

**Dykin<sup>2</sup>**  
SHORT STORIES



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by  
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*To the way, the truth, and the life...*



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## Ye Are the Church

*Winter 2007*

“**G**od hates fags!” an angry man shouted. After years of litigation, the court ruled against the board's challenge of the sale of the reverend's interest in the church.

Prior to the ruling, Pastor Stephon had dealt with the board in the most dignified manner. On this day however, the gloves came off. Praying in the spirit, he smiled up at the heavens as he sashayed up the sidewalk. The stone-faced women flanking him, however, were all business. Pastor Stephon's mother Diva King, her partner Jules, and eight armed members of their organization shepherded him through the pasture of protesters. Kesean Little and Ronnie Tabscott were there to support him too.

No press conference was scheduled, but the media got wind of the verdict and ambushed the Pastor. Ronnie freaked out when she saw the TV vans. Her feet halted as the reporters scrambled by her to get to the pastor.

Lingering behind, Ronnie leaned against a lamp pole at the end of the walkway. Plagued by the anxiety of coming out all over again, her lungs heaved for air under the scorching sun.

She had already faced her family and even lost some friends. Now, the fear of a public outing sent a ruckus through her bowels. The thought of co-workers seeing her on TV made her nauseously afraid. Anchored by the knots in her stomach she tried to take a step to catch up with the group, but her legs were too jittery.

Uncertain of whether she could contain herself, Ronnie ducked into the tabernacle through a side door. A woman dressed in black sitting alone on the front pew barely looked up from her veil. Seized

with Judas' remorse after deserting her friends, Ronnie watched the scene behind the stained glass windows of the church.

Kesean's eyes searched frantically for the woman of her dreams. Her lips tightened and her teeth clenched as her head bobbed around looking for Ronnie. Grief tickled Kesean's face. Shame and embarrassment morphed into a mean resilience that bulged from her temples and jaw lines.

Thronged by the multitude, Jules and Kesean pulled out their straps and the protesters immediately backed away. Pastor Stephon stood at ease as the eight miraculously parted the mosaic sea of bandits. He ascended the stairs then paused at the top. There, the parishioners and reporters closed in once again.

Jules covered the front standing three steps below the pastor. Diva stood at his right and the other eight women encircled them. Kesean stood back to back with him in an A-stance wearing a graphic t-shirt that read, "I AM THE CHURCH."

She saw Ronnie through the glass doors. Holding the pistol, Kesean tilted her head questioning Ronnie's departure.

"I'm sorry," Ronnie mouthed. Kesean shook her head no then looked away as if she never knew her.

The pastor turned and faced the crowd.

"Are you replacing the leadership at the Holy Right?" a reporter asked. Bulbs flashed.

"Is it true that you're a drag queen, pastor?" asked another.

"Is the Holy Right turning into a gay church?" another yelled.

"Settle down, be quiet," Jules insisted with downward palms. "On behalf of the Reverend Doctor King, we are happy to announce that church services for the former Holy Christian Right will resume here, at the new People's Church this Sunday," she declared. "The church is open to *everybody*, so please come as you are," she continued over the chatter.

"As for ya'll," Jules addressed the protesters, "feel free to find a new church home because you are now trespassing on private property," she concluded as the U.S. Marshal's pulled up. No one dared ask any more questions.

Diva kicked up her heel and smiled over her shoulder for the cameras as the twelve entered the church escorted by two Marshals. Ronnie caught up with them inside.

Pastor Stephon removed the relics of the saint from the altar and replaced them with his grandmother's red, black and green cassock. The Marshals gave the saint's remains to the grieving widow and escorted her out of the church.

