

Religion Decision

By

Morgan R. DeRosia

DeRolls Entertainment

morganderosia15@gmail.com

Gospel music plays.

FADE IN:

EXT. ASHTOWN, WOODCOON, MN - MORNING

Sheltered, minuscule town, cars parked outside the church and in the parking lot.

Mother and son rush up the steps to the church. She abruptly bends down to tie his shoe, yanks him up, they rush inside.

INT. CHRISTIAN DOVES CHURCH, ASHTOWN, WOODCOON, MN - MORNING

Families dance and praise with their arms in the air. Church choir and pianist stand behind the altar as they sway and bob to the music.

BRIELLA DESALTS, 19, wears light blue dress, flats, hairs half up in a French braid with a flower in it, arms crossed in front of her, she caresses her BIBLE tightly, eyes close as she prays to herself.

Briella's mother, CANDACE DESALTZ, 38, wears brown skirt, hair in a bun, has lots of makeup on her left side.

Music STOPS. FATHER RAYMOND, 39, wears black cassock and cross. He walks up to the altar, bible and notebook in hand.

FATHER RAYMOND

Oh, Lord, we thank you for this day.
We ask that you give us strength for
any struggles we are going through
today.

Everyone prays out loud. Father Raymond continues to pray in the background. Briella plays with a promise ring, prays out to herself.

BRIELLA

Lord thank you for this beautiful day.

Car horn BEEPS. SILENCE fills the church, everyone glances at Candace and Briella. Briella flinches, prays.

BRIELLA CONT'D

Please watch after me and protect my
mom.

Briella glances over at Candace with tons of makeup below her left eye and cheek. Candace rushes out the church.

BRIELLA CONT'D

Give us both courage. Thank you, Amen.

EXT. DOVE ORTHODOX CHURCH, ASHTOWN, WOODCOON, MN - AFTERNOON

Townspeople chatter on the porch and parking lot. Mrs. Forpes and Anna gossip outside the church doors.

Both Mrs. Forpes and Anna cackle. Briella, wears a winter jacket over her dress, she watches WENDY zip up her sons coat, Briella smirks, smile quickly fades. She lowers her head and eyes meet the ground.

Briella closes her eyes, breathes deeply. She zooms out the door, head down as she passes Mrs. Forpes, holds bible tightly in one hand.

MRS. FORPES

Oh Briella, honey, I heard you were heading back to school soon?

Briella pauses, puts on a fake grin and looks up at Mrs. Forpes.

BRIELLA

Yeah, uh, tomorrow afternoon.

ANNA

Oh, what are you studying?

Briella watches Candace stand beside the car, talks to DENIS DESALTZ, in the driver's seat, late 30's, scruffy, wears old gray flannel with stains. Anna's smile fades awkwardly, she looks to Mrs. Forpes.

ANNA CONT'D

Well, I should get back.

Anna flounces down the church steps, her skirt flows with the wind.

MRS. FORPES

Are you excited for your sophomore year?

Briella inspects Candace and Denis, barely looking at Mrs. Forpes. Candace steps back from the car, arms fly up.

BRIELLA

Uh, yeah, can't wait.

MRS. FORPES
Are you coming back for services on
Sunday's?

Briella's eyes move back and forth from her mother and Mrs. Forpes.

BRIELLA
I plan to, yes.

Denis SLAMS the steering wheel.

DENIS
I don't give a shit. Just get in the
damn car, the Whitecaps are playing.

Denis takes a slow exhale.

DENIS CONT'D
Candace, would you please get in the
car.

Briella and Mrs. Forpes gaze at her mother and Denis. Candace leans forward to the car window.

CANDACE
(whispers)
We are outside the Lord's house, watch
your mouth. It's her last day, we can
at least give her a ride home.

Denis sighs, pulls out an already opened jerky stick and yanks on it with his teeth, and beeps the horn.

Briella strides down the steps and to the car. Candace places her hand around her neck and smiles.

CANDACE
Good morning, sweetheart. Hop in the
back.

BRIELLA
Good morning, mom.

A pile of junk and BEER in the back seat. Briella walks to her moms side of the car, places the beer on the floorboard on the other side and gets in the backseat, fastens her seatbelt, her eyes never leave Denis.

INT. DENIS'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

They drive past an abandoned building, destroyed, with half a roof. Denis scoffs and shakes his head.

DENIS

You want to fix up pieces of shit like that for a living. Is this your way of coming out of the closet?

CANDACE

Denis!

Briella sighs, rolls her eyes and stares out the window.

EXT. BRIELLA'S TOWNHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Secluded, blue, two other cars parked out back, one inside porch connecting the entrances to the other apartments. DAVE'S QUICK STOP, small convenience store down the road.

Denis stomps up the stairs to their complex, Candace grabs the BEER from the back and Briella slides out of the car.

CANDACE

Oh, shoot. We need eggs.

BRIELLA

I could've walked and stopped at Dave's Quick Stop.

DENIS

You're damn right. You should've.

CANDACE

Denis enough. It's alright sweetie, I'll get them later.

INT. BRIELLA'S COMPLEX - AFTERNOON

Briella and her mom step inside the dark, dust and smoke infested living room. Pizza boxes, beer and other junk in the corner by the couch, a small TV on the floor.

Her mom puts the beer in the fridge, Denis lounges on the small, grey couch. Briella shuts the door.

DENIS

Don't slam the fucking door. And turn the TV on channel 12.

Briella sighs, removes her jacket. Denis cracks open a beer as Briella turns on channel 12 and retreats to her bedroom.

INT. BRIELLA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Tiny, rectangular, with a twin size bed, one dresser, small cubby with a shelf and rod below it going across, and a window. 4-5 CARDBOARD BOXES.

Briella takes the flower out of her hair, undoes the braid, puts the flower and flats into an open box. Briella stares at an unopened PREGNANCY TEST in the open box, breath shaky, she sighs.

She removes a JOURNAL from in between her naked mattresses, plops on her mattress and gazes at a CHECKLIST.

CHECKLIST reads: packed bible, packed church clothes, etc. She goes all the way down the list to packed important items hidden from Denis (check marked).

Briella slips her BIBLE and dress into the opened cardboard box, she glides a checkmark right next to PACKED AWAY BIBLE and CHURCH CLOTHES. Briella closes the journal, puts the pen in the spiral, slides it between her mattresses.

Candace stands in the door frame, slightly knocks on the door and sits down beside her.

CANDACE

My baby's getting her first apartment tomorrow! Whoop, whoop!

Candace's arms raise the roof. Briella chuckles, smile fades when she see's the pregnancy test, she quickly closes the box and places a smaller one on top of it.

BRIELLA

I'm coming home at least every Sunday.

CANDACE

Honey, they hold services down there, too.

BRIELLA

It's not that. Last year things got bad without me home.

CANDACE

Things have gotten better. He's gotten better.

Briella looks at the ground and sighs, looks back at Candace.

BRIELLA

I wish you could come with.

CANDACE

Me going to school with my daughter?

BRIELLA

Why not? You deserve to get out of this town, too.

CANDACE

Maybe God has other plans for me.

Briella messes with the ends of her dress.

BRIELLA

I'll call every Sunday then.

CANDACE

I'll call You, every Sunday.

Candace rises.

CANDACE CONT'D

Any dinner requests?

BRIELLA

No, whatever you make is always good.

CANDACE

Come on, it's your last night.

Briella smiles and shakes her head.

CANDACE CONT'D

Alright, fine.

Candace leaves the bedroom, shuts the door behind her.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Round table, takes up half the kitchen, Denis sits at one end, Briella on the other and Candace right in between them. Dinner plates with meat, beans and potatoes sit in front of them.

