

## The Week After

### **Cast of characters**

Jayla Montgomery- African-American, 17 years old and lives with her two parents. She is 5'5 and loves to read.

Loren Montgomery- Jayla's mom. She is in her late 40's. She has been married to Jayla's dad for 22 years. She works at their local church as the choir director.

*At rise: The play is set in the house of Loren and Dorian Montgomery. The day is July 3rd, 2015. It is exactly one week after gay marriage was legalized in the United States. The sun has just set and the house is quiet.*

*Lights up: JAYLA sits on her bed reading a book with earphones in her ear. A knock can be heard on the outside of JAYLA's bedroom door. Loren, Jayla's MOM walks in and taps JAYLA's leg.*

MOM:

*(Sitting on her bed)*

Jayla baby, how was your day?

JAYLA:

*(She closes her book and reaches over to turn off her music)*

It was good. I hung out with Alexis. We went to the mall. I got some really cute shirts. Do you want to see?

MOM:

*(Smiling)*

No, I believe you. Did you and Alexis get anything to eat?

JAYLA:

Yeah, we had Charley's. They have this new chicken cheesesteak that I tried. It is so good. *(She stares off into space thinking about the sandwich)*

MOM:

Oh...that's good. *(beat)* How's Alexis? Is she doing okay?

JAYLA:

She's doing amazing! She just got this cool internship at the courthouse for over the summer! We went out to celebrate.

MOM:

Internship huh? I didn't know she was interested in law.

JAYLA:

Yeah, it's all she talks about. She's been so anxious about getting the internship. It feels good to see her get these blessings.

MOM:

I bet it does. *(beat)* Does she have a boyfriend?

*JAYLA shifts on the bed like she is uncomfortable. She reaches beside her and checks her phone and sends a text before setting it face down.*

JAYLA:

Um...no. She doesn't. Why'd you ask?

MOM:

Just asking...*(beat)* Does she not have any boys in her life? There's this handsome young man that just joined the choir. He'd be a good fit for her.

JAYLA:

*(Laughing)*

A handsome young man huh? I know I'll regret asking this, but who are you talking about?

MOM:

I don't know why you'll regret it. It's Jeremiah Coleman. You guys go to school together, right?

JAYLA:

Jeremiah Coleman? You can't be serious.

MOM:

Sweetie, I rarely joke around. He makes good grades and has one hell of a voice on him. Him and Alexis would make a good fit.

JAYLA:

*(She lets out a forced laugh)*

Mom, why are you trying to set her up? I don't think she's worried about boys right now, especially not Jeremiah Coleman.

*JAYLA gets off her bed and goes to fold her new clothes and put them in the dresser.*

I'm surprised you aren't trying to set me up!

MOM:

Why do you say that?

JAYLA:

Well, you have a tendency to do send weird looks to me whenever a boy glances in my direction. *(Laughing)* Sometimes I think you want to marry me off!

MOM:

Baby, you make it sound like a bad thing.

JAYLA:

It kind of is though.

MOM:

You always have your head in that phone. You never look up to see those boys.

JAYLA laughs and shakes her head at her MOM.

MOM:

Anyways, you know I just want the best for you...I want the best for both of you.

JAYLA:

I get that mom, but boys aren't really on my mind and it's definitely not on Alexis'. *(beat)* Alexis getting that internship has really made me start thinking about what I want to do in life. I am 17 now and I don't have much figured out...

*JAYLA goes back to the bed to get her phone, but walks back to the dresser to start folding clothes again.*

JAYLA:

...I don't know. I'll probably end up being a nurse or something.

MOM:

I thought you were interested in something close with literature and books.

JAYLA:

Yeah, but Alexis was telling me about her older sister who is a pediatric nurse, and it seems like a job worth doing. It's good pay and her sister says it's so much fun being around kids all day. I bet I could incorporate books somewhere in there.

MOM:

Hmm...you sure do let her influence your decisions a lot.

JAYLA:

Who? *(beat)* Alexis? How so?

MOM:

Well, it just seems like everytime Alexis does anything...you suddenly want to do something like it.

JAYLA:

Um, ouch mom.

MOM:

Oh, sweetie you know I mean no harm, but maybe you two have been spending too much time with each other. *(beat)* Don't you have other friends?

JAYLA:

I do have other friends, but mom...spending too much time together? *(laughing)* Mom, do you not like Alexis or something?

*JAYLA glances at her mom and sees that she has a serious expression on her face.*

JAYLA:

*(She fully turns to look at her with suspicion)*

What's this about Mom?

MOM:

*(beat)* Well, I got a phone call from some ladies from the church today.

JAYLA:

Okay...

