PROLOGUE

FADE IN:

HIGHWAY - SNOWING - A FEBRUARY AFTERNOON

Carlene is driving erratically down the highway. Tears flowing, hair is up with strands falling and eyeliner is smudged. She can't control the tears. No music playing on the radio as she yells out to no one.

CARLENE
William Is gone, suicide,
Mom!!!!!!
As she pulls into the parking lot of the Hospital she hits the steering wheel.

CARLENE
What the hell am I doing, where am I?

She looks up and sees HOSPITAL. She parks the car, sits for a moment, pulls out, drives around the lot, parks again. She sees emergency entrance, gets out of the car and walks towards the entrance like a robot. Enters the hospital and sits with her head down, fidgeting with her purse.

CARLENE
(under her breath)
I am losing myself.

An older nurse approaches.

OLDER NURSE
Honey can I help you?

Carlene's voice is trembling. Too embarrassed to speak, mouth is open but nothing comes out. Nurse can see something is terribly wrong. She turns around to a younger nurse and says something inaudible.

OLDER NURSE
Why don't you come with us to a private room where we can talk.

They enter a small room off to the side of the hallway, and sit with Carlene close by.

OLDER NURSE
Honey you look like you're in pain. What can we do for you?
CARLENE
My heart is broken, my head is not in a good place.... I'm having some really dark thoughts.

OLDER NURSE
Are you having thoughts of hurting yourself?

CARLENE
I... I... don't want to but I just want to sleep.

The two nurses talk to each other quietly.

YOUNG NURSE
Carlene, would it be ok if I take your vitals?

Carlene shakes her head ok as she takes her coat off. As the younger nurse starts to take the vitals the older nurse asks Carlene more questions.

OLDER NURSE
Have you taken any type of medications? How long have you had suicidal thoughts?

Carlene is numb to all the questions, her mind at the moment a blank. Nothing at all, she is kind of going through the motions.

OLDER NURSE
Carlene, we are going to admit you into the hospital for observation. We feel that you should spend the night with us. We will have a social worker down to talk to you shortly.

CARLENE
Ok, I am so tired.
(She says
in a child
like voice)

Carlene is admitted, given a gown and all of her belongings are removed from the room. There is a nurse sitting outside of her room to keep an eye on her as Carlene waits for the social worker.

CARLENE
Maybe at last!

The social worker shows up about 10 minutes later. Enters the room and introduces herself as Janet.

JANET
I hear you want to talk to me. Let's sit over here.

They move to a table and chairs by the window.

JANET
First I do not judge anybody I just feel at times people want to talk to somebody that understands and does not threaten them. I am just here to listen and help where I can.

Janet then sits quietly and waits for Carlene. Carlene takes a big breath, fidgets for a moment and then.

CARLENE
I... I... don't know if I can.

JANET
Go ahead honey, whatever you want to say or not, I am here for you.

There is silence. Carlene finally looks up, pushes the hair from her face and looks determined.
CARLENE

Yes.

(a Pause)
YES!  I feel it is time
that I tell someone what is
hurting me, weighing me
down to the point of
exhaustion and I just don't
want to fight back anymore.
I am so tired.

Carlene sits back in her chair, looks out the
window at the snow falling, takes a deep breath,
squares her shoulders, turns to Janet.

CARLENE

I... I don't know where to
start. There is so much
hurt in my life, despair
and abandonment that it all
seems to blend together.
One dark tunnel that I have
been running down forever.
I am so tired of it all and
confusion seems to be my
partner in life. I have
depended on other people so
much and they have failed
me. I am so tired, I just
want to shut the world out
and close my eyes and let
the comforting feel of
sleep come over me. SO
TIRED OF IT ALL....

JANET

Well Carlene, I have always
believed starting at the
beginning helps organize
your thoughts. Why don't
we start their and see
where it takes us.

Carlene begins to talk, not at Janet but out the
window. Feeling depleted of all fight, she just
wants to tell her story to someone, to share her
feelings of despair, to empty her soul that has
been so overburdened for so very long.

CARLENE
I remember bits and pieces
from about 4 years old. So
that is a good place to
start.

(PAUSE,
SIGH)
My Dad was the one man in
my life that I felt good
about. My mother on the
other hand was my devil.
She got religion early in
my life and never let go.
When I say religion I mean
she was fanatical about it.
The church was her
salvation and she practiced
it with fervor on all of
us. Beat it into us
regularly, and I do mean
physically.

Carlene takes a deep breath, her shoulders slump,
she sits back in the chair and looks out the
window at the white snow. The snow seemed to have
a calming affect on her as she begins to let go.

JANET
Carlene, would you like
something to drink or eat
before we go on with your
story?

CARLENE
No, I am OK, I just want to
talk, to tell someone. It
has always been about
others, it is my turn.

(A pause,
deep
breath, she
continues
talking and
looking out
the window
at the
snow, like
she is
talking to
the world,
telling no
one and
everyone,
letting
go.)

CARLENE
(Looks away
from the
window and
talks
straight to
Janet)
Janet, I need to tell you a
little about my family so
you will understand how I
get where I am today.

JANET
Carlene, start wherever you
want. It is in the telling
that matters, the letting
go.

CARLENE
(Carlene
looks out
the window
again takes
a deep
breath,
exhales
slowly and
begins.)
My mother met my dad when
she was 22 and my dad was
32, they were married
shortly after that.

FADE OUT
FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN

Claudia 22 yrs, Gabe 32 yrs.; 1965 coming out of the small church, having just been married.

GABE
And now Claudia it all starts, lot's of kids, fun, and above all lot's of love.

CLAUDIA
Oh, Gabe yes, lot's of kids.

FADE OUT

FADE IN (TRANSITION IN AND OUT WITH CLAUDIA HAVING ONE CHILD AFTER THE OTHER IN NEXT FEW SHORT SCENES)

GABE (Television on; background news)
That damn asshole. I can't believe Johnson's sending more soldiers over there!

CLAUDIA (nursing first born William, 2 weeks old)
That just tears me up for the wives and their children.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

LATE EVENING, SNOWING HEAVILY, BACKGROUND MUSIC WITH SIMON & GARFUNKEL, HOMeward BOUND PLAYING ON RADIO; CLAUDIA AND GABE DRIVING FROM HOSPITAL PARKING LOT WITH 2ND CHILD, CARLENE.

CLAUDIA
Oh Gabe, she is just so beautiful.
(holding baby, sitting in back of car)

GABE
Yes she is honey. William is going to be such a good big brother. Wow, it's really coming down out here.

CLAUDIA
Humming to the music; lovingly looking at her baby girl.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

GRANDMA HALLIE
Come on in kids. Mom and dad have to go have another one! Why you keep having them right after the other?
(Claudia outside in car)

GABE
Mom there's no since in acting like that. Now I'll be back tomorrow after work and pick Carlene and William up. Thanks for keeping them tonight.

GRANDPA FLOYD
There's my little pumpkins! Come on in here and give me a hug.

GRANDMA HALLIE
You smell of alcohol Floyd. Now go on...go clean up
'afore you handle these kids.

Gabe & Claudia at hospital.

CLAUDIA
Oh Gabe! Look at those dark curls. She is so beautiful, I want to name her after me Gabe. You are little Claudia Maddie. We'll call you Maddie.

