

an excerpt from

sandblasted

a play in progress

by charly evon simpson

characters.

- ANGELA** black woman in her 30s. a safety cat which is a scaredy cat, but it is exactly what a scaredy cat would call herself.
- ODESSA** black woman in her 30s. a bit of a show off before...and after. like before you might have been a little annoyed with her because she got all the attention, but it doesn't matter now.
- ADAH** older black woman. she is somewhere between 100 and 200 or between 40 and 90. no one knows. she is like oprah when oprah shares pictures of her veggies on Instagram and you wonder if she went out and tended to the garden herself or if she has folks who do it for her.
- JAMAL** black man in late 20s/early 30s. ANGELA's younger brother. he's a bartender.

Also, there's a **VOICE**. It can be recorded. It should be recorded by an older black man.

Adah should be played by an actor who is at least 40 and, most importantly, looks and feels older than Angela and Odessa. Also, Adah rhymes with Jada.

place.

where the sand is.
the beach should feel different than the desert.
the other places are built on top of the sand.

time.

now.
after.
future.

for aunt adah and aunt louise

--

Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.

- **Audre Lorde**

I was talking about time. It's so hard for me to believe in it. Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. I used to think it was my rememory. You know. Some things you forget. Other things you never do. But it's not. Places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place—the picture of it—stays, and not just in my rememory, but out there, in the world.

- ***Beloved*, Toni Morrison**

Yes, something seems to have occurred, something has seemed to occur, and nothing has occurred, nothing at all...

- ***Happy Days*, Samuel Beckett**

one.

we're not at the beginning, but also not at the end.

think: wide expanse. desert. there needs to be sand. a lot of sand.

and it's quiet.

after we've sat there for a while, the sand moves.

and someone sits up in the sand, spitting and gasping for air.

it is ANGELA.

ANGELA

shit

it's all in my hair now

ANGELA gets up and tries to wipe the sand off.

never gonna get it out
just going to be in there
every damn time I comb through it
little flakes
little granules
flying through the air
getting in my eyes
finding their ways

then there is a rumble.

ODESSA emerges from the sand.

ODESSA

it's gonna be all in the cracks and everything

ANGELA

that's what I was saying

ODESSA

I can feel it
up my underwear

ANGELA

I never understand how it gets there

ODESSA

just so small

ANGELA

but how does it get through all the layers

ODESSA

no one knows

it's just something we all accept

ODESSA tries to wipe the sand off.

she wipes some off her arm.

then her arm falls off, landing in the sand.

ANGELA doesn't notice while ODESSA just stares at it.

ODESSA

oh shit

ANGELA

what?

ANGELA looks at ODESSA.

oh shit.

ODESSA

come on.

not now.

ANGELA

OH SHIT

ODESSA stares at her arm in the sand.

does it hurt?

ODESSA

not physically

ANGELA

is there blood?

ODESSA looks around.

ODESSA

not a drop.

ANGELA

so strange
even with such a large body part
no blood

ODESSA

this lady who used to go to my church when I was growing up
she was singing amazing grace
and then WHAM!
ear just falls off
clean and crisp

ANGELA

really?

ODESSA

yeah
best part is she just picked it up and kept singing

ANGELA

that's dedication

ODESSA

that's...well...it's something.

ADAH enters from off stage.

ADAH

what's the racket?

can hear you all the way up there in the rocks

ODESSA

my arm.

ADAH

what?

ANGELA

her arm

ODESSA

it's fallen off.

ANGELA points to the arm in the sand.

ADAH

shit

ODESSA

I know

ANGELA

I thought it would take a while longer to...
to get

ADAH

longer?

ANGELA

yeah
a lot of breaths
months of stewing
months of incubation
I thought it would take a number of sleepless nights
for a part so large to...

ADAH

just like you to trust in something like time and sense

ANGELA

I just trust that time will get us
will not outlive us
or
or

a moment.

wind.

sand.

time passing.

ANGELA

you trust the sand

ADAH

what?

ANGELA

you had us lie in the sand like you trust it. you trust it?

ADAH

I'm not sure I do.

ANGELA

why not?

ADAH

well

she points to ODESSA

ODESSA

my arm

ADAH

her arm

ANGELA

right

ADAH

it didn't work

ANGELA

right but--

ADAH

I thought if you could

lie in the sand

take a sand bath and let the heat from the seat

seep into your skin

I thought it could slow the process...

ODESSA

it didn't

ADAH

sorry

a lull.

ODESSA

ugh!

ADAH

something else?

ODESSA

no. just the arm.

ADAH

does it matter when?

when it happens, does it matter?

ANGELA and ODESSA stare at ADAH as though she doesn't understand a thing.

ANGELA and ODESSA

of course it does

ODESSA

location

age

situation

ANGELA

some times may be inconvenient

or—

ADAH

it is always inconvenient

it is always the wrong place, wrong time

ANGELA

warm in bed at 100 sounds pretty good to me.

ADAH

okay

well

fine
let's go

ODESSA
where we going?

ADAH
someplace else

ANGELA
but we just got here

ADAH
clearly this place didn't work

ANGELA
right

ADAH
so we going someplace else

ODESSA
fine

ANGELA

fine

ADAH
we'll put you back together, Odie

ANGELA
we're running out of glue

ADAH
tape?

ANGELA
gets all sandy

ADAH
we'll restock

ANGELA

when?

ADAH walks over and picks up ODESSA's arm

ADAH

chin up

ODESSA

it's just...

I'm sick of falling apart

ADAH

I know

ODESSA

will you ever just tell us how you have lasted so long?

ANGELA and ODESSA look at ADAH

ADAH

what

ANGELA

no parts of you are...

ODESSA

still

like you are still...

ANGELA

so...

ODESSA

how?

ADAH

...

...

...

...

...

magic

they frown.

I don't know!
I don't know.

spinach?

ODESSA

I eat spinach

ANGELA

I definitely don't

but I will

I can

ODESSA

I eat spinach
and I'm still falling apart

ADAH

they suggest spinach
and exercise

ANGELA

I exercise
I ran a marathon

ODESSA

good for you

ADAH

well hopefully that'll help

ODESSA

can we go
I just
you don't really give us any answers
and then you say
spinach
spinach?!
fucking spinach is your answer

ODESSA huffs and exits.

ADAH

I also said magic

ANGELA

yeah I'm not sure you should say that one again

ADAH exits with the arm.

ANGELA looks around, sighs, and then exits.

shift.