET
 HOME NOW!"

THE BROTHER/SISTER PLAYS

OBA

Uh thank you . . . Shaunta. Yeah.

Oba exits.

MARCUS

Marcus nods to his friend.

SHAUNTA IYUN

She smiles.

MARCUS

Marcus exits.

SCENE 8

There is a noise heard offstage like a gunshot or loud fireworks.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Marcus!

OSHA

Enter Osha.

Walking fast.

(The sound again!)

OSHA

Her breath comes loose . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

She holds her stomach . . .

OSHA

She catches her knee . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN AND OSCHA

She . . .

TERRELL

Enter Terrell laughing his ass off.
Damn what's wrong with yall.

OSHA

Somebody out here . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shooting!

TERRELL

Huh. And what you come out here
To do Shaunta Iyun eat him?

OSHA

What you doing out here?

TERRELL

Shooting fireworks.

OSHA

That was your . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Stupid ass.

What the hell you lighting fireworks for?

OSHA

It ain't the fourth.

SHAUNTA IYUN

It's near bout September!

OSHA

Who called Marcus' name?

SHAUNTA IYUN

I did girl I thought he was here and . . .

OSHA

Don't even say it. Where he at?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Went out by the waters. Talking bout
That dream and Elegua . . . Talking crazy
Girl.

OSHA

This time a night? It's near bout
Morning! What's on his mind?

TERRELL

Probably some dick.

OSHA

Eh!

SHAUNTA IYUN

Silly nigga!

TERRELL

Osha girl, damn red, I'm saying why you
Be gay-chasing that nigga, Marcus?

OSHA

First of all . . .

TERRELL

You gon end up on *Oprah* I'm telling you.

OSHA

Marcus is just sensitive . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

. . . And sweet.

OSHA

Right.

You wouldn't know nothing bout that . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Or a bath.

OSHA

Dirty butt.

TERRELL

Yall gon catch a whole lotta hell running behind
That homo.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Least we ain't gon catch the yit-yit running behind yo ass.

TERRELL

Shaunta you don't run nowhere.
If you did we all feel you coming.
Ain't that what Shaunta mean
In the Cherokee? "Girl-Who-Run-Like-Thunder"?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Osha . . .
 Shaunta Iyun calls
 To her friend.
 Osha girl! You
 Hear something?

OSHA

What?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Who?

OSHA

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shaunta feels around in the dark.
 She slaps Terrell on the face.

TERRELL

Eh girl!

SHAUNTA IYUN

Oh Terrell that's yo black ass.
 Damn boi you better wear bright
 Colors this time of night.

TERRELL

Whatever heifer!

SHAUNTA IYUN

I'm just saying you better open
 Your eyes bright or smile the one.

I lost you completely, soot. Thought
 The devil was calling for me.

OSHA

Girl me too!
 A gunshot is heard.

(Pah.)

TERRELL

Wasn't me.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Lord . . .

OSHA

Where you say he went?

SHAUNTA IYUN

C'mon let's go see.

TERRELL

See, that's how bitches get kilt round
 Here, investigating shit. Just like the
 White folks in the scary movies they
 Hear the strange noise and they got to
 Go deeper in the woods n shit. "No
 Lil white skinny girl don't go in that
 Dark basement! Hannibal, Freddy,
 Jason in the cellar playing the *Carmina
Burana* haunting music with his dick
 Tucked tween his legs he bout to come
 For you girl, run!" Nope, she just
 Standing there calling for her friend.

Terrell gives his best Jodie Foster or Jamie Lee, "Mike, you there." She don't Feel it till it's too late. Don't sense nothing Till wicked man done sliced her up and through Uh-huh. Yall go ahead and keep on Wanting to see what's happening. End up snoting like them white girls In scary movies. Talking bout, "I'm so Scared."

SHAUNTA IYUN

OSHA

SHAUNTA IYUN

You ready girl?

OSHA

Right, behind you girl.

TERRELL

Damn Osha girl da summer
Done been good to you! Lawd
Shawty! Wait up!

Terrell exits.

In pursuit of that ass.

SCENE 9

MARCUS

Marcus on Ms. Elegua's porch.
He starts to knock but . . .

ELEGUA
Hey there.

MARCUS
You heard me?

ELEGUA
You walk hard.
Think you think this a catwalk or something.

MARCUS
You always . . .

ELEGUA
Calling you out?
You need something?

MARCUS
I was headed to the waters. But I wanted to ask . . .
I don't mean to be . . .

ELEGUA
Boy stop worrying bout disrespecting folks . . . keep
That mess up see if you don't have ulcers all up and through
Your prostrate.

MARCUS
Earlier,
You were going to tell me something else.

ELEGUA
I'm tired.

MARCUS
Ma'am I know you old and prolly . . .

ELEGUA

Call me old one more 'gin.

MARCUS

Let me finish.

ELEGUA

MARCUS

I'm just confused. I mean why my daddy dreams made
You sad? What bout my dreams make you get quiet.

ELEGUA

They used to say that boys like you, with um Ralph
Tresvant Sensitivity have . . . can see things rest of us
Can't quite.

MARCUS

ELEGUA

Say sweet boys got a secret of sight.

MARCUS

I'm not . . .

ELEGUA

You marched your lil light-skin self all the way over here
To lie?

MARCUS

I mean . . . who said . . .

ELEGUA

Folks before your time.

MARCUS

Huh that's crazy.

ELEGUA

Fore my time.

MARCUS

Stch.

They ain't even have gay folks in Africa.

ELEGUA

Huh.

Don't let em fool you all your life.

MARCUS

So, my dream mean I'm . . . sweet?