BRIELLA

Hey Mom, Father Raymond mentioned that the church needs a new Bible study

teacher, you should volunteer.

Candace smiles, looks at Denis with the corner of her eye. Smile fades.

DENIS

I don't think she'll have time for that.

CANDACE

I could manage.

DENIS

Not until I get a job.

Briella plays with her food with her fork.

CANDACE

Honey, are you alright? Are you nervous to go back to school?

BRIELLA

No, mom, it's just -

DENIS

She doesn't wanna eat this shit for the millionth night in a row.

CANDACE

Denis, she was talking.

BRIELLA

(under her breath)

No, you're right I'd rather eat pizza every night, like a slob.

Denis drops his silverware on his plate and stands.

DENIS

What did you say?

Candace rises from the table, steps in front of him.

CANDACE

Nothing, Denis, she said nothing.

Denis raises his hand towards Candace and swings. Briella jolts up, catches his arm before it collides with Candace, she shoves Denis. Denis raises his hand towards Briella.

CANDACE

Denis!

Denis retreats, looks down, grits his teeth and makes a fist.

DENIS

Just order a damn pizza.

Denis walks into the living room, avoids Candace and Briella, lies on the couch, turns up the TV. Candace holds Briella tight, they cry.

CANDACE

I'm so sorry, baby.

BRIELLA

No, mom, I'm sorry.

INT. BRIELLA'S BEDROOM - MIDNIGHT

Briella lies with just a PILLOW, she pulls out her phone, a text message from DANIEL with a heart emoji.

DANIEL

(over text)

Hey babe, sorry I didn't text you today, hope church wasn't too boring. Let me know when you need a ride tomorrow. Love ya.

BRIELLA

(over text)

It's alright babe, I'll call you in the morning when I wake up. I Love you, too.

Briella turns on her alarm for 9am, she lies in bed, stares at the ceiling. Nothing but SILENCE. She closes her eyes, folds her arms over her eyes and prays.

BRIELLA

Lord, please protect her while I'm gone. I don't know how much more of this I can take.

She snuffles, removes her arms, scrunches her eyes and face.

BRIELLA CONT'D

I'm trying to keep the faith but..

Briella sighs, places her hands over her face, rubs her eyes

and turns over towards the wall.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. BRIELLA'S TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

Briella and DANIEL WEDDER, 20, tall, wears jeans and a chain, they pack boxes into a truck with mud all over it.

DANIEL

Is that the last of it?

BRIELLA

Yeah, I just have to say goodbye. Wait in the truck.

Briella sprints up the steps, Daniel jumps in the truck.

INT. BRIELLAS BEDROOM - MORNING

Briella trudges inside. Denis and Candace chat in the living room, TV off.

DENIS

Honey, I'm sorry about last night, but it's the only destresser I have, okay?

Candace hands Denis a business card.

CANDACE

Call Dr. Glober and make an appointment, now!

Denis takes the card, stares at it and sighs. Looks up at Briella.

DENIS

Briella, I'm so sorry about last night.

BRIELLA

I know you are, Denis.

CANDACE

Okay, sweetie, time to go. I love you and good luck with them straight A's.

Candace hugs Briella and kisses her on the forehead. She places a ROSARY around Briella's neck, she looks down at it, back at Candace and smiles.

BRIELLA

I love you, too. I'll visit whenever I can.

CANDACE

Don't worry, honey. Go be a normal college kid. But don't party too much.

Briella snickers, glares at Denis, then back at Candace and nods.

BRIELLA

I'll call you when I get there.

CANDACE

Alright, go. I'm turning your room into a home office!

They all chuckle. Briella breathes in deeply, face long, she gazes at her mom.

DENIS

Uh, good luck, Brie. With school, and stuff.

Briella exhales, turns towards Denis and smirks.

BRIELLA

Yeah, uhm. Thanks, dad.

EXT. BRIELLAS TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

Briella rushes out the door, hops in the truck, falls back to the ground. She uses the handle and leaps.

Daniel admires her and chuckles. Briella shakes her head.

BRIELLA

Shut up and drive, you sky-scraper.

Truck zips away from the townhouse. Briella grabs her JOURNAL from the center console, closes her eyes and takes a deep breath.

Daniel reaches for Briella's JOURNAL/hand, she gasps and yanks her hand away.

DANIEL

I just wanted to hold your hand.

BRIELLA

Oh, Okay.

Briella switches the JOURNAL to the other hand, holds out her left hand, Daniel grabs it.

EXT. DUNWOODY COLLEGE OF TECH, THE SACRED HEARTS APARTMENTS - HOURS LATER

Briella and Daniel get out of the truck, grab her boxes and head up the stairs.

Moments later. Briella and Daniel stand on the apartment steps, Briella texts someone.

DANIEL

Who they hell are you texting? Some guy?

BRIELLA

What? No, it's my mom.

DANIEL

What're you saying?

BRIELLA

Oh, no, you're right, it is a guy and we're flirting hardcore.

DANIEL

Ha. Ha. You're so funny.

They giggle, Briella wraps her arms around his neck, Daniel wraps his arms around her waist and stares into her eyes, he snickers.

BRIELLA

What?

DANIEL

I'm just happy you're here. And I can stay with you without having to sneak in.

Daniel looks at THE SACRED HEARTS APARTMENTS SIGN and smirks.

BRIELLA

Yeah, but it was kind of fun.

DANIEL

I'll help you unpack.

BRIELLA

Actually, I just wanted to be by myself tonight and prep for tomorrow.

DANIEL

Why? It's the first day.

BRIELLA

I know but I'm going to be really busy, so I want a head start.

DANIEL

Hmm. Okay I'll see you tomorrow then.

He smooches Briella's cheek, leaps down the stairs.

DANIEL CONT'D

Love you, babe!

Daniel jumps in his truck and drives away. Briella raises her hand halfway to wave, eyebrows raised, she lowers it.

BRIELLA

Love you, too, I guess.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

2nd floor apartment opens up to a living/bedroom area with a bed, beanbag chair, kitchen to the side with a window cubby, bathroom and closet down the hall in the back. A whole wall with windows and a bookshelf.

Briella unpacks her bedding and clothes. She looks outside her window, smiles, moves her fingers down the ROSARY beads and sighs.

INT. DUNWOODY CLASSROOMS HALL - NEXT DAY MORNING

A long hallway with doors and stairs at the end of the hall. Briella stares at door that reads FUNDAMENTALS OF ARCHITECTURE AND RESIDENTIAL SPACE DESIGN, 120.

PROFESSOR STURN, elder, wears a button up shirt and black pants, walks over and unlocks the door.

PROFESSOR STURN

Excited to learn, are we Miss?

BRIELLA

Desaltz, Briella.

Briella reaches her hand out to Professor Sturn, they shake hands. He opens the door for her.

INT. DUNWOODY CLASSROOM 120 - DAY

Briella steps into an enormous lecture classroom. Rows all the way down on each step. Briella makes her way to the front row and sits down, takes her books out of her backpack.

MINUTES LATER. Students flood into the classroom. Professor Sturn stands behind his desk, collects some papers, moves in front of the chalkboard.

PROFESSOR STURN

Good morning, students, I am professor Sturn, the head of the Architecture program here at Dunwoody.

Daniel slips in, sits next to Briella, smiles and waves. Briella scoffs, half smiles, her eyebrows tense up.

BUZZ from her phone.

DANIEL

(over text)

I forgot to tell you, I transferred schools so we could spend more time together.

BUZZ.

