

When The Devil Come Knockin'

A ten minute play

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Charles Allen- An alcoholic who is trying to win over the forgiveness of his son.

Darius Allen- A college student who must learn to forgive his father's abuse and move on with his life.

SETTING

Set in a small apartment, with no elaborate furnishings. Run down with only a liquor bottle placed on the table to tempt Charles. Only lighting for it to have is based upon the director's discretion.

(As the scene opens, the lights slowly raise up and on stage, we see a messy home that is owned by CHARLES ALLEN. In the middle on the table is a bottle of whisky there only to tempt Charles. The light slowly dims down. From stage left CHARLES ALLEN (50's) old and sleek enters. He looks tired with heavy eyes. As he walks he stands there a beat and then suddenly Charles turns and looks startled, then we see young male nicely dressed with glasses around 20 years of age. He goes by DARIOUS and he is Charles's son.)

CHARLES

(Hiding the bottle)

Hey there...

DARIOUS

Let's go, now...Charles let's go!

(Darius fully enter looking around at the mess.)

CHARLES

What? No, Darius...I Can't—

DARIOUS

(Noticing)

Mhmm. Did you hear what I said?

CHARLES

(Changing the subject)

How school going?

DARIOUS

(Irritated)

I had to skip class to come get you, now pack your stuff!

(Charles sits on the couch)

CHARLES

You need some money? I can send you some money on the first.

(Darius walks all the way in and grabs him.)

DARIOUS

You told me you were going to send me money three months ago. Let's go!

CHARLES

(Trying to clean up and looks for his phone)

Well, this time I will. My phone battery got lost somehow, so I had to go buy another one.

DARIOUS

Why do you keep telling that lie, God—all you care about yourself. Get your things and get in the car!

CHARLES

How's your mama? Tried calling her, but she won't pick up the phone.

DARIOUS

I mean can you blame her. You—never mind. Can we just go!

(Charles exhales, not from anger but from feeling guilty)

CHARLES

(Changing subject)

What is that you studyin' again in school?

DARIOUS

(Condensing it for him to understand)

I'm studying telecommunications... Now can you please get your stuff and let's go, so I can make it to my next class.

CHARLES

Boy you sure would have been good at football; you could have gone pro someday.

(He makes his way to the table, hiding the whiskey bottle still. Sitting and waiting for a response. But there is a brief pause.)

DARIOUS

I don't like football Charles you know that.

GREG
(Criticizing)

Now you wanna be on TV? You too good to not be playing football, you should've joined the team.

DARIOUS
(Yelling)

I don't want to play no football! Now get up and come on!

(There is a brief pause.)

CHARLES

Why is you yelling?

(We see Charles pressing his fingers to his temples, the effects from the alcohol is sinking in.)

DARIOUS
(Softly laughing)

Wow. You giving me advice, or better yet criticizing me. And I come *all* the way down here to pick your drunk behind up.

CHARLES

I'm just trying to help—

DARIOUS

Well don't. You helped enough. Now I'm not playing. Get. Up.

CHARLES

Oh, Lord here we go again.

DARIOUS
(Turning with much intensity)

Yes here we go again. God! Why can't you sober up? Huh!

CHARLES

Boy what are you talking about?

DARIOUS
(Goes up to him, feel his body for the bottle)

This! God, you can't go through anything. Obviously the rehab center called me. You think I'm some type of fool?

CHARLES

Son let's just talk about this.

DARIOUS

What is there to talk about? You need help! You are an alcoholic who beat mama till she was black and blue. What the hell is wrong with you? Obviously you care about nobody but yourself.

(Darius grabs and slams the bottle on the table.)

CHARLES

(Standing)

They weren't treating me right at that clinic.

DARIOUS

(Out of frustration)

They weren't treating you right? It's a 12 step program and you were on the 10th one. How can you quit?

(Charles stands there; we see a bemused expression on Darius's face, a slight dramatic pause. We see Charles shivering and then his knees suddenly fall weak and Darius catch him.)

DARIOUS

God you're a pathetic drunk

CHARLES

It was just one cup, that's all I didn't hurt nobody.

DARIOUS

You're hurting me.

CHARLES

How did I hurt you? I'm the one with the problem.

DARIOUS

Oh you've always hurt me, now let's go.

CHARLES

Boy your mama spoiled you.

DARIOUS

Go to hell! You have NO RIGHT to speak about my mama. It's your fault; you're the one who hurt this family.

CHARLES

I didn't mess this family up by myself.

(Darius is fuming with anger and he steps face to face to Charles.)

DARIOUS

You did. Charles I remember when I was five years old, and you came in the house all late at night. I know, because my heart started to pound. You were so high and drunk you probably didn't know if you were in the right house. Then I saw you, breathing heavy, with so much evil in your eyes. You started to come in all crazy, looking for something. I heard mama say: "I don't have no money." Cause she had to pay that rent the next day, all you were looking for was a quick fix. You ran my sister away, and I'm so messed up, it's all your fault!

CHARLES

That was the old me.

(Darius slowly walks up to the edge of the stage.)

DARIOUS

The old you... no, he's still in there... Cup by cup and bottle by bottle you bring him back. You're selfish, I grew up without having a father figure in my life, to teach me what a man is supposed to. You took away my happiness... Christmas when you stole all the presents and sold them, then you sold my grand mama's necklace and her ring just so you could have a quick fix. Nothing but a junkie, that's how you hurt me. That's how you messed this family up.

CHARLES

Darius, you have to forgive me. That was the old me.

(A beat.)

DARIOUS

Forgive?! Forgive!

(Darius goes out of control and grabs Greg's shirt and pushes him toward the couch.)

I tried forgiving you. All you do is drink and drink.

CHARLES

Then leave me then! Let me wallow in my pain, I'm so sick of everybody trying to help me and I keep failing them. Go! Just go! I mean what do you want me to do?! I apologized!

DARIOUS

Saying you're sorry for all those years don't make it alright. (Pause) You—you weren't there for me, you chose that POISON over us! You have no idea how bad you screwed me up; my life is crap because of you!