ELEGUA

Gon boy . . .

MARCUS

I mean what? That's it! What about the man?

ELEGUA

I said . . .

MARCUS

And all that rain . . .

ELEGUA

GON!

Elegua trembling. Barely holding herself together.
Please . . . I don't know all. I don't. But all that rain?

Nese people round here talking bout a storm coming.
It can't mean Good. Just can't.

MARCUS

Marcus fades off her porch.

SCENE 10

SHAUNTA IYUN

STOP FOLLOWING US!

TERRELL

That ass too fat.

SHAUNTA IYUN

You know I hate you?

TERRELL

The feeling's reciprocal.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shaunta shocked

Oh hell nah!

OSHA

Boi you learning words?

TERRELL

"Reciprocal" comes from the word "reciprocus."
"Re" meaning "back," "pro" meaning "forward."

Right now we need to "re pro" out this damn
Offroad.

OSHA

Not till we find Marcus.

TERRELL

It's dark as hell out here.
She know where she going?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Hm-huh.

TERRELL

How the hell? 'Cause she got them pretty eyes they
Can see everything.

OSHA

Oh. Hey . . . boy . . .

TERRELL

Yeah . . .
So where we wandering?

SHAUNTA IYUN

'To the spot her n Marcus first kiss.

TERRELL

Euh!

OSHA

Dag Shaunta!

TERRELL

Out here?

SHAUNTA IYUN

They were nine.

OSHA

It was just a . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

First n last.

OSHA

It was our favorite spot

SHAUNTA IYUN

Was . . .

OSHA

C'mon yall walk up.

Spirit in the Dark

MARCUS

Trust. I know. Ain't no answers out here. Not to
 Me particular
 Just sky and dust but ain't we all?
 Don't you wish it was?
 Don't you wish the days, all damn day, running into
 Everything that scares the . . . Outta you would just wash
 Out into the waters, drain away. That the disappointed
 You strange-boy stares would light up and leave, like, not
 Look down on you wondering, "What you doing?
 What you thinking? What you dreaming?" Specially when
 On't know yo ownself. Looking at you like you a problem
 Staring at you like, "Where your shame?"
 Right when everything seems simple. I might be . . .

Or at least it might be all right to be . . . here come some secret.

Some dream.

And you just smile and

Smile. You know that feeling? To just smile and smile and
 Smile and smile and smile and smile and . . . when you wanna
 Just get up on tabletops and scream you want to say, say . . . huh
 Huh.

It's nice out here, you think? The Bayou. Maybe it's magic out
 Here. I always thought so . . . Magic. "Secret of sight."
 More like

The . . . more like the secret of sweet. The secret is ain't
 nobody

Think it's a secret cept me, cept those who don't want to see.
 And those who do keep talking bout me saying things to me
 Man even my own dreams won't let me . . . these the times
 You wish for a daddy, maybe not, maybe he wouldn't be
 proud of

Me . . . but at least you can scream at somebody you can . . .
 stand up

To em and tell him tell how it hurt you to be . . . say, "I ain't
 Put this black skin on me I didn't press these . . . boy-boy
 Thoughts into my head. You think I set out to be dreaming
 o dis

Man

Old

Enough

To be my . . . you

Talking to me slowly i' th' water n rain crying, laughing
 Singing sometimes all in the rain. I didn't make him up I ain't
 Conjure him to me. All I am is here

Heard, here so . . . so you don't got to understand me 'cause
 I don't

I don't hardly either just . . . just love me."
 You ever wish it would all just wash away?
 Never heard
 A black boy say that I bet. Not out loud.
 Wish them waters would
 Rise up like that water and take it all, me too, out and away.
 You
 Wish that sometimes? I do. I do.

SCENE 11

OGUN SIZE

Be careful what you wish for Marcus.
 Enter Ogun Size.

MARCUS

Marcus moves.

OGUN SIZE

Where you going?

MARCUS

I don't know.

OGUN SIZE

I hope not closer out there to that water.

MARCUS

Nah . . . I can't even swim.

OGUN SIZE

Laughing.
 Me neither. So we both be outta luck.

MARCUS
 What you doing out here?

OGUN SIZE
 Good evening to you too.

MARCUS
 I'm sorry I mean how you . . .

OGUN SIZE
 Nah, you ain't got to apologize . . .
 Something caught in your eye Marcus.
 Ogun wipes a tear.

MARCUS
 Thank you.

OGUN SIZE
 You ain't all right so what ailing you?

MARCUS
 Been one of them days.

OGUN SIZE
 I hear you man. Three times a charm they say.
 Third time I done put down somebody who ought
 To be burying me. Three times of saying good-bye.
 When your daddy died . . .

MARCUS
 Why everybody do that?
 Stop up like when they coming to tell me about . . .

OGUN SIZE

You know folks, me too, you trying to explain something
 You ain't never really understood. You shut up for fear of
 putting
 It wrong.

MARCUS

Was he . . . sweet?

OGUN SIZE

He could be.

MARCUS

No I mean—

OGUN SIZE

Interrupting.
 But he could be as mean as the devil too. Like every man
 We all got the ability of being a lot, but you seeing that,
 Sure.

MARCUS

Huh.

OGUN SIZE

Sit a while, hause.

MARCUS

All right.

OGUN SIZE

You a lot like them: my brother, your daddy.
 Feel everything don't you? I ain't felt nothing till I

Saw you standing there staring at me at that
 Funeral today.

MARCUS

You saw me?

OGUN SIZE

Felt like the world push up to my feet.

MARCUS

You mean come from under . . .

OGUN SIZE

No I mean I finally felt the ground.

