

#### 42 Months

Month 1: June 17, 2004

I made it. I finally made it to high school, just go by the skin of my teeth. Thank God for summer school. I could say it wasn't all my fault but that would be a lie. I could say that because of the divorce I was less focused on school. I should be saying that I was too worried about my next home rather than homework, high school and college- I should have said that but I would only be lying. I never felt the need to try hard, I thought I was too good, too smart to give an effort. Its always easier to tell yourself and others lies because it was too much to worry, hurt, and trouble to face the truth.

I told myself that despite what I went through I would change how I was at school so I can do good. I fed myself another lie. My mind wasn't ready to change yet, not for at least three more years.

My mother had always found a way to pull me through and she had me by the hand once again. She had her own plans for me. She decided that I should go to an art school, so I didn't fight back against her plans. I submitted my portfolio, went to the interview and got in, naturally.

Month 6:

Things were going good at school- I was on track ,simply because it was easy, learning was always an easy and fast process for me. I was proud to be a Salem Sun devil. I even tried out for the basketball team and made it. My head got a little big only from hope. I was going to start a new me. No one would have to know the old me. No one would ever know that I was so introverted I had no real friends, just classroom associates. Or that I used to bully people only because I was scared of people. Or that I secretly **Envyed** the athletes because I was too shy to try out for anything. No- Salem High would never know that, they would only know the me I was scared to be in middle school. But, it seemed like the more comfortable I got in my new self, the more I felt myself slipping into my old one.

We had a rough Christmas that year. It was hard on me it was the first year without my grandparents, my father, and my brother. Just me and my mom. It was rough on her too I seen it in her eyes. I felt her pain but there was no way I could save her from it and it was killing me.

My mother was a Virgo, which meant she was loud, outgoing, friendly, pessimistic, but strong. She kept her feelings inside, I guess that's where I get it from. We were complete opposites but not by choice. If it were up to her I would be her twin. This is the reason we bumped heads so much. I wanted to be young mentally. ~~100%~~ Though I already found my own narrative voice and value system. She hated this because she strived for total control of the world.

I didn't mind giving up a bit of power to ease the stress of raising me. I wanted to change so bad but I couldn't. I knew I had let my old self leak though. My grades matter less each day.

Month 12

Another summer in school- I fucked up again. I would have to put up with the usual nagging from my mom.

When are you going to learn?! Why wont you just do what you need to do?! Do you like summer school?! Why do you feed me lies and I find out at the last minute that you're off track, and I end up doing all of the work, trying to help you out of your hole?! Laicia, will you please work with me this year?

I heard this every semester, every year from middle school through high school.

Month 15: 10th grade

My best friend needed a place to stay so naturally being the kind person I am I told Rachel she can stay with me. She was having problems with her aunt since her grandmother had a stroke and went into the nursing home. She was beyond strong because I know her grandmother was her everything and it was killing her inside. We haven't seen or talked to each other in a while because of all the moving I've done.

Rachel and I have known each other since we were six. She was my only friend when I got to Virginia. She gave me her friendship so I was forever loyal to her. We became closer than friends

and more like sisters. We were so close that we didn't have to speak to know each others thoughts.

Things were okay until everyone got comfortable with each other. It was cool having my best friend live with me I was given a second chance to bandage our distant relationship. She grew up faster than me, in every way. October came and she was already bored with my quiet and homely personality and lifestyle. I didn't want her to leave or make her unhappy- I think she knew this.

"Lay please, I would do it for you. Please Lay-."

It worked every time. I would find a way to make anything she wanted possible.

It even worked when I let her sneak in some boys and they stole all the alcohol from my mothers bar. We didn't notice until my mother said something.

Trinette: "ALACIA TARIA TAYLOR!! Get down here!"

Alaicia: "Yes"

Trinette: "What happened to my alcohol?!"

Alaicia: "What?"

Trinette: "You heard me! Don't play stupid."

Alaicia: "What are you talking about?" I walk through the kitchen to the bar. I can't believe it's gone! What am I going to tell her? Why didn't I put this up before they came over? What am I going to say? Should I tell her truth? OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD!

Alaicia: "I don't know."

Trinette: "Are you gon' sit here and lie to me! What happened to it!"

Alaicia: "I don't know."

Trinette: "RACHEL! Get down here!"

Rachel: "Yes Ms. Tee"

Trinette: "What happened to my alcohol?"

Rachel: "I don't know."

Trinette: "Ya'll better stop playin' with me. Somebody better tell me something. Alaicia what happened?"

Alaicia: "...I don't know."

Trinette: "What did you do with it?"

Alaicia: "I drank it."

Trinette: "Where did you throw the bottles?"

Alaicia: "Outside."

T: "Where!"

A: "Behind the fence in the alley."

