

DAESIA HARVEY



Daesia's writing is sheer fun. She writes highly dramatic breakdowns in relationships, especially between women who are locked into battles over men, values, and looks. When reading Daesia's novella, **Deidra**, it is easy to imagine her characters on television, in movies, or in tabloids. It is a wild ride that ends with a cliffhanger that Daesia has promised to finish for next year's literary magazine.

Daesia's play, **Mami**, tells a similarly engrossing story of a teenage girl who is found to be pregnant by a doctor, even though she claims she has never taken any risks with boys. Daesia impressively tells the story by giving equal nobility and strength to three generations of women and treating each woman sympathetically. There is no villain in this play. There is only a breakdown in communication.

While Daesia has a penchant for creating lively characters, her characters are not nearly as fascinating, sassy, or poppin' as Daesia is in real life. Daesia knows what she wants and seizes the opportunity. She can work for days on end, turning out a project she is proud to call her own. She can certainly be proud of the following works of fiction.

- Gossett

Mami by Daesia Harvey

SCENE 1

La'maisia and Nani walk into the kitchen for breakfast. Their mother, Cassie, is waiting for them.

CASSIE

Good morning, girls.

LA'MAISIA

Hello.

(NANI walks over and grabs CASSIE's legs.)

NANI

Hi, mommy.

CASSIE

Nani, get off of my leg. La'maisia, we are going to have to talk about last night sooner or later.

LA'MAISIA

For what? There's nothing to discuss.

CASSIE

You're absolutely right, but we will talk about how you behaved extremely out of character.

LA'MAISIA

I'm not hungry I'm going to school.

CASSIE

No. You and your sister are going to the doctor today. If you choose not to eat, that's your business. Starve for all I care.

(CASSIE walks out the kitchen to get her coat and purse out of the living room.)

LA'MAISIA *(mumbling)*

Yea, for all you care.

NANI

Why are you so mean to mommy?

LA'MAISIA

Because mommy is mean to me.

NANI

No she's not! Don't say that!

LA'MAISIA

Little girl stop yelling before I stick my stiletto down your throat and prevent you from finishing your little bit of chicken.

NANI

It's not chicken. It's waffles!

(CASSIE returns ready to walk out the door.)

CASSIE

Girls, you ready? Nanita, you're gonna have to wrap that up and bring it with you or we'll be late. La'maisia, set the alarm and meet us in the car.

LA'MAISIA

Why do I have to set it? You could set it yourself.

CASSIE

Because I said so, don't question me. Listen, set the d - - n alarm, and let's go.

(LA'MAISIA sets the alarm and they all exit.)

SCENE 2

(CASSIE, LA'MAISIA, and NANI arrive at the doctor's office and are called to the back.)

DR. PATEL

Hello, ladies.

CASSIE

Good morning, Dr. Patel.

LA'MAISIA

Hello.

(NANI waves hi.)

DR. PATEL

So, what brings you in today?

CASSIE

It's time for La'maisia's physical and Je'naisia needs this wound checked out. Nani, are you listening?

DR. PATEL *(to Nani)*

Okay, little lady can I see your arm?

(NANI walks to the doctor and shows him her scar.)

DR. PATEL *(continued)*

It's doing really good. Healing well and all. How does it feel, Nani?

NANI

Way better. My sissy gave me Tinker Bell Band-Aids to make it look pretty.

(THEY all laugh.)

DR. PATEL

Okay, mom. Now, La'maisia is of age. She's 16, so she can choose to either have her

physical with you present or she may ask you to leave.

LA'MAISIA

I want her gone.

CASSIE

Oh, I'm not going anywhere.

(La'maisia rolls her eyes and sucks her teeth.)

DR. PATEL

...Right...So, mom's gonna stay?

CASSIE

D - - n right.

DR. PATEL

Okay. La'maisia, we're going to run a few tests, so we'll need a urine and blood sample.

(LA'MAISIA takes the baggie and exits to restroom.)

