The Pains of Motherhood

 by Jack Young

**SCENE ONE: INT. ANTENATAL CLINIC – AFTERNOON**

FX: LADIES TALKING

**NURSE**: Hello ladies and gents! Welcome back to another antenatal session! You all sitting comfortably? Right we’ll begin.

We’ll start this session by introducing ourselves just in case we have any new people here today. Let’s start with you, what are your names and how are you finding the pregnancy so far?

**GINA**: Err, okay… well my name’s Gina and he’s Jayden! How is the pregnancy going? Well it’s a long hard slog as you ladies will know!

FX: LADIES LAUGHING IN AGREEMENT

**GINA**: Seriously, it has been very difficult. Thank god I have Jayden looking after me! Could never have done this alone!

**NURSE**: And how have you found it Jayden? Has it been what you expected?

**JAYDEN**: Well I knew it wasn’t going to be a walk in the park! (laughs) It’s been a really interesting experience for me and we’re closer than ever!

**NURSE**: Great! And have you got any questions you’d like to ask?

**GINA**: Ummm yeah I do! (pause) I was really worrying last week when I felt sick. Is it normal to feel sick during this stage of pregnancy? I got a lot of morning sickness at the beginning but I thought that had passed.

**NURSE**: Well, there could be a number of reasons why you were feeling sick and might not have had anything to do with you being pregnant! For example, did you eat anything particularly exotic or rich on the day you felt sick? Different foods make different people feel sick.

**GINA**: Nahh not particularly! Was just a normal eating day. Started with a couple of slices of toast in the morning and had some salad for lunch…

**NURSE**: Ok… and were you around certain smells? Sometimes a particular smell can get to you when you’re pregnant…

**GINA**: Nope not really…

**NURSE**: I’m not trying to scare you but have you taken a HIV test?

**GINA**: No of course I haven’t! Why should I? I’m 16 years old and I’ve only slept with one man in my life and that’s Jayden…

**NURSE**: Still, I would recommend the test just to be safe…

**GINA**: I don’t need no test, I’m sure I’ll be fine.

**NURSE**: I really would recommend it… Ok who’s next? That couple sitting over there… What are your names?

**JAYDEN**: (Low voice) You know, you really should get that test done…

**GINA**: Nahh what a waste of time that would be? I know I’m not positive because I’ve only slept with you…

(PAUSE)

**JAYDEN**: Okay well at least try and speak to your mum again! Can’t believe she’s so against this pregnancy! Can’t she see were in love and want this?

**GINA**: No she can’t! She’s got it into her head that this pregnancy is the worst thing that could happen to me! Ok Michelle getting pregnant WAS the worst thing that could happen to her as she is irresponsible and can barely look after herself, but I AM responsible and have you to help me!

**JAYDEN**: Please go and see her? For me?

**GINA**: Do I have to?

**JAYDEN**: No you don’t have to! But you could put your point of view across and she’ll have to listen to you!

**GINA**: Fine, I’ll go and see her tomorrow night after college.

**SCENE TWO: INT. FARAI’S HOUSE - EVENING**

FX: AFRICAN STREET

FX: KNOCK ON THE DOOR

FX: DOOR OPENS

**FARAI**: Hello.

**GINA**: Um hi Mum. (LONG PAUSE) Can I come in?

**FARAI**: If you are going to behave.

**GINA**: Mum! I’m not a little child anymore!

**FARAI**: Well you are acting like one!

**GINA**: Mum I came here to try and have a grown up conversation with you! If you’re going to be like this then there wasn’t much point in me bothering!

**FARAI**: Gina, I think you are making a big mistake! You saw what happened with your sister when she had Benjamin! She could not cope! Benji was taken away from her!

**GINA**: But I AM responsible. Come on mum, you must know this? I did my grade ten revision all by myself! Without any help from you… straight As I got! Straight As! And all off my own back! I want the best for myself and my baby!

**FARAI**: Gina, you are 16! 16 year olds should not look after babies! You’re not grown up yourself! You’ve got your whole life ahead of you! And how are you going to pay for the baby’s clothes and other things? I certainly can’t afford to help you! I can barely put food on the table for us as it is!

**GINA**: Jayden has a good office job and you know I have a job in Richmond’s!

**FARAI**: But you can’t both work and look after the baby at the same time, how would you manage?

**GINA**: Childminders, friends, we would work something out.

**FARAI**: Gina… You cannot have this baby, you must have it adopted! It’s only right!

**GINA**: I will NOT have my baby carted off to some random couple. I WILL look after my baby and there is nothing you can do to stop me!