MARCUS

OGUN SIZE
 Memories, right they wash over you out here.

MARCUS

Where's your brother now, Ogun?

OGUN SIZE

Situation happened with him and
 Your daddy; they got in trouble good with the
 Law and
 Um well I . . . It was me who . . . I asked him . . .
 To leave town. Told him
 He better if he left. Nigga never listen to
 A word I say. Why he start that day I never
 Know. Your daddy . . . he turned hisself in.
 Walked hisself right into jail one day. Guess
 Without . . . Without Oshoosi . . .

MARCUS

And that's where he died.

OGUN SIZE

Yeah that's where they say Legba died. In jail.
But he wasn't the same after Oshoosi left.
They was always together those t . . .

MARCUS

Please don't . . . just tell me about them.

OGUN SIZE

They . . . huh . . . it's hard to tell. 'Cause they . . .
They was always made some people uncomfortable
I can't lie make my stomach funny talking bout it . . .
But some people in this world they just fit right.
. . . My brother couldn't never sleep . . . he always had bad
dreams.
Used to piss me off. Waking up dreaming
Crying, wanting to stay up. Got so I started ignoring him

I would

Hear him awake and act like I'm sleep or something. Act like
I ain't paying attention. One night Legba your daddy was
spending

The night over, they was bout your age. Shoosi wake up
crying.

I thought he gon embarrass hisself crying in front of
company.

I heard Elegba say I heard him say whisper, "Shhh! Shhh!"
It's gon be
Okay. Shhh, now, Oshoosi it's gon be all right."
And he stop crying. I heard him not saying anything.
And I turned over to see what they was doing. See what he
had done to make

Him stop. And Elegba had done hugged Oshoosi
Close and they had laid back down again.
I didn't know what to say. Still don't.
The next morning, I say, "You two niggas get yall ass up."
Huh.
I was mad.

MARCUS

Why?

OGUN SIZE

All my life I tried to get my brother to quit crying and
Sleep like that and never could. Never could.

MARCUS

You got something in your eye, Ogun.
Marcus wipes a tear.

OGUN SIZE

Look at us both out here crying.

MARCUS

Least we crying together stead of separate.
He smiles.

OGUN SIZE

He don't know why?

OGUN SIZE

He smiles back.

OGUN SIZE AND MARCUS

Th . . .

SCENE 12

TERRELL

Oh yall niggas gay!
Enter Terrell.

OSHA

With Osha girl.

SHAUNTA IYUN

And Shaunta Iyun.

TERRELL

They was kissing!

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shut up . . .
Mr. Ogun.

MARCUS

Wait . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

You gay?

OGUN SIZE

Laughing.
No . . . I'm too old to be gay . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

You was kissing!

MARCUS

Marcus braving.
I kissed him.

OGUN SIZE

Too sad to be gay . . .

OSHA

You what?

OGUN SIZE

Too . . .

TERRELL

He sweet . . .

MARCUS

Shut up . . .

TERRELL

You gay . . . what . . .
Ray Charles can see that
And he blind and dead.

SHAUNTA IYUN

And you couldn't tell me . . .

MARCUS

Osha . . .

OSHA

You know I love you?

MARCUS

Marcus stung.
I love you . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

But like a friend.

OSHA

Osha's face . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Falls into the water.

OSHA

Exit Osha.

OGUN SIZE

I'm sorry Marcus.

TERRELL

Yall finna kiss again?

SHAUNTA IYUN, MARCUS AND OGUN SIZE

SHUT UP!

OSHA

Enter Osha.

Marcus!

Calling for her friend.

Marcus Eshu!

Do you know how many niggas would

Stomp a hole in Heaven to get with me?

You telling me you rather be with him?

OGUN SIZE

No!

OSHA

Gay or no he old and I'm phyne!

TERRELL

Yes Lord.

OSHA

They all stare at Terrell.

TERRELL

To himself,
"Shut. Up."

OSHA

Marcus be my friend.

MARCUS

I am . . .

OSHA

Tell me the truth.

MARCUS

I do.

OSHA

Them dreams you was talking bout before . . .

They about a man, huh.

MARCUS

Yes but he . . .

OSHA

You ain't dreaming about me.

MARCUS

No, Osha girl. I don't need you
 In my dreams. You my friend in
 Life.

OSHA

I wouldn't be so quick on that one Marc . . .
 Eh boy walk me home.

MARCUS

Osha . . .

OSHA

Don't call my name . . . Don't call my name . . .
 Don't call me . . . Don't . . . Don't.
 Osha exits.

TERRELL

Followed by Terrell.

SHAUNTA IYUN

And Shaunta Iyun too.

A Vision on the Waters

OGUN SIZE

Quiet now Marcus.

MARCUS

I hear it Ogun. I hear it.
 Marcus moves.

OGUN SIZE

Night.

MARCUS

Night.

OGUN SIZE

Hey . . .

MARCUS

Hmm.

OGUN SIZE

What was you and Elegua talking bout earlier?
 Was you really talking bout old times?

MARCUS SIZE

I told her . . . I told her a dream I had.

OGUN SIZE

Huh. Tell it to me. Tell me your dream.

MARCUS

Marcus stares.
 There's this man . . . and all this rain.

(Lights shift to Oshoosi Size standing in rain. Humming.)

ACT 2

S C E N E 1

OBA

(Offstage)

Marcus Eshu!
I really do believe you must've lost
Your true mind boy! Or smacked your
Forehead on the pavement!

MARCUS

Marcus Eshu sits in his room watching
The walls.