GABE
Well...I don't know too many girls named after their mom's but I agree...let's call her by her middle name.

CLAUDIA AND GABE KISS. FADE OUT

FADE IN:

CLAUDIA PREGNANT, WASHING DISHES.

CLAUDIA
Oh God! Gabe come quick!  
(Hands on stomach, breathing heavy, lays on couch)

GABE
Claudia, what's wrong?

CLAUDIA
We need to get to the hospital Gabe, something is terribly wrong. I feel it! It's that same feeling I had when I had the
miscarriage last year. Oh Gabe hurry!

GABE
Hold on Claudia, it's going to be all right.

GABE AND CLAUDIA IN HOSPITAL ROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON

CLAUDIA
(crying)
Oh God help me! I can't believe I lost her Gabe. What did I do wrong? She was full term. It's so different than before Gabe!

GABE
I'm so sorry Claudia. We'll get through this. (comforting her)

DR.
Claudia there was nothing we could do, the umbilical cord wrapped around her neck. It's not your fault. I'm so sorry for your loss.

GABE
Claudia, do you want to see her?

CLAUDIA
Yes, I do. Please bring her in so I can say good bye to her.

Nurse brings baby in, wrapped in blanket.

CLAUDIA
(crying)
We'll name her Penelope.
GABE
A beautiful name for a beautiful little girl.

Nurse reaches for baby, places her in a box.

CLAUDIA
What are you doing? Why is she in that box?

Nurse looks at Gabe for direction.

GABE
Please, remove her from that box. We'll have a casket and a proper funeral for our daughter.

CLAUDIA
What the hell is wrong with you? She is not just a piece of meat! She has a soul! She's a human being!

Gabe trying to console Claudia as nurse leaves room with baby.

GABE
Claudia, I know this is hard honey. We'll get through it.

CLAUDIA
I...I...just don't know how honey. I don't know how! (sobbing)

NURSE
Claudia, The doctor wants me to give you something to help you sleep. I ordered some dinner for you. You may not want to eat my dear, but please try to drink something okay?
Claudia nods yes.

GABE
Honey, listen since they are giving you something to sleep I'll be heading out. I'll wait to you fall asleep though. I'll see you in the morning and we'll work out the funeral plans. I'll ask mom and dad to help buy a casket for Penelope okay?

CLAUDIA
(reaches arms out to him)

GABE HOLDING CLAUDIA IN HIS ARMS UNTIL SHE DRIFTS OFF TO SLEEP. SHOULDERS SLUMPED, GABE LEAVES HOSPITAL.

FADE IN:

NIGHT
Elder Jones walks in Claudia's room.

ELDER JONES
Hello there sister. I'm a local pastor and visit patients from time to time here.

Claudia pushes her dinner tray away—shakes his hand.

ELDER JONES
No, go on ahead. Eat. Don't mind me. Just wanted to stop by and introduce myself. How are you today?

CLAUDIA
(sniffling)
Not well. I lost my baby today.

ELDER JONES
I'm so sorry. Do you mind if I pray for you?

CLAUDIA
Nods Yes.

ELDER JONES
Dear heavenly father. We come to you right now. We ask you to heal this sister's heart lord. She has just suffered a great loss. We ask that you make her whole oh god! Halalujah! Praise God! And lord, we ask you to come right now and fill this precious sister with your gift of the holy ghost. Ashanti ma ki ah! Halalujah! Praise you Lord!

CLAUDIA
(lips quivering)
Yes lord. Praise you lord.
(mimics Elder Jones- raises her hands in air)

ELDER JONES
Sister Claudia I'd like to invite you to our church we recently started.

ELDER JONES
Here's my card. The church is somewhat small and we're still working on another
building. But stop by and visit with us. The Lord has great things for you and your family.

CLAUDIA
Oh. Oh. Okay. Thank you...what was your name?

ELDER JONES
Elder Jones, sister. You can call me Elder, that would be just fine.

CLAUDIA
Okay. Thank you for praying for me Elder and for your card. I may just visit your church sometime.

ELDER JONES
Wonderful! We look forward to it. Now bring the whole family. God is working miracles.

CLAUDIA LOOKS SPELLBOUND AT ELDER JONES AS HE WALKS OUT DOOR

FADE IN:

CLAUDIA AND ANOTHER WOMAN WALKING FROM DOOR TO DOOR INVITING NEIGHBORS TO CHURCH. BIBLES ARE IN HANDS.

FADE OUT

FADE IN: SPRING 1971 EARLY EVENING

CLAUDIA
Gabe, I don't know why you have to buy that devil's brew! Why don't you just come to church with us? Tomorrow is Sunday. Please come with me and the kids.
GABE
Claudia, now you know I just don't really feel comfortable there. And you preach at me about buying only a 6-pack one time a week but you go and give our money to that damn church!

CLAUDIA
How dare you! Who do you think you are talking about the Lord and a good church like that. You're gonna split hell wide open buddy!

GABE
I can't take this shit.
(puts beer in fridge, leaves through backdoor-walking away)

CLAUDIA
(yelling out door)
Oh yeh! Do that you no good alcoholic!
(slams door shut)

Claudia making dinner. 5 yr old Carlene feeding bottle to 4th child, 2 month old Gabe Jr.

CARLENE
Mom, Gabe's done with his bottle.

CLAUDIA
Thank you honey. You know I don't know what I'd do
without you. I really depend on you sweetheart.

CARLENE
I love you mom.

CLAUDIA
I love you too honey. Now here, let me take baby Gabe and you kids go on now. Get up there at the table and eat your dinner.

WILLIAM
I'm hungry! Mumm..this is so good mom.

CLAUDIA
Thanks William. Now go on...all of you eat up and we'll listen to the gospel music on the radio after your baths.

FADE IN AND OUT

GOSPEL MUSIC PLAYING

DISSOLVE TO: LATE EVENING

CLAUDIA
(softly crying, sits at table in kitchen, praying)
Oh God, please help me. I need your strength right now. Touch Gabe's hear Lord.

CARLENE
(lights off, living room, sleeping
Poor mom. Why won't Day just come to church with us? It'd make mom happier.

WILLIAM

Shhh!

(lifts head up from covers. sleeping on couch)

Just go to sleep Carlene.

CLAUDIA

(voice louder)

Oh God! I am coming to you right now...help Gabe see the light.

(speaks in tongues)

In Jesus name. Amen.

CARLENE

William! Hey William!

WILLIAM

What?!

(whispering loudly)

CARLENE

She is getting mad now...I'm scared.

WILLIAM

Shhh...just close your eyes Carlene. She's just getting in the spirit.
CLAUDIA
William! William! Get up boy!

WILLIAM
Great.
(whispers under breath)
I'm coming mom.
(in kitchen)
(rubs eyes sleepily)

CLAUDIA
Now I know your dad is next door at that damnable bar.
(putting jacket on him)
I want you to go over there and tell him I need him. Go on now honey. And hurry!

WILLIAM IS SEEN WALKING INTO BAR. "IN THE SUMMERTIME" PLAYING ON JUKE BOX. WILLIAM FINDS GABE, TUGS ON HIS SHIRT. GABE PAYS BILL, LEAVES THE BAR. MUSIC FADES OUT AS THEY ARE SEEN WALKING INTO THE HOUSE.

