Play name: *Ubuntu (The Cape Town Project)*
Author: Theatrefront
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Characters: **Sarah** (a young Canadian woman)
Michael (a professor)
Libby (a young Canadian woman)

SARAH:

Nature is, by nature, unfair. There is a commonly held belief that in order for the peacock to produce the exquisite colours found in its plumage, it must eat thorns. For centuries the great sages have meditated over the paradox, holding it up as evidence that beauty cannot exist without suffering. In truth, the peacock does eat thorns, but that is not what makes it beautiful.
Most things are they are because of pigment. Skin colour is determined by the amount and type of melanin in a human being. But peacocks, like rainbows and soap bubbles and the blue sky, get most of their colour from light refraction. Which means that their beauty can only exist if there is something to shine on them. Some light, however thin, however faint. Everything needs the gaze of its beloved in order to shine.
Here, now, at the end of all the conversations we never had, all that is left is a thin stream of light. Enough for me to stand in and tell the truth.

MICHAEL:

(in a lecture hall delivering a lecture)
Okay, settle down. Settle down. You can't hide…
You can't hide from your ancestors. They always find you. A distant relative of mine told me that recently. And he was right.
We each possess a genome that is unique. It's our own private genetic symphony. But if you listen intently you can hear something underneath: a song of our common past. But if it's a symphony, a song, it's a song that's always revisiting itself as we sing it. Or reviving itself. Or devising itself. Or deriving itself. You see what I'm getting at? Just in that way. A series of single typos evolving into new meanings. And we can trace those typos, or genetic makers, back in time on chromosomes that otherwise don't change much from generation to generation. In men that'd be the Y chromosome.
So okay, take me. Take my Y chromosome. Please. If I have a look at all my makers, I can trace back the route my ancestors took to get here. Not just my great-great-grandfathers on their coffin ships from Ireland but much farther back, to my Cro-Magnon cave-painting father, back to my father who left Africa fifty thousand years ago. And when he did that, he was one of a band of probably around one hundred, one hundred and fifty people. Think about that. A band of about half the number of people in this room colonized the world only 2500 generations ago. Which makes us all, which makes me - an African.

LIBBY:

I've been wearing black for a week. I kind of ran out of good black clothes two days ago.

“It is as natural to die as to be born; and the one is as painful as the other.” Francis Bacon said that.
He died of a cold, you know. Francis Bacon. A cold - get this - that he picked up while stuffing snow into a chicken. Apparently as an experiment in refrigeration. That was 1626.
The ninth president of the United State died of a cold, which he caught after delivering the longest inaugural address ever. In the rain. That was 1841.
2009.I’m just saying. 2009. Who dies of a cold in 2009? Someone who is too wrapped up in their own head - in their birds and notes and little … to bother to, to go to the doctor. I’m just saying it’s wasteful. It’s - It’s wasteful.
And stupid. This is stupid. I’m talking to an egg. I’m talking to an egg.