OBA

(Offstage)

I don't
Care how upset you were or what you
Were looking to find, you don't bring

Your behind in here drifting like the
Morning dew talking bout some . . .

MARCUS

He is on punishment for coming home
So late the other night. He tried to
Explain to his mother what had happened . . .

OBA

(Offstage)
Shut Up!

MARCUS

She was having none of that.

OBA

What were you thinking, boy?

Enter Oba.

You know how many boys your age get
Shot or throwed up in jail round here for
Just walking? Huh? Do you? Answer me!

MARCUS

I . . .

OBA

Shut up!
Sitting round here walking the
Streets like your daddy! You wanna know
About your daddy he used to walk around
Too and look what happened to him. Dead
And in the ground. You want that do you?

MARCUS
Tears in her eyes . . .

OBA
You scared the daylights outta me round
Here being fast and grown!
There's a storm on the way!
What were you
Thinking? What did I ever do to make you . . .

MARCUS
Mama . . .

OBA
No! I don't wanna hear nothing
But you. I means that Marcus Eshu I do.
Lord God help me . . .
Oba exits. Talking to the Father.

SCENE 2

MARCUS
Marcus sits in his room staring at the afternoon
Light.

SHAUNTA IYUN
Marcus!
Shaunta Iyun enters
Whispering Loud for her friend
Marcus Eshu!

MARCUS

Shaunta what you doing out there girl?

SHAUNTA IYUN

I'm doing the Jenny Craig "Call and Response" workout plan. What it look like I'm Doing. I'm freeing you like they did Stephen Biko.

MARCUS

Didn't Stephen Biko die in jail?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Nigga sneak out the house!

MARCUS

I'm on punishment.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Thus I said "sneak."
C'mon I gotta talk to you about something . . .

MARCUS

I am in enough trouble
As it is. I am not going nowhere with . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Ooh you cranky what's wrong with you?

MARCUS

Gon Shaunta I'm tired.

SHAUNTA IYUN

You ain't been sleeping?

MARCUS

Trying not to.

SHAUNTA IYUN

'Cause of the . . .
Huh.
What . . . what happens in that dream?

MARCUS

Nah, last time I went around talking about What was in my head I ended up wet, tired And locked in here. Done Speaking my mind for a lil while now . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

But Marcus the rain . . .

MARCUS

Shaunta . . .

(Elegua is offstage, singing.)

MARCUS

Marcus hears it.

SHAUNTA IYUN

How could he not?

(Elegua is offstage, singing.)

MARCUS

What's that?

ELEGUA

Enter Elegua

Hair undone. Bent low to the ground . . .

MARCUS

Singing?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Almost screaming.

(Elegua sings.)

MARCUS

What's wrong with her, Shaunta?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Swhat I was trying to tell you. A storm coming.
 Ogun sending Elegua away. Say, she don't need
 To be out this close to the waters. Say, she can
 Come back when it's over.

MARCUS

What she walking around screaming for?

SHAUNTA IYUN

She won't say . . . She won't talk about it with
 Nobody but ever since you told her about that Dream she
 Been wandering around crying out like
 That. Going on some days now.
 She looks to Marcus . . .

MARCUS

Me? I didn't tell her nothing except . . .

(Elegua sings.)

ELEGUA

Elegua exits.

SHAUNTA IYUN

MARCUS

It was just some stupid flick in my forehead.
 It wasn't nothing to scream about.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Who you trying to convince?
 Don't stay locked up in there forever.

MARCUS

Where you going Shaunta Iyun?

SHAUNTA IYUN

To make sure she get home safe.
 Shaunta Iyun exits.

SCENE 3

MARCUS

Marcus stares after his friend . . .

SHUA

(Offstage)
 Damn you got pretty eyes for a nigga.

MARCUS

Marcus stunned . . .

THE BROTHER/SISTER PLAYS

SHUA

Enter Shua with his Kangol

Low . . . Down low.

I mean I'm saying though son the way the
Light playing on your eyes or whatnot, that's
What's up though.

MARCUS

Oh . . . thank you.

SHUA

So, yo son what you on?

MARCUS

Oh, I don't do drugs man.

SHUA

Word? Are you serious son? You think . . .
Huh. Country niggas. Yo, I'm trying to
Say yo, you get down?

MARCUS

Where?

SHUA

With dudes, son!

MARCUS

Oh . . . oh . . . Oh! I mean . . .

Oh. Why?

SHUA

Why else I'ma be asking you?
Come outside.

MARCUS

I . . . Right now?

SHUA

What, you want the dick later?

MARCUS

I . . . um . . . oh . . .

Laughing.

My mama . . .

SHUA

Oh your daddy coming too?

MARCUS

My daddy's dead.

SHUA

Damn yo! You said that and it was like
“Flame on” in your eyes, son, when you
Talk about your old mans. No disrespect famo.

MARCUS

What?

SHUA

My condolences . . .

MARCUS

Thank you . . .

SHUA

How long he been dead for?

MARCUS

I barely know'd the nig . . .

SHUA

Now don't get sad man. Now the light
Almost gone out your eyes. You want,
If it keep them eyes bright, I let you call
Me Daddy.

MARCUS

Stupid . . .

SHUA

Serious, man.
He smiles.
Come outside.

MARCUS

I can't . . .

SHUA

Oh aight.
Shua turns to leave . . .

MARCUS

Wait . . . Meet me. Out by the waters,
The Bayou.

SHUA

The swamp?

MARCUS

Yeah right off Buras Drive.

SHUA

How I'ma find you, the light in your eyes?

MARCUS

Blush.

Yeah something . . . something like
That. I'm Marcus . . . What's your . . .