CLAUDIA
(hands on hips)
Well, there you are! Welcome home you alcoholic devil! William, get over here with your sisters now!

William looks up at Gabe.

GABE
Go on William. Go on. What in the hell are you up to now Claudia?

CLAUDIA
I thought maybe you'd like to see a show Gabe. You don't want to serve the lord with us, so maybe you can just see what you're doing to your children!

Claudia opens fridge, removes can of beer, opens it.

GABE
What the hell...

Claudia forcefully puts beer to William's lips.

WILLIAM
Yuck!
(gags)

CLAUDIA
Drink it! Drink it boy!
(yelling)
Maddie and Carlene begin crying.

CLAUDIA
Aww...you're next girls.
(sneering)
Come on Carlene, open up! I said open up or I'll bust your mouth wide open!
(shrieking at her)
That's a girl.

Beer spilt on Carlene's gown as Claudia removes from Carlene's mouth.

Carlene gagging but trying to keep the liquid in mouth.
Maddie looks up at Claudia with mouth wide open. Tears and snot streaming down face.

CLAUDIA
Good girl Maddie. You drink up sweety. Let's show daddy what a good example he is to you kids. (sneering up at Gabe)

Gabe visibly shaken...mouth open, but no response. Shakes his head, walks quietly to outside darkness. Lights cigarette. Sits on back porch steps. Head down.

CLAUDIA
Oh kids, I'm so sorry. (wiping their mouths with kitchen rag)
Please forgive me...If dad would just serve the lord with me, I wouldn't get so mad.

CARLENE
(hiccuping)
It's ...o...o...kay m...m...mom. (hugs mom)

Claudia tucks girls in, kisses William on forehead then is seen walking outside.

CLAUDIA
I'm sorry Gabe. I don't know why I did that. I...I...just want you...

GABE
Claudia, that was awful. Those kids don't deserve that.
CLAUDIA
I know, I know! Oh God I know Gabe. I just have all this anger inside me and I pray that God will just take it away. I think if you just came to church with us, as a family...

GABE
(puts arm around Claudia)
I just don't agree with everything they preach their Claudia but maybe...just don't expect much but maybe I'll visit tomorrow. But you need to promise never to hurt those kids like that again.

CLAUDIA
Oh Gabe! Thank you. I love you so much honey.
(whispers)
Thank you Jesus
(as she hugs Gabe's neck)

FADE OUT:

FADE IN. SUMMER 1971 CHURCH SCENE. THE MUSIC IS LOUD, PEOPLE CLAPPING HANDS, SINGING, DANCING IN SPIRIT. CLAUDIA HANDS IN AIR, STOMPING FEET TO BEAT OF MUSIC; SPEAKING IN TONGUES. GABE SR SITTING ON PEW HOLDING 6 MONTH OLD BABY GABE; APPEARS UNINTERESTED IN HIS SURROUNDINGS. WILLIAM, CARLENE, MADDIE JUMPING UP AND DOWN, MIMICKING ADULTS. - DAY

FADE OUT TO THE MUSIC "I'LL FLY AWAY OH GLORY..":

DISSOLVE TO: SUNDAY AFTERNOON, SUMMER 1978
FADE IN: HOT- SUMMER 1971

Carlene outside on porch playing with Jack and Balls.

JOHN
(16 yr. old teen neighbor)
Hey there Carlene!
(yelling from upstairs apt.
leaning over banister)

CARLENE
(age 5)
Hi John.
(smiles up at John as she continues to play alone with the jack and balls.)

JOHN
Watcha doin'?

CARLENE
Just playin'.
(not looking up at him)

JOHN
Wanna come up and see this new toy I got?

CARLENE
(looks up at John)
Uh...I don't think mom would let me.
   (back to bouncing the ball)
She said I had to stay on the front porch.
   (nonchalant)

JOHN
Aww...no way! I asked your mom if you could come see my new toy. She said you could.

CARLENE
(looks puzzled)
When did ya see my mom?

JOHN
(stutters)
Uh..uh..she was uh..up here this morning! She asked us if we would come visit your church.

CARLENE
(smiles)
Oh yea...

JOHN
Cool! So...come on up and you can have some popcorn and pop.

CARLENE
Oh, I love pop.
   (looks over shoulder questioning ly)
Okay...Can I bring my Jacks & Ball?
JOHN
Yea, if you wanna. But I have some new toys.

CARLENE
(yelling up)
Okay.
(leaves jack & ball in corner on porch)
I'm coming!
(smiling, running up the steps to John's apt)
Mmm... popcorn smells good.
(peeking in the apt but not walking in, appears apprehensive)

JOHN
Well, just don't stand there. Come in.

Carlene cracking knuckles, turns head around as if looking for someone. John standing at the stove pouring popcorn into a bowl.

CARLENE
(standing at the doorway. Half in- half out, slowing moving inside)
Uh... I don't wanna get in trouble.
JOHN
(walks quickly to Carlene, grabs Carlene's arm-pulls her in apt., shuts door)
Hey, it's okay. Gosh Carlene, we're just gonna play. Don'tcha want some pop?

CARLENE
Uh...uh...yeah. (stuttering)

JOHN
Okay...don't go anywhere. I'll get you a pop. (walks to fridge)

CARLENE
Where's your mom?

JOHN
Don't worry about that...

Carlene fidgeting with buttons on her dress and turns around to the door. Her hand is on door knob. John immediately is at her backside.

JOHN
Where ya going?
(John's hand is on Carlene's)
Take your hand off the door Carlene.

Carlene shuts her eyes. Frozen
CARLENE
I just wanna go...

JOHN
Not gonna happen Carlene.
(pulls her hand away from the door knob)
(sneers)
We're gonna play a game.
(He holds her hand walking to couch)

CARLENE
(eyes wide, breathing heavy, lips quivering, pulling away from John)
Please...don't...just...wan na...go...

John grabs her wrist with a jerk. Drags her to the couch. Carlene is stumbling trying to get away.

JOHN
Stop it!
(he gets close to the couch and pushes her down on it. Carlene stumbles and falls backward on to the couch)

CARLENE
(lays very still on couch as if frozen. Her arms up up criss cross in front of her chest. Lips quivering)

John on his knees, leans down to kiss Carlene. Uses his tongue to lick her face, tries to put his tongue in her mouth.

CARLENE
(eyes squeezed shut-lips closed tight)
Mmmmm
(shakes head back and forth)

JOHN
Open up damn it!
(continues kissing her as he moves his hands up her dress)

CARLENE
(cries out)
Uh!
(wiggling around)

JOHN
Be still god damn it!
(unzipping his pants)
Fuck! Get up! I said get up god damn it!
CARLENE
(nervously
stands up,
feet
wobbly)
Plea...please...I...just...

JOHN
Come 'ere.
(he sits on
couch,
aggressively
grabs her
arms and
makes her
stand in
front of
him)
Pull your dress up.
(she is
frozen
still in
front of
him)
Now!
(He grabs
the hem of
her dress
with one
hand, pulls
it up and
he shoves
the other
hand up her
dress)

CARLENE
Ouch!
(jerks
back)

JOHN
You stupid bitch.
(he grabs
her and
throws her down on couch jerks her panties down her ankle and his head is seen down on her private part)

John unzips his pants, moving his hand to adjust himself and mounts Carlene. He is moving up and down on her

CARLENE
(eyes squeezed shut, trembling as tears flow, quivering lips open and close trying to say something.)