MOM:

Jayla, be honest with me. Were you kissing Alexis at the mall?

*JAYLA goes to sit on the bed and sits further away from her MOM.*

JAYLA:

Mom, I don't think it's none of your business what I do with Alexis. That's my personal life.

*Jayla's MOM stands up in a haste and throws her hands up.*

MOM:

Damnit Jayla! I'm trying to be patient with you here. Did you or did you not kiss that girl?

JAYLA:

*(Calmly)*

It seems you already know the answer to that.

MOM:

Oh, what the hell Jayla! I didn't raise you to be gay! How dare you parade around town with your girlfriend! Is that what she is to you? Is she your girlfriend? I always had a feeling she was a...what do they call themselves? A dyke is it? Is that what she is? Are you one of them? Jayla, this is a sin and you know that!  
*(She stares at her with disgust.)*

*JAYLA stands in anger and walks to her MOM.*

JAYLA:

Don't you dare call her that! I've known Alexis my entire life and so have you. *(beat)* You want to talk about sinning? Huh? Let's talk about sinning mom. What do you call having sex outside of your marriage? This should be an easy one for you mom...

MOM:

*(Looking around confused)*

Wh-what are you talking about Jayla?

JAYLA:

What was his name?

MOM:

*(Getting angry)*

I don't think you know what you are talking about girl.

JAYLA:

He was tall. Dad isn't that tall---

MOM:

---Jayla. Stop this.

JAYLA:

Why mom? Is it because it's true? You cheated on dad and I saw you do it.

MOM:

You don't know what you saw. This isn't about me.

JAYLA:

Well, now it's about the both of us.

MOM:

How long have you been...this way?

JAYLA:

I'll answer that after you tell me how long you've been cheating on dad.

MOM:

I don't know what you're talking about.

JAYLA:

*(Yelling now)*

Stop lying! Please just stop lying. If I'm going to be honest, so do you. Just admit it.

MOM:

I have nothing to admit. You walked into dangerous waters with this girl.

JAYLA:

*(She lets out a dry laugh)*

Mom...I don't know how we go to having this conversation right now. It's obvious you should know what it's like having to sneak around with someone. *(beat)* Me? I have hid this part of myself for so long. I'm not afraid to admit it anymore; I refuse to hold it in anymore. Now that it's legal for us to be open and be together freely...I-I can't hold it in anymore.



MOM:

Jayla...*(She lets out a laugh of disbelief)*are you being forreal with me? Is this really what you have to say to me?*(beat)*What will your father say? What will the church think? Dear God...I never thought my daughter...my beautiful daughter...would turn out to like girls.

*JAYLA backs away from her mother and goes to sit down again. Her mother continues to stand. The two gaze at each other.*

JAYLA:

You know what he would say? My father? He would say that I am still the girl I was a day ago when he took me to go get ice cream. He would say that I am still the same girl who goes to the library every weekend to read the backs of the new shipment of books. He would say that nothing has changed. He would say that I am still his beautiful daughter.

MOM:

Jay--

JAYLA:

--I'm not done.

MOM:

Jayla Rose Montgomery. I am still your mother. Don't act out girl. I've been too lenient with you already.

JAYLA:

Oh, spare me that spill.

MOM:

Jayla Rose!

JAYLA:

What? What could you possibly have to say mom.

MOM:

I ought to whoop you for that girl.*(beat)* Was it my fault? Was I too lenient? Was I not hard enough on you?

JAYLA:

Lenient? You know who's been lenient mom? Me. Answer me this.  
(JAYLA stands up) What would dad say to you, huh? What would he say when he found out you were kissing another man while you were supposed to be at choir practice? What, pray tell, would he have to say? *(Beat)*

*JAYLA stares at her before turning to grab her phone off her bed and grabs her purse off the door. She walks to the door, but turns to her mom before walking out.*

I don't care who you tell. Tell the whole world for all I care. I don't care what other people think. I'm going to meet with Alexis. I'll be back later.

*JAYLA turns towards the door.*

MOM:

Jayla...

JAYLA:

*(Turning around)*...Yes?

*The two stared at each other for a second in silence before JAYLA throws her hands up and turns to leave once again.*

MOM:

Wait Jayla...

JAYLA:

*(Frustrated)*What mom?

MOM:

Are you going to tell your father?

JAYLA:

*(beat)*Are you?

MOM:

I-I don't know yet.

JAYLA:

Hmm...

*JAYLA turns around shaking her head and walks out the door.*

*The lighting fades away with Jayla's mom standing in the middle of Jayla's room. The curtains close right as her mom collapses to the floor. The lights go to blackout with the only thing being heard are the sobs coming from Jayla's mom.*

End play.