

I do not know this yet but in four days, I'll be dead. I have been told that I'm one who tells a tale much too quickly because of the excitement that comes with telling it. I am sure you are curious as to how I'll die and so I will get on with this tale of mine.

It will start on Wednesday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2019, I'll remember this date clearly because I will check my phone that morning by 11 a.m. I will be sending out yet another email application for a remote job. I do have a job, but I want to quit. I believe I am not getting paid enough, not with Nigeria's economic situation.

I mean, I live with my parents even though I'm twenty-nine and I have the resources to move out; but I have this idea that there's no rush; I'm not being chased by my parents and my mom has this ancient belief that a lady should not stay alone but move from her parents' house to her husband's house and while I intensively disagree, we both agree that it's okay that I'm still at home.

I know that one day I will have to move out, not to my husband's house like my mother expects but to my own place. I haven't told my parents yet, but I do not plan on getting married. I know you're not here to hear about my love life but about the cause of my death; nevertheless, it is my story, and I will tell it how I like.

I choose not to marry because I am asexual; this is something I have never told anyone; but I will be dead, so I don't care if the world knows or not. I don't know anyone who is like me, and I wish I did so I could be relatable. It's 2019 and there's an emergence of people being open about their sexuality, including a few women and while I applaud them for that, I have never seen anyone talk about how they have no desire or how they are not sexually attracted to anyone. So, my friends mock me for not having crazy sexual experiences as they do and I can't relay to them that; although I have kissed men, had relationships and have even been sexually intimate, it does nothing for me.

I have never spoken to a Professional about this, but one can start to tell these things when they get to their early twenties; when they want to be wild and live life, but there is no wildness going on for you. I feel like I've told you enough about my sexual life now, so let's get back to the point.

I will close my laptop after I send the application email. It's a lazy day for me and I'll decide not to work that day, so I'll lay on my bed scrolling through Instagram. I'll like a few pictures, type 'lol' when I am in fact not laughing at all and decide that if I do not want to die of hunger; I better go make something for myself.

My parents will not be home; I don't expect them to be, my dad will be at work and my mother will probably go to her best friend's house where she spends her whole day tittle-tattling. Sometimes I get jealous of their friendship because I don't have close relationships like that, and it gets lonely.

When I get to the kitchen, I'll go through what's available like someone who didn't do this same routine the day before, I wouldn't want to eat rice and I'll opt for spaghetti instead. All this information will be crucial, I promise. The problem will be that I'll need to go get tomato sauce for the spaghetti cause after having checked the kitchen there will be none left. That afternoon, at 1 pm, I'll throw on a light dress and make my way to the Aboki's shop at the end of the street. I will not have showered yet, and I'll pray I don't look crusty or even if I do that no one from primary school would suddenly reemerge and see me; and if that happens the ground had better open and swallow me.

I will be super thankful that I wore the dress that I had on because the sun will be scorching. I'll think then that there were two chances, either my skin would peel off or my head would turn darker than it already is, and I'll keep thinking; all these for a sauce or two.

I'll pray the outcome of the spaghetti somehow would make this journey worth it. I will be wrong, but we both don't know that yet.

When I get to the Aboki's shop I'll greet him, I'll ask if he has the particular tomato sauce I want, but he'll say he doesn't have it. Since I'm outside, I'll decide to walk to Mama Carol's shop which is about a three-minute walk from the Aboki's shop, and I'll ponder on how the walk is good for me since I never leave the house and I'm always in my room.

When I get to Mama Carol's shop, I'll greet her and request the sauce. I'll stare at her youngest daughter for a few seconds and smile while reflecting on how cute she is, children are cute when they aren't yours.

I will be too focused on Mama Carol's youngest daughter that I will not notice that someone is breathing heavily beside me, I will smell his breath although he would not say a word. It will smell like a mixture of cigarette, the alcohol I see women sell in a small bowl; I don't know what it's called, and I never bothered to find out. There is a last smell, but I can't put my finger on it.

Wait, piss? His breath smells like piss; I'll think to myself. As if to confirm my very thought he'll open his mouth and ask Mama Carol for a pack of cigarettes. I've learned not to judge people, but I can't help but think how he wants to smoke even more when his eyes are blood red.

I'll be glad at that moment that I don't have one of those faces you can read an expression on; I know people like that and if they were in this very instance, a fight would have broken out because of the irritation on their face.

I'll get the sauce from Mama Carol's First Daughter, Carol, and start to make my way home. I'll almost forget about the man whose mouth smells like piss but as I pass the Aboki's shop, I'll feel a hand hold mine, it'll feel very rough, like you are passing a building uncompleted and very far from completion; and you brush your skin against the concrete wall. My brain will automatically register that it's

the 'Piss man', his breathing will be even heavier from trying to catch up with me.

He'll leave my arm as soon as I turn toward him; I'll resist the urge to scratch the part of my arm he has touched or wipe it completely against my dress. He'll hand me 200 naira, "Your Change", he'll say those two words and I'll see that his teeth are a mixture of cream, brown and black.