SHUA

Daddy, remember? Call me Daddy.

SCENE 4

MARCUS

Marcus Eshu, sneaking out in the late.

OGUN SIZE

Eh Marcus . . .
Enter Ogun Size.

MARCUS

What you doin out here?

OGUN SIZE

How you doin?

MARCUS

Oh . . . how you doing?

OGUN SIZE

I'm all right. Boy time you try to put things
Down and you know plant yourself you gotta

Pick up and go . . . I'm trying to send Elegua
Off you know.

MARCUS

Uh-huh.

OGUN SIZE

She keep on wandering off . . . She ain't slick
I know she ain't "senile" yet.

MARCUS

Nope.

OGUN SIZE

Say the storm
Might do make landfall. You never know
This woman done wandered . . .
You haven't seen her?

MARCUS

No.

OGUN SIZE

I haven't seen you.

MARCUS

Been on punishment.

OGUN SIZE

What you doing out?

MARCUS

Going to meet a friend.

OGUN SIZE

Oh you . . .

MARCUS

A new friend . . .

OGUN SIZE

Oh. Oh!

MARCUS

Smiles.

OGUN SIZE

Well I gotta find Elegua. Listen man, she
Been acting strange ever since . . .

MARCUS

Yeah I heard.

OGUN SIZE

Can you tell the Dream again maybe I can . . .

MARCUS

I don't remember, I haven't had it . . .

OGUN SIZE

The rain in it, is it bad?

MARCUS

Yeah it gets pretty bad.

OGUN SIZE

Like bad, bad . . .

MARCUS

Bad.
To himself, "Bad nigga."

OGUN SIZE

And the man in it?

MARCUS

Yeah . . .

OGUN SIZE

What does he look like?

MARCUS

I gotta go . . .

OGUN SIZE

Eh, didn't you just say you was on punishment?
Your mama know . . .

MARCUS

Ogun you ain't my daddy man. I mean . . . You know
You ain't my daddy, I ain't your brother so just . . .
Gon find your aunt, Ogun. I gotta go.

Marcus exits.

SCENE 5

SHUA

Night.

MARCUS

Sittin watching the waters.

SHUA

Shua with his cap covering his
Eyes.

MARCUS

Marcus with his hands in his lap.

SHUA

Shua kisses his teeth.
Stch!
How old are you?

MARCUS

Sixteen . . . I just turned sixteen. You?

SHUA

Twenty . . . two.

MARCUS

SHUA

MARCUS

Crickets.

SHUA

Shifting.

MARCUS

Huh.

SHUA

Whatever.

MARCUS

Crickets.

SHUA

Shua kisses his teeth.

Stch . . .

So wassup man?

MARCUS

Nothing.

SHUA

I see that. Yo, where you from?

MARCUS

From here.

SHUA

Yeah you seem like you from down
Here. Country niggas.

Ey shorty yall get storms round
Here? I was up on the news yo
Say it's one coming.

MARCUS

Sometimes . . . Yeah.

SHUA

Damn yo this my first time down
Here. Visiting my peoples.

MARCUS

So you're from up North?

SHUA

From the boogie down baby.

MARCUS

That's the Bronx right?

SHUA

Uh-huh.

Shua looks over Marcus.

Marcus in his jeans lookin just right.

You aight.

MARCUS

Thanks.

SHUA

Yeah you all right. Got a lil phatty
Or what not . . .

MARCUS

Thanks . . .

SHUA

Them eyes sexy . . .

MARCUS

Marcus bites his lips.

SHUA

Sex lips too . . . Sexy-
Ass lips.

MARCUS

Black boy blushing.

SHUA

C'mere . . .

MARCUS

Marcus moves.

SHUA

You gonna call me Daddy, Eyes?
 Shua puts his fingers to Marcus' lips.

MARCUS

Marcus kisses Shua's fingers.

SHUA

Shua moves his hand behind Marcus' head.

MARCUS

He pulls Marcus' head down toward
 His lap.

SHUA

Lights.

SCENE 6

OSHA

Osha stomps onto her porch.
 Lord . . .

SHUN

Shun walking up . . .
 Every night, Osha?

OSHA

I'm just spending
 Time with him while I can.

SHUN

I understand girl I'm just saying give
 Him some time to miss you. You young
 Chicks don't know how to tether niggas.

OSHA

He'll miss me when he's gone back
 To the Bronx.

SHUN

You need to get him to help put up my storm
 Boards messing round here talking bout some, "Hanging
 Out." Oh chile never mind. He from up there he
 Don't know nothing bout no shutters.
 I don't trust them niggas from up there no how.

OSHA

You rather me be hanging with Marcus
 Still?

SHUN

I didn't mind you . . . hanging with that boy.
 I just tried to tell you he was his way, like
 That. You know I don't hate on the gays.

OSHA

Mama just go in the house.

SHUN

Oh hell nah! Get your ass in this house
 He can come ring the doorbell like normal bastards.

OSHA

Mama please just let me wait for him by myself.

SHUN

Huh. You get yo ass in this house come late night.
I don't care whicha way a hurricane coming, you
Got school tomorrow. Hear me Osha girl?

OSHA

I hear you.

SHUN

Shun goes into the house, talking trash:
Boy come down here talking all side
Ways. He better just be courting and
Not trying to do the electric slide with
My baby I'll light his ass up. I mean that . . .

SCENE 7

MARCUS

Enter Marcus Eshu.
She all right?

OSHA

You know how she get.

MARCUS

How you?

OSHA

All right.

MARCUS

You busy or something

OSHA

Waiting for a friend . . .

MARCUS

Who? Like . . . like a new friend?
Smiles.