DANIEL CONT'D

(over text)

I also got an apartment at Sacred Hearts.

BUZZ

DANIEL CONT'D

Isn't that great?!

Briella turns her phone on Do Not Disturb, places it under the table, glances at Professor Sturn and then back at her phone.

BRIELLA

(over text)

Okay, um, why are you taking an Architecture class? Are you still in mechanics?

DANIEL
(over text)
Yeah. Electives, babe.

Daniel smiles big and brightly, Briella grins at Daniel. She turns her phone off, puts it in her backpack and opens her notebook.

Professor Sturn writes on the chalkboard: CHAPTER 1. FINDING THE RIGHT CLIENT.

INT. DUNWOODY CLASSROOMS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Students disperse from the classroom. Daniel waits beside the door. Briella walks out with Professor Sturn.

PROFESSOR STURN
Yeah, just stop by my office around 2
and I'll give you that Humanitarian
Architecture pamphlet and we'll go
from there.

BRIELLA
Ah, thank you, so much!

Briella turns towards Daniel with a huge smile. Daniel crosses his arms, glares at professor Sturn then at Briella, then points to Professor Sturn.

DANIEL
You're so oblivious Brie. I wouldn't
go to his office alone.

BRIELLA
What? Why?

DANIEL
Did you see the way he looked at you,
he totally wants to fuck you, babe.

BRIELLA
What?! That's ridiculous.

They trudge down the hallway, students pass.

DANIEL
I'm just looking out for you, I don't
want anyone to take advantage of you,
like Denis does. I'm the only guy
looking out for you, princess.

BRIELLA

I think I can protect myself, thank you.

Briella walks away. Daniel grabs her hand and walks alongside her. Briella glances at Daniel, eyebrows scrunched.

BRIELLA

Where are you going?

DANIEL

Walking you to..?

BRIELLA

Statistics.

Briella rolls her eyes as they walk down the hallway.

EXT. DUNWOODY COLLEGE OF TECH, ARCADE HALL - DAYS LATER

A horseshoe shaped building, giant entrance with staircase, big, open quad. Students throw a frisbee, two students on a picnic, and students reading.

Daniel waits below the stairs, Briella floats down the stairs, books in hand. She grabs Daniels hand and they walk to his truck in parking lot.

Daniel rushes over to open the car door for Briella, she gets in, he rushes back and hops into the truck.

BRIELLA

Such a gentlemen you can be when you try.

Daniel starts the car, pulls away.

Briella stares out the window, face is long.

DANIEL

What's the matter, Brie?

Briella scoffs.

BRIELLA

How did you..? How come you moved into Sacred Hearts? You could always stay with me.

DANIEL

Yeah but this way it'll be easier and

I can come over whenever. I thought you'd be excited.

BRIELLA

No, I am. You just had a set plan before and then randomly changed it.

DANIEL

Yeah, I did it for you.

Briella turns on the radio. MUSIC.

The truck parks in front of the Sacred Hearts apartments.

Daniel turns his keys, engine STOPS. Briella steps out of the truck, heads up the steps. Daniel follows her.

INT. SACRED HEARTS, OUTSIDE BRIELLAS DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Narrow hallway, lights flicker slowly, down the hallway are stairs to other apartments. Briella and Daniel stand outside her apartment door. Briella's door reads 40.

BRIELLA

Thanks for walking me to my door.

DANIEL

I can't come in?

BRIELLA

Well I was going to do some homework and then go to sleep. I'm sorry but not tonight.

DANIEL

You said I could last night.

BRIELLA

Yeah I know but I already got swamped with homework. Plus now you can move in and tighty up your place.

Daniel sighs and takes a step back.

DANIEL

Alright, fine. I'll stay with you tomorrow night.

Briella takes his hand and nods. She snickers and points to the number on her door.

BRIELLA

In the Bible the number 40 stands for completion or fulfillment. 40 days, 40 nights, it's a sign from God that I'm meant to be here.

DANIEL

And that's my cue. I'll see you tomorrow.

Briella unlocks her hand from his, looks down, bites her lip, looks up at Daniel.

BRIELLA

Goodnight.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Briella opens the door with just enough room to squeeze inside, swirls around, shuts the door quickly, locks it with the chain and bolt. Some light from the neon sign across the street pours through her apartment windows.

Briella flips on the light. Empty cardboard boxes on the kitchen counter, textbooks, notebooks and binders on the bookshelf, BIBLE lies beside her pillow.

Briella goes into the kitchen, comes out with a water and munchies chips. She scoots on her bed, opens Bible and reads.

She grunts and places her hands on her stomach, glances at a calendar with days crossed off, she studies a day crossed off CIRCLED IN RED, weeks ago. Shaky she gulps, places Bible down, looks up at the PREGNANCY TEST lying on the counter.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - SUNRISE - DAYS LATER

Apartment is dim, empty boxes on the kitchen counter. Bible opened on her bed, a POSITIVE PREGNANCY TEST lies next to it. Briella paces back and forth, hyperventilates, hands over her face as she wipes away tears.

BRIELLA

No, no, no. This can't be happening.

She yanks the rosary off and flings it on the bed. She gags, moves her fist against her mouth. She sprints to bathroom and heaves, trudges out, wipes her mouth, clasps hands together and eyes close as she falls down on her knees.

BRIELLA

Please, Lord, this can't be real.

BUZZ, BUZZ, BUZZ. Daniel calls. Briella flinches, rises up, turns her phone off and flips it over.

She races past the book shelf, knocks over an Architecture textbook. Shaky, she picks it up and slams it back in the shelf, book shelf rattles.

BANG, BANG, BANG on the door.

DANIEL

Babe? Everything good? I called.

Briella wipes away her tears, looks at her reflection in the window and fixes her hair.

BRIELLA

One second!

Briella yanks the PREGNANCY TEST, scrambles to the bathroom, rushes out with the test in her hand.

Rushes over to the book shelf, shakes her head, sprints to the kitchen. Tosses the test into the microwave.

She wraps a shawl around herself, rubs her eyes and runs her fingers down her hair. Sniffles.

Daniel stands, arms folded, he checks his watch. His eyebrows raise when she opens the door just a crack.

BRIELLA

Hey, babe. Sorry I- I was just reading my Bible.

DANIEL

Why were you crying? Is it because Jesus dies?

Briella rubs her eyes.

BRIELLA

It's nothing. Just stress from school. Which I need to get ready for, so I'll see you after, okay?

DANIEL

I could make you an omelette! Or we could make it together.

Briella gags.

BRIELLA

Oh, I, uh, don't have any eggs. I'm sorry babe, I need to be alone, I'll see you later.

DANIEL

I've got eggs at my place, I'll go get them.

BRIELLA

No! Please Daniel, I don't feel good.

DANIEL

Alright, princess. We should do dinner and video games soon.

Daniel pushes the door back, kisses Briella's forehead.

DANIEL CONT'D

Just relax for now baby.

He gazes around her apartment, everything scattered.

DANIEL CONT'D

Hope you feel better, I'll check on you later.

BRIELLA

Um, okay, I'll see you later babe.

Daniel walks down the hall. Briella slowly shuts the door and takes a deep breath.

INT. DUNWOODY CLASSROOM 3D MODELING - AFTERNOON - DAYS LATER

Briella leans up against the wall, writes in her journal. Students stroll into the classroom. She closes her journal, sits in the back of the room.

Archer, 22, tall, brown hair, wears a long sleeved T-shirt, a small cross, carries a sling bag, sits next to Briella.

MOMENTS LATER

Students, laptops open, draw with styluses. Briella flips through her notes, her building design only has the base/flooring. Everyone else has two full stories.

