

SHOES THAT FIT

Written by

Sierra Lawson

sierralawson215@gmail.com
281.779.6653

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY

A group of children play outside on a hot summer day. They are in clusters all over an inner city neighborhood. Some lay in the grass, some stand around in the streets, some play basketball in the distance.

BEEJAY (14) lays alone under the shade of a tree. He has two stuffed backpacks that lay beside him. He doesn't look like he's showered in a while.

TYLER (16) walks down the street towards BeeJay. He licks an Ice Pop.

TYLER

Did you know that back in the day
in Japanese culture that they had
like, an honorable way of killing
themselves? It's called Seppuku.

BeeJay nods in acknowledgment, he hardly pays attention. He is scans the street, looking for someone.

TYLER (CONT'D)

I ain't seen your sister around
here, skinny boy. Ain't nobody seen
her.

BeeJay nods again to himself. He doesn't respond. He looks at Tyler's ice pop, adoringly.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Oh yeah, you see that, huh? Mama
Bridge is giving them out at her
house.

BEEJAY

Who?

TYLER

Big Mama Bridge. She's giving out
ice pops at her house. You should
go and get you one.

BEEJAY

Nah...I don't need any handouts.

TYLER

It's not like that, man. You just
gotta talk to her for awhile and
she'll feed you.

BEEJAY

Like I said, I'm good. I'm gonna
catch you later, man.

Beejay gets up, grabs his bags, and walks away.

TYLER

You gotta eat some time, skinny
boy!

BeeJay walks down what feels like the worlds longest street.
Behind him we see the sun set and fall in a time lapse.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

He stops walking when he sees a MAN dump a trash bag in a
dumpster nearby. He hides in the shadows until the man is out
of sight.

BeeJay runs up to the dumpster and takes out the trash bag.
He rips it open and scavenges it for food.

As he eats, Beejay looks up and sees a MOTHER and her YOUNG
SON through a lit window. The mother and son are snuggled
together on a couch as they watch TV together.

It begins to rain.

BeeJay snatches his head away from the image, and retreats
further back into the alleyway.

He pulls a pillow and thin blanket out of his backpack, and
makes a small pallet on the ground. He positions it under an
awning so he doesn't get wet. He pulls out a cd player, puts
on the headphones, and tries to lull himself to sleep.

A HOMELESS MAN (50) walks up to BeeJay as he shivers in the
damp night air.

HOMELESS MAN

Hey little man. You don't have an
extra blanket, do you?

Beejay looks at his backpack, then back at the man. He shakes
his head no.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Damn. Alright. I'll leave you be.

The homeless man starts to walk away. BeeJay sits up and
pulls his blanket off of himself without much of a second
thought.

BEEJAY

Hey, man.

BeeJay holds his blanket out for the homeless man.

HOMELESS MAN

Aww thank you, young man. Thank
you!

The homeless man takes the blanket and makes his own pallet
across the way. BeeJay lays back down and plays the music
loud on his headphones. He curls himself in a fetal position
and closes his eyes.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Tyler is in the middle of a basketball game with some friends
his age. He runs up and down the court with the speed of
light; unstoppable. He's about to throw a shot in the air
when he notices BeeJay enter the court.

Beejay sits on the bleachers and starts to sneeze. Tyler
leaves the game and goes to sit by Beejay.

TYLER

You'll never guess what I heard
through the grapevine today.

BEEJAY

That aliens live among us, and you
know where one is?

TYLER

That's a conversation for another
time.
(beat)
Somebody saw Lita.

Beejay snaps his head towards Tyler.

BEEJAY

You said what?

TYLER

Yeah, man. It's true. My friend saw
your sister leaving Mama Bridge's
house.

Beejay stands up in a hurry and grabs his bags.

BEEJAY

What the hell would she be doing
over there?

(MORE)

BEEJAY (CONT'D)

We don't even know that lady. She's been gone for weeks! Why wouldn't she come find me?

TYLER

Man, I don't know. That's all I heard, so I'm telling you.

Beejay jumps off of the bleachers and walks away hurriedly.

TYLER (CONT'D)

You sure are running off like you know where you're going!

Beejay comes to an abrupt stop. He turns around towards Tyler, impatiently. Tyler tells his friends goodbye, and the boys walk off of the court.

EXT. BIG MAMA BRIDGES HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Tyler and Beejay walk up to the front door of the house. Tyler knocks loudly three times on the door.

TYLER

The door is always open here, but don't you walk your ass in Mama Bridges house without knocking. She's real nice, but she'll whoop your ass if you're disrespectful.

Beejay isn't listening. He looks anxiously around the outside of the house.

TYLER (CONT'D)

It's a little quiet around here. It's usually packed around this time.

BEEJAY

Man, where is my sister? Where is Lita?! Why ain't nobody opening up the door, man?

Beejay pounds on the front door.

TYLER

Hey man, I wouldn't do all that if I were you.

BEEJAY

(loudly)
Hello! HELLO! Anybody ho-

LEVI (30), a tall, muscular man, swings open the door. He looks down menacingly at the two boys.

LEVI
You better be the police knocking
on this goddamn door like that at
this hour.

The boys are silent for a long beat. Tyler finds his voice.

TYLER
Hey, brother man. We were just
trying to see if we could talk to
Big Mama real quick.

LEVI
Big Mama ain't seeing anybody
tonight. Or any other night. She
don't feel well.