John immediately stops when he hears...

CLAUDIA
Carlene! Carlene! Where are you?

JOHN
Shit!
(gets up and grabs Carlene roughly by arm)
Get up! Get up! (grabs her by face)
Now listen. You never are allowed to tell anyone what we did. You here?

CARLENE
(nervously nodding head yes as she pulls panties up and jumps up from couch)

JOHN
Because if you do we both 'ill get in trouble. Both us! Understand!?

CARLENE
(continuous ly nodding head up and down)

JOHN
Okay...now go on. You don't wanna keep your mom waitin'. She'll beat your ass!
(sneers)
See ya later Carlene!

Carlene runs so fast-almost falls down steps.

CLAUDIA
Were up at their apartment? What's wrong with you? What did you do?
(jerks her arm)
Carlene, I swear to God, I'm gonna beat you senseless!

CARLENE
Mom! Mom!
(crying)
He did stuff to me! Ugly stuff! It hurt!

CLAUDIA
(looks up toward apt)
Get your butt in the house now! You better not come out!
(grabs her arm, whispering loudly)
...and don't you dare, don't you dare say anything to your dad. You hear me?!
(jerks on her arm with emphasis)

CARLENE
(hiccups)
Ye...ye...yes...
(crying, walking slowing up to house steps)

Claudia is seen walking up steps to apt. Can be heard screaming something inaudible.

FADE OUT

1975. CARLENE 8 YRS OLD; LAYING ON COUCH WITH BLANKET OVER HER HEAD, PULLING ON EYEBROWS NERVOUSLY. GOSPEL MUSIC IN BACKGROUND ON RADIO. - LATE AFTERNOON

GABE
Claudia, I'm heading outside. Gonna try to get the car started. I think I may need to walk up to the store and get some oil
first. William, you and Gabe want to take a walk with me?

WILLIAM (9 yr)
Yeah! I'll go with ya.

GABE JR (5 yr)
No...I play with my toys.
(on floor playing with soldier figurines)

CARLENE
(looks up from blanket)
I'll come!

CLAUDIA
No...you stay here. I need you to give Marlene (1 yr old) a bottle while I get dinner on the table. Keep an eye on Caitlynn (3 yr old) too. Maddie you help your sister.

Both Carlene & Maddie together say "K!"

Carlene makes bottle for Marlene, feeding her.

Claudia in kitchen making dinner.

MADDIE
Carlene, when you're done with Marlene lay her down and let's play house with Caitlynn.

CAITLYN
Baby...
(reaching for baby doll Maddie is holding)

CARLENE
I'm tired. I'm going to lay on the couch with Marlene. Maybe later okay?

MADDIE
I guess. Okay Caitlyn, you can be the mommy...I'll be the babysitter.
   (pretend play)

Carlene done feeding Marlene; curls up with her on couch. Carlene puts blanket over head and can be seen pulling on eyebrows nervously.

CLAUDIA
   (swiftly remove blanket from Carlene)
What are you doing? I thought that's what you were doing! Pulling on those eyelashes and eyebrows again aren't ya?

CARLENE
No!
   (eyes wide with fear)
I...I...was taking a nap with Marlene.

CLAUDIA
You lying little brat!
   (jerks on her arm harshly)

CARLENE
Ow!
(wincing with a shriek)

CLAUDIA
Maddie, watch your sisters. You,
(to Carlene)
get your hind end up those stairs now! Get your dad's belt down to me. Now! I said now!
(hits her arm)

Carlene runs up the steps, tripping on the way up. In parents bedroom, nervously looks around for dad's belt. Picks it up and begins crying...runs back downstairs when she hears mom yelling.

CLAUDIA
Carlene! You better get down here!

CARLENE
Coming!
(with sobs)

CLAUDIA
Pull your skirt up. You better not move one bit young lady. So help me God I'll kill you if you do!

Carlene pulls skirt up and bends over table, holding on tightly.

Claudia strikes her butt 6 times with the belt. Carlene jumping, screaming out with pain.

CLAUDIA
What'd I tell you? Now...pull your pants down! I've had it with you making yourself look hideous!
Hits Carlene 2 times with belt on bare bottom. Carlene winces out with pain and the 3rd strike was on her legs.

CLAUDIA
See? You little brat! I told you not to move! You move, you get it all over! Pull your panties up. March up those steps now! We have some more learning to do!

CARLENE
But...I didn't...
(stops herself immediately, pulls panties up, walking up steps)

Claudia continues hitting her with the belt. It strikes the back of her legs, her back and arms.

CARLENE
(crying, screams out in pain)
I'm sorry! I'm sorry mom. I'll stop.

CLAUDIA
Stop right there!
(grabs her by the hair, pulling her backwards)
Don't you dare go in that room yet. Take your clothes off.
Carlene looks bewildered as snot and tears are flowing.

    CLAUDIA
    What'd I say? Take them off! Now!

Carlene strips down to underwear, holding arms over chest.

    CLAUDIA
    (smacks Carlene in face)
    I said everything!

Carlene's hands shake as she removes panties.

    CLAUDIA
    (loud whisper)
    Get your ass on that bed and don't you dare move, you little devil!

Carlene walks in her bedroom, sits on bed, shivering, naked on bed.

Claudia can be heard stomping down the stairs and back up the steps within seconds.

    CLAUDIA
    Here, scoot over.
    (has a bible in hand)
    Honey, I'm sorry. I love you and this won't happen again. But you have to behave yourself, okay? Now... I need to show you something.

    CARLENE
    (nods head up and down, arms
tight
around
herself)

CLAUDIA

(reading
scripture)
First Corinthians, chapter 6, verse 15. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Carlene, your body is God's temple and when you are destroying it by pulling your eyebrows, well hell you're just like a smoker destroying their body. Do you see what I'm trying to teach you?

CARLENE
Y...Ye...Yes mom. I'm so sorry.
(sobs)

CLAUDIA
Well, I think you need to tell Jesus your sorry. So, you're going to stay in this room until you pray through and make this right. So, go on and get under the covers.
(tucks her in)

CARLENE
(stuttering)
C...c...can I...I...eat supper, put m...my..my..clothes on?

CLAUDIA
Are you serious? Young lady maybe you haven't learnt your lesson yet.

CARLENE
It's okay. I'm sorry! I'll pray and go to sleep. I won't pull my lashes out no more.

CLAUDIA
(smiles)
There. Now you're getting it.
(kisses her on cheek)
Now sleep. See you in the morning.

Claudia walks out of room.

Carlene seen blankets up over head, whimpers with pain when she moves from side to side.

FADE OUT

CARLENE AGE 10 AND WILLIAM 11 IN DARK BASEMENT/WASHER AND DRYER TO THE SIDE. CARLENE IS GETTING UP FROM FLOOR. WILLIAM'S BACK IS TO CAMERA, ZIPPING UP PANTS - DAY

CLAUDIA
William! Carlene! Where are you?

WILLIAM
Coming up mom! I was helping Carlene fold clothes!

