

GIVE ME A SIGN

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

An otherwise beautiful, LAUREN GRAHAM (20's), is not looking her best today. Bundled in her robe, surrounded by Kleenex, with sweat seeping out her skin. Stress has caused her to look older than what she is.

DANNY (20's) enters, breathing heavy and carrying a bag. He's an average looking guy but something about his personality makes him appear more attractive. At least TODAY.

DANNY
(catching his breath)
Y'all need an elevator in this
building.

He empties the bag. Soup and medicine.

LAUREN (V.O.)
Danny had been my boyfriend for the
past year and a half but with all
the breaking up and getting back
together it seemed more like a
half.

She looks at him, shocked he's taking care of her.

DANNY
Baby, I live to do stuff like this
for you. I'm all about you now...
and God.
(a beat)
Well God and then you.

LAUREN (V.O.)
He meant, Bishop, God and then
maybe me. I'll give him his credit
though. He's really changed since I
told him this was the last shot and
if he ever put his hands on me
again, that would be the very last
thing he does.

He sits beside her, kisses her forehead.

LAUREN
You mean that Danny?

DANNY
Stop doubting me.

Lauren looks down as if trying to forget what he did and truly forgive him for his past ways.

He lifts her head up by her chin. Takes her hand. They make eye contact.

DANNY
I know what I've been like but baby, I don't want nobody else. I'm sure of that now. Lauren and Danny till the day I die. And even then you better not get remarried.

He grabs a bowl of soup off the nightstand, prepares to feed her.

LAUREN
You want to marry me? And have kids by me?

He gives her a spoonful. She slurps it up.

DANNY
(jokingly)
Of course. You got a good job now once you graduate med school you'll be making what, eighty, ninety thousand a year?

LAUREN
Oh that's how you going, huh?

DANNY
Shoot, you know pastors don't start out making a lot of money. I'm gonna need at least one big tither.

As Lauren laughs, soup drips out her mouth. She fails at catching it. Her eyes look down at the noodle on her poked out lip.

Danny kisses her, gently sucking her lip and caressing her face.

LAUREN (V.O.)
Things couldn't have going better for me. One year left in med school, a decent job, a loving boyfriend, my own place. I'm truly happy and for once I didn't feel

LAUREN (V.O.)
bad about it. The signs showed that
I was headed in the right
direction. If only my parents were
alive to see me.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - SAME DAY

They lay in the bed. Danny is on top of the sheets, fully dressed, Lauren is underneath the sheets. She turns on lamp, its adds just enough light for her to read.

She reaches on the floor and grabs her books.

LAUREN (V.O.)
School has always been my way of
escape, my safe haven.
Burying myself in books has always
helped me survive. Truth be told,
if it wasn't for the problems me
and Danny had, I wouldn't have
finished college in three years.
Probably why I gave him another
chance. I guess he kind of helped
me... in a way?

As she flips through the pages, Danny wakes up. He looks at the clock.

DANNY
It's four in the morning, Lauren.
(recognizing her books)
Feeling better I see.

LAUREN
I been tossing and turning all
night. My fever is down but I been
throwing up. I'm nauseous. My body
feels different.

DANNY
Just get some rest. You get like
this around ya folks anniversary.

THE NEXT MORNING

Lauren bolts up and runs to the bathroom. Danny stands fully dressed and in shock by how fast she just ran.

DANNY
What's wrong with you!?!?

MOMENTS LATER

Solemn. The whole mood has changed. Danny stands by the window looking out as the cars drive by.

Lauren sits Indian style against the headboard of the bed.

LAUREN

So no response Danny? Just gonna stare out the window?

A beat.

LAUREN

I'm just as surprised as you.

DANNY

I ain't -- we ain't, ready! And if Bishop found out...

LAUREN

This is between me and you! No one else. Me and you Danny!

DANNY

We need to think about our careers. You're still in school. Nah. I know it's your body and your choice but, nah. I can't do t.

Lauren is angered by Danny's selfishness and lack of concern for her.

LAUREN

So you don't want it?

DANNY

No. Not right now.