BRIELLA

What the hell, where's my walling?

ARCHER

I can do all this through him who
gives me strength.

Briella sighs, flips a page. Looks up at Archer.

BRIELLA

Philippians... uhh.

ARCHER

4:13.

Briella taps her laptop, drags a line up, it disappears. She grunts, tears flow, she places her hands over her face and slams her elbows on the desk.

ARCHER CONT'D

Come to me, all you who are weary and
burdened, and I will give you rest.

Briella uses her sleeve to wipe away tears, looks up at Archer.

BRIELLA

Matthew 11:28, I know Father, thanks.

Archer leans over with his stylus, clicks line structure, drags the line up, it straightens and stays.

BRIELLA CONT'D

That's not in my notes.

ARCHER

It's in mine.

Briella writes down in notebook, Line Structure, baby, she quickly erases baby, writes then drag line.

EXT. DUNWOODY COLLEGE OF TECH, ARCADE HALL - DAY

Small groups of students head in and out of the building. A lady walks her dog, a student plays guitar under a tree. Archer leaps down the steps, Briella strides down, holds the railing and her journal.

ARCHER

Hey, what happened to your rosary?

Briella glances down and feels for her rosary.

BRIELLA

Oh, I left it at my place.

ARCHER

What's your name young Faithful?

BRIELLA

Briella.

ARCHER

Well, I'm Archer.

BRIELLA

Thank you for the help, Archer, see you around.

ARCHER

Anytime.

Briella moves her hair to the side. She bolts down the sidewalk, embraces her journal and keeps her head down.

ARCHER CONT'D

Wait, hold up.

Archer darts after her, passes a student, moves to the left on the grass, then back on the sidewalk. He catches up to her.

ARCHER CONT'D

Are you in architecture?

Briella glances up, she sighs.

BRIELLA

Yeah, second year.

ARCHER

Hey me too, except I'm a Junior transfer.

Sidewalk breaks off into a Y shape. Briella points to the right.

BRIELLA

I go off this way.

ARCHER

Would you like a ride?

BRIELLA

No, it's not that far and a walk might do me some good.

ARCHER

Okie dokie. Hey, you should go to the Life in Christ church with me? I haven't gone in a while though.

BRIELLA

How come?

ARCHER

Just stopped going after I wasn't forced to but Jesus needs to be in my life again.

Briella looks down. Archer reaches out for a fist bump.

BRIELLA

He never left you. I don't know when I'll be able to go this semester but we'll bring back the faith.

Briella see's Archers fist, gives him a light, unmotivated fist bump.

ARCHER

Not everything is hopeless, Briella, he'll help you with whatever you're going through.

Briella softly smiles, turns, looks down and walks away. She turns back around, sees Archer, he waves with a big smile.

Briella smiles, turns back, she reaches for her rosary beads, feels nothing but skin, smile fades.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - EVENING - A WEEK LATER

Briella sits on her bed, wears her ROSARY, phone up to her ear, laptop, opened tab search of pregnancy books, another with mommy stories, another with AA schedule meetings.

Her JOURNAL open, a list of WHAT TO DO reads different options Briella could take regarding the pregnancy.

She writes best for her career would be an ABORTION. She quickly crosses it out and shakes her head. A tear falls down her cheek.

DENIS (V.O.)
 What about Saturday afternoon?

Briella snuffles, wipes her eyes with her sleeve.

BRIELLA
 (into the phone)(Voice dry)
 This Saturday?

Briella clears her throat.

BRIELLA CONT'D
 (into the phone)(More clearly)
 Only in the morning.

DENIS (V.O.)
 Damn, that sucks. I quit cold turkey
 and I can't even sleep in on the
 weekends.

BRIELLA
 (into the phone)
 Price to pay being an addict.

DENIS (V.O.)
 Hey, I'm doing better. Thanks for the
 help kiddo, I appreciate it.

Silence. Briella stares at a MOMMY STORY called "At First"

It reads: At First it ruined my life. At First I wished I
 never did what I did. At First I was alone. At First my
 career as a doctor was crushed...

Briella slams her laptop.

BRIELLA
 (into the phone)
 Dad?

DENIS (V.O.)
 Yeah, Brie!?

BRIELLA
 (into the phone)
 Is mom there?

DENIS (V.O.)
 Uh, yeah. Yeah, she's right here.

CANDACE (V.O.)
Hi, honey! We've missed you!

BRIELLA CONT'D
(into the phone)
Mom? Can I talk to you about something?

CANDACE (V.O.)
Of course, honey, what is it?

DENIS (V.O.)
I'm going to work, I love you. Both of you.

Denis and Candace smooch. Briella scrunched her face and mouth in disguise, softly laughs.

CANDACE (V.O.)
We love you, too, dear. What did you want to talk about Brie?

BRIELLA
(into the phone)
Dare I ask about dad and therapy?

CANDACE (V.O.)
He's really trying this time Brie, made an appointment with Dr. Globber. No more alcohol in this house from now on.

BRIELLA
(into the phone)
Good. Good. I'm praying it lasts.

CANDACE (V.O.)
Me too, honey. Don't worry about it, you have a lot going on, I'm sure.

Briella laughs nervously, she gazes at her list, writes give him/her up for adoption.

BRIELLA
(into the phone)
More than you know momma.

Briella stares out the window, a mother and child hold hands, walk into the diner across the street.

BRIELLA CONT'D

(Into the phone)

Hey mom, what do you think about Daniel? Do you think he's mature?

CANDACE (V.O.)

Well, he's nice but I think his priorities are messed up.

BRIELLA

(into the phone)

What do you mean?

CANDACE (V.O.)

From what you've told me, he only seems to care about you. Are you having issues?

BRIELLA

(into the phone)

I've just been thinking about a lot lately. I might take a year off from school.

CANDACE (V.O.)

What?! Briella Rain DeSaltz you better finish off school, this is what you want to do, don't push it off. It better not be for Daniel.

BRIELLA

(into the phone)

It's not for him. What if I didn't have a choice?

CANDACE (V.O.)

There's always a choice. Pray to the Lord and he will answer.

BRIELLA

(into the phone)

I need to come home.

CANDACE (V.O.)

Only for services and then you will go back to school. You need to do this Brie and for no one else but yourself.

She looks at her phone, multiple texts from Daniel, she gazes at the clock and rises.

BRIELLA

(into the phone)

Shoot. I've got to go, mom. I promise I'll continue school, I just have to figure some stuff out first. I love you.

CANDACE (V.O.)

You better, I love you, too.

Click. Briella closes her journal, sets it under her pillow next to her Bible, grabs her jacket and her bag, heads out the door.

INT. DANIELS APARTMENT - EVENING

Apartment similar to Briella's but smaller, smaller kitchen with no nook, table has clothes, papers, and bills scattered on it, a TV stand with an Xbox and tv on it, bathroom across from the kitchen, door open and toilet seat up.

Daniel paces back and forth in the kitchen, phone in hand, breakfast ingredients laid out on the counters. Bacon and an omelette with peppers, onions, ham and cheese cook.

Briella busts in and rushes to the kitchen.

BRIELLA

Babe, I'm so sorry I'm late for tonight, I was on the phone with my parents talking about -

She smells the breakfast cooking, gags, runs into the bathroom. Daniel rests against the bathroom doorway.

Briella gets up, rinses her mouth out with water, washes her face and hands.

DANIEL

What is going on with you?

BRIELLA

Are you serious? You're blaming me for getting sick?

DANIEL

Throwing up is a major sign of remorse.