CLAUDIA
Get up here, I need the trash taken out and Carlene I need you to help with the dishes.

CARLENE
Coming!
(to
William)
Please, I can't do this no more.
(tears in eyes)

WILLIAM
(looks away with sadness)
Nods head up and down without words. Walks slowly up steps.

CARLENE
(straightens dress, wipes tears, follows William up steps)

FADE OUT

Dissolve to: Sunday afternoon, summer 1978

Playground/picnic with Claudia, Gabe and all the kids.

Claudia driving the car, Gabe in passenger seat, kids in back of station wagon. William and Gabe Jr.'s head out the window, smiling.

WILLIAM
(age 13)
WooHoo! Let's play guys!
(football in hand, runs toward field)

CLAUDIA
(age 35)
William, put that football down. We're going to sit at the picnic table as a family and eat first!

GABE
(age 45)
Yep, gonna eat first.

WILLIAM
(slowly walks with head down, ball tucked under arm.)
Okay.
(sits at table)

CARLENE
(age 12)
I'm not playing football William. You're mean! You tackle too hard.

WILLIAM
Chicken! Four-eyed chicken!
(sneers at Carlene)

CLAUDIA
Hey! That's enough! Now we're gonna get along and have fun. If Carlene doesn't want to play football she doesn't have to. Leave her alone William or I'll bust your hind end. You hear me?

WILLIAM
Yeah.
(head down, snaps head back up)
Maddie, you'll play right?
MADDIE
(age 11)
(eating on chicken leg)
Sure. Gabe can play too.
Hey, he can be on my team.
Caitlyn can be on yours.

CLAUDIA
Maddie! Put that chicken leg down. Let's pray first.

Everyone's head is bowed.

CLAUDIA
Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for this meal. You always provide. Thank you for a beautiful day and a healthy family. God bless our pastor and his family today and all of the saints of the church. Thank you for a good service this morning Lord and for Gabe coming to church today. Halalujah. In Jesus name, Amen.

Everyone simultaneously says Amen.

GABE JR
(age 7)
(wolfing down his lunch)
I'm done! Can I get up!

CLAUDIA
Are you sure? If you leave the table your done. Won't be seconds. It'll probably be gone.
GABE JR
(excitedly)
Yeah! I'm done mom.
(fidgeting in seat)

CLAUDIA
Go on then. Go play. Behave too!
(emphasizes)

Gabe runs to the swings. Smiling from ear to ear.

WILLIAM
'K! I'm done...come on Mad...let's go!

MADDIE
Wait! Not done yet.

CARLENE
Hey Day
(to Gabe)
Did you like church this morning?

GABE
(shrugs shoulders)
I guess.

CLAUDIA
Carlene, are you done yet?
(with piercing eyes)

CARLENE
Uh...Yes. Almost.
(head down and finishes lunch. walks to slides)
MADDIE
Me too!
(jumps down and runs toward ball field where William and now Gabe Jr is tossing football back and forth)

CAITLYN
(age 6)
Can I get up? I'm done.

GABE
You sure pumpkin?

CAITLYN
Yep.

CLAUDIA
Go on. Go ahead and go play. Here take Marlene with you. She's done too.
(Marlene age 4)

Claudia and Gabe seen cleaning up, then walking hand in hand around the park.

Carlene pushes Marlene on swing.

William, Gabe Jr., Caitlyn, Maddie play football, running, laughing.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

1985 SUMMER. CHURCH SERVICE ENDED. SISTER JONES (PASTORS WIFE) AND CARLENE ARE WALKING OUT SIDE BY SIDE AS OTHER SAINTS OF CHURCH ARE SHAKING HANDS, WALKING TO CARS. - MORNING
SISTER JONES
Sister Carlene, Can I talk to you?

CARLENE
Sure Sister Jones.
(age 18, finished her senior year)

SISTER JONES
You've been baby sitting the kids now for several years every weekend. They love you and you do such a wonderful job with them.

CARLENE
Oh Sister Jones, I love them so much. It is such a blessing to be a part of your family. I actually look forward to the weekends at your house.

SISTER JONES
Well...that's what I wanted to talk to you about. How would you like to nanny on a full time basis?

CARLENE
(excitedly)
Really? Are you serious? Oh, I'd love nothing more!

SISTER JONES
Talk it over with your mom and family and let me know. We love you and would love for you to be a part of our family. We can discuss further details later.
Both hug and Carlene excitedly runs to Claudia's station wagon. She opens back seat and gets in; Claudia and the other kids were waiting in car for her, watching her talking to Sister Jones.

CLAUDIA
(driving out of church parking lot)
What was that all about?

CARLENE
Mom! You are not going to believe this!

CLAUDIA
What?
(complacent )

CARLENE
Sister Jones asked if I'd want to babysit the kids as a full time job! Can you believe it?

CLAUDIA
Oh Carlene, that would be great! Praise God! Will they pick you up and bring you home every day?

CARLENE
I'm not sure. She didn't say; she wanted me to talk to you first.

CAITLYN
(age 12)
I wanna go too! I like goin' to their house. They have good food.

GABE JR
(age 13)
Shut up Caitlyn, gosh, you are so dumb some times.

CAITLYN
You shut up!

CLAUDIA
Stop it now! Don't let me pull this car over, because if I do I'll knock your heads off! You hear me?!  
(glaring at them in rear view mirror)

GABE JR AND CAITLYN
Nods yes.

CLAUDIA
Carlene, we'll talk to Sister Jones tonight after church and get more details. It's fine if you sit for the kids, but what did she offer to pay? And, why does she end you everyday rather than weekends now?

CARLENE
Um...she didn't say anything about the pay. But I'll ask her tonight after church. I guess she's now going to work for Brother Teddy every day now at his office 'cause his business is picking up.

CLAUDIA
Hmph! Well, she should be at home with her family, but if Brother Jones
approves then I guess God is in it. Yep, I guess that's fine. I hope you remember, you need to be able to contribute to this family too. So don't forget that.

Claudia looking in rear view mirror at Carlene, moves mirror so she can see her.

CARLENE
I know.
(looks out car window, with sadness)

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

SUMMER 1986. EARLY EVENING. CARLENE (AGE 19) IN KITCHEN MAKING DINNER. BROTHER JONES SITTING AT TABLE READING BIBLE. JONES’ CHILDREN CAN BE HEARD (INAUDIBLE) PLAYING-GIGGLING IN BACKGROUND IN LIVING ROOM.

CARLENE
(calls out to Brother Jones-he's at table in dining room reading Bible)
Hey Brother Jones, Sister Jones called earlier and said she would be late. She told me to go ahead and make dinner. Will you be eating with us?

BROTHER JONES
(closes Bible, walks up
behind
Carlene)
She called you?
Hmmm...wonder why she
didn't call me? Yes, I'll
be eating with you and the
kids.

CARLENE
You were out. I told her
I'd give you the message.

BROTHER JONES
(looks up
from
reading
Bible,
closes it,
staring at
Carlene's
backside)
You know, you sure are
growing into a lovely young
woman Sister Carlene. You
are going to make someone
very happy one day.