FX: GINA STRIDES OUT OF THE KITCHEN AND SLAMS THE FRONT DOOR

FX: FARAI SIGHS

**SCENE THREE: INT. FARAI’S HOUSE – AFTERNOON**

FX: AFRICAN STREET

FX: THE DOOR OPENS

**FARAI**: Jayden. What are you doing here?

**JAYDEN**: I’m here to see you. We need to talk! Can I come in?

**FARAI**: There is nothing to say. I think Gina is making a big mistake!

**JAYDEN**: Look, I understand that you don’t want your daughter to get hurt, but I’m there for her 24/7. I’ve got us a nice flat, a good job and…

**FARAI**: I’m not worried about that Jayden. The fact is, Gina is 16! 16 I ask you! No 16 year old should have to look after a baby!

**JAYDEN**: She’ll be 17 by the time the baby is born but that’s not the point! There are plenty of young African mums who cope with it fine! How is Gina any different? She’s kind, clever and has a lot of love to give our baby.

**FARAI**: Clever she is! And she should be doing something great with her brains!

**JAYDEN**: And she will! After the baby is born! I’m not going stand in her way! I love her. I want the very best for her.

**FARAI**: You say you want the best for her yet you’re allowing her to go through with this pregnancy? You’re living in a dream world Jayden! Once you have the baby, your life will consist of nothing more than changing nappies and feeding it! There won’t be time or money for Gina to go to university!

**JAYDEN**: There will! I’ll earn it!

**FARAI**: What in your “office job”? Bet that will take you a while! I don’t think you’ve thought this through! I don’t think there is any more to say., She knows where I am. Goodbye.

FX: FARAI SLAMS DOOR IN JAYDEN’S FACE

**SCENE FOUR: INT. GINA AND JAYDEN’S FLAT – EVENING**

FX: TELEVISION PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND

**GINA**: I can’t believe she slammed the door in your face!

**JAYDEN**: I can’t quite believe it either!

**GINA**: God my mother is so rude! If I’d of done that to her, I would have got a good hiding… And I can’t believe she said

Ooo!

**JAYDEN**: (franticly) Gina! What it is it? (excitedly) Is it the baby?

**GINA**: My waters have broken! Call an ambulance now! I think it’s coming! I think our baby is finally coming Jayden!

**JAYDEN**: Shouldn’t I call your mum too?

**GINA**: (gasps in pain, breathless and slightly angry) Call the ambulance Jayden!

**JAYDEN**: Ok I’m doing it now!

FX: KEYS IN NUMBER

FX: RINGING AND PICKS UP

**JAYDEN**: Hello?

**CALL OPERATOR**: Hello which service please?

**JAYDEN**: (breathless) Ambulance!

**CALL OPERATOR**: Ok I’m just transferring you…

PAUSE

FX: RINGING AND PICKS UP

**CALL OPERATOR 2**: Hello ambulance service!

**JAYDEN**: Hi! My girlfriend’s just gone into labour and needs an ambulance soon as possible! I haven’t got a car so I can’t bring her in!

**CALL OPERATOR** **2**: Ok, try and keep calm… What’s your address please?

**JAYDEN**: Flat 4, Cork Building, Church Street. Please hurry! I think the baby is coming very soon!

**SCENE SIX: INT. JOHANNESBURG GENERAL HOSPITAL - EVENING**

FX: PHONE STARTS TO RING AND IS ANSWERED

**FARAI**: (distorted) Hello?

**JAYDEN**: Hi Farai it’s Jayden.

**FARAI**: Oh… hello.

(AWKWARD PAUSE)

**JAYDEN**: Farai, Gina’s gone into labour!

**FARAI**: Already?! But she’s not due for another two weeks!

**JAYDEN**: She really needs her mum. Please come and see her! She needs her mum right now…

**FARAI**: I am coming.

**JAYDEN**: (stunned) Really?

**FARAI**: Yes, really.

**JAYDEN**: What changed your mind.

**FARAI**: I don’t agree with what you are doing but I love Gina and that’s all that matters right now. What ward is she in?

**JAYDEN**: She isn’t, she’s gone straight down to the delivery suite.

**FARAI**: I’d better hurry! (laughs) I’ll get the next bus. See you there in about half an hour.

**SCENE SEVEN: INT. JOHANNESBURG GENERAL HOSPITAL – EVENING**

**GINA**: What did you do that for?! That’s the last thing I need right now, my mother telling me how I should give up this baby! Call her back, tell her not to AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

**JAYDEN**: What’s happening?!

**NURSE**: It’s just a contraction. Completely normal.

**GINA**: I just wanna have this baby now!

**NURSE**: I think you could be here for some time yet I’m afraid! As this is your first baby, it takes the baby a while to find its way out of your body. You’ll know when it’s coming when your contractions become closer together. So Jayden, I want you time each contraction for me okay? I’ll get you a stopwatch and a piece of paper. That’s something brilliant that’ll really help Gina right now. Is that okay?