"Aunty, take your change, you drop am for floor". I'll do a quick search on myself; realize I had actually dropped my change and stretch out my hand and take it from him. "Thank you" I'll reply and give him a polite smile. I'll think in that moment that it's in my head when I feel his hand linger for a bit, but it really wouldn't be. He'll shine his teeth; what I'm not sure is a '32' anymore, and then he'll walk away.

When I get home, I'll knock on the gate and the new security will open it. He'll greet me good afternoon for the second time.

He will be greeting me while his eyes are focused on my breasts. This was something boys did in secondary school that irritated me then; it still very much irritated me now. I'll make a mental note to tell my dad to fire him even though he started working with us two weeks ago, since he always forgets where to place his eyes. Constantly staring at my breasts was something he had done since he started working for us; I will be over it and done making excuses for him. However, before then, I'll decide to caution him.

"John, my eyes are up here", I'll gesture toward my eyes.

"Look in my eyes and not somewhere else". I'll notice his facial expression change with embarrassment, he'll have a shy smile plastered on his face, and after I would have gone in; I'll imagine he stands there for a few minutes before locking the gate.

Almost an hour later, the spaghetti will be ready, and the hunger will make me think that it is the best spaghetti I have ever had.

I'll work a little; my parents will come back home, and I'll forget to tell them about John.

Two days after that, it'll happen.

I will be working in my room; I have a table by my window that sometimes encourages me to work or that I use when I need to get in a more serious position. However, at the time I start to hear noises from downstairs, I'll be on the bed, and my laptop will be propped open, but it'll be asleep because I'll take a 10-minute break to scroll through Instagram.

The slam of the door downstairs would send shock waves through my body causing me to have goosebumps all over. I'll try to ignore it; I'll want so badly for

it to be a strong wind, maybe it's raining again I'll think and the door in the kitchen felt the consequence of the wind. I'll tell myself that I am no white woman from a movie who goes to check when she hears a noise, I wouldn't give in to that temptation, I will stay put; lock my door; and say multiple prayers until someone returns home.

The second sound I'll hear will cause my spine to crawl. Maybe someone is trying to get into the house, I'm not sure, but I'll snap myself out of it again from going to check.

My mind will race through all the possibilities, could it be the man from two days ago, I'll wonder. The man from the street; the piss man. I had never seen him before then. Did he follow me? Does he know where I live? My mind will be spiraling.

I'll do something I have never done before; I'll hide beneath my bed. It isn't the movies, but I'll have to pinch myself just to make sure I'm not dreaming. I had heard things like this in the news, even read things like these on Instagram blogs but the possibility of it happening to me will frighten me.

The loud bang on my door will cause me to jolt and I'll hit my head on the wood beneath my bed. I will not have realized that drops of tears have started to escape my eyes; I'll proceed to hold my mouth shut so I don't make any noise.

I will forget to remind my dad to change my locks which are frail, so whoever is at the door only has to hit it a second time and the locks will give way.

I'll see his feet stagger in.

For the first time, I'll wish my parents were home. I am not sure if I'll be alive when they return.

This man, whoever he is; will be breathing very heavily. It'll mirror that of the Piss man. It will be loud enough that it'll drown my mild sobs. I will not see his face, but I'll see his feet walk down to my closet. He'll open it forcefully, with a creak and a groan; the hinges would yield.

He'll scan through as though looking for something. Money? I'll question, but he'll search none of my bags, and then he'll proceed to check the bathroom. He is looking for me, the realization would make my heartbeat sound like explosions in my chest, and I'll shut my eyes.

My mom will have asked me to follow her earlier that afternoon for her Friday prayers at church, I will refuse even after much persuasion because I'd rather be at home than have my mother take me to her pastor after service to pray for me concerning finding a husband. It is bad enough that I constantly get compared to my younger brother who is a man and yet got married last year. The prayers even intensified after his marriage. At that moment, however, I'd have given anything to be in church with my mom.

I'll feel a hand grab my leg; almost immediately I will be pulled out fiercely. The man will give a villainous laughter, I'll be prepared to see the Piss man with his cream, brown and black teeth but my vision will get blurred because the manner in which he'll pull me out will be so vicious that there will be a strong collision between my head and the wood. I will tell something has broken. It is either my head has split open, or the wood is broken, or both. My eyes will start to close, there will be a mixture of my blood, tears, and sweat on the gray rug. Before my eyes go shut, I'll see his face. My attacker will be my security.

I'll get rushed to the hospital eventually, the doctor will explain after the surgery that I have a brain injury. Due to the impact my cerebral cortex will be damaged, and I'll be in a coma. I'll literally be a vegetable; I'll be alive yet unconscious. He'll say that my chances of awaking the coma are slim and it could progress to me being brain dead which will be worse than the current state.

I know I said that I'll be dead and now you know that I will be in a coma, but wouldn't you classify it as being dead? I will never be able to do the things normal people do.

I don't know what will happen to the security, I don't know what he will do to me after I pass out and I have no idea of his original plan.

All I know is this; I am a twenty-nine-year-old unmarried asexual female who is currently sending a job application email. I am oblivious to what correcting my security will lead him to do, my only mistake will be picking spaghetti this afternoon for lunch, and I do not know this yet but in four days, I'll be dead.