

Daud Xiddig
Three Standing Shelves

Bush Theatre Protest Series

[Clapping, drumming, singing]

Three women walked into Xaraas' shop.

Farxiya, the favourite, had dark gums and hinno scaled her hands. She asked if she could trade in her legacy for three kilos of rice. She said, with a smile that crept from the side of her mouth, 'she won't be needing it while she was heading.'

Ayaan, the eldest, had a beauty spot that was tucked right beneath her nose. She said, 'Can I exchange my language for mango flavoured Ilo Tango?' She loved to watch the golden specks tumble out of the sachet and into her cup. She said in her head she loved to count how many could float. Kow, labo, a hand, shan, boqol.

Amaal, the tallest, seemed few inches shorter today. 'Xaraas, what do you have left?' 'One biscuit Abuwaled I was planning to keep that from my shaax later on today.' She said, 'Please, I have to get rid of my pride by midnight and all the other shops are shut.' Xaraas looked down, broke his biscuit in half and offered her a piece. Farxiya stopped counting her rice.

Xaraas at this point had asked where the loud woman was. Farxiya was confused. She thought the loud one had come in secret and offered her mind instead. She said, 'She came to me yesterday and told me "Your legacy has value".' Farxiya, bloated from all the laughter that she had suppressed for years, shocked herself when she heard one escape.

Ayaan, his grey eyes glossed over with disbelief. 'I thought I was the only one. I thought it was only me she came to at night to say, "Take your Somali with you." That she had heard of languages swimming in the sea before.' Amaal, the tallest, looked down to the ground with a lump of sugar that sat in her throat, started to cast her words over the room. She said, 'Can she not see? Does she not know that my pride hasn't made me tall in years? That I have stopped tilting towards the sun?'

Amaal's grainy voice left a soft, thin white powder all over the shop's floor. Xaraas at this point stopped listening.

Of course, he was too busy counting his new rations and updating his stock list.

Credits:

Writer and performer: Daud Xiddig

End slide reads:

Bush Theatre Protest Series

We believe the connection between art and protest is vital.

The Bush Theatre's Protest series is a platform for artists to shed light on injustices that persist in our world.

bushtheatre.co.uk/protest