CASSIE

Dr. Patel, she's been acting very strange lately. I don't know what her problem is, but I think we need to test her for psycho syndrome and depression.

NANI

Mommy, can I play on your phone?

CASSIE

Here. Go sit in the chair and don't interrupt again.

DR. PATEL *(laughing)*

I don't think there's a such thing as psycho syndrome, but if there is, I'm sure La'maisia doesn't have it.

CASSIE

No, seriously. Last night, she did something strange. We were sitting at the dinner table, and she ate all her food. Then, we all went to bed. In the middle of the night, she got up and went to the kitchen and threw away half of the left overs. When I approached her about it, she told me it was disgusting and went back to bed.

DR. PATEL

So, it's strange for her to not like your cooking?

CASSIE

NO. But if something tastes nasty, my daughter isn't going to eat it, and like I said, she wolfed her food down before.

DR. PATEL

Hmm.

(LA'MAISIA returns with the urine sample, and the doctor takes her blood.)

DR. PATEL *(continued)*

Okay. I'm going to send these off to the lab and ask some questions while they're testing. La'maisia when was your last menstrual cycle?

LA'MAISIA

Um....about 3 weeks ago.

DR. PATEL

Okay. Any abdominal pain or fever?

LA'MAISIA

No.

DR. PATEL

Okay. Are you still getting constant headaches?

LA'MAISIA

No.

DR. PATEL

Okay. Well, I'll go get the results and be right back. You ladies sit tight.

(DR. PATEL leaves to get the results, and time passes slowly. Eventually, DR. PATEL returns.)

DR. PATEL *(continued)*

Okay. Mom we have good news and bad news. What do we want to hear first?

LA'MAISIA

Shouldn't you be addressing me instead of my mother? I mean it is me and my body that we're discussing.

DR. PATEL

You're absolutely right. My apologies, La'maisia. Which would you like to hear first?

LA'MAISIA

Good news.

DR. PATEL

Well, actually it may all be good news, but let's see. All your blood tests came back negative, so you're completely healthy.

LA'MAISIA *(giving a fake smile)*

Great.

CASSIE
What's the other news, doctor?

DR. PATEL
Her pregnancy test came back unreadable.

CASSIE
PREGNANCY TEST?

DR. PATEL
Yes, ma'am. She's of the age where every physical we also administer a pregnancy test.

CASSIE
Okay, but unreadable? What...what does that mean? Are you telling me my child is PREGNANT?

DR. PATEL
Well, it may be possible. I'm not sure why the test came back unreadable, but that's always a possibility.

LA'MAISIA
I'm not sexually active.

CASSIE
La'maisia, I suggest you close your mouth right now before I get up and get ya back dirty.

LA'MAISIA
But I'm telling you th---

(CASSIE closes her eyes and takes a deep breath.)

CASSIE
I'm sorry, Dr. Patel, but I might really hurt this girl. We'll be back tomorrow for another test.

DR. PATEL
That's fine. Make sure she gets plenty rest, and try not to hurt her Cassie.

(CASSIE grabs NANI's hand and heads off stage.)

SCENE 3

(LA'MAISIA is nowhere to be found, so CASSIE calls her father on the phone.)

CASSIE (frantically)
Daddy?

PABLO
Cassie, que pasa?

CASSIE
Is La'maisia there?

PABLO
No. I thought you were taking the girls to the doctor today.

CASSIE
I did. Daddy, I'll call you back. I need to find your granddaughter before she does something else stupid.

(CASSIE hangs up and walks off stage. LA'MAISIA is at PABLO's house, talking with her grandmother.)

LA'MAISIA
Gramma, I...I think I might be in trouble.

IRIS
What's wrong, baby?

LA'MAISIA
Gramma, I'm scared.

IRIS
Come on. Let's go to my room.

(THEY walk to IRIS's room and sit on the bed.)

IRIS
Talk to me, Nena.

LA'MAISIA
Gramma, I can't be pregnant.

IRIS
PREGNANT? La'maisia, what have you been getting into?

