



DAPHNE'S DIVE

BY

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DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

DAPHNE'S DIVE
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in memory:
Kathy Chang(e)

The world premiere of DAPHNE'S DIVE was produced by Signature Theatre (James Houghton, Founding Artistic Director; Erika Mallin, Executive Director), New York City, on April 26, 2016. It was directed by Thomas Kail, the set designer was Donyale Werle, the costume designer was Toni-Leslie James, the lighting designer was Betsy Adams, the sound designer was Nevin Steinberg, the music was by Michel Camilo, and the production stage manager was Lori Ann Zepp. The cast was as follows:

DAPHNE Vanessa Aspillaga
INEZ Daphne Rubin-Vega
ACOSTA Carlos Gomez
REY Gordon Joseph Weiss
JENN KK Moggie
PABLO Matthew Saldivar
RUBY Samira Wiley

DAPHNE'S DIVE was the recipient of the inaugural Roe Green Award and received a staged reading at the Cleveland Play House.

CHARACTERS

DAPHNE

Bar owner. Latina.

INEZ

Daphne's sister. Latina.

ACOSTA

Inez's husband. Latino.

REY

Glass cutter and manual laborer. Any ethnicity.

JENN

Activist, performance-artist, and merrymaker. Asian-American.

PABLO

Painter. Latino.

RUBY

A young woman who is also, in some way, a child. Any ethnicity.

SETTING

Philadelphia, 1994–2011.

DAPHNE'S DIVE

Scene 1

North Philly. Piano music tumbles out of a second-story window.

RUBY. I am eleven.

Into: Daphne's Dive—a corner bar in North Philadelphia. A potted aloe vera plant by the window. Pablo drinks orange juice. Rey nurses a beer. They hear the piano music from upstairs.

PABLO. That's one helluva rooster.

DAPHNE. Those eighty-eight keys have it rough. They get beat like a birthday piñata.

PABLO. You admire him more than me.

DAPHNE. Live music every morning? I ain't complaining.

PABLO. There's more to art than pretty songs.

DAPHNE. Ay, you're my favorite artist on planet earth, okay?

PABLO. Okay.

DAPHNE. It's not a contest, though.

PABLO. Yes it is.

She splashes some vodka in his orange juice.

DAPHNE. For inspiration.

PABLO. Isn't Acosta usually through by now?

REY. You waiting on Acosta? Me, too.

Daphne pours a Coke from the tap.

PABLO. What's with all the Coca-Cola? It's barely eleven.

DAPHNE. Yeah, my stomach is protesting, but those sirens, three nights straight? You didn't hear from the corner?

PABLO. Nah, I was sketching all night and blasting Vivaldi.

DAPHNE. My upstairs tenants, above the piano player? Three nights ago cops raid the place. Two nights ago *feds* raid the place. Last night, one in the morning: Wham! Whack! "F you, B! Suck this!" Playing baseball with the furniture.

PABLO. That's what you get, not evicting them years ago.

DAPHNE. All those kids running, screaming, *carajo*, they have more kids than the old lady who lived in a shoe. Feds took the parents in handcuffs. DHS rounded up the children. The little boy, the one who can't walk, beautiful clear eyes, wearing rags, Pablo. Cuando hay un Salvation Army two blocks away. In the United States of America, you gonna dress your kids like a shanty town? So I'm tired. I'm tired and I'll be drinking Coca-Cola all day.

PABLO. At least one of 'em got out. The older boy, right? Navy, was it?

DAPHNE. Last week he comes home. His "tour of duty" is up. We're chatting in the stairwell. Kid never stepped foot in boot camp. "Navy," it turns out, means Graterford Prison.

PABLO. Maximum security!

DAPHNE. Just eighteen years old, so you know he did some heavy shit. I gave him a mop and a ten and he cleaned the hell outta my stairwell.

PABLO. Ten bucks won't keep him off the street.

DAPHNE. It'll keep him outta my face.

PABLO. You need a proper coffee.

DAPHNE. I can't. My reflux.

PABLO. So brew it light.

DAPHNE. My Krups broke.

PABLO. I'll go to Lawrence Bakery. How do you take it?

DAPHNE. Why you being so nice?

PABLO. I have a favor.

DAPHNE. Not my trash.

PABLO. Daphne.

DAPHNE. You know I don't go for that.

PABLO. I started a new canvas.

DAPHNE. My garbage, my business.

PABLO. You take sugar?

DAPHNE. Two Equals, skim milk. The answer's still no.

Pablo exits. Daphne has a stomach pang. Using a knife she removes a chunk from the potted aloe and dissects it for the gel inside.

That your motorcycle out front?

REY. Goldwing GL.

DAPHNE. What club you ride with?

REY. Whole point of two wheels is to get away from folks.

DAPHNE. The guy I was just talking to, he paints bikes. He came through one time with a Harley-Davidson, whole thing airbrushed with eagles, buffalos, tomahawks—a pow-wow on wheels. Following week he showed up with a trophy as tall as this bar.

REY. You ever ride?

DAPHNE. There's two kinds of people. Those who ride bikes and those who don't wanna die. Roy is it?

REY. Rey.

DAPHNE. Welcome back.

