

"BREAKFAST AT DADDY'S"

by

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CHARACTERS

AISHA WILLIAMS

A black 33-year-old female. She's the second child out of three in her family. Her hair has not been styled, braid or ironed, it looks quite nice as it is. Just divorced and ten weeks pregnant.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

AISHA's father. He chose her name, it's an African name that means "Life". TYRONE is a 54-year-old black male. He was once an idealistic lawyer and a convinced feminist, until he tried to succeed in this white world, got married and had three children who still need and require a lot of him, daily.

(Kitchen at the WILLIAMS'. AISHA has just arrived and is now sitting on a stool. She is wearing a sophisticated short dress, high heels and what's left, after dancing all night, of her party make up. There is a big glass of water in front of her. TYRONE, in his striped pajamas, opens the cutlery drawer looking for a knife but there are none, he won't stop looking for it until he will find one in a random place. He's about to make a sandwich, the ingredients are already on the kitchen isle. TYRONE opening drawers.)

AISHA WILLIAMS

Thank you, daddy, you are the best.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

(Finds the knife in the tools drawer, opens the peanut butter jar, about to spread some on the bread, pauses, looks at AISHA)

Until what time did they say you could eat?

AISHA WILLIAMS

Nine? I've always loved your silverware. You are so elegant.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

(Looks at his watch and then spreads the butter on the bread)
How are you, princess?

AISHA WILLIAMS

(Taking her shoes off)
I'm ok, daddy. I just need this to be done. Finished. Over.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

(Handing her the sandwich on a plate)

Go on then.

(Pause. Concerned)

Are you sure?

AISHA WILLIAMS

(Eating and smiling)

Well, I'm a little bit tired from dancing all night but the thirties are the new twenties, aren't they?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

That's not what I'm asking.

AISHA WILLIAMS

I'm ok, dad. The divorce papers are already signed. Khareef doesn't care about me or the pregnancy so I'm free to do as I please. Who would have imagined that him not caring about me would turn out to be a good thing in the end, right?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Rrrr...ight.

AISHA WILLIAMS

I can't wait to start my new job next week. It's a considerable raise, it feels like I'm on the right path now.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Good.

AISHA WILLIAMS

I can achieve things from this position. I can help other people. It's gonna be amazing. Thank you so much for recommending me to Mr. Wordner.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I'm proud of you, baby.

AISHA WILLIAMS

(Raising her glass of water)

Clean slate for Aisha Williams, woohoo.

(Pause, TYRONE is not that into the festive mood, AISHA goes back to normalcy)

AISHA WILLIAMS (Cont'd)

Please, don't worry about me, as long as I have you nothing bad can happen to me. Seriously, don't worry.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

That's all I do, Aisha. About you and about your brothers.

AISHA WILLIAMS

I'm sorry.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

And I can't understand why you look so happy.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Well, we're fixing this, aren't we?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Are you sure this is what you want?

AISHA WILLIAMS

Yes.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I am way too old to raise another kid but why don't you want to do it? It's your...

AISHA WILLIAMS

Way too old! You're not even 55. Don't say that.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

54 years old is not young.

AISHA WILLIAMS

It is.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I mean as young as what I was when I had you all.

AISHA WILLIAMS

No, that wasn't even young, you were a child back then.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Yeah, well... And do you think I did a bad job?

AISHA WILLIAMS

Why? No. Of course not.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I think... maybe...

(Pause)

Listen, you're twelve years older than I was when I first became a father. Don't you think you are ready..

AISHA WILLIAMS

Do you think this is the time to come up with these questions? Now? Really? I'm practically minutes away to go get...

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I need to know. Why don't you want to raise a baby? It is a wonderful experience.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Is it?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Yes, sometimes.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Ok. Well, anyway... it's not that.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

So what is it?

AISHA WILLIAMS

Daddy, seriously, now??

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Yes, now. I want to understand you.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Ooof, ok, I'll tell you then. It's not raising the kid I'm worried about; it's the pregnancy itself. I still don't want to put my body through that. A pregnancy is a terrible thing.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

No, it's not.

AISHA WILLIAMS

I mean, what it does to your body, terrible things, with permanent effects. I'm not ready for that. I can't stand a single more day of these feelings, the crazy ups and downs, the morning sickness, this is changing me..

TYRONE WILLIAMS

You should think about it carefully, reconsider it after meditating or something, because... I don't know... I'm really not sure we should go through with the abortion today.

AISHA WILLIAMS

We?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

What?

AISHA WILLIAMS

Dad!

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I'm sorry, this is a stressful moment for all of us. You, ok? You shouldn't..

(Pause. Looking for some reason to dissuade her daughter...)
There might be... violent protesters by the clinic... I don't know.

AISHA WILLIAMS

There always are.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

No, seriously, people are really wound up about this subject, the protesters might be dangerous and even organized. The police will be there.

AISHA WILLIAMS

They always are, the churches in the neighborhoods establish shifts and they are there all the time with those brochures and pictures of... just flesh.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

How do you know that?

AISHA WILLIAMS

Friends. Facebook. Internet.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

So if we get to the clinic and they get aggressive and don't let us pass, then what?

AISHA WILLIAMS

You are a lawyer, since when are you scared of people?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I'm concerned about situations in which my baby can get hurt. Is that difficult to understand?

AISHA WILLIAMS

No, daddy, thank you.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

You know they could physically hurt you... or even worse, they could try and ruin your life.