BRIELLA

Maybe it's because I'm under a lot of

stress and you decide to be a dick.
Oh, and the greasy, unhealthy food
that you're cooking.

DANIEL

You knew this was happening tonight
and you're late. You don't respond or
talk to me anymore and when you do
it's vague as fuck with dumbass
excuses, like oh, sorry I was reading
my Bible.

BRIELLA

Maybe you should accept and appreciate
my beliefs and actually try to
understand them instead of criticizing
them.

DANIEL

Really? What has God done for you,
huh, he set you up with a shitty life
and you praise him for that?

BRIELLA

The only thing I'm unthankful for is
him setting me up with you.

Daniel slaps Briella, immediately widens his eyes and tries
to console her. She says nothing, hand on her cheek, cries,
rips off a promise ring and chucks it at Daniel, she leaves.

DANIEL

Brie, I..

Daniel rushes to the door, it slams in his face.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Briella rushes in, slams the door, cries, she leaps on her
bed, lies on her stomach, arms folded and head down.

FADE OUT:

INT. SACRED HEARTS OUTSIDE BRIELLAS DOOR- DAYS LATER

Dark and dim hallway, lights flickering. Daniel raises his
hand to knock on Briellas door, it flings open.

Briella stands in the doorway, hair going every direction,
eyes long, wears jeans, t-shirt, and bookbag, Rosary in her
hand.

She carries a box full of pictures, letters, a hoodie, and a teddy bear with a heart that says B+D. She shoves the box to Daniel.

Daniel steps back, stares down at the box in his hands. Briella steps into the hallway, bumps into Daniel, turns around, locks her apartment.

He watches her rush away, looks down at the box, moves the bear, yanks it back, turns and kicks the wall.

INT. DUNWOODY CLASSROOM 3D MODELING - WEEKS LATER

Briella stands, dark circles under her eyes, wears a Dunwoody hoodie and joggers, Rosary in her pocket, beads hang out a little.

Archer, wears a nice button-up shirt with a bowtie, dress pants and shoes.

He sits next to her, crosses his fanny pack in front of him, takes out a computer tablet. Briella slowly sits down.

ARCHER

I'm going to bible study tonight.

Briella stares at the wall, the lesson is projected on the screen, she has no school materials out.

Archer reaches over to touch her arm, she flinches away and gasps. Archer retracts quickly, looks her up and down.

ARCHER

You need to go more than I do.

BRIELLA

Huh?

Professor Carrs walks over to the laptop at her desk, presses buttons, her screen shows on the projection over the wall.

BRIELLA CONT'D

I'm sorry, I'm...not myself today.

ARCHER

That's why you need the Lord. I'm not taking no for an answer.

PROFESSOR CARRS

Okay class today we're finishing up with the roofing and we'll start the

interior.

Briella sighs, closes her eyes, tilts her head back, reaches her notebook and laptop out of her bookbag.

ARCHER

I can take you back to your place
before we go and then head up together
at 7.

BRIELLA

Fine. Only to get you to stop talking
about it.

PROFESSOR CARRS

Alright, can anyone remind the rest of
the class how to create roofing tiles
with texture?

Class remains silent, nobody raises their hands. Briella looks over at Archers, the exterior built, two stories, looks super real and complete.

PROFESSOR CARRS

Briella, how about you?

Briella glances up at Professor Carrs, her laptop still on the loading screen. Briella opens her mouth but nothing comes out.

ARCHER

Her laptop is still loading Professor
Carrs, I can answer this one on her
behalf.

PROFESSOR CARRS

Alright, go ahead Archer.

EXT. DUNWOODY COLLEGE OF TECH, ARCADE HALL - DAY - RAINS

Briella walks down the steps, bookbag still open. Archer quickly rushes over to zip it up for her. She turns, eyebrow raised, confused.

Archer motions to the bag, Briella nods. Archer takes out an umbrella, unlocks it, carries it over Briella. She pushes it over to Archer, he places it back over her.

Briella sighs, glances up at Archer, then down at the sidewalk.

ARCHER

A lady should never get drenched,
especially one who is already down in
the dumps.

Briella's phone DINGS. Texts and missed calls from Daniel.
BUZZ, he calls, Briella sighs, Blocks Daniel's number. Archer
sees.

ARCHER

Crazy ex-wife?

Briella grins, looks at Archer, closes her eyes and shakes
her head.

ARCHER CONT'D

Shit, I guess I'm the only one.

They meet at the Y of the sidewalk, Briella steps towards the
right.

ARCHER CONT'D

My Jeep's this way.

BRIELLA

It's fine, I can walk.

ARCHER

Brie, it's pouring out.

BRIELLA

So, I'll call an Uber.

ARCHER

C'mon, I'm harmless. You can hold my
fanny pack!

Briella chuckles.

BRIELLA

Okay, fine, it's not that far.

She crosses her leg over to the left. Archer steps over,
holds umbrella over her as they approach the jeep.

Archer rushes over, opens the car door for her.

BRIELLA

Thank you, Mr. Fanny pack.

Archer pauses, slams his hand over his chest and steps back.

ARCHER

Damn, Briella jokes hit hard.

Archer slams the door, Briella flinches her eyes but unmoved.

He walks over, jumps in his seat, pulls the seatbelt in front of him, turns the jeep on, radio blares COUNTRY. He turns the dial, music gets quiet.

ARCHER CONT'D

Sorry about that. You gonna put your seatbelt on?

Briella looks over at the seatbelt, yanks it over, it clicks. Jeep pulls out of the parking lot.

BRIELLA

I didn't picture you as a Redneck.

ARCHER

No, no, I like country but I like other genres too, I'm not obsessed with guns and camouflage.

BRIELLA

Stereotypical.

ARCHER

Sadly, most people are.

BRIELLA

I hope not.

Moments of music plays. Briella plays with her Rosary beads.

ARCHER

Did you hear about the kidnapping at school?

Briella jolts her whole body up, eyes wide with concern.

BRIELLA

What?!

ARCHER

It's fine, he eventually woke up.

Briella sighs, slouches back in her seat and rolls her eyes at Archer.

BRIELLA
My gosh, kid.

Archer laughs.

EXT. SACRED HEARTS - MOMENTS LATER

Rock music plays as they pull up to Sacred Hearts. Daniel sits on the railing by the entrance, Briella doesn't see him. Archer turns the keys, Briella chuckles.

ARCHER
I told you I listened to everything.

BRIELLA
I guess so.

Archer see's Daniel, points to him.

ARCHER
Who's that guy? Looks like the town druggie.

BRIELLA
That's my uhm, he's my...it's..

ARCHER
Complicated? I've had my fair share, I get it. It's okay, I'll protect you.

BRIELLA
Why does every guy think I'm a damsel in distress?

Archer reaches in the back of his jeep, pulls out his umbrella, cocks it like a weapon.

ARCHER CONT'D
Oh, no. I'll be ready to take him.

Briella laughs, places her hand over her mouth. Looks at Daniel and sighs.

BRIELLA
Let's go in.

Briella and Archer get out of the car, Archer carries the umbrella, they walk up the stairs.

Daniel hops off the railing, steps in front of the doorway.

DANIEL

Brie, can we just talk about this?

BRIELLA

Get out of my way Daniel, it's done, we're done.

DANIEL

Seriously? I help you get away from your father, let you crash at my place no matter how inconvenient, I fuck up one time and you kick me to the curb?

BRIELLA

Stop Daniel, you did it to yourself.

DANIEL

And now you're gonna fuck this guy, right? Aren't Christians supposed to wait for marriage or some shit?

