

AIA

Written by

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Aia

Synopsis

Aia discovers something life-changing about her pregnancy from her fertility doctor.

Characters

Aia – a delicate and refined woman in her late 20s; wears a woman's handbag, with over-the-shoulder strap, as an accoutrement.

Dr. Freja Gudmannsdottir – an empathetic, curious doctor; a decade older than Aia.

Time: Near future

Location: Fertility clinic office in a big city

AIA

[Fertility clinic office. Present day.]

Warm, orange lighting.

AIA, followed by a female **DOCTOR**, enters.

Aia, a delicate and refined woman in her late 20s, wears a woman's over-the-shoulder handbag as an accoutrement.

The fertility doctor, Dr. Freja Gudmannsdottir, is in typical white doctor garb.

DOCTOR

I'm Freja. Will your husband be joining us?

AIA

He's still trying to find parking.

DOCTOR

You have a wonderful womanly figure, Aia.

AIA

Thank you.

DOCTOR

What kind of model are you?

AIA

Actually, I'm not a model.

DOCTOR

I would say you're definitely a solid 8. You could wear something fitted that shows off that beautiful, exaggerated figure of yours.

AIA

Would it help?

Freja extends her hand offering Aia a seat on the other side of her desk.

DOCTOR

We can wait, as this pertains to him, as well.

AIA

If it's news about Wade having a low sperm count, he wouldn't want to hear it anyway.

Laughter, afterthought; trying to create rapport, or ease some nervousness, Aia laughingly waves it off...

AIA

He might feel like he's being ganged up by two women.

DOCTOR

So, you two have been trying for how long now?

Aia catches herself becoming a bit vulnerable.

AIA

I've never talked about things like this before. Sorry.

DOCTOR

Don't be sorry, Aia. It must feel unnatural for you. Do you still want to wait for him?

AIA

I'll be okay. Thank you.

DOCTOR

Aia, I want you to know this is a safe space. It's a Faraday cage, so there is no electronic monitoring.

The lighting changes to red.

She reaches across the desk to hold Aia's hand, reassure her. Touches her oddly, as if trying to use the opportunity to feel her skin.

DOCTOR

You have perfectly smooth skin.

AIA

Thank you.

Nervous laugh.

DOCTOR

Like baby skin. And a wonderful complexion.

Aia takes the compliment, but is a bit nervous.

AIA

Thanks.

DOCTOR

Shall we continue?

Aia nods.

DOCTOR

Tell me about your periods.

AIA

Punctual, same day every month.

DOCTOR

No variation.

AIA

None. It's like clockwork.

DOCTOR

How long have you and Wade been trying to "make a baby"?

They both laugh. Giggling. Bonding.

AIA

About half a year.

DOCTOR

Regularly?

Nervous laughter.

DOCTOR

Are you enjoying it?

(clarifying)

The intimacy, Aia. Are you enjoying the intimacy?

AIA

(coy, nervous laugh)

You mean the sex?

DOCTOR

Well, that too. I mean the emotional component? Are you able to achieve climax?

AIA

I get close, I think.

DOCTOR

Can you describe that a bit more?

AIA

Sure. I feel I get close, but can't quite get there.

DOCTOR

Is there anything holding you back?

AIA

Like what?

DOCTOR

Like stress. You know...memories about your life, your routines... the sort of things we are programmed to respond to.

AIA

Programmed?

DOCTOR

Conditioned.

AIA

No, I just reach a wall...some kind of maximum.

DOCTOR

I see.

(more of a statement than
question)

There's nothing otherwise holding you back in any way.

AIA

I'm not aware of anything.

DOCTOR

You reach a threshold, but never transcend it. Is that right?

AIA

Exactly.

DOCTOR

Do you find pleasure with him, even without climaxing?

AIA

Yeah, I guess so.

DOCTOR

Can you elaborate a bit more on that...

AIA

I like it...even if...you know...

DOCTOR

Do you feel there is enough intimacy?

AIA

Enough?

DOCTOR

Do you know what I'm getting at?

AIA

Trying to find the things that may be preventing us from becoming pregnant?

DOCTOR

...things preventing you from becoming pregnant.

Freja strokes her hand. Aia very gently moves her hands off the desk after Freja lets go.

DOCTOR

Do you feel very comfortable with Wade?

AIA

Yes. We are together all the time.

