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Can I use the Restroom?

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ENC 4436

Dr. James Beasley

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Can I use the restroom?

Introduction

I wrote this story in the mindset of my great grandmother (Margret Williams). She has shared 80 years' worth of stories growing up as a Black woman in America and it truly inspired me with this writing. Having my own dealing with racism, I can only imagine how it was for her during her 20's. Something simple as using the restroom was unfortunately not as easy access for people of color. It is important that these stories are told in my opinion, Non-fiction and/ fiction.

Barbra

It was the year 1935 and it was one of the windiest days in St. Augustine. Barbra a beautiful petite Black woman was coming down to Florida from New York to visit her husband family. See, Barbra has lived in New York all her life, and this was her first time in the South. Her husband tried to give her tips and tell her the ways of the North is not the ways of the South. Barbra being the educated strongminded woman she is, she did not have a care in the world of what her husband had to say. Her mama would tell her "You give respect, you get it back" and that is exactly what she believed until this very day.

Barbra had the bladder of a peanut and had to use the restroom extremely bad. As they were passing a restaurant, she told her husband to stop but he insisted that they keep on going.

She asked why and he told her that specific place was not welcoming to Black folk. Barbra told her husband to turn around and go to that exact place because that is where she chooses to use the bathroom.

"Hey, this isn't one of those uppity places downtown on St. George, you know?"

"We'll maybe I will go across to Bridge Street."

"It isn't worth it, honey."

"What about The Spot on Riberia next to your Cousin Frank job?"

"Sweetheart, you got to put up with those uppity customers, thinking they are better than us and you are not use to that treatment"

"Unless you want me to release myself right here in this seat, I advise you turn around"

As the sweet and understanding husband he was he turned the car around and went to the place his wife wanted to be at. As he parked, he let her go inside by herself because he knew the outcome of the experience she was going to have.

As she opens the door you can hear a loud screeching noise come from it. Instantly, blue eyes and blonde hair was staring at her deeply. It got so silent that you could hear the click clack of her baby heels while she walked to the bar. She clears her throat and walks up to the bar.

"Excuse me sir can you point me to your restroom, please?"

"You must not be from around here little lady"

Barbra with a light laugh

“No sir I am not but I really have to go to the restroom so if you could please tell me where it is,

“

He cuts her off

“Now, I will say this nicely because obviously you do not know how things work around here but we do not offer services for your kind”

“My Kind”?

“Yes, your kind.... If you need to use the restroom, I suggest you go around the corner and squat on some leaves”

He starts to laugh with a few other people in the bar

One guy yell

“Leave lady before it is a problem”

Barbra turns around and stares him and his eyes

“A problem? It will be a problem if I do not get keys to the restroom that I have right of having”

Barbra was in there so long that her husband began to worry. His palms was sweating and he had all bad thoughts about what could of possible happened to his wife. He finally gained up the courage to open the door to the car and walk towards the restaurant. He opens the door slowly

and then he sees his wife going back in forth with a man. As the protective husband he is he pushes his way up to his wife.

"Man, you better back away from my wife"

"Who you think you talking to colored boy...wait I know you"

"I am sure you do, now baby lets go"

"No boy, I am not done speaking to you. You were the little nigga that was going to be the first in the NFL"

"Mhmm, now if you do not mind, I would like to leave so my wife can release herself if you do not mind"

"Well, boy, the thing is I do mind. See your wife may not be from here but you know all good to well not to be coming into a place like this"

As the man continued you talked the husband took his wife hand and they went to the car.

"Baby, why did we leave like that, he is going to think he won and that we"

He husband cuts her off

"Sweetheart, you never go anywhere you are just tolerated. We are Kings and Queens and should be treated as such. Now it's a place I can take you not to far so you can use the restroom, is that ok Suga?"

With a big smile on her face

“Ok!”