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My personal abortion story, originally posted on Abort73 in 2006, will soon be adapted into a short film designed to help women and girls make more informed, life-affirming decisions.

When I first wrote my story at age 27 (now 46), my intention was to offer encouragement and honesty for those navigating incredibly tough choices. Over the years, responses from women moved by my testimony have inspired me to keep sharing, even as my story now sits among thousands of others on the Abort73 website (story #803).

One memory stands out: a woman who came to me after hearing my story went on to have a son who has now accomplished remarkable things. I am still connected to her, and she has thanked me multiple times for having the courage to share. Experiences like these have shown me how one voice can truly make a difference.

Last year, I had a conversation with a mother whose biracial daughter felt out of place when classmates questioned the color of her skin. I shared that we could adapt stories using AI to empower and inspire—something I'm passionate about, having created many videos and written accounts using various platforms. Now, I plan to take select parts of my journey and, with AI storytelling tools like Whisk, Flow, Midjourney, Hedra, Suno, Canva, etc, inspire even more lives through creative digital storytelling.

I look forward to sharing not only the pain, but the hope, healing, and positive change that can come from telling our truths.

The story below is very graphic. Please refrain from reading it if you will be triggered by it.

If you have any comments or questions, my email address is on the last page.

Hello,

My name is Ayana Elon. I sit here, not at a loss for words, but trying to figure out how to put them together in a way that will help you better understand the reason behind sharing this story.

God spoke to me, telling me it was time to give this part of my testimony. I mentally fought with Him for a couple of reasons. One was that I'd already started on an autobiography and wanted to tell my "whole" testimony all at once. I guess He had other plans. The other was that I knew I'd be judged based on what I had to say. I knew some people wouldn't fully understand or be able to differentiate between the person I once was and the person I've become. Still, He told me it would be okay. And while I do know that some people will only look at this the way they want to and come to their own conclusions, I believe my story—my testimony—will help some teenage girl or woman who's thinking about having an abortion make a better decision.

This is my story...

It was about six years ago when I learned that I was pregnant with my fourth baby. I was in my early 20s and on birth control pills. This pregnancy wasn't like the others. I was only a few weeks along, and every day I felt as though death had come over me. I literally threw up everything I ate and drank, including plain water. I couldn't do anything or go anywhere because I was always sick and miserable. On top of that, I was scared—afraid for my life. My previous doctor and others had told me that I shouldn't get pregnant because I'd already had three C-sections, and there was a chance that my uterus would rupture. I decided to do something that would change my life. I decided to have an abortion.

I explained my situation to my mother and asked her if she could loan me the money to pay for the abortion—it was a few hundred dollars—because at that time, I didn't have it. She told me she couldn't help me do anything like that, refused to give me the money, and basically told me to stick it out. I didn't have anyone else I could go to right away and didn't know what else to do.

Shortly after, I called one of the local hospitals and asked them: If I tried to perform the abortion myself, how long would it take for the ambulance to make it to my house? The

woman on the other end of the phone begged me not to do that because there was no guarantee I'd receive help on time and I could die. I decided I was going to try it anyway. (I got the idea from watching the movie *If These Walls Could Talk*.)

I went into the bathroom, took a bath, and laid out something on the floor for me to lie on. I got a wire hanger, some towels, and some rubbing alcohol, laid on the floor, and attempted to kill my baby. As harsh as that may sound, there's no other way for me to put it because that's what I was trying to do.

I wasn't in there long before I realized that I couldn't do such a thing myself. I left crying—mad because I'd tried to do that and hurt because I couldn't. I was filled with so many emotions at that time and really didn't have anyone to talk to... no one I could relate to.

I finally got the money from a relative, who will remain nameless, and made an appointment to have the abortion at a clinic about an hour and a half away because there wasn't one in my city. Every day, up until the day it was time for me to have the abortion, I would lie in my bed, caressing my belly, talking to the baby I was carrying. I would apologize to it. I say "it" because I do not know if the baby was a boy or girl. I will never know.

About a week or so after making the appointment, I got on a Greyhound bus and headed off. The first clinic I went to was in Bossier City, LA. The brick building was among others, and there wasn't anything that brought attention to it. The entrance was in the back and was locked, with a security camera facing the door. I rang the doorbell and was told I had to wait. I was a little early for my appointment. Once inside, I had to continue waiting because the doctor who was supposed to "counsel" me was late. I was weighed and given some reading material. I watched other young girls come inside the building, some with parents and some alone.

Finally, the doctor arrived to meet a bunch of restless young women. When it was my time to talk with him, it really wasn't what I expected. I expected someone who seemed more caring. His attitude was pretty cold, asking basic questions like if someone was making me have the abortion and if I really wanted to do it. He never really "counseled" me. Never did he once try to talk me out of going through with it. I was given an appointment to come back in two days and left.

I didn't want to wait that long. I just wanted to get it over with as soon as possible. So, I called another clinic, which was located just across the river in Shreveport, LA, the same day. They told me I could come in the next day. I caught a city bus and got off about a block away from the clinic. I stopped at a Circle K convenience store to buy a money order to use to pay for the abortion because I was told not to bring cash. I walked to the clinic, checking out my surroundings. I'd seen on the news several times before where people had bombed

abortion clinics and set up pro-life rallies, some ending in violence. I was actually afraid that something might happen to me while walking there.