CARLENE
(smiles
nervously
at him)
Awww...Brother Jones.
Thank you. That is the
sweetest thing.
(turns back
to stove)
Do you mind asking the
children to...
(freezes)

BROTHER JONES
(standing
very
closely
behind her,
hands
lightly on
her
shoulders-
whispers in
her ear)
I really appreciate all you
do around here Sister
Carlene. I don't know how
we'd make it without you.

Brother Jones presses up against her backside.

CARLENE
(freezes,
eyes widen
nervously)
B...B...Brother Jones, uh...I
feel blessed to help out
God's family.
(fidgets
with
spatula)
C...C...Can you watch over
the pasta while I set the
table?

BROTHER JONES
(backs up
away from
Carlene,
head down,
closes his
eyes, puts
hands over
face)

CARLENE
Henna, come on in the
kitchen honey, can you help
me with set the table?
(nervously
gets
plates))

TIMMY
(shouts)
I can! I can!
CARLENE
Timmy, I need you and
Hannah to wash up honey and
then you can help.

Carlene rushes out of
kitchen as Hennah gets
dishes out.

HELEN
Where's mom? Shouldn't we
wait for her?

BROTHER JONES
She won't be home until
later honey.
(stirring
sauce on
stove)

CARLENE
(in
bathroom,
staring at
mirror,)
Oh Dear God, please, please
help me.
(washes
hands and
wipes tears
from face,
walks back
to kitchen)
Brother Jones, Helen,
Timmy, Hannah at table
waiting on Carlene.

BROTHER JONES
This looks yummy Sister
Carlene
(without
eye
contact)
Timmy, you want to lead us
in prayer?
Carlene's head is down and waits for Timmy to start blessing. Fade out with dark, classical music.

SAME DAY. NIGHT. KIDS IN BED. HOUSE IS DARK. CARLENE IN BASEMENT FOLDING LAUNDRY. SHE HEARS SOMEONE COMING DOWN STEPS. - CONTINUOUS

    CARLENE
    (looks up from folding)
    Oh. Hi Brother Jones. Is Sister Jones home yet?

         BROTHER JONES
         No. Not yet.
            (standing at end of basement steps watching Carlene fold clothes)

    CARLENE
    (awkwardly walks to dryer to get more clothes out)
    Well...is there something...
       (bending over she feels his body pressing up against her)

         BROTHER JONES
(as she straightens up he immediately has his arms around her from the back)
Oh, Carlene...
(whispers in her ear)

CARLENE
(stuttering)
Brother Jones, please.

BROTHER JONES
Shhh...you are so special and you take such good care of us.
(a door can be heard opened and shut)

Brother Jones quickly steps back from Carlene, rushes up steps. Carlene can hear inaudible conversation between Brother and Sister Jones.

Carlene looks up toward steps as Sister Jones walks down steps.

SISTER JONES
Hi sweety. Thanks for taking care of everything today. It's been a long day. I'm heading to bed...hey, are you alright?

CARLENE
Yeah, I'm fine. Just tired. I'm going to finish this load and go on to bed.
SISTER JONES
Well, put that laundry
down. You can finish that
tomorrow. Come on...you
get some sleep. You've
outdone yourself today.
Brother Jones seems tired
too. He went on to bed.

Carlene nods and follows her up steps. Sister
Jones gives her a hug and they both part ways to
their own rooms.

FADE TO FOLLOWING DAY.

SISTER JONES DRIVING AWAY FROM HOUSE. CARLENE AND
CHILDREN ARE IN KITCHEN EATING BREAKFAST. -
MORNING

CARLENE
Hey guys, what do you say
we go to the park today?

Timmy & Hannah excitedly smile, jump up and down.

CARLENE
But first, I have to go to
mom's house. I have some
clothes and shoes there I
would like to get. Helen,
do you want to come with
us?

HELEN
(reading a
book, looks
up)
Sure! When are we leaving?

CARLENE
As soon as you all help me
clean up and get out of
those pj's!

Timmy, Helen, Hannah all run out of the room...
CARLENE IS SEEN DRIVING UP THE DRIVEWAY TO PARENTS HOME. SHE AND KIDS JUMP OUT...WALK INTO HER PARENTS HOME. - DAY

CLAUDIA
(walks in kitchen from living room)
Well, hi there kids!
(hugs Timmy, Helen, Hanna)
What are you doing Carlene?

CARLENE
Hi mom!
(heading up steps)

CLAUDIA
What are you doing?

CARLENE
Going upstairs. I have some things I need to get.

CLAUDIA
Maddie, why don't you take the kids outside. I need to talk to Carlene.

CARLENE
(stops on 2nd step, looks at Timmy, Helen, Hannah and motions for them to go)
What's wrong? Is this okay that I get some stuff?
(nervous)

CLAUDIA
Get down from those steps.  
(sneers)  
Who do you think you are?

Gabe Jr, Caitlyn & Marlene all walk out the front door.

CLAUDIA  
You think you can just come over anytime you want?  You spoiled little preachers girl...you think because you are living with them now you something dontcha'!  Well let me tell you, this is my home!  You don't just walk back in here anytime you want!

CARLENE  
(heads toward the door, hand on knob, turns to Claudia)  
Mom, you are rude and need to pray that God helps you with all of that anger you have bottled up.  
(rushes out the door, runs to the car)  
Kids, get in the car now.  
Hurry!

All 3 children do as she says when they see Claudia running out the door, with a belt in her hand.

CLAUDIA  
(screaming, running toward Carlene)
Get over here you little brat!

CARLENE
(didn't make it to the door, runs behind her car as Claudia is chasing her)
Mom! Stop this! I'm 19 years old, this has got to stop!

CLAUDIA
(close enough to strike the belt at Carlene's backside)
Come here you devil!
(screaming at her)

CARLENE
(quickly runs out of reach from Claudia to drivers side of car, opens it and locks door.
panicky)
Oh Lord kids! I'm so sorry!

CLAUDIA
(screaming, inaudible standing at driver's
Carlene speeds out of driveway in reverse and heads out on to road.

**CARLENE**
Are you guys okay?
(pushing hair away from face)
Oh Lord! I am really sorry. Mom needs Jesus kids. We need to pray for her.

Helen and Timmy are laughing.

**HELEN**
That was scary but funny Carlene. I can't believe your mom was trying to whip you! What happened?

**CARLENE**
I don't know Helen, she just gets so mad and loses it. I just hope she doesn't take it out on the others. Oh God, please don't let her do that.

**FADE OUT AS CARLENE DRIVES DOWN THE ROAD, WORRIED LOOK ON FACE.**

**FADE IN - LATER. CARLENE IN BED PRAYING. - NIGHT**

**CARLENE**
Dear Lord, I need you right now. Please make a way for me to leave. I love working for you Jesus, taking care of my pastor's family, but things are right. I don't ask for much Lord, but just please make a way...
(is seen falling asleep)

ONE YEAR LATER. CARLENE 20 YRS. OLD; CLEANING HOUSE (STILL AT PASTOR'S HOME) - SPRING, 1987 AFTERNOON

Phone ringing.

CARLENE
Hello.

CLAUDIA
Carlene? Hi honey. How are you?

CARLENE
I'm good, just cleaning. How are you?

CLAUDIA
Carlene, I have some bad news.

CARLENE
(puts down sweeper, appears upset)
What is it mom?

CLAUDIA
Are you alone or is Brother or Sister Jones there with you?

