

The park was filled with people. They were streaming in from everywhere. The Digicel banner waved proudly from the stage as the MC introduced the next act, a singer duo second prize winner of Digicel Rising Star from some years back. Tanya picked up Cheeny, lodged her at her hip, grabbed Jean's hand and barked at Adriana to slow down and be careful. Adriana was running, running after Tara who was too far ahead. Rosalind dialled Alexandria's number. She answered on the first ring.

"Alex yuh sure yuh naah come?"

"Mom, it's best if I just stay home."

"The show good so far, wish you when deh yah fi see Christopher Martin him really can sing and Sandra Brooks a go come on later."

"Christopher Martin was the guy who won the Digicel rising star thing two years ago right?"

"No him win it five years ago or something like dat."

"A so long?"

"It free, Tanya can just come fi yuh."

"Mom, I don't want the same thing to happen with Clair that happen last time, I will just stay home." Alexandria said firmly.

Rosalind knew when her daughter wouldn't budge from a decision she had made, so she quickly said goodbye and held on to her granddaughter's hand. Adriana began to fuss and Rosalind began to cuss. They soon came to an agreement that satisfied them both and Rosalind began to enjoy the night once more.

I am having problems writing this part. It just doesn't seem to be coming out right. It still feels uncomfortable when I think of it and I am a grown woman of 35. This happened at least thirty years ago and yet whenever I think of it, it still feels like yesterday. I am here, sitting at

this desk, trying to convince myself that this part is unimportant, that there is no reason for me to tell you this part of my story, that it serves no purpose in exposing you to this particular truth, that I am a grown woman who should have already gotten over all of this and "strong enough" to sweep it under the rug and move on with my life and those with me are trying to convince me of that. Funny thing is, in writing this to you I am trying to "move on with my life".

All my life I have kept these things buried, sharing it only in tidbits to those who I couldn't help but share it with. Today I need to tell you in detail what I have kept hidden for so long. Something I feel ashamed to tell anyone. This skeleton that won't stay dead and buried covered up beneath the ground. And I don't see why I must keep it a secret, why is it okay to never tell that they molested me, raped me, had sex with me when they shouldn't have while it is okay for them to do it. Valid question that I haven't found a satisfying answer to as yet. Hell, why is it so difficult to just tell the truth! I am tired of hearing how wonderful he was, when I know without a doubt that he was not a good man, not someone to be honoured, not someone to speak well of, not someone who did what was right nor what was good. Yet everybody loved him, think highly of him and I sit in the corner every time, afraid to say that he was not a good man as you say, he was an horrible man who is not worthy of all the praises you keep on giving him. You see there are many men around me who I know who fit this bill, I am not talking about just one man, they are many men! I should correct this and say many people, don't I?

But I get it, how I see him when I am hurting right now, is not how others see him, for them he was and is a loving father, beloved

brother, uncle, cousin and son, a loyal friend, a good lover, a great provider, maybe even considered a trustworthy individual with some flaws of course but overall 'a good person'. And the truth is there were good side to him. He could make others laugh easily, afterall he was very charming and I am sure if you speak to those who love him, including myself, we at times can easily talk about the many nice things he did way back then. And there is no mistaking it, I do love this person that had done these things to me. But still what he did was wrong. And he knew it was wrong. I forgave him years ago when I was a child, here I am again having to go through the process of forgiving them all over again - why is that I wonder.

You see, I don't think you want to hear this, something is fighting me here with just writing this down, and I have not handed it to you as yet - why is that? Based on all my years of experience with this and your reaction when I try to tell you and what have occurred in my life so far in trying to write this to you, why is there a resistance to me telling you something that happened to me years ago, I keep on wondering - why. And so, I am certain that you don't want to hear about or handle what I am about to tell you, you prefer if I remain silent, pretend that it never happened, that I am ok with it and it has not have a major impact on everything I have done in my life - both sexually and non-sexually. You prefer that I say it is ok I am over it, it is done and over with, all in the past. I thought I was over this, yet here it is again, unwelcomed but present. So I must say it...face it...deal with it...conquer it, overcome it and then re-bury it as I have done so many times before. Hopefully never to have it resurrected again, so here goes. When did this become something, one cannot and should not talk about? If I was talking to a child, I would

tell her or him to tell, yet here I am nervous and scared to write this, afraid of what you will say and think of me – amazing. Afraid of the consequences of telling you the truth, afraid that these things won't get better but worst by telling you the truth – how is that possible?