OSHA

What it matter to you?

MARCUS

I ain't come here to fight.

OSHA

What you come for?

MARCUS

I met a . . . a friend too. I wanted to
Tell you.

OSHA

Ehuh! Tell Shaunta Iyun she like to hear
That kind of stuff.

MARCUS

Last time I checked you my best too.

OSHA

Yeah I thought so too tell I figured out
You was lying.

MARCUS

Lying!

OSHA

I didn't stutter man. Lied. You knew Marcus,
Say you didn't. How I was feeling? How
You gon be my best friend and not tell me?
Huh?

MARCUS

I . . .

OSHA

All you got for me Marcus Eshu? "I."

MARCUS

Marcus laughs.
Eh girl, tell me how you didn't
Know I wasn't interested? Huh? Tell me how you
Couldn't tell after all the years after all the teasing
And the fights . . . the time you punched Eric down
The way in the stomach 'cause he called me a faggot?

OSHA

Huh.
Osha laughs.

MARCUS

He still be running when he see
You coming talking bout some "gone girl."
When we would play "hide and go get it" with the
Other kids. Everybody round us hunching and I'm
Talking bout some "let's play cuddle."

OSHA

I just thought you was being romantic.

MARCUS

Girl!

OSHA

All right. All right . . . I shoulda've known.
I mean you the only one I could sing *The Wiz*
Straight through with.

(*Marcus sings.*

Osha sings.

Marcus and Osha sing.)

SHUA

Enter Shua
Kangol pulled
Way down.

MARCUS AND OSCHA

Hey.

MARCUS

OSHA

SHUA

You know Joshua?

OSHA

MARCUS

Joshua?

OSHA

Osha turns to Marcus.

You met before?

SHUA

Shua puts his fingers to his lips.

To Osha:

You ready to go?

MARCUS

Huh.

OSHA

We'll talk later Marcus.

SCENE 8

OBA

Oba on the porch.

I didn't go looking for you 'cause I didn't want to
Know really where you was. I didn't call for you
For fear that you might hear me and not answer
Back.

MARCUS

OBA

I ain't got much to say either Marcus but hear me
Out. You disobeyed me. The first time you just didn't
Tell me but this time you heard what I said and still
You went on your own way. Made your own path.

MARCUS

OBA

I just want to know where it's leading you?

This sneaking and secrets and lying, and making a
Fool of . . . did you really think I didn't know that thick
Girl was hiding you the other night? Where is it
Taking you, Marcus Eshu? You turning into the man
You want to be? Or the man you need to be? Or . . .
No matter what you like, or don't, you still a man.
All men have to be men. They say a woman can't
Teach you that . . . I got news for you, no man can
Either. Only you can learn it for you.

MARCUS

OBA

Gon on in there and lay down . . . if you want. I
Can't make you do much a nothing these days.
I figured I would just offer.

MARCUS

Marcus moves to . . .

OBA

What's this Dream I hear you got going?

MARCUS

Ma'am?

OBA

Is it something I could . . . wanna hear?

MARCUS

It's something I barely remember.

OBA

Night.

MARCUS

Night.

A Dream of Drag

MARCUS

That night.

Marcus is

Sleeping dreaming this very . . . odd, weird dream.

Not the one . . . no this other mess.

In this dream are the very best friends

Shaunta Iyun and Osha girl.

All Caught in a Sun Shower.

To the best:

It's raining.

OSHA

We see that Marcus.

MARCUS

But the sun's out.

SHAUNTA IYUN

I see why they put you in the advanced
Class Marcus.

OSHA

Them good observation skills.

MARCUS

Why yall being so mean!

SHAUNTA IYUN

It's raining.

OSHA

And you should have told us.

MARCUS

I didn't know.

OSHA

Course you did.

SHAUNTA IYUN

It was raining in your dream.

MARCUS

Lord first I couldn't get nobody to listen to that
Stupid dream. Now everybody acting like it King's
Dream. Look . . .

I knew it was raining hard in the dream
But this ain't that. This a sun shower
You know what we used to do in a sun
Shower. Osha, Shaunta Iyun.

SHAUNTA IYUN AND OS HA

Rain . . .

MARCUS

Shaunta Iyun going in.
Osha struggling . . .

OSHA

Hey!
Ain't we too old to be playing this game.

MARCUS

Shaunta Iyun giggling . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

This your Dreaming Marcus Eshu tell us.

MARCUS

The song "Sunshower" by Dr. Buzzard's
Original Savannah Band begins to play . . .

OSHA

Laughing
Oh hell to nah.

SHAUNTA IYUN

We are not . . .

MARCUS

Yes we are . . .
Shaunta pats her weave.

OSHA

Are you . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

For real?

OSHA

This was cute when we were kids Marcus.

MARCUS

Osha rocks back on her heels.

OSHA

But we grown now . . .

MARCUS

She puts her hand on her hip.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Back then they would call it kids being
Cute.

OSHA

When you grown

SHAUNTA IYUN

They call it a drag show.

MARCUS

It's my Dream. We gon do what I want.
All laughing and playing in the rain.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Ha! So you Dream of drag now?

MARCUS

Maybe guess we have to wait and see.

OSHA

Lord you are so free and easy in your Dreams
Marcus Eshu.

MARCUS

Nah not always only when I'm with you
Two . . .

MARCUS, SHAUNTA IYUN AND OSHA

My best.

MARCUS

C'mon yall sing the song.

(Marcus, Shaunta Iyun and Osha sing "Sunshower.")

MARCUS

Osha singing lead.

(Osha sings.)

MARCUS

Madam Iyun.