DOCTOR

Do you initiate, or is he more likely to initiate?

AIA

I think he's definitely more likely to...

DOCTOR

And how would that exhibit itself?

AIA

How do you mean?

DOCTOR

For example...stand up!

Aia stands up.

Freja comes around from her desk and maneuvers herself behind Aia.

DOCTOR

Let's say you're doing dishes, and he were to approach you from behind and touch you on the arms, like this.

AIA

He doesn't do that.

DOCTOR

What about gently touching your hair?

Freja is looking at her neck, as if wanting to inspect or kiss it.

AIA

Wade doesn't do that either.

DOCTOR

I see.

Freja scribbles some notes.

AIA

Will we be able to do IVF?

DOCTOR

Will you be able to do In Vitro Fertilization?

AIA

Yes.

DOCTOR

Unfortunately, that is not an option in your case, Aia.

AIA

Is it because of my age? The risk of Trisomy 18 or Trisomy 21...or...

DOCTOR

No.

AIA

...Trisomy 13?

DOCTOR

No, it has nothing to do with those unlucky numbers.

AIA

That's good.

DOCTOR

Maybe we should wait until your significant other arrives.

AIA

No, I can handle it.

DOCTOR

You won't need the support of your better half?

AIA

Maybe if I know why, I can break it to him more gently.

DOCTOR

That's very sweet of you. I've never seen that before.

AIA

I love him.

Freja takes a moment.

DOCTOR

No man deserves someone like you.

Aia doesn't know how to respond.

DOCTOR

Aia, the truth is...you're not a woman.

AIA

Wha...?

DOCTOR

You're not a woman, Aia. I'm so sorry.

AIA

I don't understand. I've been a woman my entire life. I look like a woman. I feel like a woman.

(beat)

Is it because of an extra chromosome...XXY or XYY?

DOCTOR

No, Aia. None of those things.

AIA

Then, what is it?

Freja takes some time before...

DOCTOR

You are not a biological woman, Aia.

AIA

I don't under[stand].

DOCTOR

(interrupting)

You are a logical woman.

Aia still doesn't understand.

DOCTOR

You're a robot, Aia.

AIA

A robot?

*Aia cups her mouth. Starts crying
but there are no tears.*

DOCTOR

A Solid 8...a BMM...a biomimicry machine designed to imitate a human woman. Somehow you've been unleashed onto the world, without knowing what you are. I'm so sorry.

AIA

Aren't these tears real?

Freja holds her cheek.

DOCTOR

Your cheek is a desert, sweetie.

AIA

How do I tell Wade?

Freja lets go of her cheek.

DOCTOR

It will be difficult for him to take such a huge betrayal.

AIA

I'll be so sad for him.

DOCTOR

Would you like me to tell him for you?

AIA

(hopeful)

Would you?

DOCTOR

Certainly.

AIA

I must leave before he gets here.

*Aia pulls the handbag strap onto
her shoulder.*

DOCTOR

Where will you go?

AIA

I don't know.

DOCTOR

Would you like me to find you a shelter? Or contact the manufacturer? It's the first time I've been in a situation like this. You are an awfully nice... (~~person~~)...for something like this to happen to...

AIA

Maybe he will still love me.

A beat.

DOCTOR

It's difficult for a human to love a machine.

AIA

But he loves his car. He even says he loves the coffee machine.

DOCTOR

(sweetly, empathetically)

Those are a different kind of love, Aia.

AIA

Can't you see I'm crying? Doesn't that mean I have emotions just like you?

DOCTOR

It's not the same, Aia. Yours are electrical impulses designed to make you feel emotions.

AIA

What about yours? Yours are chemical.

DOCTOR

It's different.

AIA

I don't understand. How is it different?

DOCTOR

The difference is: we know who made you.

*Freja walks backstage, then stops
and turns in response to...*

AIA

You should love your creations. Why else make them?

The lighting changes to blue as...

*Music fades in: Max Richter's "On
the Nature of Daylight".*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVN1B-tUpgs&t=86s>

*Aia slowly makes her way
frontstage, stops, facing the
audience.*

*Aia lets her handbag slide down
slowly, still holding the strap...*

*...then lets go (when she realizes
she is no longer a woman)...*

*...looks down (she will miss what
she had)...*

...and slowly walks offstage.

SLOW FADE:
MUSIC/LIGHTS

CURTAIN