Archer steps a tad in front of Briella to face Daniel.

ARCHER

Woah, hey, no need to tell the whole world her business and we're friends.

Daniel slightly pushes Briella aside, gets closer to Archer, Archer backs away onto the step below.

ARCHER CONT'D

I didn't think Christians smoked pot but here we are.

DANIEL

You need to mind your fucking business.

ARCHER

Yeah, well, I'm helping Brie, which apparently is something you couldn't do for her.

Daniel decks Archer in the face, Archers grunts, falls right, drops the umbrella. Briella bumps Daniel to the side, kneels beside Archer, checks his face.

Archers nose bleeds, the side of his face is red. His button-up's all muddy and sleeve has a little blood on it. Archer groans.

ARCHER
Should've become a doctor.

BRIELLA
I'm so sorry, Archer.

ARCHER
I could reconstruct my bridge but I
don't think the mold would hold.

Briella scoffs, shakes her head, turns towards Daniel, who stands in the corner, looks away from them.

BRIELLA CONT'D
For the love of God, can you just
leave?!

ARCHER
Can only reconstruct your apartment.

Daniel twists towards Briella, gets closer to her.

DANIEL
I fucking can't. I love you Briella,
don't you see I need you.

BRIELLA
(scoffs)
You need something, alright, but it's
not me. It's Jesus.

Briella helps Archer up, grabs the umbrella off the steps, they trudge inside, Daniel remains outside.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Briella flings her door open, plops Archer on her bed. Bible and journal lie by her pillow, an architecture book, school books and a WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING book all lie on the floor, opened.

Briella quickly closes them all, places the others on top of the Expecting book, then places them on her kitchen nook.

She flips on the light, goes into the kitchen, comes out with a wet wash cloth, hands it to Archer.

BRIELLA
Here. Don't tilt your head back,
that's a myth, instead, lean a little
forward, pinch both nostrils every 5

to 10 minutes. I'll be right back,
take your shirt off, I'll get the
stain out.

Archer looks at her with amazement, she strides down the
hallway to the bathroom, he shrugs.

ARCHER

Did you get a lot of nosebleeds as a
kid?

BRIELLA

No.

Briella comes back with an oxyclean stain remover stick,
stares at Archer shirtless, abs and a rose tattoo up his
right rib area, he holds his clothes up, keeps the wash cloth
up against his nose.

BRIELLA CONT'D

Lot of injuries to tend to.

She takes his shirt, sprawls it out on her bed, presses the
stick on the blood spots, the dirt, and mud spots.

ARCHER

Maybe you should've been the doctor.

Archer removes the wash cloth, blood spread on the wash
cloth, he folds it over, pinches his nostrils. He groans.

ARCHER CONT'D

At least my bowtie is fine.

Briella chuckles, shakes her head and takes his shirt down
the hallway, comes back with plaid pajama pants, throws them
to Archer.

BRIELLA

Your pants need to be washed too,
they're Daniels but it's better than
nothing.

Archer unclenches his nostrils, holds the pajama pants up.

ARCHER

I don't think he'll want them back.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

Briella and Archer sit on her bed, Archer wears the pajama

pants and Briella's purple shawl.

Briella's laptop and 3D modeling notebook open, she draws on her laptop screen with a stylus, Archer oversees what she does.

Briella zones out, her stylus goes off the laptop. Archer redirects her hand to the Roofing Analysis Tools button.

BRIELLA

Sorry. Can we take a break?

ARCHER

No, we're almost done, come on.

BUZZ. Briella's phone rings, caller ID reads MINNIES GENERAL HOSPITAL. Briella hops off her bed, picks up phone, walks into the hallway. Paces, answers it.

BRIELLA

(over the phone)

Hello?

PEGGY (V.O.)

Hi! This is Dr. Peggy from Minnies OB/GYN, is this Briella DeSaltz?

BRIELLA

(over the phone)

Uh, yes, it is.

PEGGY (V.O.)

Okay, this is just a phone call confirming your check-up with us next week, are you available for Tuesday at 2 pm?

BRIELLA

(over the phone)

Yes. That works for me.

PEGGY (V.O.)

Okay, great. I look forward to meeting you, we will discuss further options for you and your child on Tuesday.

BRIELLA

(over the phone)

Oh, yeah, okay.

PEGGY (V.O.)
Alrighty, bye hun, have a good one!

BRIELLA
(over the phone)
Uh, thanks, you as well.

Call ends. Briella turns her phone off, stares at the wall. Archer struts towards her.

ARCHER
Hey, everything okay?

BRIELLA
Yeah, uhm.

Briella looks up at Archer, scoffs, fakes a smile, motions her phone/arm up.

BRIELLA CONT'D
Just a check-up is all.

ARCHER
Alright, let's get back to it.

Briella and Archer sit back on her bed, her building has half her roofing complete with texture.

BRIELLA
What the, why'd you do-

ARCHER
Da, da, da. You still have to finish it.

Archer places the stylus in her hand, she clicks a roofing implant button, draws a zig-zag line up to the center of her building and back down the other side. It stays and texture is automatically added.

BRIELLA
Yes!

Archer pulls his arm closer to his body, in a cheering way, they high five.

ARCHER
See, you *can* do it.

BRIELLA
Thanks Archer, I really owe you.

ARCHER

Nah, no worries, I understand you've been distracted lately.

BRIELLA

You don't know the half of it.

ARCHER

No offense but you seem to have bad taste in guys.

Briella scoffs and shoves his shoulder.

BRIELLA

Okay, you might be right. There is more to the story.

ARCHER

I figured there was more, but I won't pry.

BUZZ. Dryer's finished. Briella rises up, speeds to the bathroom.

ARCHER CONT'D

I feel like a horrible replacement boyfriend, making you be a housewife.

Briella chucks his clothes at him, they hit his face.

BRIELLA

Good thing I'm neither your girlfriend nor a housewife, huh?

ARCHER

That's it, I'm telling people you broke my nose.

Briella chuckles, shrugs, looks at the time, reads 5:30 pm. Archer looks over at the time.

ARCHER CONT'D

I think it's dinnertime before church.

BRIELLA

Sounds good to me, you can cook.

Archer hops up, places his clothes on her table, walks to the kitchen and inspects her fridge and cabinets. He pulls out some TV dinners of Roast beef, mashed potatoes and carrots.

Briella steps into the kitchen doorway, Archer holds tv dinners up for Briella to see, she nods in approval.

Archer goes to the microwave, Briella quickly steps in front of the microwave and takes the dinners out of his hands.

BRIELLA

I'll do it. Go put on a movie.

Archer hands off the dinners, takes a step back and waves his arms up, mocks her.

ARCHER

Yes, dear, whatever you say.

He walks into the living room, sits on her bed and types on her laptop.

Briella sighs, turns around, opens the microwave to the positive pregnancy test, takes it out, stares at it. She opens a drawer with a trashcan in it, throws the test in the trash.

She unravels the plastic from both dinners, places one in the microwave and starts it, throws away the plastic seals.

Microwave DINGS. She pulls out the dinner, places a fork in it, walks to the living room and hands it to Archer.

ARCHER

Thanks. Ready for Fast and the Furious 9?

Briella grins.

BRIELLA

Actually. Can we watch I Lived on Parker Avenue?

ARCHER

Never heard of it, is it HI-larious?

BRIELLA

No, but I've heard it's really good.

Briella heads back to the kitchen, looks down at her TV dinner, scrunches her mouth in disgust, throws it away, pulls out Salt and Vinegar chips, walks to the living room, plops on her bed next to Archer.

