

Doctor In a Tube

Around five o'clock in the evening, Jasmine called an emergency meeting with her cousin, Indigo, and her ex-boyfriend, Devon, who is also her son's father. For the past two weeks, Jasmine had found herself unable to hold food down; she had been constantly nauseous throughout the day, and her sense of smell had heightened to the point where everything around her stunk. All she knew was that she couldn't act neurotic about her feelings because then people would notice.

"Damnit, Jas, you better not be pregnant!" she said to herself.

Jasmine's flu-like symptoms couldn't have come at a worse time. She had just landed the role of a lifetime as one of the leads in a new law drama on one of the most important streaming services in the world. She was at peace with her life, and the drama between her and Devon was finally over. Her life had been in order since their extensive conversation two months ago about being co-parents and nothing else. Jasmine walked into her bedroom. It had a soft gray color palette, contrasting against the rustic elements of exposed ceiling beams and stacked stone, giving it a cozy feeling. Floor-to-ceiling windows allowed a beautiful view of the Chicago Skyline and Lake Michigan. Jasmine sat in the middle of her king-size Monett Tufted Upholstered bed, trying not to panic. She picked up her cell phone and called Indigo. The phone rang three times before Indigo picked up; her voice came through loud and clear as the wind zipped past her as if she were in a convertible with the top down.

"Hey, girly, I'm headed to your house right now, just leaving the office," Indigo said.

"Indy, I need you to do me a favor. Can you stop at Walgreens and pick me up something?" Jasmine said, her voice slightly nervous.

"Yeah, what do you need?" Indigo asked.

Jasmine felt a lump in her throat as she took a deep breath before answering her question.

“A box of saltine crackers, some Ginger Ale, the Canada Dry kind, and a Clear Blue pregnancy test.”

Indigo rolled her car windows up and turned the volume as if she couldn't hear what was said.

“Run that by me one more time, Jas, because that sounded like you asked for the ‘I-think-I’m pregnant’ test kit, and I know you don’t need that,” Indigo said with disbelief.

Jasmine’s nervousness and irritation were evident as she rolled her eyes at the phone, even though Indigo couldn’t see her.

“Look, can you stop and get it before Devon gets here? I haven’t felt right for the past few weeks, and I need to know if this is a virus or something else,” Jasmine pleaded urgently.

Indigo sucked her teeth loudly.

“Girl, I swear to God if you’re pregnant—”

“—Just get it and get here, damnit!” Jasmine hung up the phone and lay on the bed in the fetal position. She closed her eyes tightly and began to pray that she had the flu.

“Oh God in heaven, please let me have the flu. If it’s the flu, I promise I won’t have sex again until I get married,” Jasmine whispered her plea to God.

Jasmine was startled by a small, innocent voice as she prayed quietly to herself.

"Mommy, you're not feeling well?" the voice said sweetly. Jasmine opened her eyes to find her three-year-old son, Jerome, standing beside her bed, looking at her with concern.

"No, baby, my stomach hasn't been feeling right all day," Jasmine replied.

"Do you need to go to the hospital?" asked Jerome.

"Let's hope not. I will know what's wrong when Indy arrives from the store," Jasmine reassured him.

Jasmine closed her eyes again as Jerome climbed into bed and started playing with her cell phone. Her anxiety made her feel like it took Indy ten hours to get to her house from the store. Ten minutes later, Jasmine heard Indigo closing the front door and climbing the stairs to her bedroom. Indigo called out to Jasmine as she made her way to the bedroom.

"Jas, where are you?" She opened the bedroom door to find Jerome lying on Jasmine's back while playing games on her phone. Jasmine's head was hanging over the bed, facing a wastebasket. Indigo could see that Jasmine was exhausted, as if she had been vomiting all day.

"Oh, honey chile', you look like death ran you over twice," Indigo said to Jasmine as she lifted her head and placed it back on the bed.

"You got the test?" Jasmine said nervously.

"I got it; let me help you to the bathroom."

Indigo helped Jasmine to the bathroom, and Jerome got up and followed behind.

"Can I come, mommy? I want to help," Jerome said. Jasmine grabbed his hand.

“Yes, I will need all the support I can get.”

Indigo helped Jasmine into the bathroom, handed her the pregnancy test, and closed the door behind them. The bathroom had a luxurious vibe; it was serene and edgy with a contemporary layout. Jasmine did some of her best thinking in this room once she lit her candles and turned on her aromatherapy diffuser. After she followed the instructions that came with the test, she flushed the toilet and sat Jerome on her lap as they awaited the results. The silence in the bathroom made Jasmine hear her heartbeat. Jasmine held Jerome tightly, continuously kissing his face to take her mind off the issue. Jerome didn't understand what was happening, but he loved the attention from Jasmine as she held him tightly. Jerome noticed the test on the sink.

“Mommy, what's that tube-looking thingy?” Jerome asked.

“It will tell me if I have the flu,” Jasmine replied.

“It's a doctor in a tube?” Jerome asked.

“Yep,” Jasmine giggled as she replied to him.

“So, when I get sick, I can use it instead of going to the hospital?” Jerome asked.

“No baby, this is just for girls,” Jasmine stated.

“Girls get to have all the good stuff,” Jerome huffed as he crossed his arms and stuck out his bottom lip.

Jasmine smiled at Jerome as her knees shook like a drug addict feenin' for a hit. Jasmine knew who the last person was she had sex with. It was two months ago, with Devon. This time, they decided to go their separate ways for good and had “Goodbye Sex.” She thought this pregnancy test, or Doctor in a tube as Jerome puts it, was taking too long.

"I'M AN IDIOT!" Jasmine screamed out.

Just then, Jasmine's alarm on the phone goes off. Per the instructions, the results will show in three minutes. Sweat gushed down her face like a broken dam filled with water. Jasmine turned over the pregnancy test and read the results. To her dismay, it wasn't the flu, just a baby. What was she going to do? She thought to herself. Her career was just now taking off. Tears poured down her eyes as she buried her face in Jerome's chest. The sound of the doorbell ringing made the tears flow faster because she knew Devon was at the door. Within seconds, Jasmine had to tell everyone she was pregnant or that her new show got picked up.

Jasmine stood up, washed her face, grabbed Jerome's hand, and headed to the living room. Waiting at the bottom of the stairs was the last person she wanted to see... Devon. Even though, in the past, his standing there in his six-foot-three, dark, and handsome glory would have made her weak in the knees and maybe rekindled their love, Jasmine knew that it had to be different this time. No more toxic relationships. Jasmine looked at Indigo and nodded in agreement that she was indeed pregnant. Indigo looked at her with disappointment, knowing she would become a stay-at-home mom and try to work things out with Devon again. Jasmine cleared her throat once Devon and Jerome settled down from happily greeting each other.

"I have an announcement to make," Jasmine said as she looked at Devon.

"I'm..."