(Shaunta Iyun sings. Then Marcus and Osha join her.)

MARCUS

Taking over.

(Marcus sings.)

OSHA AND SHAUNTA IYUN

Sang Marcus Eshu.

(Shua enters.)

SHUA

MARCUS

The music stops. We stop dancing.
What you want?

SHUA

MARCUS

Rain pours . . . the sun is
Gone.
My friends are gone. To Shua:
Get out of my Dream.
Shua smiles.
Shua takes off his Kangol. He strips down
And now he looks like . . .

OSHOOSI SIZE

Oshoosi Size dressed in all white . . .
Shh! Shh! It's gon be okay.
Shh now Marcus. It's gon be all right . . .
Just ask him ask my brotha . . .
For me.

SCENE 9

MARCUS

The next morning
Black boy running . . .
Mama?

OBA

Oba still on the porch.

MARCUS

Mama?

OBA

MARCUS

Mama I . . . I will be right back. I have to tell
Osha and Shaunta . . .

OBA

Do what you please, Marcus.

MARCUS

I will be right back.

OBA

What you please.

MARCUS

When I come back let me in.

OBA

She goes in.

MARCUS

He runs out.

SCENE 10

SHAUNTA IYUN

Enter Shaunta Iyun eating a sandwich singing.

(Shaunta Iyun sings.)

MARCUS

Thank you Father! Shaunta.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Boy what you doing? What's wrong you coming
Round the corner breathing like the big girls?

MARCUS

Shaunta I gotta tell you something . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Oh now you ready to tell me something.
Wait a Dream?

MARCUS

No . . . well yeah.

SHAUNTA IYUN

It's about me and Jason Witt?

MARCUS

What?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shaunta braving.
I know! I know! I should have told you . . .
But it's hard to come out and be like, "I like, have
Loved this *white* boy since the third grade!"

MARCUS

Shaunta Iyun.

SHAUNTA IYUN

But he so cute and nice and country as hell . . .

MARCUS

I sucked Shua's dick.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shaunta Iyun drops her sandwich.

SHAUNTA IYUN

MARCUS

SHAUNTA IYUN

Shua?

MARCUS

Yes.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Josh-shua . . .

MARCUS

Nods.

SHAUNTA IYUN

That fake-ass neyo kat with the Usher hat?
 Shaunta Iyun swats her foolish friend.
 The one that Osha seeing!

MARCUS

Eh girl!

SHAUNTA IYUN

What you suck his dick for! All the
 Dick in the world and you gotta suck
 His!

MARCUS

Ain't like I knew she was dating him. She
 And me weren't talking and his ass ain't say shit
 Cept yeah that feel good.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Least you know you good at it.

MARCUS

Shaunta!

SHAUNTA IYUN

Identify your strengths

MARCUS

We gotta tell her.

SHAUNTA IYUN

We!

MARCUS

We just gon let him keep lying to her?

SHAUNTA IYUN

Uh-uh oh no ma'am. I don't like how you got Creole all the sudden
 Marcus E. Throwing all this here *we* in the soup. *We*
 Didn't give the king of New York some face. *We*
 Weren't there to watch it and now *we* gon act like
We don't know nothing bout it.
 Starting right, Shaunta looks
 At her imaginary watch now.

MARCUS

Shaunta Iyun . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Eh there Marcus E. Baby BABY! What's going on man
How's that secret of sweet coming? I don't know nothing
about
No homoerotic fellatio. Nope. Not me.
Couldn't be! Then who!

MARCUS

You right no sense in her killing us both.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Tell her you didn't mean to suck it.

MARCUS

A realization.
Just bring her out by the waters?

SHAUNTA IYUN

What?

MARCUS

Yeah just bring her out there.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Huh.
There goes a brave man.
Shaunta Iyun exits.
Damn boy made me drop my sandwich.

A Re-Collection

MARCUS

I'm old enough to know better. To know. What did
I expect to happen, did you see this coming? Huh, you
couldn'ta . . .

Guess I wouldn't've listened or heard but
I hear now. Yessuh. I do. I hear you can't just wake up one
morning

A Dream on your mind, in your heart, spend that day
No matter whose wedding or funeral running round
Telling everybody bout it. Just talking I got a Dream
It went like this . . . I got this feeling feels like this . . .
Lesson: When you thought about it

Prayed about it and you can't keep it to yourself . . .
Maybe it's better to run or walk away but don't give
It unto the air.

You realize that your Dreams too heavy for
Everyone else? You can grin; you can bare em but the world
Seem to light a fire or drown deep when you mention
Your innermost thoughts, wishes, desire . . . so what's that
teaching: Keep it

To yourself? That ain't right either.
So how do you play it?

How does this run out? 'Cause right now I'm back out here
By the waters knowing more than I did, understanding
. . . Well I'm still standing but just barely

My best friend's bout to hate me, if she don't still . . . already.
Got a ol lady say she see a storm somehow in my Dream and
A mama who barely can look me in the eye 'cause she
think I'm

On the ho stroll and she ain't but half wrong, she ain't but
half wrong

'Cause I'm out here again waiting under the good God's sky
 for some Up
 North down-low Negro and . . .
 These Dreams.
 All I got are these Dreams and Memories. The Dream of a
 man who
 I think . . . well I know . . . but how to tell that part? How to
 explain that . . .
 Stop thinking Marcus just tell him.
 'Cause all that thinking this thinking ain't gon undo
 Redo make do nothing. Time to quit thinking or quicker
 think so
 The next move is made before the thought. The next move
 don't
 Take a whole lot of thought. The next move . . . Here he
 comes.
 Here we go.
 Marcus moves.

