

Seafloor Turquoise

author credit: Derek J. Snow

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Sea Floor Turquoise By Derek J. Snow

CHARACTERS:

KARIMAH: Mid-teens. African-American activist. Dreams of becoming a psychologist. Optimistic with a deep and inspiring presence.

SETTING: Any park, USA. Springtime.

SCENE 1

(KARIMAH is sitting in the grass on an ancestral quilt, looking up at the sky. She radiates a beautiful, infectious energy that seems to make everyone she interacts with feel as if they can take on the world. She speaks to a friend, represented by the audience directly in front of where she sits.)

KARIMAH

Let me tell you something. Whenever anybody asks you to define Black joy, they're trying to discover your secret so they can get some for themselves. If you have to ask, you probably have no clue how to find any and if you actually did, would you recognize it for what it was? *(bright laughter)* Would you replace the concrete and bricks of your struggle with some of that blue sky? Would you take in a deep, full breath and give it a warm hug, a long hug; A 'where have you been all my life' kind of hug? Would you let it transport you to a place that smells like peace, maybe a deep turquoise like the oceans your ancestors swam in? Maybe it feels cold at first, then warmer as the sun found its way to your oasis on the horizon line. Maybe it read you a whisper of some spoken moment of a happiness you once knew. You felt it and spun around looking for someone but found only a companion breeze wrapping your body like Egyptian cotton. Maybe your spirit just started moving to drums you've never felt before. It just *knows*, muscle memory from some celebration centuries ago that you can't identify...but you feel it just the same. *It* has resurfaced enough to let you know that it is here, that it lives. So why not give thanks? *(she does a little shimmy dance)*. Did you feel that? Me too! Maybe it's the time when you put your entire face underwater, feel the coolness fill your ears and know that none of the noise above can disturb your flow. It could feel like opening your eyes to see the sea floor shining rays of understanding on your submerged hands, causing you to make a fist that is free from conflict or drama for a change. A slow fade that excites you when you think about dreaming of future dreams you haven't considered yet. Being present. A pale morning of overcast grays and blues that promises

you something new, makes you believe that every day could be different if you only knew the formula. It excites you to search. Excites you to have a few moments of not feeling invisible or misunderstood. It could taste like a glass of cold water after peppermint candy, or something entirely new that you thought up as you walked in your Truth. Maybe it feels as smooth as putting cocoa butter on your face and feeling every cell awoken to your glow. Maybe it's quiet and hidden, a warm rain that you can walk in and think about feeling love and inner strength as you walk between the raindrops, watching the flowers bow in thanks. See, we spend so much time wondering how we're going to make it to the next day without losing ourselves—maybe our very lives, even— to those parts of the Universe that want to not only *steal* our Light, but sometimes *extinguish* it. We know it's there, it's always there, somewhere on the road beside us, close behind us. We've always known. And that's why this Joy is so very important, why it is wanted so badly by those who can't create it. It's the one thing that can live on when we have long gone, a gift from our Ancestors to help us keep those who chase us through our spiritual woods from ever catching up to us. Not if we remember to use it when we need it most. When we're tired of fighting, tired of protesting, tired of stress, tired of long hard nights. We can still remember that the next day just might be the one we keep dreaming about, so we learn to discover the beauty in the simplicity of just taking another breath and giving it one, maybe even two, more tries. Feeling proud and strangely excited when you feel how strong you can be under any circumstance. Feeling that you cannot be broken no matter what is thrown at you . Because you know that when it's all said and done, you'll be able to find that sea floor wherever you are, and all the screaming and useless noise from above will never make it to your ears. *(a faint sound of African drums is heard, or maybe KARIMAH begins to tap a rhythm on her leg. It accelerates as she begins to get excited.)* Because you will be listening to the echoes of field hollers and drums from some forgotten coast, a beautiful lullaby from an enslaved mother long ago that begins to stir your inner magic, a rhythm that swirls the waters around you and disturbs that surrounding sand, shoots through your fingertips and toes as you fall into the embrace of **your Joy** and forget what the world has told you what has been and won't be. You are only interested in what truly *is*, and what better way to celebrate the gift of what Joy means to you than finding it all by yourself, for yourself.

(KARIMAH is dancing now, and it is a wonderful moment because she has forgotten that anyone was watching. After a few moments, she gathers herself, looking directly into the audience with a sincere invitation.)

Alright, then. It's your turn. You ready?

END

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