AISHA WILLIAMS

What now? Aren't you getting a little bit overdramatic? Why are you... Are you really trying to change my mind now? And how would they even do that? How could some random strangers ruin my life?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

They take pictures of the people going into the clinics, they make videos and upload them to YouTube. They just put your face all over the internet for anyone to see.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Ha! That ship has already sailed. All our faces are all over the internet.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I mean in that context, while you are going into the abortion clinic. Everyone will see that, your friends, your future employers, your current employers, your clients, my clients, our family, anyone...

AISHA WILLIAMS

Well, let them see it. It's my right to get an abortion. It's my body.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Don't be naïve.

AISHA WILLIAMS

So it's not my body?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Your body is part of society, you are aware of that, aren't you? Do you want to get fired before you even started?

AISHA WILLIAMS

I'm not...

(Pause. That argument almost worked)

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I think you should have it.

AISHA WILLIAMS

The abortion.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

The baby!

AISHA WILLIAMS

What?! I'm not understanding this conversation at all. You've been supporting me from the first moment I told you and now what?

AISHA WILLIAMS (Cont'd)

What is going on? Why are you telling me all this today of all days? And why are you beating around the bush? Just get to the point and stop with the stupid protesters and the internet, what is it?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I... I'm... I'm not comfortable with the idea.

AISHA WILLIAMS

So?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I'm not comfortable at all.

AISHA WILLIAMS

I've heard you the first time. Why are you telling me now? You know what I want and what I need and you were supporting me. What the hell happened?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I'm sorry, baby. I was just waiting for you to come to your senses. Maybe I've waited for too long.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Wow.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I thought you would just... I don't know... I thought once the pressure of the divorce was over... you would see things clearer and reconsider having the baby.

AISHA WILLIAMS

That doesn't make any sense, daddy. It's all a pack of stress, the abortion goes in the same bundle.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Well, I'm sorry but I thought I raised you better than this.

AISHA WILLIAMS

I think you raised me really well, thank you. You taught me my rights and you taught me to fight for them.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

The life you are carrying has its rights as well...

AISHA WILLIAMS

Oh, my god! Please tell me we are not having this conversation.

(Pause)

You lied to me!!

TYRONE WILLIAMS

When did I lie to you?

AISHA WILLIAMS

You told me you supported me!

TYRONE WILLIAMS

And I do. Always. I will support you through the pregnancy and I will support my grandkid if needed.

AISHA WILLIAMS

There's no grandkid! Stop it!

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Listen, baby...

AISHA WILLIAMS

I'm not a baby anymore! Maybe that's the problem, that you don't think I can make my own decisions. You think my health and my future are still your sole responsibility...

TYRONE WILLIAMS

You're quite comfortable with that idea when I make phone calls to help you get a job or when I pay your health insurance or when I...

AISHA WILLIAMS

I'm a full grown woman now, ok? My body is mine.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

No, it's not. You can't say your body is yours. Private property doesn't apply to human bodies. Your body is not yours and whatever it contains is not yours either. That's a stupid concept and I don't know how it got so popular lately.

AISHA WILLIAMS

What? You're against abortion now because of... semantics? Philosophy? What is it?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

No. I just don't want you to have an abortion because I think it will ruin your life. Forever. You won't get over it.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Oh my god, you actually think I am that weak. I'm not actually a little princess daddy, I can take it.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

No, you can't. You won't be able to forget about it. I am just trying to help you have a better life here because... you know what? You are already a mother, AISHA. That's what you have to deal with.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Wha..? No, I am not!! What are you talking about?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

You are a mother now and you won't be able to stop fantasizing about the child that could have been, about the age that he or she would have been at different times in your life, about names, hair colors, smiles in the park, a little hand holding yours, he or she beside you... imagining where in the space around you that person would have been at a given moment. Orbiting you. Laughing.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Dad, stop it.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

You may not have this kid and he won't be around you, but the idea of that person will orbit around you forever and you'll have a worse life as a result of that.

AISHA WILLIAMS

How do you know that?

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I've seen it. I've heard the stories. Women fantasizing in any random moment of their life about what their unborn kids would have been doing then and then and then. Your brain just does it. It tortures you. And when I say random moments I mean even twelve, eighteen, thirty years after the abortions. Accept it, you are a mother now, Aisha.

AISHA WILLIAMS

No, I am not.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Say whatever you want but your only decision is to walk down that path with a living person by your side or with a dead embryo in your memory; but nothing, nothing will change the fact that, right now, it has already happened, you've become a mother.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Stop it! Seriously! Why are you doing this to me??

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Because the same goes for me. I'm not against abortion, I'm against YOUR abortion. You will be making me the grandfather of an idea I won't ever be able to get out of my mind. I can't. I don't want to go through that. Don't do this to me. I'd rather have a breathing person by my side than a ghost filling me with anguish, guilt, sadness and nostalgia. Why won't you?

AISHA WILLIAMS

Because I don't think I'll be filled with anything like that. I'll just be free to live my life. Those things you're saying happened to another generation. You had other things in your mind.

AISHA WILLIAMS (Cont'd)

You were brainwashed by restrictive social norms, fanaticism and religion and stupid values, we're not... my generation is... freer...

TYRONE WILLIAMS

(Laughs)

Right you are. Go on then. Have your beautiful abortion and doom us all but I'm not taking you to the clinic. Sorry, but no. Just no. You're right, Aisha, you're not my princess anymore. Go be freer someplace else.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Daddy.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Get out. I may as well live fantasizing about two people I've lost instead of just one. Who cares? Certainly not you.

AISHA WILLIAMS

Dad, please.

TYRONE WILLIAMS

Out. Now.