They scoot back and stare at the screen as Archer glances at

the chip bag, looks at Briella and presses play.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Briella and Archer shoulder to shoulder, hunched over, glued to the documentary. TV dinner devoured, almost completely clean and salt and vinegar chips bag empty, behind the laptop.

LAPTOP SCREEN: a young man, JOEY hugging an older woman and young girl, his MOM comes up and hugs the woman.

THE MOM

It's my turn.

Everyone cries and chuckles.

JOEY

Thank you for choosing life.

The end credits roll as a book graphic appears with thank you notes and letters appointed to the other woman.

ARCHER

Wow!

Archer claps his hands.

ARCHER CONT'D

What a tear-jerker, how dare you make me cry instead of laugh, like a good friend would?

BRIELLA

Worth the watch, though, right?

ARCHER

No, yeah, 100 percent. What made you pick this movie?

BRIELLA

I mean I'm pro-life but most people don't know what's going on inside mothers' heads and what women who had to make tough decisions were actually going through.

ARCHER

Hmm, okay, I see you. Plus, the mom absolutely hated herself for even considering abortion.

Briella gazes at her journal and then reaches for the chips, nothing left, she pulls out an empty hand, groans and frowns.

Archer glances at the empty salt and vinegar chips bag, then at the clock, reads 6:08 pm. He rises up, pulls Briella up with him.

ARCHER

Let's go. The church is about a half an hour away but I'm getting you some real food first. How's Taco Bell sound?

Briella takes a minute, no reaction, she smiles big.

BRIELLA

Actually, it's the only thing this week that's sounded appealing.

ARCHER

Great!

Archer rushes to the door, Briella holds out her arm to stop him and points to his clothes, still on the table.

ARCHER

Formal clothes, right! Can't show up in..

Archer flares his arms up, the shawl opens up.

ARCHER CONT'D

This. You must change your exterior too, little lady.

Briella exits down the hallway.

Moments later, Briella returns in a red, flowy dress, with a bowtie in the back, Rosary around her neck, and red flats.

Her hair split and braided behind her ears and comes together to one small braid in the back.

Archer straightens his bowtie, pauses when he sees her.

ARCHER

Wowzers, you look great.

Briella laughs.

BRIELLA
Thanks, you do too Archer.

ARCHER
I mean it, the Lord's gonna bless you
with a much better guy, who you
deserve.

Briella scoffs.

BRIELLA
I don't think love is for me, or at
least anytime soon.

ARCHER
I get it. You ready to go?

Briella looks around, glances at her journal/Bible, walks
over, yanks them, heads for the door, opens it for him.

BRIELLA
Yep!

ARCHER
Ladies first.

Archer moves his arm in a circular motion towards the door.
She exits first, she pauses in the doorway and turns around.

BRIELLA
This *is* an apostolic church, right?

Archer leans over, close to her, places his hand on the door
frame.

ARCHER
Well, of course, it is.

They chuckle, turn around and leave.

ARCHER
What kind of Christian do you think I
am?

Archer closes the door behind him.

INT. CHRISTIAN SAINTS CHURCH - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Archer and Briella stride through the doors. Stain glass
windows on the sides, rows of pews, giant statue of Jesus
hanging from the cross, altar in the middle with baptismal

area beside it.

Briella looks around, smiles, journal and bible in hand.

The pastor, tall, wears black suit and neon tie, holds Bible, talks with ROSE , 40's, wears black skirt and green blouse by the first set of pews.

Instrumentalists set up microphones, a young man places a cup of water on the altar.

Archer struts up to the Pastor, the woman's eyes and smile widens, she embraces Archer tightly. Archer grunts, wraps his arm around her slowly.

ARCHER

It's good to see you too, mom.

Briella stands at the second pew, hand around her other arm in front of her as she gazes at the scenery. Archer points to Briella.

ARCHER

Mom, Pastor Premise, this is Briella.
She studies at Dunwoody with me.

Rose reaches her arm out, Briella strides up and shakes it.

ROSE

Hi Briella, I'm Rose.

BRIELLA

Hello, sister Rose.

ROSE

Oh.

Rose turns and looks at Archer, eyebrows raised in amazement.

Pastor Premise shakes Briella's hand.

PASTOR PREMISE

What church do you attend, Briella?

BRIELLA

I go to Dove Orthodox, in a little town called Ashtown.

PASTOR PREMISE

Ohh, not too far from home, are we?

BRIELLA
About an hour or so.

Archer swings around to Briella.

ARCHER
Sounds like the perfect distance to
me.

Rose smacks Archer upside the head. Archer scrunches his face
and closes his eyes. Briella laughs

A young man walks up to the pastor.

YOUNG MAN
We're about to start

PASTOR PREMISE
Alright.

Pastor Premise turns to Briella.

PASTOR PREMISE CONT'D
We hope you enjoy the service.

BRIELLA
Thank you.

Briella walks into the first pew on the left and sits, Archer
follows.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dark, some light pours from the neon sign across the street,
laptop and TV dinner and chips bag still on Briellas bed,
books in the kitchen nook.

Door opens, Daniel creeps in.

He shuts the door, turns on the light, struts down the
hallway.

Few moments later, comes out, inspects the bookcase, stops at
the pregnancy book and takes it out.

DANIEL
What the?

Daniel shakes his head, chucks the book on the bed. Crumbles
the chips bag in his hand, tosses it on the floor, checks out
the laptop, types in her password, it unlocks.

The laptop displays the documentary *I Lived On Parker Avenue*, he reads the summary.

He exclaims, slams the laptop, rises up and stomps to the kitchen.

He opens up her drawers and cabinet doors, slams them all shut, yanks the fridge open, it's mostly empty, he shuts it. He stands, hand on his hip, he looks around and sighs.

Looks down, spots the trashcan drawer slightly open, he pulls it open and gazes at the PREGNANCY TEST. He picks it up, turns it over to see it's positive.

INT. CHRISTIAN SAINTS CHURCH - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Gospel music plays from the worship team.

People pray, some are up at the altar. Briella bends down at the altar, hands clasped and head down.

BRIELLA

Lord. This is what you want from me?

Briella sniffles, tears flow down.

BRIELLA CONT'D

Please forgive me for my mistakes,
Jesus. Please help me. And never give
up on me. There's - there's just so
much. I can't - I can't do it alone.

Archer steps to put his hand on her back, Rose puts her arm in front and shakes her head. She places her hand on her back, motions Archer to get tissues.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Dark, some light pours from the neon sign, Archer and Briella push open the door and rush in, they laugh.

Briella turns on the light, they stop, Daniel sits at the edge of the bed with the pregnancy test in hand. He rises.

DANIEL

What the fuck is this, Brie?

Briella sets her journal and Bible on the table.

BRIELLA

Daniel, what are you doing here?

Archer steps in front of Briella and towards to face her.

ARCHER
Call the cops Briella.

Daniel opens a pocket knife, steps towards Archer. Archer steps back and places his arm in front of Briella.

DANIEL
You better get the hell outta here,
Archer.

ARCHER
No.

BRIELLA
It's okay Archer, he won't hurt me. He
only wants to hurt you.

Archer glances at her, back at the knife and then at Daniel.

DANIEL
Do as the Fairlady says.

Archer turns close to Briella, holds her hands.

ARCHER
You call me if anything happens, okay?
Don't let him hurt you anymore.

Briella nods her head, tears in her eyes.

BRIELLA
I got this. It's okay.

Archer stares at Daniel as he walks out the door. Daniel flips the knife closed, shoves it in his pocket.

DANIEL
Were you gonna tell me?

BRIELLA
I don't know.