**JAYDEN**: I’ll do anything to help!

**NURSE**: (smiling) Great, I’ll be back in two ticks, just try to keep yourself comfortable Gina.

**SCENE EIGHT: INT. JOHANNESBURG HOSPITAL – EVENING**

FX: GINA IN LABOUR – PUFFING, DEEP BREATHING

**JAYDEN**: You’re doing brilliantly love.

**GINA**: (crying slightly) This is awful AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

**NURSE**: Deep breathing now, remember what you learnt in antenatal…

**GINA**: I can’t do this no more AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

**NURSE**: You’re contractions are getting very close together now, I think it’s time this baby said hello to its mummy!

**GINA**: Really?! Oh god. Oh god. Jayden please stay with me!!

**JAYDEN**: I’m not going anywhere, I promise.

**SCENE NINE: INT. JOHANNESBURG GENERAL HOSPITAL – EVENING**

**NURSE**: You’re doing great Gina! I can see the head! Just one big push!

FX: GINA PUSHES THE BABY OUT WITH ALL THE ENERGY SHE CAN MUSTER

FX: SCUFFLING AND WALKING

**GINA**: (tearfully and faintly) is it breathing?

FX: SILENCE AND THEN THE SOUND OF BABY CRYING

**NURSE**: Well done!! Beio - could you cut the cord? I’ve got my hands full here…

FX: PAUSE AND THEN SCISSORS CUTTING

**NURSE**: Congratulations you two! It’s a girl!! A beautiful baby girl…

**JAYDEN**: I can’t believe it! I’ve got a little girl! Thank you! Thank you so much for all your kindness…

**NURSE**: (laughs) It’s my job!

**JAYDEN**: Gina, you’re a mummy! How amazing is that?! SILENCE Gina? Gina?

(Shouting) What’s happening?!

**NURSE**: (OFF) Can we have some help in here!

FX: DOCTORS COME RUSHING INTO THE ROOM

**SCENE TEN: INT. BUS – EVENING**

FX: CARS HOOTING

**FARAI**: (talking to self) I could be there by now! (PAUSE) this traffic isn’t going to move …

FX: FARAI PULLS PHONE OUT OF HER POCKET AND DIALS NUMBER FOR TAXI

FX: RINGING AND PICKING UP

**TAXI OPERATOR**: Hello, Hellman’s cabs?

**FARAI**: Oh hello, can I book a taxi from the end of Croxley Street please.

**TAXI OPERATOR**: Where to?

**FARAI**: Joburg General please. How long will you be?

**TAXI OPERATOR**: Can be with you in five minutes.

**SCENE ELEVEN: INT. JOHANNESBURG GENERAL HOSPITAL – EVENING**

**DOCTOR** She’s going critical.

**NURSE**: But why? She’s young, she’s fit… I’ve only seen this before in HIV patients.

**DOCTOR**: I need her medical records NOW and if there’s anything we haven’t done we need try it immediately.

**NURSE:** One second.

FX: WALKING

FX: OPENS FILING CABINET

**NURSE:** Here you are…

**DOCTOR:** I see you’ve seen miss Adio before?

**NURSE:** Yes she came to my antenatal classes. I remember her well because she was only woman in the class that hadn’t and wouldn’t take a HIV test.

**DOCTOR:** Right now it’s starting to make sense! Let’s get a test done NOW. The child’s safe. I don’t want to lose another. Not like this…

**SCENE TWELVE: INT. JOHANNESBURG GENERAL HOSPITAL – EVENING**

**JAYDEN**: NOOOOOOOOOO!

**NURSE**: I’m so so sorry.

FX: JAYDEN STARTS CRYING

**JAYDEN**: No, no, no, no, no! I simply refuse to believe it! My Gina’s young, fit, healthy!

**NURSE**: (very gently) I’m afraid she has a form of HIV.

**JAYDEN**: What?

**NURSE**: We’ve tested her blood and she is HIV positive. The disease is taking away all of her fight.

**JAYDEN**: But Farai’s not here!

**NURSE**: Who’s Farai?

**JAYDEN**: Her mother! She’s on her way to the hospital as we speak.

**NURSE**: Well call her and tell her to hurry. We don’t know how long she has.

**JAYDEN**: (starts crying again) I will do.

**SCENE THIRTEEN: INT. JOHANNESBURG GENERAL HOSPITAL – EVENING**

FX: MACHINE BEEPING

**JAYDEN**: How are you feeling my love?

**GINA**: (crying and faintly) I don’t wanna die!

**JAYDEN**: (crying too) Neither do I! I love you so much Gina. More than anyone else in this world.

**GINA**: So do I. Look after Farai for me won’t you. I want you and mum to look after her please. No one but you two.

**JAYDEN**: Of course I will.

**GINA**: And when she gets older and asks you why I’m not here, please tell her what happened for me? And say how much I love her?

**JAYDEN**: I’ll tell her every-

FX: FLATLINING SOUND AND BEEPING

**JAYDEN**: Gina! Giiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiina! No! NOOOOOOOO