BIG MAMA (65) walks up behind Levi. She looks down at the boys with a steady eye.

She whispers something in Levi's ear and walks away. The man rolls his eyes. He steps out of the doorway, irritated.

The boys exchange a confused look.

LEVI (CONT'D)
You coming in or what?!

INT. BIG MAMA BRIDGES HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The boys walk hurriedly inside of the house. Tyler makes a beeline straight for the kitchen.

BeeJay walks slowly through the house. He lowers his bags onto the ground. He is amazed by the muted and antique decor. He is about to touch a very large and old record player when Tyler calls his name.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

BeeJay enters the kitchen and is hit with the smell of homemade southern cooking. Sweet potatoes, dressing, hot water cornbread, fried chicken, and baked macaroni and cheese. He almost immediately salivates.

BIG MAMA
Well don't just stand there, baby.
Fix yourself a plate.

Tyler sits at a table in the kitchen, he gnaws at a plate of his own.

BIG MAMA (CONT'D)

Tyler! Tell me something, baby.

Tyler tries to hurry up and swallow the lump of food in his mouth.

TYLER

Hmm...did you know that there are more stars in the sky than there are grains of sand on earth?

Big Mama smiles.

BIG MAMA

No baby, I didn't know that.

BeeJay wants desperately to eat. His stomach grumbles most unkindly. He holds his belly. *I can't get distracted now.*

BEEJAY

Where's my sister?

Big Mama turns and looks at BeeJay. She holds his gaze nice and steady.

BIG MAMA

I don't know YOU, much less who your sister might be...what's your name, baby?

BEEJAY

BeeJay.

BIG MAMA

Mmm, BeeJay. Sounds familiar.

Tyler stands up from the kitchen table to dispose of his plate.

TYLER

I told you all about him, Big Mama. He's the boy that lives in the alleyway on main street now. He's been looking for his sister.

Beejay cuts an eye at Tyler.

BEEJAY

I don't LIVE there. I've just been waiting on my sister.

TYLER

Whatever you say, skinny boy. I'm gonna head out, Big Mama. Thank you for the food.

Big Mama nods in acknowledgment, and Tyler leaves the house. Big Mama and Beejay stand together in the kitchen in silence.

BIG MAMA

I like Tyler. He's a real smart boy. Always reading something. That's his superpower; Knowledge.

Big Mama starts to tidy up the kitchen.

BIG MAMA (CONT'D)

I'll have to beg your pardon for my son, Levi. I raised him better than that to be yelling at children through my doorway. He doesn't like me letting strangers through all the time. Somebody stole a vase of mine. Real pretty vase.

BeeJay fidgets in his spot. He isn't sure whether to stay or go.

BIG MAMA (CONT'D)

You're looking real uneasy there. What's going on in your little mind?

Beat.

BEEJAY

Tyler said you'll whoop my ass if I'm disrespectful.

BIG MAMA

Do you plan on disrespecting me?

BEEJAY

No, ma'am.

BIG MAMA

Then sit your little ass down and eat something.

BeeJay hurries over to the kitchen table and sits. Big Mama fixes him a plate of food and sits it in front of him.

Beejay inhales his plate. He looks up with big eyes at Big Mama. She gets back up, fixes him another plate, and sets it down in front of him. She watches him in silence.

She leans back in her chair and looks out the window.

BEEJAY

Ma'am, my sister. Tyler said she
had been through here.

Big Mama looks back at Beejay, she holds his gaze and says
nothing.

BEEJAY (CONT'D)

She's about...this tall. She's got
braids in her hair. She's real
skinny like me... brown skinned.

Big Mama stares at Beejay with a faraway look in her eye.

BIG MAMA

(beat)

What's your superpower, baby?

BEEJAY

My what?

BIG MAMA

Your superpower. What keeps you
warm in the cold? What fills your
belly when it's empty? What can you
do better than ANYBODY else?

BEEJAY

I... I think I should go.

BIG MAMA

Mine is my record player. My daddy
gave it to me when I was 11 years
old. I play it all the time. Come
on in the living room, let me show
you.

Big Mama waddles out of the kitchen. Beejay follows behind
her, hesitantly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Big Mama sets the record player up and starts to play a
record that is actually familiar to Beejay.

He nods his head along.

BIG MAMA

You like this, do you? Oh, then
you'll LOVE this one.

She digs up a huge box of records and searches through. She pulls out a new record and loads it into the player. Beejay sings along.

BIG MAMA (CONT'D)

Well, what do you know! I didn't take you for a Sam Cooke fan.

Beejay tries to hide a smile, but can't help himself. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his portable CD player. He opens it up to show Big Mama the disk inside; *Sam Cooke's Greatest Hits*. Big Mama claps her hands in delight.

Levi walks in and stares down coldly at Beejay.

LEVI

It's getting late, mama.

Big Mama stops the record player. She lets out a long and sad sigh.

BIG MAMA

Well, I suppose it is.

Beejay grabs his bags off of the floor.

BEEJAY

I'm sorry, I just really need to know where my sister went. We had a plan that if CPS came looking for us we'd split up and...we were supposed to meet at the alley on Main Street a week ago. We're supposed to meet up and find my uncle in Chicago.

Big Mama gives a sad look to Beejay.

BIG MAMA

Hey baby...what's your superpower?

Beejay looks confused.

BEEJAY

What? Did you hear anything I just said? You crazy old--

Beejay is snatched up by the back of his neck and forced out of the door.