



# LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD

BY JEFF AUGUSTIN



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*For Adele Shank, who lives in the words  
of the many writers she inspired.*

The world premiere of LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD was presented by Roundabout Theatre Company (Todd Haimes, Artistic Director; Harold Wolpert, Managing Director; Julia C. Levy, Executive Director; Sydney Beers, General Manager), as part of Roundabout Underground, at the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre in New York City, opening on February 17, 2015. It was directed by Giovanna Sardelli; the set design was by Andrew Boyce; the lighting design was by Gina Scherr; the costume design was by Jennifer Caprio; the sound design was by M.L. Dagg; and the production stage manager was Donald Fried. The cast was as follows:

SULA.....Carra Patterson  
 CAROLYN ..... Deirdre O’Connell  
 JOEL .....Maurice Jones  
 MANUEL..... Gilbert Cruz  
 VISHAL.....Chris Myers  
 MADISON.....Crystal Lucas-Perry  
 TOUSSAINT/MAN.....Carl Hendrick Louis

LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD was developed during a residency at the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center’s National Playwrights Conference (Preston Whiteway, Executive Director; Wendy C. Goldberg, Artistic Director) in 2013.

## **CHARACTERS**

SULA — Mid-20s Haitian woman

CAROLYN — Early 40s White American woman

JOEL — Early 30s Haitian-American man

MANUEL — 113-year-old Cuban man  
(played by an actor in his 50s/60s)

VISHAL — Mid/Late 20s Multi-Ethnic Trinidadian man

MADISON — Early/Mid-30s Haitian-American woman

BABY/MAN — Early 30s Haitian man  
(both played by one actor in his early/mid-30s)

## **PLACE**

For the most part in Overtown, in Miami, FL. But also various locations in the greater Miami area, West Palm Beach, and the Atlantic Ocean.

## **TIME**

Present day.

## NOTES ON LANGUAGE

—— : A silent moment when a character reveals or holds back a truth. A time when language is too much or not enough.

Overlapping dialogue: Joel's line begins on Carolyn's "wake."

JOEL. Is everything okay? You called then I heard all this screaming

CAROLYN. You're going to wake up the whole building

Translations:

SULA. Pa kit'm. [Don't leave me.]

The actress playing Sula should say the line in Creole. The line in brackets is the translation.

There should be no subtitles for the Creole.

*To accept one's past — one's history — is not the same thing as drowning in it; it is learning how to use it.*

— James Baldwin

# LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD

## ACT ONE

### Scene 1

*Sula floats on a tire in the Atlantic Ocean between Haiti and Florida. She wears a long white cotton dress. Light from the moon shines on her, keeping the endless darkness from enveloping her. She is striking, the kind of beauty that wars are fought over. She is also pregnant, like so pregnant she's about to explode. The baby kicks violently; it shakes her entire body. She exhales. To the baby ...*

SULA. Shhh. Shhh ... Please. Not here. Not in the sea. The sacrifice and wait you've made will be worth it. You'll love and be loved purely.  
*(The baby kicks again.)*

Shhh. Shhh.

*(A beat. She begins to sing a Haitian nursery rhyme.)*

Dodo ti pitit manman [Go to sleep mommy's little baby]

do-o-do ti pitit manman [Go to sleep mommy's little baby]

Si ou pa dodo shat la va mange'w [If you don't sleep the cat will  
eat you]

[If you don't sleep the cat will  
eat you]

*(The darkness crowds in as she continues to sing.)*

Manmanw ale nan rivyè ... [Your mommy went to the river ... ]

*(She is swallowed by the dark.)*



## Scene 2

*Outside apartment building. Late night. Carolyn in a robe, pajamas, and slippers. The only source of light is the moon. To God ...*

CAROLYN. Come on God. Just turn back on the power. Please. Come on baby. Who loves you?

*(No response.)*

I said I was sorry, didn't I? Come on God.

*(No response. Sula enters, soaking wet. Carolyn's back is to her. She looks up at the building. Is this the place she's looking for? She goes to approach Carolyn, but ...)*

Well fuck you then.

I'm tired of this.

Turn back on the electricity and be gone

I don't need you

*(Sula tries to get into the building without being noticed, but a contraction hits her, causing her to release a sound of agony. Carolyn turns and sees Sula.)*

SULA. I didn't mean to bother you.

*(Sula continues to try to get into the building.)*

CAROLYN. Are you okay?

SULA. I'm fine

CAROLYN. You're pregnant, you can't be fine.

SULA. I am

CAROLYN. You know where you are?

SULA. Miami

CAROLYN. But where in Miami?

SULA. *(Pointing to the building.)* I'm seeing a friend.

CAROLYN. I live here, who?

SULA. Maybe I have the wrong address

*(Sula tries walking away; she's obviously in pain.)*

CAROLYN. Go down that block, someone will cut you open and sell your baby for crack. You go down that block. Some yuppie will enslave you and then your baby. I'm not stupid, you're not the first refugee I've seen.

# LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD

by Jeff Augustin

4M, 3W

On a balmy night in Miami, soon-to-be mother Sula floats ashore on a car tire. Having survived the perilous journey to escape her native Haiti, Sula is determined to forge a better life in America for her unborn son. She finds safety in an apartment building dedicated to sheltering refugees, joining a diverse community of immigrants, each with their own unique dreams and dilemmas. But even though the life she has hoped for seems within reach, Sula knows she can't outrun her demons forever. *LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD* is a darkly lovely drama about learning to start a new life by facing the one you left behind.

*"[A] warm and fanciful drama ... LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD requires some serious suspension of disbelief, but its characters are drawn with such empathy and humor that it's [easy] to take the play's more fantastical conceits at face value."*

—**The New York Times**

*"There's nothing small about the ambition of LITTLE CHILDREN DREAM OF GOD ... Playwright Jeff Augustin floats big ideas about religion: God and voodoo; the capacity to outrun the past; the fragility and volatility of relationships between parents and children; family legacies; and, of course, love."*

—**New York Daily News**

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