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## 8 Weeks

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# 8 Weeks

## Aiyana Ross-Beck

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"Miss Brown," his secretary is saying, "he is on a conference call right now. If you wait I can let him know you are here."

"I don't have time to wait David."

"Miss Brown," he shouts at me, but I am already at the door to Joe's office.

As I walk in, I swallow hard.

"So we are going to build this building in stages," he looks up and stops what he is saying maybe it is the fact that I am a mess or the expression on my face. "Liah, what's wrong."

"I am, I am..." I can't say the words. My beautiful blue eyed blonde architect boyfriend is standing, waiting for me to tell him why I had been crying and why I am scared and I can't say anything.

7 hours earlier

It is Monday December 19 at 7:45am and it is day five and nothing still. Oh my God, this could not be happening to me. I'm a fashion model turn editor at Runway magazine. I live in Brooklyn, New York. I'm not married, I mean have been with Joe for four years and we've live together for half that, but it is wedding than baby not the other way around. There is no way that I can be pregnant. We use protection and we are safe. Wait there was that night...

"Oh, fuck!" I shout unconsciously.

"Whaz wong?" asks Joe as he poked his head out of the bathroom with a month full of toothpaste.

"Forgot I have a meeting this morning with Emily," I lie as I stare at my stomach in the mirror. Emily is my boss. Honestly, no matter how mean and over controlling she is, she is still has an amazing editorial eye. But no matter how I spun this, Emily would not like a pregnant editor at her magazine, especially since I was her goddaughter.

"Oh, just tell Emily you were making me happy as always." He says cutting in between me and the mirror to plant a kiss on my lips.

It is his cute and adorableness that seemed to be causing my world as I know it to explode. "I think I'll stick with I over slept," I finish, turning away to get dressed in a hurry. I leave without saying goodbye, which is something I would never do and immediately start making calls as I walk to the subway station.

A gentle voice says, "Emily Piece's office"

"Hey, Liza it's Liah."

"Oh hey, what's up?"

"Look I need to push back my meeting with Emily to 2 o'clock"

"Liah, I can't, she's packed this afternoon."

"There is no time after 11 that I can meet with her?"

"Well I mean you can be her lunch appointment?"

"That works!"

"Okay then, be at Pastita at noon."

"Thanks doll."

"You owe me."

I hang up and run down the stairs and jump on the L train to Manhattan. Once out of the subway I start calling again.

"Hello, Doctor Kempner's office how can I help you?" a high pitched voice says.

"Hello, I need to make an emergency appointment for this morning." I begin.

"Regarding?"

"Look I just need an appointment."

"Ma'am I need to know what it is regarding."

"Look I maybe pregnant!"

"Oh, congratulations. How about 11 o'clock?"

Why the hell is this woman congratulating me, I don't want this. "How about in 15 minutes?"

"Oh, well her next availability is at 11 o'clock."

"Look I'm downstairs and I am not the kind of woman that can just sit around wondering if my whole life is going to change because the damn condom broke so I need you to help me out."

"In that case darling, how about in 10 minutes?"

"That works for me."

"Name?"

"Taliah Brown"

"Okay Miss Brown I will see you at 9:30"

"Thank you"

"You're welcome, ba bye"

"Bye"

I walk into the hospital building and get on the elevator to ride to the third floor.

"I am not pregnant;" I begin talking out loud to myself. "Dr. Kempner is just going to say that I have a late period and that this happens all the time. I just have to keep thinking positively." The elevator bell rang and I get out onto the third floor and head straight for the office.

Once inside the sterol environment, I walk up to the counter and begin whispering to the nurse. "Hi, I just called my name is Taliah Brown."

The nurse looks up, "Oh yes Miss Brown, fill out these forms and then we will call you in a moment." It was the same voice from the phone.

"Okay," I say as I take the clipboard with the forms. "Thank you."

"You're welcome," she says smiling.

I walk to sit down in one of the chairs nearest the door. I fill out the papers and then look up to see a woman who looks like she is in her third trimester. She is reading a magazine called *The American Lawyer* while rubbing her tummy. Holding her hand is who I presume to be her husband, playing with what must be a three year old. In front of me is this perfect image of family or at least the family I can imagine for myself. I mean the woman can't be that much older than me, guessing by the magazine a lawyer, and she has a child and another on the way. Can it be possible that I can have that with Joe? No, we have only talked about kids once and the bottom line in that conversation was that we weren't ready, but I was 27 years old and it's not like I had forever.

