

Stay

By Kennisha Jonesel

Ann sat underneath the kitchen table listening to her parents arguing. She watched her life fall apart in a matter of minutes.

“I never loved you! I just needed help after I got pregnant.” her mother screamed.

“How could you say such a thing after all of these years?” Her father asked.

“Easy, I just did!”

“You can say whatever you want, but I know you love me!”

Ann’s mother wiped the tears away from her eyes. She went over to the cabinet, grabbed a frying pan, and raised it over her head. Her father stepped closer to her with tears in his eyes. He reached for the pan, but her mother stepped backwards.

“Everything I’ve ever said to you was a lie!” Ann’s mother said.

“I don’t believe you! Why waste so much time with me, if none of this was real?” asked Ann’s father.

“I told you, I needed help.”

“Wait...”

Ann’s father dropped down to his knees, tears flowing from his eyes. The more he wiped them away, the more they fell. He sat on the floor sobbing into his hands. Ann wanted to crawl to him so bad, but knew she’d get in trouble for being in the kitchen

while her parents fought. She scooted next to the leg of the table and held on to it as she cried with her father. She covered her mouth, trying to cover the sound of her whimpering. She noticed that her father had stopped crying. He stood up and faced her mother.

“Is Ann mine?” he asked.

That one question stopped both Ann and her mother in their tracks. Ann looked up at her father. She couldn’t believe he would ask such a thing. Her mother started to slowly step backwards, frying pan still above her head.

“Answer the damn question! Is she mine?” Ann’s father asked.

“I told you, everything I ever told you was a lie.” Ann’s mother replied.

Ann felt like a bullet had went through her chest. She couldn’t believe what she just heard. It was as if the same bullet had gone through her father’s chest. He stood in front of her mother with a blank stare. He turned around and headed towards the bedroom. As soon as he left the kitchen, Ann’s mother dropped the frying pan in the sink and breathed a sigh of relief. She leaned over the sink and turned on the water. As soon as she stuck her head under the water, Ann ran to her parent’s room.

“Daddy?” Ann whispered.

Ann slowly walked into the room with tears falling down her face. Her father was packing up his bags. He had smashed every single picture in the room, except Ann’s. She watched as her father grabbed every single piece of clothing he owned and stuffed it into his traveling bags.

“Daddy, are you leaving?”

“Yes, I have to go! Your mother doesn’t want me here.”

“She didn’t say that.”

Ann’s father paused and turned around. He saw his little girl’s shirt wet from tears. He walked over to her, moved her hair out of her face, and cupped her face.

“You heard all of that, huh? Ann’s father asked.

“Please don’t be mad.” Ann replied.

“I could never be mad at you baby, but I do have to leave.”

“No you don’t daddy, you can stay.”

“I have too Ann.”

Ann’s father went over to his bags and zipped them up. He picked them up and headed towards the door. Ann ran in front of him and sat down.

“Stay Daddy!” Ann screamed.

“I wish I could.” Ann’s father said.

Ann began to cry. Her father sat his bags down and picked her up. He picked his bags back up and opened the door. He walked over to the front door and put Ann down. He could hear her mother screaming in the kitchen still. Ann once again sat in front of the door.

“I wish I could take you with me baby, but I can’t. I have to go.” Ann’s father said.

“I said stay!” Ann screamed.

Ann’s father unlocked the door. He smiled once more at what use to be his daughter. When he went for the door, Ann got up and ran crying to her room. He looked

once more at what had been his life for the last eight years. He turned the knob and walked out into the world to find his next life.