T: "Go get them. Hurry up!"

I searched frantically around the backyard for bottles that weren't there. I was only stalling to buy enough time to come up with a story. She came out to see my progress

T: "So where are they?"

A: "I sold them?"

T: "You sold them? What do you mean you sold them?!"

A: "I needed money to get my cell phone."

T: "Stop fucking lying!"

A: "I'm not!"

I pulled out my cell phone that my grandmother bought me.

T: "Where did you get that from and why do you have it?"

A: "I bought it with the money I got from the bottles to call granny."

Even though it would enrage her further, but it was a good enough to make the lie believable.

T: "Give it here and get yo' ass in the house! You getting the hell out of my house! I'm wit dealing with this type of bullshit. Both of ya'll pack your shit."

R: "Ms. Tee what did I do?"

T: "She wasn't doing shit like this 'til you came and i know you helped her so both of ya'll are leaving."

Rachel is heartbroken to have to move again and her only option would be her grandfather's house. She dreaded this because he was almost ninety, he could barely hear and is blind as a bat. Not to mention she would have to change school's. That was the only thing on her mind- the fact that my mom was mad enough to kill- that was only number twenty in a scale of one to ten on

how much she cared.

Rachel: "Laicia, Ima tell her if you don't tell her or she gon' put us out."

Alaicia: "No, I cant! Not now. Just wait"

R: "No she serious, tell her!"

A: "No, calm down and just be quiet. Don't say nothing"

R: "Laicia she really serious, and I have no where else to go, tell her the truth."

A: "No. If I do that you really gon' get put out 'cause it was mostly yo' fault. So just do what she say for now, pack yo' stuff but do it slow. Act like you real sad and give her a chance to calm down. She not really gon' put us out. If she ask you anything just say I don't know."

R: "Laicia she fa real, she's really gon' make us leave, I'm telling her the truth. What am I gon' do?"

A: "She not serious I go through this a lot. Even if she was, you act like she was just gon' put you out, so don't say nothing"

R: "Aite whatever, I see what kind of friend you are, you just gone let her send me to my granddads? Whatever , I don't even care anymore. Tell her what ever you want."

A: " UUGGHHH!!, I wish you would stop doing that. Look. Just don't say nothin' ok"

R: " What ever you the worst friend ever, maybe I should go to my granddads. You probably did this to get me kicked out, if you did I hate you."

A: "You're the one who called them over here!- okay what ever , it's good , hate me!"

I left her room and went in mine and laid down. I fell asleep in my clothes. I was so stressed about the night before, I didn't even bother getting under the covers. I woke up the next morning scared to eat breakfast in fear that my mother would be downstairs. I went to the bathroom . I tried to see if Rachel was up on the way back to my room. I didn't want to do anything loud to stir up any emotions from last night. I was sure my mom wasn't here but then I heard her on the phone telling her best friend about my fiasco last night. I knew I would hear her mouth about it all day. I stayed in my room just laying on my bed. I feel asleep again and when I woke up Rachel was in the bed with me. When I got up she woke up.

A: "Whatchu doin' in here?"

R: "I came in here to wake you up, yo mom was snapping again she wouldn't even let me eat breakfast. You wouldn't wake you so I laid down and fell asleep"

A: "Oh"

R: "You not still mad from last night are you?"

A: No, I know you ain't mean it.

She smiles

R:" What time is it?"

A: "Uhh... 3:23"

R: "Dang!, We was sleep a long time."

A: "Yeah I know. You know what, I think we shoulda left"

R: "Why? And where we gon' go?"

A: "We could've went to my grandma's house. I'm tired of this."

R: "So what are you thinking?"

A: "I'm thinking its time for a change"

Month 21

I had never been away from my mother but I knew a change was needed. I still couldn't believe that December I caught a plane to California. I kept in close contact with my grandma because she helped me get away from Virginia, from drama, from sadness.

It was February and my mother was on her way to come and 'rescue' me from California. It took her a month and a half to pack up, sell the extra, and be on her way. I was nervous about her coming to come get me. I was scared because I knew she would be mad, worried, hurt, and confused. I didn't know which emotion she would show first. I didn't want to be 'rescued' but I was happy that she cared so much.

Well soon she will be in California any day and she was going to take me away and into her world once again. I guess that I would have to get used to living in her world, her life, for her.

Month 25

The end of February I was back in her possession. I was one month away from being a junior and this time I did it with straight A's. I went to Mt. Eden High because my father lived in Hayward. But

now that my mother had come to rescue me it would be harder for me to commute because we were staying with a friend of the family until my mother got stable.

I felt bad for making her move so suddenly but I knew it was the best for me. This was the first year I didn't have to go to summer school. I was proud because I knew that was a good thing but the majority of me wanted to be in summer school.

Month 30

I was excited to start school.