LAUREN

I can't wrap it in plastic and put it in the freezer and save it for later.

DANNY

You know what I mean. I'm up for youth pastor, and with this, it could be years before I move up in ministry.

This breaks Laurens heart. She goes off.

LAUREN

(walking towards him)

So you can screw me and lay up in bed with me behind "the churches"

LAUREN

back but the minute your sneaky ass
come close to being exposed you
wanna send me off to the clinic.

DANNY

You should be understanding. I was
looking out for us.

LAUREN

No, like always, you were looking
out for Danny. Last summer ago when
you slammed my head into the
shower, and then wanted to take me
to your bishops banquet, I went,
cuz I was looking out for YOU. I
wore a hat to cover the stitches
and bruises YOU gave me. Or the
winter you elbowed me and left my
eye black. I looked so foolish
walking around in the snow with
dark sunglasses on but I covered
for YOU because if "your bishop"
knew you liked to whip my ass then
you would "never move up" in
ministry.

DANNY

Stop bringing up the past. I
changed! I haven't kicked ya ass in
over a year! But if you don't get
out my face... you said you forgave
me.

Lauren stares at him with disgust. She hog spits at him, it
lands right next to his lip.

He lunges at her, grabs her by both arms and looks at her in
the eye. Unsure if he really wants to go through with that
ass whooping. She's terrified. He looses her and walks out
in a rage.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - DAY

As Lauren lies on the exam table, undressed, wearing only a
gown she stares at the ceiling.

LAUREN POV

A deathly silence. The light seems extra bright. Unearthly
bright. She squints, blinking profusely.

LAUREN (V.O.)
God give me sign.

We hear the door open. DR. WESTON (50's) enters. He has a very deep voice, well groomed, father figure type of guy.

DR. WESTON (O.S.)
Lauren, how are you today?

LAUREN
(exhales, drained)
I'm alive.

She nods.

DR. WESTON
You don't sound excited. Have you been having morning sickness?

LAUREN
Occasionally throwing up. Not on a consistent basis though.

DR. WESTON
Then I would consider you one of the lucky ones.

LAUREN
Only thing me and luck have in common is the first letter of my name.

DR. WESTON
Have you given any thought to our last conversation?

LAUREN
It's all I've thought about. I'm still undecided.

She rubs her belly.

DR. WESTON
You're twelve weeks. Four more weeks to decide.

LAUREN
I'm so confused Dr. Weston. I don't know what to do. One day I want the baby the next day I don't. It's stressing me out. The father has been MIA. I don't wanna bring a baby into this world with an

LAUREN
inconsistent father. I have no one
to talk to.

Dr. Weston Looks on with concern.

DR. WESTON
Lauren you've been my patient since
you were nine. You can talk to me.

LAUREN
I feel horrible for even
considering abortion. But I'm not
where I need to be. If I was
married or more established then I
would know for sure.

DR. WESTON
So many women come in my office
with the same questions and
concerns. Strong, wealthy,
independent women. So you're not
alone. Even women with husbands
come in unsure whether they want to
terminate their pregnancy. It's not
just a young, single woman/inner
city thing. I see people from all
walks of life come in here everyday
feeling the same way you do.

LAUREN
And what do you tell them?

DR. WESTON
The same things I told you.

INT. WOMB - CONTINUED

An twelve week old baby, no bigger than a peanut floats
around aimlessly in Lauren's stomach.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

There's an aggressive knock at the door.

SECONDS LATER

Lauren stands there looking a sorrowful Danny in the eye.

DANNY
Can we talk?

She stands there. Expressionless.

Danny tries to walk in but she doesn't budge. It won't be that easy.

DANNY
Baby listen. I don't blame you if you don't want to talk to me. I may not-- I wasn't too supportive when found out. I was selfish and only thinking about me. Never considering that this was a life that had the right to have a life. And I'm sorry. I can't beg you enough or take back what I said but I can tell you that I'm ready to face this. You're not in this by yourself anymore. And I'm sorry for making you feel that way. I love you.

Lauren exhales, trying to stay tough but she can't help but soften up. This is what she wants to hear. This is the nourishment her soul needed.