Daphne has removed the gelatinous "meat" from the aloe. She slurps it down whole, like a live fish, grimaces.

Ach ayy blaghghg!

REY. Too much drink?

DAPHNE. Too much life.

Jenn enters: Her sequined American flag bikini shows off a lithe figure. Over each breast is a blue glittery star, the bikini bottom is red and white stripes. The effect is not sexual but striking and bold. Her handmade flag reads: PEACE LIBERTY ECOLOGY DEMOCRACY. It's ripped down the middle.

JENN. Beautiful day for a dance in the sun.

DAPHNE. Art Museum steps?

JENN. Best real estate in the city, and it's mine.

DAPHNE. What did the cops have to say?

JENN. They might as well have had 3D glasses and tubs of popcorn. They were cracking up. Called me every name in the book. But there were a lot of school groups today. Wide-eyed children, so curious, completely open, and they can't look away. "Hey miss, why you dance like that?" "Hey miss, let me wave that flag!" I had a whole class of first graders chanting, "Peace! Liberty! Ecology! Democracy!" The cops pulled out handcuffs, Daphne.

DAPHNE. To arrest you or the kids?

JENN. They chased me around the big yellow Calder sculpture, through all the soft pretzel stands. One of 'em ripped my flag and the first graders booed him. A needle and thread should do the trick.

DAPHNE. Coffee and rum?

JENN. Please.

DAPHNE. Oh shit my Krups broke.

JENN. Just rum then. How's it going?

REY. What's the occasion?

JENN. War, poverty, global consumerism.

REY. You always dress like that?

DAPHNE. In the winter she wears more fabric.

REY. You a dancer?

JENN. Not that kind of dancer. Liberty Bell on Sundays. Love Statue during the week. UPenn, Art Museum steps. It's my Contract with America. Not that Newt Gingrich approves...

REY. Who's Newt Gingrich?

JENN. Bless your soul. *(To Daphne.)* Has Acosta come through yet?

DAPHNE. Take a number.

Jenn works on her flag. Inez enters. She is Daphne's older sister, who shops at fancier stores than Daphne.

INEZ. Coño, that traffic would make Mahatma Gandhi an asshole. Hi, Jenn. I love it.

DAPHNE. Hey sis! How's the Main Line?

INEZ. No tienes ninugna idea, Daphne. These gringos...

DAPHNE. Suburbanite, you miss us. He he he...

INEZ. No. You think I miss breathing the pollution from all these SEPTA buses? Please. I'm just acclimating to the provincial mentality of my new neighbors.

DAPHNE. The people next door again?

INEZ. I put up an eight-foot picket fence so I didn't have to see their ratty underwear. I hired the best carpenter on the Main Line, custom made, beautiful pine. I didn't move to Haverford to see some tightly whities on a clothesline out my kitchen window. They're environmentalists, but really? Did we have a washer and drier in Puerto Rico?

DAPHNE. You know we didn't.

INEZ. No we did not but you'd never see Mami's bra blowing in the breeze, waving at the neighbors. Am I right?

DAPHNE. Mami didn't wear a bra a day in her life.

INEZ. Well her underwear. Papi's underwear. Am I right?

DAPHNE. Always and forever, sis.

INEZ. And they were pissed I put up the fence. Bringing me a fresh-baked pie, explaining that picket fences aren't "what we do here." "It blocks the view. Makes things feel closed off. The trees belong to all of us." What was I going to do, tell her "Hey, Mother Earth, I don't want to see the brown stripes up and down your husband's draws"?

DAPHNE. Delicious, thank you.

INEZ. They know and I know what's under it all: "Porta Rickins" bought the best house in the zip code. Sorry, Charlie! Eat it up, Haverford! So, I planted a güiro vine at the base of the picket fence, because I'm connected to my roots. No Boricua garden should exist without a güiro vine. Coño, you should see my güiros.

JENN. What's a güiro?

INEZ. A güiro is a gourd, a calabash, Puerto Rican as they come. More Puerto Rican than a crucifix on the rearview. Más boricua que un parakeet in the kitchen.

DAPHNE. Scratchy instrument we play around the holidays.

DAPHNE'S DIVE

by Quiara Alegría Hudes

3M, 4W

In a tucked away corner of North Philly, six regulars gather at a neighborhood watering hole. Over twenty years, they turn their collective memories into a vivacious mythology. The tales they'd rather forget, however, keep sneaking up and tapping them on the shoulder. At Daphne's Dive, an aloe plant, a girl's sneaker, a stiff drink, and mounds of trash become talismanic treasures to a group of outsiders trying to be "in" together.

"...[a] slow-burning, vibrantly sketched portrait of a scruffy North Philly booze joint...as much a portrait of a gentrifying community as a splintering group of friends." —**Time Out (New York)**

"Hudes has a fine grasp of the friction created by the social tectonic plates that shift according to the waves of gentrification and governance. Each of these characters is good company..." —**Deadline.com**

"[DAPHNE'S DIVE] has a fierce compassion for its characters and an ardent love for Philadelphia's diversity...there's an unasailable heart to Hudes' work..." —**The Guardian (US)**

Also by Quiara Alegría Hudes
26 MILES
WATER BY THE SPOONFUL
YEMAYA'S BELLY
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