

another plan of action. You sound worse than Andy or better yet, Jesse. Everybody can shoot holes in your ideas, but they can only come up with “somethin’ else.”

CAMAE. I got a plan. But ... I’m just a woman. Folk’ll never listen to me.

KING. So if you were me, what would you do?

CAMAE. Really? You wanna know what lil’ old me would do?

KING. Yes.

CAMAE. You really wanna know what I’d do?

KING. Yes. I. Do. *(Beat.)*

CAMAE. Can I borrow your jacket?

KING. Sure.

START

CAMAE. And yo’ shoes? *(He hands them to her. She puts them on. She stands on top of one of the beds. King looks on in awe. She steadies herself. Throughout her speech, King is her congregation, egging her on with well-timed sayings like, “Well!” “Preach!” or, “Make it plain!” With a “King” voice.)* Chuuch! We have gathered here today to deal with a serious issue. It is an issue of great paponderance — you like that? — Paponderance! It is a matter of importance more serious than my overgrown mustache: HOW do we deal with the white man? I have told you that the white man is our brother. And he should be treated as such. We touch our brother with the softest of hands. We greet our brother with the widest of smiles. We give our brother food when he is hungry. But it is hard to do this when our brother beats his fist upon our flesh. When he greets us with “Nigger” and “Go back to Africa,” when he punches us in our bellies swelling with hunger. Abel was slain by his brother Cain and just like the Biblical times, today the white man is killing his Negro brethren, shackling his hands, keeping us from rising to the stars we are booooouuuuund to occupy. We have walked. Our feet swelling with each step. We have been drowned by hoses. Our dreams being washed away. We have been bitten by dogs. Our skin forever scarred by hatred at its height. Our godly crowns have been turned into ash-trays for white men at lunch counters all across the South. To this I say, my brethren, a new day is coming. I’m sick and tired of being sick and tired, and today is the day that I tell you to KILL the white man! *(Sotto voce.)* But not with your hands. Not with your guns. But with your miiiiiiind! *(Back to regular voice.)* We are fighting to sit at the same counter, but WHY, my brothers and sisters? We should build our own counters. Our own restaurants. Our own

neighborhoods. Our own schools. The white man ain't got nothin' I want. Fuck the white man! FUCK the white man! I say, FUCK 'em! (*Camae looks to King, sooooo embarrassed.*) I AM SO SORRY, Preacher Kang. Ooooooo. I just can't control my mouth.

END

KING. Obviously, neither can I. (*She steps down off the bed and begins to pull off his jacket.*)

CAMAE. Well, you axed. That's what I would say ... if ... I was you.

KING. That's what you would have me say?

CAMAE. Why not?

KING. "Fuck the white man"? (*Long heavy beat.*) I likes that. I think that'll be the title of my next sermon.

CAMAE. Oooooo! Folks ain't gone know what to do with that.

KING. Amen! Fuck 'em!

CAMAE. I never thought I'd hear you say that!

KING. Ooooo! They got me so tired, Camae. All this rippin' and runnin', rippin' and runnin', around this entire world and for what? FOR WHAT? White folks don't seem to want to listen. Maybe you're right. Maybe the voice of violence is the only voice white folks'll listen to. (*He coughs.*) I'm tired of shoutin' and carryin' on, like you say. I'm hoarse. (*He grabs Camae's flask and drinks.*) Sometimes I wonder where they get it from. This hatred of us. I have seen so many white people hate us, Camae. Bombin' folks' homes. Shootin' folks ... blowin' up children.

CAMAE. Make you scared to bring a Negro child into this world, the way they be blowin' 'em up.

KING. Yes, Camae! They hate so easily, and we love too much.

CAMAE. Last time I heard you was preachin' "everybody the same." Negro folk. White folk. We all alike.

KING. Well, at the most human level we are all the same.

CAMAE. What one thing we all got in common? (*Beat. He searches hard to come up with an answer.*)

KING. We scared, Camae. We all scared. Scared of each other. Scared of ourselves. They just scared. Scared of losin' somethin' that they've known their whole lives. Fear makes us human. We all need the same basic things. A hug. A smile. A —

CAMAE. Smoke?

KING. (*Frustrated.*) Which I could use one more of. Where is that niggah wit' my pack? (*Camae goes to the window, but can't see past the rain.*) He always out there runnin' his mouth. Worse than me sometimes. You see him?