She steps to the side and lets him in. She kisses her and hugs her like she's never been hugged before.

LAUREN (V.O.)
I don't know what it was about Danny's apology... Maybe it was what I needed at the time. I had a month left to make my decision and I still wasn't sure what I wanted to do but I knew regardless of what I chose, I didn't want to go through it alone.

MONTAGE

Danny opens the car door for her. Inside the drivers seat is a rose. She smiles from ear to ear.

As they eat at a restaurant, a BABY stands in the booth behind them and touches Laurens hair.

Danny picks her up from school.

They look at pictures of baby clothes.

They kneel down and pray together.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - DAY

An excited, Danny stands beside her as she lies on exam table, wearing only a gown. Lauren looks at him as he looks around the doctors office in awe.

LAUREN (V.O.)
(cont'd)
... go figure. This is Danny's
first visit.

Dr. Weston enters.

DR. WESTON
(to Danny)
Hi dad. Mom how are you today?

LAUREN
I'm better.

She grabs Danny's hand.

DR. WESTON
Fifteen weeks tomorrow.

LAUREN
I know. So fast.

DR. WESTON
I have great news. The spine is
growing accordingly. Mom you have
no cyst. Your iron, blood pressure
and sugar are all normal.

Danny looks more relieved to hear this news than Lauren. Yet still something seems to be weighing on his mind.

DR. WESTON
Dad looks more relieved than you,
Lauren.

LAUREN
I don't know why. He ain't the one
carrying.

They laugh. Dr. Weston pats Danny on his back.

DANNY
She's got our little soldier in
there.

DR. WESTON

Usually around sixteen weeks we will be able to tell the sex. So next visit we'll know.

LAUREN

(to Danny)

I'm excited, are you?

Danny throws on a smile.

DANNY

Where's the bathroom, doc?

DR. WESTON

Just out there, to your left.

Danny exits. Lauren looks at the hand he was holding. It's moist from his sweat. She holds it up.

LAUREN

He's nervous. he'll never admit it though.

DR. WESTON

We all are at first. He'll be a great dad.

LAUREN

I know. His excitement rubbed off on me.

DR. WESTON

So I guess you've decided?

LAUREN

Yeah. Danny would kill me if I even mentioned abortion.

DR. WESTON

Once you see the baby's face, you'll feel bad for ever thinking of such a thing.

Lauren holds back the tears.

LAUREN

I know. All I needed was a sign and I think I got it.

DR. WESTON

You go on and get dressed. I'll see you in a week. Congratulations again.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY - CONT'D

Danny is coming out the bathroom. A nervous wreck. He's met by Dr. Weston, who's walking past.

DANNY
(discreet)
Doc, can I talk to you?

Danny's rubbing his thighs. Shaking like a crackhead needing a hit.

DR. WESTON
Sure.

They walk side by side.

DANNY
You know of any good adoption agencies?

Dr. Weston is thrown off guard by the question. Appalled.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

As they watch 'A BABY'S STORY', Danny seems unattached. Lauren lies across his lap, so into the show that she doesn't notice.

LAUREN
Babe do you see this? Do you see what we go through?

He grunts.

LAUREN
Water please.

DANNY
It's right there on the coffee table, Lauren. It's closer to you.

LAUREN
But babe you know my tummy is hurting. Every time I move I get cramps.

He lifts her head up, grabs the glass and drops her head back on his lap.

DANNY

Here!

LAUREN

Please control your enthusiasm.

She drinks the water. Moaning each swallow.

Danny can't believe this. Ain't no way she's in so much pain.

She holds the glass up, indicating she's done and would like him to take it. He stares at her.

LAUREN

What babe? I'm with child.

DANNY

And I'm with 'pain in the ass'.

She's shocked but lets it go. She rolls the glass to the end of the couch. Moaning as a drop of water spills onto her leg. She's real extra today.

LAUREN

Oh did I tell you I told my professor and my mentor? They are so excited. And the security guard at my job said she had a dream we had a girl. She can't wait either. I want to be there when you tell your mom.