"Miss Brown?" says a new nurse.

Startled I look up to see the nurse is calling me to go back and see the doctor. I stand and look back once at that picture of family before going back with the nurse. The nurse guides me to a room that is even more sterile than the waiting room and with the added bonus of pictures that depict the insides of pregnant women. Normally this would not bother me, but not today. The pictures have become the horrors of what could be.

"So, I need to take your blood pressure," she says as she begins wrapping the blood pressure meter cuff around my arm. The pressure I begin to feel in my arm is almost equal to how my stomach feels. "Your blood pressure is fine. So may I ask why you in today." She unwraps my arm and begins to write on my chart.

"I believe there is a possibility I may be pregnant."

"How many days has it been since your last period?"

"34"

"Have there been any incidents of unprotected sex?"

"Yes"

"Have you taken an at-home pregnancy test?"

"No."

"Any chance you could have an STD or STI?"

"No! I mean no, we are monogamous."

"Okay," she turns around and head over to the sink and open a cabinet. "I am going to need you to pee in this cup. There is a bathroom across the hall. Leave it on the cart next to the door. Then come back and put on this gown." She passes me a gown and a cup. "The doctor will be in with you shortly," she finishes with a smile. (She exits.)

I stand and head for the bathroom. On my way all I can think is how I wish Joe was here. I pee in the cup, leave it on the cart, go back to the room, and put on the gown.

The next 10 minutes feel like hours. All I keep thinking is I am not pregnant and I just wasted a 10 dollar co-pay and the past hour and half.

Then Dr. Kempner comes knocking on the door, "Are you ready?"

"Yes."

She comes in, "Hey Liah, so I'm going to get straight to it, you are pregnant."

My face is expressionless; all I want to do is cry.

Dr. Kempner continues with no delay, "so let's take a look shall we, feet up please."

I place my feet in the stirrups as she begins to examine me.

"You are going to feel a little pressure, okay Liah?"

"Mmhmm"

"Okay, so you look to be about eight weeks pregnant." Dr. Kempner begins.

"But I've had a period."

"Well that could have just been spotting which is normal." Dr. Kempner continues (but that's when I'm gone in thought). I am pregnant. Do I want this? Should I tell Joe? What about my job? Would I be a good mom?

Before I can stop myself I say, "I can't listen to this right now."

"That is fine Liah; I will give you some time to process this. Why don't you make an appointment for the end of the week and then we will talk in more detail."

"Okay."

"Stop by the desk okay, to make the appointment before you leave."

"I will."

After Dr. Kempner leaves, I get dressed in a haze of thought. Eight weeks, I'm eight week pregnant. How is this possible? I pull out my blackberry. I begin to go through my calendar and count back the weeks. Oh my, it was during the Halloween party. My baby was conceived at a Halloween party. My baby. This thing inside of me is my baby. I have made my decision. I am going to keep my baby, even if Joe doesn't want to, because it is my baby. With this realization I grab my purse and head out to the front desk I make an appointment for after Christmas.

As I leave the doctor's office I begin to look around at all the different people and begin wondering who was going home to a family and then my phone rings. I reach in my bag to check my Blackberry. It is Joe calling. I don't know what to do. Am I supposed to pick up and drop the bomb that I am pregnant? No, I should tell him face to face. I ignore the call and check the time, it's 10:45. I had just an hour to get to Pastita to meet Emily. I walk to the subway and take the B train to Midtown. The subway train is a blur. As I walk up to the street I keep envisioning myself with a baby. The image is something that I never knew I wanted till now. I walk into Pastita and immediately stop thinking about babies. I have to get through this meeting. That is all that matters. I walk up to the hostess and she leads me to my table. I wait for about 10 minute and then I see Emily walk through the door. When she gets to the table I stand and give her a smooch before retaking my seat.

“So darling, why did you cancel are meeting this morning?” Emily starts. She is going to dig if I don’t give a fitting excuse.

“I hadn’t realized I had a doctor’s appointment,” I reply nonchalantly.

“Oh, are you well?”

“Yes it was a routine appointment.”

She eyed me not satisfied with my answer. Since my mom died when I was 8 Emily stepped in to fill the whole. She was my mom best friend. Never have children herself I was her only daughter. “Okayyyy, well since you don’t want to share why you rescheduled let’s get down to business.”

We discuss the spring issue and the new additions for about an hour.

“Oh Liah,” Emily says as she I gets ready to leave.