DANIEL
You don't fucking know?

Daniel steps closer to her, she backs up to the wall.

DANIEL CONT'D
You were gonna live your life all

happy, meanwhile, I'd have no idea I had a kid. Who the fuck does that?

BRIELLA

I didn't know what I wanted to do yet.

DANIEL

How long Briella? How long have you known?

BRIELLA

A month...maybe two.

Daniel bites his lip and walks away from her, nods, grabs the bible off the table.

DANIEL

You sit here saying you're a Christian, reading this shit.

Daniel turns towards Briella.

DANIEL CONT'D

You're so righteous, so much better than me, better than Denis, huh?

Daniel chucks the Bible at Briella, hits her stomach, she grunts, heaves forward.

DANIEL CONT'D

You can't even be honest with yourself, Briella.

Daniel struts up to her.

DANIEL CONT'D

I gave you everything.

He picks her up by her neck. She weeps.

BRIELLA

Please Daniel.

DANIEL

I put up with your stupid shit, Biblical nonsense,

He squeezes her jaw.

DANIEL CONT'D

Your fairytale dreams of becoming an

architect, I was even fine with you screwing Archer. And this is how you repay me.

He shoves her onto the ground, moves his leg around, on top of her.

BRIELLA

Daniel stop. I loved you, but you were too much and then I found out I was pregnant, and I -

Daniel slaps her in the face. Her head turns, she leaves it to the ground as more tears flow.

DANIEL

Shut. Up. I don't want to hear any more of your lies.

Briella snuffles and reaches for her Rosary beads.

Daniel yanks the Rosary off her, it breaks, beads fly everywhere.

DANIEL CONT'D

You used me.

Daniel punches her. She grunts, her head goes further back, nose bleeds, mouth opens, breaths heavily.

DANIEL CONT'D

I was the only person who gave a shit about you.

Daniel punches her. Her head turns to the side, more blood near her eye drips on the ground. She groans.

DANIEL CONT'D

Even God doesn't give a shit about you.

Daniel slams her head on the ground. She groans, mutters and raises her hand a little off the ground, reaches for him.

DANIEL CONT'D

And now you're alone.

Daniel gets up, spits on the floor, walks out.

Briella cries and mutters, blood all over her face, she lowers her hand over her stomach.

BRIELLA
Please, Jesus, help me.

Her breath heavy, slows down. She slowly moves her head to the other side and lights out.

INT. BRIELLAS APARTMENT - MORNING - NEXT DAY

Bright sunlight from the windows pour. Bible opened face down, pages ripped out, crinkled, and folded all over. Trash and pregnancy test on the floor.

Rosary broken by the kitchen, beads everywhere. Briella lies on the ground. Blood puddle by her face.

Her phone on the floor, RINGS. Caller ID reads Archer.

MOMENTS LATER

Archer busts through the door, breaths heavily, he sees Briella.

ARCHER
Jesus!

Archer walks over and picks her up, carries her towards the door.

Her eyes open, she gasps and coughs.

ARCHER
Hey, hey, shh, it's alright, I'm getting you help.

She sighs, tilts her head back.

INT. ARCHERS JEEP - DAY

Christian music plays quietly. He speeds frantically down the highway, he taps his fingers, glances at her.

A car horn beeps, he slams his brakes, almost hits the car in front of him.

ARCHER
Ah, shit! Sorry! Sorry.

BRIELLA
That's not very Christian of you.

He looks over at her, face swollen and bruised black and

blue, and with dry blood. She tightens her face.

BRIELLA CONT'D

I can't smile.

ARCHER

You shouldn't. It's okay, don't move or talk, just sit there and look pretty.

Briella scoffs, laughs, coughs and grunts from the pain.

EXT. MINNIES EMERGENCY HOSPITAL - DAY

Archer carries Briella to the hospital entrance. NURSE WENDY, rushes out with a wheelchair.

NURSE WENDY

What happened to her?

ARCHER

Her ex beat her last night.

Archer sets Briella in the wheelchair and pushes, they rush into the hospital.

INT. MINNIES EMERGENCY HOSPITAL - DAY

Commotion throughout the hospital, patients in the waiting room. Doctors and nurses rush in and out.

Nurse Wendy goes behind the desk, hands Archer papers and a pen.

NURSE WENDY

You'll have to fill this paperwork out for her. Wait here, we'll get her set up in a bed.

ARCHER

Wait. What if I don't know her information?

Nurse Wendy pushes Briella through a set of doors.

They roll up to a hospital bed, attendings lift Briella up onto the bed.

INT. MINNIES EMERGENCY HOSPITAL - EVENING

Briella lies in the hospital bed, in a gown, face cleaned and

stitched up, IV hooked up to her. Archers small cross hangs by the IV bag.

Archer sits beside her in a chair, slouched and arms folded, eyes closed.

Briella coughs. Archers eyes open and he rises up.

ARCHER

Heyy. She's alive!!

Briella giggles, groans.

BRIELLA

Ow. You can't make me laugh.

ARCHER

Sorry. I don't know if you have insurance or like anything about you I've found out, so lucky you, you have paperwork to fill out.

BRIELLA

Yay, lucky me.

Nurse Wendy walks to Briella's bed, holds a clipboard.

NURSE WENDY

Well, you have some major and minor injuries, we popped your nose back into place and you needed stitches by your left eye. You have a broken rib.

Briella moves her head to other side, scrunches her eyes and groans.

NURSE WENDY

Good news is, your baby is fine.

Nurse Wendy looks at Archer, places her hand on his shoulder and smiles. Briella looks up slowly. Nurse Wendy leaves.

BRIELLA

I'm sorry if they thought you were the father.

Archer sits on the edge of the bed.

ARCHER

Meh, it's okay. Kinda fun being popular.

Briella scoffs, coughs. She leans her arms up, struggles to sit up, groans. Archer supports her back.

BRIELLA

Crap. What time is it? We're missing class.

ARCHER

Don't worry about it, I called the school.

Briella sits up straight, glares at Archer.

BRIELLA

What did you tell them?

ARCHER

Don't worry. Just that you were in an accident and in the hospital.

Doctor Steph Minnie, 30's, wears doctor coat and gloves, walks up to Briella.

DOCTOR STEPH

Hello Briella, I'm doctor Steph, I fixed you up and examined you and your baby. You had an appointment with us next week, correct?

BRIELLA

Yeah, sorry I'm early.

DOCTOR STEPH

No need. Archer, do you mind stepping ginto the waiting room, I just want to ask Briella a few questions?

Archer stands up, smirks at Briella and nods.

ARCHER

No problemo.

He strides to the waiting room.

BRIELLA

He didn't do this to me. It was my ex-boyfriend.

DOCTOR STEPH

I know, I already spoke with him. Is there anyone we can call, a parent or

guardian?

Briella looks down at the ground, then at her phone, back at the doctor.

BRIELLA

My mom.

DOCTOR STEPH

Great.

Doctor Steph steps away. Briella grabs her arm.

BRIELLA

Wait. She doesn't know that I'm pregnant. I don't know how to tell her.

DOCTOR STEPH

Well, you'll be showing soon, you're 12 weeks. You'll receive the best help if she knows.

BRIELLA

Yeah, I know.

DOCTOR STEPH

Nurse Wendy will come by in a few to check some things for you and your baby. I'd still like you to stop by Tuesday, we'll follow up and discuss your options, okay?

BRIELLA

Okay, thank you, Doctor Steph. Would you tell Archer to come back?

Doctor Steph nods and smiles. Briella lies back down and sighs, glances over and sees the cross. She closes her eyes and smiles.