Unlike the other clinic, while they did have a doorbell and intercom system, the door wasn't locked. I walked right in. I went to the desk and told the lady at the window what I was there for. She gave me a form to fill out. There were single women and girls, couples, and girls with parents in the waiting room. My heart was racing because I really didn't know what to expect. Yes, they'd so-called "explained" what all would happen, but I still wasn't prepared for what was going to happen.

After filling out the form, I waited some more and then was taken into a room for a basic check-up. I was shown a video of what the procedure was going to be like. More waiting. My name was called, and I was taken to the back of the clinic. I was given some pills that the nurse said would help "relax" me and "ease" the pain of the procedure. I was sent into a room where more women and girls were waiting and told to go into another little room inside, take off my pants and panties, and wrap the lower half of my body in an all-white sheet. I was instructed to wait in the room with the others until my name was called. I sat next to a book rack, near a television, stiff... almost unable to move. The others seemed so relaxed and carefree, talking and chattering as though they were at some after-school hangout. Some laughing and smiling, a few seeming to look as though they were in another world. One by one, names were called to go to one of the "other" rooms.

One of the women asked an open question about what to expect when going into the other room to have the procedure done. I remember one woman in particular telling her that she had nothing to worry about because she'd had abortions in the past and was okay. Not one, but two—and she was about to have yet another one. There were a couple of other women in the room, chanting and raving about their many abortions. One woman had had more than three. I became sick at the thought, thinking about how easily they bragged about having abortions as if they were some great form of birth control.

I waited in that room for what seemed like forever before my name was called. There seemed to be at least two rooms that the doctor was "operating" out of alternately. I was "greeted" by two nurses who were very friendly and kind to me. I was instructed to get on the table. I asked the nurses again about what was going to happen; they explained to me what was going to happen without giving full details, still trying to be kind. The doctor came in, face straight, no sort of emotion whatsoever. He really didn't say much to me either. He told me to scoot closer to the end of the table and to open my legs, relax them, and let them sort of fall apart.

The doctor told me that he would explain everything he was going to do. He cleaned my pubic area and cervix, then injected some numbing medicine into my cervix, which was supposed to help with the pain, I suppose. It didn't! He inserted a thin tube through my cervix into my uterus. A handheld syringe was attached and used to suction the tissue out of my uterus. He turned on a machine which sounded like any regular household vacuum cleaner, but seemed a little louder. My uterus contracted, and the pain was very intense. The nurses gave me oxygen and tried to calm me down. I was crying hard and hyperventilating. They continued to hold my hands, and I continued to look up at the bright, white ceiling, crying, almost unable to contain myself. This was real. "It" was happening for real. No more planning. No more thinking about going through with it. I couldn't turn back. All the while, telling this baby that I would never know, would never hold, how sorry I was.

What happened in about 20 minutes seemed to take a lifetime to complete. When the doctor was done, I was hardly cleaned up, and he left with the same emotionless face he'd walked in with. The nurses were still trying to calm me because I was still crying and now shaking pretty bad. I tried to get myself together because I knew there was someone else waiting to be placed on the table I was lying on. The nurses directed me to the "recovery" area, which was located right across from the room I'd just been in.

I sat down, and someone brought me some warm Celestial Seasonings tea and cookies. I was told that drinking the tea was supposed to be a part of the recovery process. I sat in the recovery area for about an hour and then cleaned myself up. Afterward, I called one of my aunts to pick me up from the clinic. The next day, I got back on the Greyhound bus and went home.

After I got home, I still cried. I wanted to find out how other women felt after having an abortion. I did a search on the internet and came across some very disturbing images of what abortion REALLY looks like. The images I saw were far different and more disturbing than the ones I'd seen on the video at the clinic. Yes, I knew abortion was wrong, and yes, I knew that the baby would die, but I did not know some of the lengths some doctors went through to kill them.

I sat at the computer, shocked. I feel like if I had been counseled properly and done the search on the internet first, I would not have had that abortion. I would have probably tried to endure the pregnancy. All of the information and the facts that could have been given to me to help me make a better decision were not given to me by the people who were supposed to counsel me. They did not care about me. They only cared about the money I brought into the clinic.

I still think about that baby, and at times I still cry. People said I would forget and get over it. It has been years, and I still haven't. I don't believe I ever will.

I gave birth to Zealan, my 3½-year-old son, in 2002, despite what my doctor was telling me. I actually stopped going to my clinic appointments on a regular basis because when I went, the doctor would ask me about making a living will, hinting toward the fact that something could go wrong. I was not about to have another abortion. That's something I could not go through with again, not just because of the pain, but because I was still "haunted" by the abortion images I'd seen so many times before. I love children and still cannot believe I went through something so horrible. Since then, I have had a tubal ligation and have asked God for forgiveness. I'm still "healing."

My abortion—going through that and God allowing me to give my testimony—is the only thing "good" that came from it. I can now help educate other females about the real truth on what abortion really is. Nothing sugar-coated. Just the truth, the facts. Teenage girls and women need to know the truth and need to be well-informed about the alternatives out there. There is a better way. Abortions are tragic, and innocent lives do not and should not have to end in such a horrific way.

My name is Ayana Elon, and this was my story.

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