He looks at her like she has another thing coming.

LAUREN

(cont'd)

What? And what about bishop?

DANNY

Why are you telling people our business? That's the problem with you. It could get out to the wrong person, next thing you know I'm in Bishops office...

LAUREN

He's gonna find out sooner or later anyway!

DANNY

But I want it to come from me.

LAUREN

Then you need to hurry up!

DANNY

Yo stop rushing me! You always got something to say. I'm the man, I'll handle this!

Lauren is breathing heavy. She inhales and exhales slowly. Trying to remain calm.

LAUREN (V.O.)

All the time with him. All the time! He acts like a female. Just moody.

DANNY

You said you would keep this baby, you just assumed that's what I wanted.

Lauren, now furious attempts to sit up but the pain in to severe.

LAUREN (V.O.)

God help me not kill him.

(out loud)

Danny I recall you coming to me saying you "prayed" about it and you feel it's wrong to abort so you want me to have the baby.

DANNY

(a beat)

Yes I did... but just like you to jump to conclusions. I did not mean keep the baby. I figured, we can give it up for adoption.

She bolts up, the best she can. Bearing the pain. She snatches the glass and hurls it at him. Just missing his face.

LAUREN

(attempting to stand)

It ain't never been we! Never! It's always been about you! You and your screwed up ministry! I hate you, and people like you. Just get out!

(he doesn't budge)

Get out! Now!

She grabs her stomach. Wobbling.

DANNY

Let's talk about this. You never see my side.

LAUREN

(speaking slower)

Listen Daniel. Get the hell out before I call the cops!

He stands. She points to the door.

DANNY

(heading to the door)

Y'all women wanna be in this on your own. So y'all can say how strong y'all are. Must get kicks out of it. A man tries to help and you shut him down. Y'all wanna be men. You wanna be me. You'll never be me Lauren!

He slams the door behind him.

Lauren stands there attempting to calm down. Enough is enough.

She takes a seat, she's all cried out. The person she's most upset with is the person she has to live with forever, herself.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Angry. Lauren grabs the sheets and comforter, trying her best to rip them apart but only succeeds at tearing them off the bed. She's in beast mode now. She screams and yells but NO tears come out.

Catching a glimpse of herself in her full length mirror, stirs her up more. She hurls a glass shattering the mirror.

MONTAGE

She walks into the bathroom, opens the medicine cabinet and takes out some prescription pills. She opens them only to see the case is empty.

Lauren's in class. Her book is open but inside the book is her 3D sonogram picture. She stares at it. Ambivalent.

Walking to her car Lauren sees a SINGLE MOM, a stroller in one hand, and the BABY in a carrier strapped across her chest. She appears to be having a hard time. Just then Lauren decides.

EXT. ABORTION CLINIC - DAY

Lauren pulls into a parking spot across the street. She see's the PROTESTERS holding their graphic pictures of fetus's inside a jar, another of a baby's bloody arms and legs broken in half. Some signs read:

EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE BEFORE YOU GET PREGNANT!!!

EVERYONE WHO IS FOR ABORTION HAS ALREADY BEEN BORN!!!

She walks across, trying to ignore all that's going on. As soon as her hands touch the door she's frozen stiff. On the right side of her, opposite the protesters, a WOMAN holds a baby in one hand and a sign in the other which reads:

"Here's your *SIGN* From GOD. YOU CAN MAKE IT."

That lack of condemnation reaches her heart. This is the *sign* she needed. The *sign* she prayed for, the *sign* GOD sent especially for her.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

We follow a car seat holding a BABY BOY.

Reveal Lauren dressed in her cap and gown. She puts the car seat down, tickles the Baby Boy. He giggles.

LAUREN
 (in baby talk)
 Mummy love you. Oh yes she do.
 (normal voice)
 Look what mommy has.
 (she show's him her diploma)
 Say Doctor Mommy.

He attempts to clap.

LAUREN
 I didn't think I could make it with
 you Josiah. But God showed me with
 HIM, that I could.

Lauren gets up and places her diploma on her tv stand, right next to the picture of her parents.

FADE OUT