LA'MAISIA (crying now)
Gramma, I didn't do anything; I wasn't in the wrong.

IRIS
Who the hell was in the wrong then? La'maisia Nyree, answer me ahora mismo.

LA'MAISIA
Gramma, I don't know! I'm not out here in the streets thottin' around.

(IRIS hugs LA'MAISIA.)

IRIS
Nena. It's gonna be ok. Don't worry.

(IRIS's phone rings.)

IRIS
Yes?

CASSIE
Ma, is La'maisia there?

IRIS
You don't know where your daughter is, Cassandra?

CASSIE
Mommy, please do not start with me. Can you just answer me?

IRIS
Where's Nanita?

CASSIE
MAAAA. IS MY DAUGHTER THERE???

(IRIS hangs up and continues comforting LA'MAISIA until she falls asleep.)

SCENE 4

(CASSANDRA arrives at her parent's house and walks in.)

CASSIE
Hey, Daddy.

PABLO
Hey, baby girl. You find La'maisia?

CASSIE
She's here.

PABLO
No, she isn't.

CASSIE
Mommy told me so.

PABLO
Iris!!

(IRIS walks in the living room from upstairs.)

IRIS
Whaaaaat? Why you yelling?

PABLO
La'maisia's here?

CASSIE
Where is she?

IRIS
She's sleeping!

CASSIE
Get her up. We're leaving.

IRIS

You don't know what that child has been through!

CASSIE

I don't care, we need to go.

IRIS

And that's your problem. You don't care.

CASSIE

Yo, Mommy. I'm dead not tryna hear you right now. Go get my daughter so we can leave.

PABLO

Cassandra, that's enough. That's your mother you're talking to.

IRIS

I don't know why or how you've become like this, but I don't like it. La'maisia needs help and she needs it from her mother.

CASSIE

I'll get her myself.

(CASSIE walks off to get LA'MAISIA. When CASSIE appears, LA'MAISIA is sitting on her bed texting her best friend.)

CASSIE (continued)

Speak up, now.

LA'MAISIA

Go away, Cassie.

CASSIE

A baby? How do you plan on finishing school with a child? How will you get through college and start your career?

LA'MAISIA

"How did you get pregnant? Who's the father? Where was I? Where did I go wrong?" All you care about is school. While that's a good thing, you need to pay your freaking daughter some attention.

CASSIE

Little girl, you are pushing your luck. How the hell did you get pregnant?

LA'MAISIA

.....

CASSIE

Ooh, you make me wanna ju---

LA'MAISIA

No. Don't say it. I will. I make you wish you

had aborted me. Then you would have only had Nani to deal with. Guess what? You didn't. Deal with it. Like I deal with having you as a mother.

CASSIE

You're aborting it.

LA'MAISIA

I won't.

CASSIE

You're not of age to decide.

LA'MAISIA

But yet I'm of age to have a pregnancy test every physical. You sound stupid, Cassandra.

CASSIE

You make me sick.

LA'MAISIA

Y yo tambien. The feelings are mutual.

CASSIE

Adoption

LA'MAISIA

I probably would have been better off.

CASSIE

Not you. The child.

LA'MAISIA

YOUR GRANDCHILD.

CASSIE

Let's go back downstairs.

LA'MAISIA

Go without me.

CASSIE

LET'S GO.

(CASSIE walks back to the kitchen with LA'MAISIA close on her heels.)

PABLO

Girls, everything okay?

CASSIE

Hell no, Daddy. Hell no.

LA'MAISIA

Hey, grampa.

PABLO

Come on and wash up for supper.

(The GIRLS run to the bathroom to wash their hands while Cassie and Pablo walk to the kitchen.)

PABLO

Your mother's worried about you and La'maisia's relationship.

CASSIE

Daddy, please. Not now.

PABLO

What do you mean not now? This is your daughter we're discussing.

CASSIE

No, Daddy. Not now.

PABLO

Dique, no Daddy. Not now. IRIS!

IRIS

Ah huh??