How do I put into words what happened? How do I share with you this experience - the feelings of fear, shame, pleasure, hopelessness, numbness and blankness? I am not sure if I know how, but I intend to try. You are the first person I will tell.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

I woke up feeling something wet on me. It took a moment for me to realize what was happening. I wasn't surprised to see him there. It wasn't the first time he had been in our room. But what he was doing felt strange. He had never done that to me before. What I was feeling was something wet on me, not the silky smooth oily way that the Vaseline felt which he always uses on me when he was doing his thing. This was a different kind of wetness. With my eyes tightly shut, I turned on my side pretending to still be asleep. I was afraid, so afraid and ashamed: afraid to let him know that I knew what he was doing to me, ashamed because I was afraid. I was afraid to face him, afraid to tell him to stop. And yet, I knew it wouldn't help even if I told him to stop. For the first couple times when he had just started some years before, I had fought but quickly realized that he was bigger and stronger than me. He could easily lift me up and take me wherever he wanted me to be and he did. In my eyes he seemed like a giant, bigger, stronger towering over me like Goliath and I was no David. It made no sense physically fighting he would just hold me in place. So, I lay there filled with fear and waited. On occasions this trick had

worked – turning away from him unto my side. When he stopped what he was doing and I heard his footsteps as he walked out of our bedroom, I thought it had worked. I listened as he went to the fridge, held my breath and waited for his return. He didn't return – relieved, I fell sleep again.

When I woke the second time he was doing it again. I lay there feeling disappointed, afraid and ashamed, resigned to my fate I tried to keep my body still as he did his thing. As I often do when he was doing these things to me, I went inside of me, somewhere safe there in me where I just watched him and me, listening, observing and feeling. That night was no different. I watched, listened, observed and feel. You know, this energy, I think people call it the person's aura, well this aura is always there with him when he was doing these things to me – a sneaky, stealthy, lusty, sensual dark presence. It always felt like it hanged over him, seemed bigger than him somehow. Even once it was like I was looking straight into that presence, that monster's glaring beady eyes – separate and apart from him, just suspended over him glaring lustfully gleefully at me. It's hard to explain. I was young and scared out of my wits, not sure of what I was seeing and feeling then. But that night, I was aware of this man between my legs doing what he was doing. So, I lay there with my eyes closed and feel, filled with shame, sexual energy and fear.

I felt his tongue slide over my clits up and down stroking it as he had often done with his fingers or his penis on other occasions. Then his tongue slipped inside of me and I could feel the tip of his tongue darting in and out of me. My body responded as it always did. I felt the pleasure rushed from his tongue to me. As though a lightning bolt had run from him to me energizing me from within, my senses heightened and suddenly I could smell

his manly scent, the alcohol on his breath. I could hear his jagged breathing, feel his pleasure and mine. And then all those sensations rushed to my head and my body exploded. It wasn't the first time he had made me cum but it was the first time it had been so intense. I fell asleep immediately and when I woke up again he was gone, it was day light and my mother was shaking me awake. I got up, push the memories of the night behind me and went to get ready for school.

After that night, I stopped reading the Bible and stopped praying. After all, if god existed, he would have come to my rescue and he wouldn't have let him touch me would he? So I reasoned that god must not really exist, how could god exist and allow such evil? Incidentally that night was the first time I had a clairvoyant experience. At that age, I had just questioned how I could be re-enacting the very thing that I had just experienced in my dreams and didn't worry much about it. After all, seeing what is about to happen several minutes before it happen is just not possible right. How can one see the future when the future does not exist yet.



Revelations

**Sometimes things
aren't as they seem**

Alexandria felt on edge. She knew Tristan was awake, and she knew he wasn't feeling well. Alexandria lowered the phone and looked at the blank screen. No reply to her texts. No answer to her calls. She dialled again. Nothing.

She pressed her lips together and tried to breathe through the panic rising in her chest. She knew she was acting the way Tristan hated—clingy, anxious, impossible to soothe. The way she hated being too. Still, the impulse would not

leave her. She needed to know where he was, whether he was safe. Something felt off, though she could not have said why.

For the eleventh time, she reminded herself that she and Tristan were not together, that his whereabouts were none of her business. Still, the thought slipped in, sharp and poisonous: *Was he cheating?*

At some point, exhaustion pulled her under—only for her to be jerked awake.

“Wake up,” it rasped.

Alexandria looked up and flinched. A dark figure stood over her, somehow blacker than the darkness around it. She had seen it before, yet it still made her skin crawl. She squeezed her eyes shut, breathed a silent prayer, then opened them again.

The figure was gone.

Alexandria lay awake, too shaken to sleep.

Tristan Davis felt on edge. The pool table was getting crowded, the noise pressing in on him from all sides. He handed the cue to the girl beside him and moved toward the bar.

The impulse to call Alexandria came over him with sudden force.

He pulled out his phone. Twenty messages from her. Two from his mother. Three from his sister. Two from a friend. One from Pamela. His jaw tightened. Pamela was his supervisor, so if she was calling, it probably meant something was up at work.

Tristan dialled Pamela’s number.