CARLENE
Mom, you're scaring me. What is it? Oh, hold on Brother Jones just walked in.

BROTHER JONES
(whispers)
Everything okay? Who is it?
CARLENE
(hand over phone)
It's mom. She has bad news...

CLAUDIA
Oh good. I'm glad Brother Jones is there. Honey, you know your dad has had this awful cough.

CARLENE
(with fear and tension in voice)
Yes! Yes! What is it mom?

CLAUDIA
(sniffing)
Honey, we just came home from the doctor. They ran some tests and he has lung cancer.

CARLENE
(drops phone, slumps to floor, holding head in hands; crying)
No! No! Oh God!

CLAUDIA
Hello? Hello? Carlene are you still there?

BROTHER JONES
(picks up phone)
Sister Claudia? It's Brother Jones. What's going on?
Brother Jones talking inaudible on phone. Hangs up.

BROTHER JONES
Sister...Carlene, come here.
(Carlene stands up,
Brother Jones holds her as she sobs)
We're going to pray.
Carlene. God is a miracle worker. It's okay honey,
let God know your pain. Oh Lord, we are asking
for a miracle.
(speaks in tongues)

Carlene sobbing as he holds her. As she calms he releases her. They sit at table.

CARLENE
I...I...feel like this is my fault Brother Jones.
(twisting tissue in hand)

BROTHER JONES
Oh! Don't you do that to yourself. Why would you even think such a thing?

CLAUDIA
Because I prayed. I've been praying for the past 6 months for God to work something out that I could move on. I think you know...I need to leave here Brother Jones. This...
(stretches out arms)
isn't good.

BROTHER JONES
(looks long
and serious
at her)
You're right. You are
absolutely right Sister
Carlene. I'm so sorry.
But this
(emphasizes
"this")
is not your fault! You got
that? Do you believe me?

CARLENE
(blows
nose)
I know...but...

BROTHER JONES
No Carlene, no buts about
it. Sometimes God has
plans that we can't see.
Maybe this is His infinite
wisdom to getting your dad
saved.

CARLENE
(nods head
up and
down)
I just don't want to lose
him.

BROTHER JONES
We'll call a fast, a prayer
chain. God will heal him.
You have to have faith.

CARLENE
(nodding)
Brother Jones, I need to go
home. I have to be with
dad right now. Mom will
need me to work and help
out. I really need to be with my family... (crying)
...but what will you guys do without me?

BROTHER JONES
I agree, it's for the best. Don't worry about us, it'll work out.

Sister Jones walks in house.

BROTHER JONES
Oh, hey. Honey, come over here. We need to talk.

SISTER JONES
What's wrong? Oh Carlene honey...what is it?
(sits beside her with her arms around her)

BROTHER JONES
She got some upsetting news today. Sister Claudia called. Gabe has lung cancer. They gave him about 6 months to live.

SISTER JONES
Oh no! Come here Carlene. (reaches hug her) Oh honey, we serve a mighty God. He will work a miracle.

Carlene in Sister Jones arms, nodding.

SISTER JONES
Now listen, maybe they caught it in time. Let's
just keep positive and
trust in the Lord.

CARLENE
Thank you. Thank you both.
Sister Jones, I feel it's
best if I go home. My
family needs me.

SISTER JONES
(eyes
widened,
slowly
shakes head
back and
forth)
Well...don't you think you
should think this
through...why Carlene, we
need you.

BROTHER JONES
Sister! I agree with
Carlene. She needs to be
with her family right now.
Whatever she and her family
need we'll support that.

Sister Jones abruptly gets up, picks up her purse.

SISTER JONES
I need to take a drive.
I'll be back.
(visibly
upset)

CARLENE
(sits down,
shakes her
head
confused)

BROTHER JONES
It's okay. She'll be fine.
Now...let's get you packed.
I'll get some boxes and you
can start packing your
things. Let's get you home.

Fade out.

FALL. 1987. CARLENE 20 YRS. SHE IS WEARING NURSES UNIFORM—HEADING TO WORK. SHE IS SITTING BESIDE GABE SR AS HE LAYS IN HOSPITAL BED IN THE FAMILY'S LIVING ROOM. — EVENING

CARLENE
Dad...dad...

GABE SR.
(whispers)
Yes dear?
(eyes flutter open and shut)

CARLENE
I'm heading to work now. Would you like some ice chips?

GABE SR.
No...but can you read to me?

CARLENE
Sure. I've got some time. Let's see...
(looks for Bible on end table, flips through pages)
Okay...this is Psalms dad. (begins reading)
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name...
Gabe puts his hands together as if praying. Eyes are closed as his lips are moving but nothing coming out.

   CARLENE
      (tears coming down her face as she reads on)
      Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of his benefits; who pardons all of your iniquities, who heals all your diseases ...

Claudia walks in and silently sits on the other side of Gabe's bed, holds his hand and looks at Carlene with admiration.

   CARLENE
      ...who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with loving kindness and compassion; who satisfies your years with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle. Amen.
      (puts the bible down and reaches for Gabe's other hand.)

   CLAUDIA
Carlene, that was beautiful.

   CARLENE
Thanks mom.
      (wipes away tears and blows nose)

   GABE SR.
Sweetheart, thank you
   (whispering
   -voice
   cracks)

CLAUDIA STANDS UP. KISSES
GABE.
Honey, are you in pain? Do
you need anything right
now?

GABE SR.
   (holds hand
   in air)
I..I'm okay Claudia. I
just want to sleep now.

CLAUDIA
I'm going to clean up in
the kitchen honey. When
Carlene leaves for work
I'll come back in and sit
with you.

GABE SR.
   (slowly
   nods head)

CLAUDIA
   (gives
   Carlene
   hug)
Have a good night at work
honey. I love you.

CARLENE
   (hugs
   Claudia)
I love you too mom.
   (whispers
   in her ear)
...mom please call me
if...if, you know.
   (looks over
   at Gabe Sr
   with
   sadness)
CLAUDIA
I will honey.
(gives her
one more
hug and
holds on to
her close)
(walks in
kitchen)

CARLENE
Dad? I don't want to
bother you anymore...I'm
heading out to work. I
love you so much!
(leans over
and kisses
his
forehead)

GABE
I love you too....hey,
(looks out
window that
is beside
his bed)
Do you see that?

CARLENE
(looks out
window)
No, what is it dad?

GABE
The angel. He's waiting
for me...
(eyes wide,
then
flutters
open and
shut)

CARLENE
(leans
close
Dad,

(tears)

If you want to go, then go

(whispering)

We are okay. Mom will be okay...I'm going to stay and keep working. We all love you so much, but you've endured enough pain. Go ahead and go to sleep dad, it's okay.

GABE

(a tear flows from his eye)

I love you Carlenesue!

(pats her hand)

Thank you honey.

(he gives her kiss on cheek as she leans in closer)

Carlene tucks him in, walks toward the front door to leave and watches Gabe close his eyes to sleep.

Fade out

Fade in/out with music only for this next scene.

