

THE BABY DANCE

Wanda
Hello!

Rachel
Hello Wanda?

Wanda
Yes. I'm over here. Come in watch your step. Did you find I ok from the airport?

Rachel
No problem at all your directions were terrific.

Wanda
Al and I talked it over. We weren't sure if you should take I-20 or 80. I guess I- 20 was the
right choice.

Rachel
Oh yes , it got me right here. It's so nice to finally meet you.

Wanda
It's nice to finally meet you too. You look a lot like your picture.

Rachel
Oh thank you I feel like a mess right now.

Wanda
No, you look real nice.

Rachel
Oh. Thank you, you look great too. Are you feeling alright?

Wanda
Oh, I'm fine, why don't you take a seat. I made us some lunch. Being so hot, I made us a
cold plate.

Rachel
Oh great, that sounds terrific... How long have you lived here?

Wanda
Five years.

Rachel
Uh-huh.

Wanda
But the trailers only temporary. As soon as Al finds better employment we're planning on
moving to a bigger place.

Rachel
Well you've done a lot with the space.

Wanda
Oh thank you.

Rachel
Are these your children? They're just great looking children

Wanda
Thank you they're real good kids.

Rachel
How are they in school? Do they like school?

Wanda
Well I guess they like it alright. Kevin's real good at reading.

Rachel
Great that's just great. Do you encourage him to read?

Wanda
Yeah, well I don't tell him not to... you want something to drink? Al's out getting sodas,
but if your thirsty I could get you some water.

Rachel
Terrific ... is I tap?

Wanda
Yeah

Rachel
Oh. Do you have anything bottled?

Wanda
No, but when Al gets back I could send him for some.

Rachel
No no that's alright. (beat) but you might want to start getting some for yourself.

Wanda

I always thought it was kinda a gyp to pay for water when you can get it for free.

Rachel

Oh no . bottled water is much better for you.

Wanda

Interesting, I'll have to tell Al. (gets water)

Rachel

Do you like the doctor we found you?

Wanda

Oh yes ma'am he's one of the nicest men I ever met.

Rachel

I talked to him the other day. He says you're doing very well.

Wanda

Well I sure like him a lot.

Rachel

I brought you some more of those pre-natal vitamins.

Wanda

Oh thank you.

Rachel

I didn't know if you needed more...

Wanda

Well actually I stopped taking them.

Rachel

Why?

Wanda

They were stuffing me up.

Rachel

Oh, they made you feel full?

Wanda

No. I couldn't take a crap.

Rachel
Constipation? What did Dr. Constaless say? Did you ask him if you could stop taking
them?

Wanda
We didn't talk about it. He says I'm fine the baby's fine, so I didn't ask him about the
vitamins.

Rachel
Well you might want to mention it.

Wanda
I never took those things before and none of my kids have suffered for it.

Rachel
Fine. Don't worry about it. It's fine.

(did you get the check..)

(WANDA and RACHEL chew their food.)

RACHEL
Did our lawyer send you a check for the air conditioner?

WANDA.
Yes. Thank-you.

RACHEL.
Did you get one yet?

WANDA.
Well, there wasn't quite enough for an air conditioner so we bought a fan.

RACHEL.
I thought we sent you five hundred dollars, that wasn't enough?

WANDA.
Well, Al was the one who looked. He said they cost more.

RACHEL.
Oh. Well how much more?

WANDA.

I don't know. You can ask him when he comes back.

RACHEL.

All right. (A beat.) Oh, I brought some pictures. (Reaching into the Williams-Sonoma bag.) I wanted to show you the baby's room. (Hands some photographs to Wanda.)

WANDA.

Oh my gosh, isn't this cute? What a cute room. I like the crib. I like how it matches everything.

RACHEL.

The crib is built so it turns into a bed later on.

WANDA.

Hey, that's a nice changing table.

RACHEL.

That will turn into a bureau.

WANDA.

Isn't that neat.

RACHEL.

Well, it's practical.

WANDA.

I like how it all matches.

RACHEL.

It's a very happy room. We chose the room with the most sun.

WANDA.

You don't want the room to get too hot though. Babies are real sensitive to heat.

RACHEL.

It's a southern exposure.

WANDA.

Uh-huh. You gotta put curtains up.

RACHEL.

We are.

WANDA.

It's important to cover the windows when the baby is taking a nap. If its
too bright they get fitful.

RACHEL.

We're getting curtains. I have them on order.

WANDA.

And keep the baby cool. It's dangerous for them to overheat. Don't leave
the baby in the car or anything.

RACHEL.