PABLO

The girls are ready for food.

IRIS

Hello, Cassie. Where's my grand babies?

CASSIE

Find her because I only know where one is.

IRIS

What?

(LA'MAISIA and NANI walk into the kitchen together, and they each hug their grandmother.)

IRIS (continued)

Cassandra. We are talking before you leave this house. A family discussion is in order.

CASSIE

We won't be talking about anything pertaining to me and my daughter.

LA'MAISIA

No use in talking to her buela. She doesn't listen or care. She's too stubborn!

CASSIE

Shut up!

LA'MAISIA

Only if you do

IRIS

Ay! Respect your mother!

CASSIE

Exactly! This little girl has no type of respect.

IRIS

Well, Cassie you've allowed her to be this way, so she's accustomed to it.

LA'MAISIA

No. She just doesn't care about me, so why should I care about her?

IRIS

La'maisia, your mother loves you.

LA'MAISIA *(crying)*

SHE DOESN'T CARE. SHE ONLY CARES ABOUT MY EDUCATION. She so called loves me and Nani, but she never shows it. She doesn't give me affection. She doesn't ask me how I'm feeling or if I care about something.

(LA'MAISIA sniffles and wipes tears away.)

LA'MAISIA *(continued)*

All she cares about is stupid education, and I'm sick of it. I'm not going to college. I'm going to have my baby, and I'm getting far the hell away from her, and then I'm coming back for Nani.

CASSIE

Oh, come on. Stop being so dramatic. I do care. Don't you know you're nothing without your education?

LA'MAISIA

I'M STILL LA'MAISIA WITHOUT MY EDUCATION.

CASSIE

Now, who sounds stupid?

IRIS

That is enough. How can a mother and daughter talk to each other like this?

PABLO

Cassandra, we didn't raise you like this.

IRIS

Half of what La'maisia is saying is true, and half of what you're saying is true. You guys love each other. La'maisia, your mother only wants what's best for you.

LA'MAISIA

Gramma, after the conversation we had to today you're taking her side?

IRIS

I'm taking my family's side. I want everything worked out and solved.

CASSIE *(watery eyes and cracked voice)*

I don't know how La'maisia is going to function with this baby. Look at her. She's only 16. She's still my baby.

NANI

I thought I was your baby?

CASSIE *(small smile and a sigh)*

You are, sweetie. And so is your sister. I'm not that hungry. Can you wrap our plates to go mom?

IRIS

Nonsense. Let these girls eat here.

CASSIE

Is it alright for them to stay the night? I think I want to have some alone time in the house.

IRIS

Of course. We'll meet you at the doctors in the morning.

CASSIE

Thank you, Mommy. Goodnight, Daddy.

CASSIE

Oh, thank you, Jesus. This girl isn't pregnant.

LA'MAISIA

But Dr. Patel, why did the test come back unreadable?

DR. PATEL

Well, you were probably under a lot of stress at the time, and that probably dented the reading of it.

CASSIE

Well, things can only get better from here, love.

IRIS

Thank you, Doctor. So much for everything.

DOCTOR

No problem, Iris. Take care of your girls.

IRIS

I will.

SCENE 5

(It's the next morning and IRIS, CASSIE, and LA'MAISIA are waiting for DR. PATEL to come in with the new lab results. LA'MAISIA sits on the hospital bed in her gown, swinging her feet out of nerves. IRIS is sitting in the chair, squeezing a standing CASSIE's hand. The room is silent besides the ticking of the clock on the wall and the swish of LA'MAISIA's gown. DR. PATEL walks in.)

DR. PATEL

Okay, ladies. I have the final results.

(All heads turn to Dr. Patel.)

DR. PATEL *(continued)*

The test came back negative. La'maisia, you're not pregnant.

(LA'MAISIA closes her eyes and looks down. IRIS says a silent prayer to God, thanking him for her granddaughters' blessing being delayed. CASSIE starts to cry and gets up to hug LA'MAISIA.)

LA'MAISIA

Ma.... Don't...