SCENE 11

SHUA

Enter Shua.
 Kangol: Low.
 You know. Sup yo?

MARCUS

Heavy breath . . .
 Hey.

SHUA

Evening, as yall say.

MARCUS

Huh that's funny, you funny, you
 Always been funny?

SHUA

You all right man?

MARCUS

Oh I'm fine. Yeah I mean
 Sexy: I'm fine.

SHUA

Laughing. Yeah all right.
 What you stepping up?

MARCUS

Yeah I am . . . yo.

SHUA

Huh.

MARCUS

You . . . you like that?

SHUA

Your girl know what went down
 Between us?

MARCUS

Uh-uh.

SHUA

So what you trying to keep this going
 On the side, right?

MARCUS

Um . . . yeah.

SHUA

That's what's . . .

MARCUS

I mean no . . .

Marlene Dietrich:

I think I might be the jealous type.

SHUA

Like that? You get green . . .

MARCUS

Lauren Bacall:

Yeah, I like to keep my friends to myself.

SHUA

Shit that's cool n th gang baby.

I mean long as you can keep a secret.

MARCUS

(To us)

Is he for real?

Yeah I'm good at keeping my mouth shut.

People round here don't even know about me.

SHUA

Ha! Oh yeah?

MARCUS

Yeah . . .

SHUA

Well this time we ain't got to worry about your mouth.

MARCUS

Huh?

SHUA

I on't need your lips.

MARCUS

What you doing?

SHUA

I bet you tight.

MARCUS

Hol up . . .

SHUA

Touch.

MARCUS

Eh man!

SHUA

That's it. That's them eyes lightning up.

MARCUS

Just back up . . .

SHUA

Touch,
You making me hot, son.

MARCUS

Please . . .

SHUA

You give good ass?

MARCUS

I ain't never . . . Gon man!

SHUA

GRAB!

Can't.

Your eyes calling me.

Shua moves to . . .

MARCUS

Get off me!

*(They struggle.**Enter Shaunta Iyun pulling Osha.)*

SHAUNTA IYUN

C'mon

OSHA

Stop girl . . .

SHUA

C'mon let me get that ass nigga!

OSHA

Joshua get your hands off him!

SHUA

Shua stops.

Realizing.

Oh so yall kats trying to play me. Put my
Business out there like that? Trying to put
My shit on blast . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Nah you trying to put your shit on boys did that!

SHUA

Shut the fuck up . . .

MARCUS

Marcus moves.

Uh.

(He punches Shua.)

OSHA

Osha steps between.

Gon Joshua, just gon.

SHUA

Shua holding his face.

Fuck this . . . Fuck this . . .

Exit Shua.

MARCUS

Osha . . .

OSHA

What?

MARCUS

I wanted to . . . wanted to tell you.

OSHA

You told me . . .

MARCUS

I'm . . . I'm sorry.

OSHA

Me too.

MARCUS

I love you.

OSHA

Me too.

Osha exits.

MARCUS

Tears . . .

SHAUNTA IYUN

Roll down his face.

Marcus?

MARCUS

Hm?

SHAUNTA IYUN

You ain't crying 'cause she left huh?

SHAUNTA IYUN

You crying 'cause punching that boy
Hurt your damn hand.

(He nods.)

SHAUNTA IYUN

Laughing. Awww. Shhh! Shhh! It's gon be
Okay. Shhh now Marcus it's gon be all right . . .

MARCUS

Marcus steps back.

SHAUNTA IYUN

Like he just heard a ghost.

MARCUS

Or remembered a . . .

E P I L ● G U E

MARCUS

Marcus stands on Elegua's porch wanting to
Knock but her windows are all boarded-up.

OGUN SIZE

(Offstage)

She ain't home.
Enter Ogun Size.
She left to Houston finally. Be back
When the storm passes.
Ogun Size turns
To go.

MARCUS

You know dreams, Ogun?

OGUN SIZE

Ogun stops.

MARCUS

I have this dream.

OGUN SIZE

I know your dream.

MARCUS

But I didn't tell it right before.

OGUN SIZE

You got it right this time?

MARCUS

In this dream is your brother, Ogun . . .
It's your brother comes to me in this dream.
At first I didn't know . . . What, how to tell you?
But it's him come to me,
And he tell me to say, remind you,
Ask my brother . . .

(From offstage Oshoosi Size's voice merges with Marcus's.)

MARCUS AND OSOOOSI SIZE

Ask my brother Ogun.

OSOOOSI SIZE

Enter Oshoosi Size.
Tell him that it
Was better that I left. I'm better.
Gon and seen all of this world that

I could see. See a storm on its way,
 Seen some rain, seen me.
 But ask if he remember me
 Ask if he remember . . .

MARCUS AND OSHOOSI SIZE

Ask.

OGUN SIZE

Father . . .

MARCUS

You believe, Ogun?

OGUN SIZE

No choice but to . . .

MARCUS

What it mean, Ogun? What my dream mean?

OGUN SIZE

Ogun Size can't help hearing all that Marcus
 Eshu say.

MARCUS

He looks to the sky.

OGUN SIZE

Finds all the answers there. It means . . .
 It means my brother's dead.
 You dream like your daddy
 And I'm . . . I'm tired
 Just now.

MARCUS

Ogun Size marches a funeral processional by himself

OGUN SIZE

Walk with me Lord . . .
 Walk with me . . .
 Walk with me Lord . . .
 Walk with me . . .

(Ogun Size walks in a mock processional all his own.)

MARCUS

Marcus stares after Ogun
 To make sure he gets home safe.
 End of play.