No, of course not. My God, I wouldn't do that.

WANDA.

You'd be surprised. I know a lot of women who have.

RACHEL.

I hope you don't think I would ever do anything like that.

WANDA.

No, of course not, no. But you wouldn't believe what some women do.
There was a woman in the trailer court here who was cooking something on
the stove, right? She went out for a minute to go to the Laundromat, left her
baby, the trailer caught fire and the baby burned to death.

RACHEL.

My God.

WANDA.

She was one of them welfare mothers. They're not very bright. They don't
know how to take care of their kids.

RACHEL.

Well, if you aren't well educated....

WANDA.

They got a flaw. They have a flaw somewhere that makes them
irresponsible. And it's mostly the coloreds that got the problem.

RACHEL.

Well, I don't know if you can say that. Maybe this particular women was
this way.

WANDA.

I know a lot of them, and they're just as bad.

RACHEL.

Wanda, I don't know if you can really make a generalization like that. I
think poverty is really more the issue than race...

WANDA.

Do you know any of these people? You live next door to any of them?

RACHEL.

No...

WANDA.

No. Well you wouldn't stick up for them if you did. They sit on their
behinds while their kids are running around wild.

RACHEL.

Well, I just think that poverty causes a lot of despair which breaks down
the family unit and causes this kind of behavior.

WANDA.

You want some coffee or anything?

RACHEL.

Do you have decaf?

WANDA.

I could go next door. I think one of my neighbors has some Sanka.

RACHEL.

No, that's fine.

WANDA.

I'm gonna re-heat a little for myself. The baby makes me sleepy this time
of day.

RACHEL.
Wanda... (SHE stops herself.)

WANDA.
Yes?

RACHEL.
Uh, did you talk to Dr. Costales about drinking coffee?

WANDA.
Yes.

RACHEL.
What did he say?

WANDA.
He said I could have it in moderation.

RACHEL.
He said you could have regular coffee? Not decaf?

WANDA.
Yuh. (Wanda starts to clear the table)

RACHEL.
I think while I am here I'd like to see if we could talk to Dr. Costales
together.

WANDA.
Why? I've been getting along fine going down on my own.

RACHEL.
I know. But I'd like us to see the doctor together.

WANDA.
I don't know what for. I know about having a baby. If I know anything, I
know about having babies.

RACHEL.
Wanda, I know. But we all have to be aware that you aren't the only one
involved here.

WANDA.

I'm not going to mess up your baby.

RACHEL.

That's not what I am saying. (Taking another tack.) Wanda, this baby is a real gift to us. You're giving us a wonderful gift. And both Richard and I can't thank you enough for that. You should tell me now if you don't want to go through with this.

WANDA.

No, I want to do it.

RACHEL.

Are you sure? I'd rather know now than later. I really would, Wanda.

WANDA.

Lady, I don't have any other choice.

RACHEL.

I hope you know that we're going to give this baby a lot of love.

WANDA.

Look, I can give the baby love. That's not the problem. I know how to give love, but kids want things. They see other kids with bikes and stuff and they wonder why they can't have that too. That's what we have the problem with.

RACHEL.

Is your husband feeling all right about this?

WANDA.

Oh yeah, he pretty much knows there's no other way out for us. I keep saying to Al that as soon as we get some extra money I wanna go in and get my tubes tied. I talked to your lawyer about possibly paying for the operation.

RACHEL.

Wanda, do you ever use birth control?

WANDA.

Well, yeah...

RACHEL.

Have you thought of maybe not going through with all these pregnancies?

WANDA.

Lord, I could never do that. It would haunt me to the rest of my days

knowing that I killed my own baby.

RACHEL.

No, I understand. I can understand that.

WANDA.

There's another woman wanted my baby. She told name she had two abortions when she was younger. Now she can't have a baby. I think this

was God's was of telling her she did a sinful thing.

RACHEL.

Well, that's a tough one, Wanda...(A beat) I've been dying to ask...can I

feel the baby?

WANDA.

Sure, go ahead.

RACHEL.

You don't mind?

WANDA.

That's what is there for.

(Wanda scoots back in her chair. Rachel lays her hand on her belly.)

RACHEL.

Oh my God. Is that her moving?

WANDA.

The baby's pretty quiet right now. It usually starts to kick up when I am laying down.

RACHEL.

I think I feel something. Oh my God, there she is I feel her. (A beat) She

just kicked. I felt her foot.

WANDA.

No, I think it's just gas. (Getting up.) Would you excuse me for a minute?

I got to use the ladies' room.

RACHEL.

Sure.