“Yes?”

“You are going to be joining me for all four fashion weeks this upcoming fall.”

“Oh, wow, Emily thank you so much.”

“You earned it love.” she finishes as she leaves the table. She turns back quickly, “Don’t forget Christmas dinner at my house on Sunday.”

“I won’t.”

“Cause your Godfather misses you.”

I am going to fashion week in the fall. It is an honor that I have waited for since becoming a part of her staff six years ago. Then it hits me I can’t go. It’s not like you can bring babies to fashion week. My boss just gave me an opportunity of a life time that I can’t even take because of this pregnancy. I get up and am walking out of the restaurant when I notice it is raining. I have my thick coat and hat but neither is a protectant from the rain. I jump in a cab a call my best friend Maya.

“Hello”

“Mai.”

“Hey Liah, I was just thinking about you and that...”

“I’m pregnant”

“What?”

“I’m pregnant”

“I mean... where are you?”

“In a cab on Broadway.”

“I will meet you at Lynn’s in 15 minutes.”

“Mai I’m fine.”

“Bull shit I will see you in 15 minutes.”

“Fine 15 minutes.”

I hang up the and give the cab driver the new street address for Lynn’s Tea House a corner place Maia and I meet to chat at least once a week.

The cab driver pulls over and I hop out, pay, and walk down to Lynn's Tea House. Maia is already sitting there with a cup of coffee. As I walk in, I remember when Maia had her daughter. She used to complain about Mackenzie and how she cried and never slept but her little Asian princess is her pride and joy.

"So when did you find out?" Maia asks as she hand me a cup of tea.

"This morning, I went to the doctor. I am eight weeks along."

"Oh my goodness, I going to be an Auntie."

"Maybe not," I say with a sigh.

"You don't want it."

"No I do, but I don't think Joe does and my job doesn't exactly fit with a baby schedule."

"Oh, well no, but you could make it work with your job."

"But what about Joe?"

"Well, he said he doesn't want you to have it?"

"No, I haven't told him."

"What, why?"

"Because I don't want to call and say I am pregnant to my boyfriend who doesn't want kids right now."

She look into her cup, "Got your point. Well then go to his job and talk to him. But Liah you need to decide for yourself if you want this baby or not. Otherwise you may end up make a decision you regret."

"I think I want this baby Mai." I say looking her in the eyes.

She smiles and we begin talking about when she was pregnant with Mackenzie.

45 minutes later we leave the Tea House and go our separate ways.

I decide to walk even though it is still raining. I begin to think about what Maiahad said about deciding what I want. I want a family. It is a part of The Plan. I had to work since I was 15 to become a fashion model, editor was the next step, then it is to get married to the love of my life, and finally have lots babies. That was The Plan, but plans change and maybe the love of my life isn't a man but a child. I look down and touch my tummy. This baby was going to change everything in my world but I am 27 years old and able to handle this. I begin to think about if I have to do it alone. Joe may stay around but what if he doesn't? My mother had been a single parent. She had left my father in the Dominican Republic to raise me in the United States. If she could do it living pay-check to pay-check I can do it financially secure. There is a long road ahead of me, but I am ready for it.

I begin walking towards where Joe office building is. It is about a 20 minute walk in the rain. I get to his office tired. My prefect dark ringlet curls dripping wet from the rain. I start to his office not paying attention to the fact that his secretary is trying to stop me.

"Miss Brown," his secretary is saying. "He is on a conference call right now. If you wait I can let him know you are here."

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“I am, I am...” I can’t say a word. My beautiful blue eyed blonde architect boyfriend is stand wait for me to tell him why I have been crying and why I am scared and I can’t say anything.

“Mr. Fenton sir I need to go an emergency just came up.” He hung up the phone and walk over to me with a concerned look on his face.

“Liah you can tell me what is wrong.”

“I am...” I look away from him so I can get the rest out while the waterworks begin. “I am pregnant.”

“What?”

“I’m eight weeks pregnant,” I say moving away from him and his shocked face. “I know you don’t want kids and you don’t have to stay with me, but I’m keeping it.” Still nothing from the statue I call Joe. “I should go we can discuss the rest of this later.” I move toward the door still keeping me back to Joe.

“How long have you known.”

“I went to the doctors this morning.”

I leave the room and make it out of his office before I break in every way possible. This baby, my baby is the end of so much. As I touch my tummy, I realize that it is also the beginning of so much more.