CHURCH IS FULL. CHOIR SINGING "I'LL FLY AWAY" IN A SOULFUL, ANGELIC, SLOW VERSION. SISTER JONES IS LEADING THE CHOIR, BROTHER JONES SITTING ON PULPIT WITH BIBLE AND NOTES IN HAND. GABE IN COFFIN AT FRONT OF CHURCH. CARLENE, MADDIE, GABE JR., CAITLYN, WILLIAM, MARLENE SIT WITH CLAUDIA ON FRONT ROW, CRYING. - DAY

MARCH (EARLY SPRING) 1988, CARLENE 21. CAR PULLS UP TO HOUSE. - EVENING
MADDIE
Is that Matt?
(looks out window)

CARLENE
Yep. It's him!

MADDIE
I didn't think you were going to go out with him.

CARLENE
I know...but he's been so nice Maddie. We're going to PUTT-PUTT and then out for pizza.

MADDIE
You know mom won't like it if he doesn't come to church.

CARLENE
You let me worry about that. We've already talked about it and he's coming to church tomorrow. He's even gonna pick me up.

Knock on door. Carlene answers it.

CARLENE
(Smiling)
Hi Matt. Come on in.

MADDIE
Hi. I'm Maddie.

MATT
(shakes her hand)
Nice to meet you Maddie.

CARLENE
Mom's not here right now or I'd introduce you...

MADDIE
(raises eyebrows in a questionable manner)

CARLENE
Maddie, tell mom I'll be home by ten. Please?

MADDIE
Sure. Have fun...
(leaves room)

MATT
Well...you ready?
(smiles down at Carlene)

CARLENE
Absolutely!
(Puts her coat on, Matt helps her)
Thank you.
(smiling entire time)

WEDDING DAY SUMMER 1988. CARLENE 21 YRS. - IN CLAUDIA'S HOUSE. - AFTERNOON

CLAUDIA
(screaming)
Why do you have to marry him? You know he doesn't have the holy ghost Carlene!

CARLENE
Why are you doing this to me on my wedding day mom? Please stop!

CLAUDIA
He only started to go to church to get in your pants girl! Your dad would be ashamed of you right now. (walking rapidly around the house while yelling)

WILLIAM
(walks in the house)
Carlene, are you ready...

CARLENE
(grabs wedding dress roughly)
Get me out of here William!

WILLIAM
(gently grabs her by shoulders)
Hey, hey there..what's wrong?

CARLENE
Mom!
(puts head down)
William I've got to get out of here now...

Claudia can be heard stomping down the steps.

CLAUDIA
Well...there you are! The prodical son comes back
home to take his sister away!

WILLIAM
Carlene, go on outside...go on.

Carlene takes a bag and wedding dress, walks outside.

WILLIAM
Why in the hell do you have to continue this? What has she ever done to you that you treat her like this?

CLAUDIA
Don't you talk to me like that boy!
(reaches to hit him...he blocks her)

WILLIAM
Never again mom. Never!

Gives her a very angry look and slowly turns away from her. She has a moment of fear on her face. Stands still and watches him walk away.

WILLIAM
(walks outside to his truck where Carlene is standing, crying)
Hey there.
(holds her)
It's okay. It's going to be a beautiful day Carlene.

CARLENE
I...I...I don't know William.
WILLIAM
What are you saying?

Carlene looks up at William with confusion.

WILLIAM
Carlene, if you don't want to do this, then don't. We can just drive and call this whole thing off.

CARLENE
(tosses her gown on ground)
What other options do I have William? I have NO WHERE to go! I can't stay here anymore...she's going to kill me or I'm going to kill her. I can't take the abuse anymore! You'd think because I'm an adult she'd stop...but she's crazy William! I have no where...

WILLIAM
Okay, okay...
(holds her again)
Let's go. Let's get you out of here. It's going to be good Carlene.
(picks up her gown and hands it to her)
(Both get in truck, drive away)

FADE OUT TO MELANCHOLY MUSIC. CARLENE'S STARING OUT THE WINDOW.

FADE IN:
Carlene 2 months pregnant. Walking church ladies out to their cars from her apartment. Matt comes walking up the driveway and ignores when one of the ladies greeted him. Winter-evening.

CARLENE
Hi honey!
(smiling at him, reaches to him)
How was your day?

MATT
(Ignores her, shrugs shoulder and continues to walk in apartment)

CARLENE
(waving-smiles nervously at the women driving away)

Carlene walks into apartment. Matt is hanging coat up.

CARLENE
So...the fund raiser for the building fund went well!
(cheerful)
The party with the ladies went well and I think they enjoyed the treats.

MATT
What's for dinner?
(grumpy)
CARLENE
Well...we have plenty of leftovers from the..

MATT
(hits table with fist)
I don't want your damn leftovers from your stupid party Carlene! You had time for your friends, you should've had time to have dinner ready!

CARLENE
Where is this coming from? What did I do?

MATT
(gets up from kitchen table, stands close to her)
It's not what you did! It's what you didn't do! (Hits the kitchen cupboard so hard the wood split)

Carlene runs out of kitchen to bedroom. Gets into the closet and hides.

CARLENE
(whispering)
Oh God...no, no, no! This is not happening! Please god...
(hands on head, shaking)
back and forth)

MATT
(walks into bedroom)
Carlene, I'm sorry. Come out.

CARLENE
(head down, hands still on head)
Matt...I'm scared. Why did you...

MATT
(on knees, leans down inside closet)
Come here...I'm sorry. Sometimes I just get jealous and want you all for myself. Come here Carlene.

CARLENE
(on knees, crawls out of closet. Matt pulls her close)
I'm sorry about dinner. I'll make...

MATT
Sshhh...I'll eat what you already have. It's okay.

CARLENE
Matt, you scare me when you get angry like that.

MATT
I am so sorry. I don't know why I do...something
just snaps. When I was little my dad beat mom pretty badly but it was when he was drinking.

CARLENE
I didn't know that. Does he still do it?

MATT
No. He stopped drinking and it's better now. But I still remember...
(stares off)
I promise you, I won't ever put my hands on you. I know I've broken things and that scares you but I am not my dad Carlene.

CARLENE
(hugging him tight)
I love you Matt. We have a child to think about now. God will get us through anything. Do you want to pray with me?

MATT
Uh...you go ahead. I'm going to get something to eat.
(looks down at her)
You okay now?

CARLENE
Yeah. I'm fine.

Both get up and hug. Matt kisses Carlene passionately. He walks out of room, as Carlene gets on her knees by the bed to pray.

Fade out.
CARLENE & MATT ARE IN HOSPITAL ROOM. CARLENE DISHEVELED WITH SWEAT, LEGS IN STIRS, NURSE AT HER SIDE. - AFTERNOON

NURSE SANDY
The doctor will be here anytime. He had another delivery. How are you doing hon?

CARLENE
The contractions hurt, but okay.

NURSE SANDY
Do you still want to do this without any medication?

CARLENE
Yes, I don't want to put anything in my body that may hurt the baby.

NURSE SANDY
That's your decision dear.

Nurse Sandy opens I.V. kit.

Matt sitting in chair beside Carlene's bed, holding her hand and watching a baseball game on t.v. Carlene begins breathing heavy.

Nurse Sandy looks over at Matt, frown on face, turns back to getting the I.V. started in Carlene's hand.

NURSE SANDY
Matt, why don't you coach your wife in some breathing.
(kind of snippy in her tone)

MATT
That is why I'm sitting here.

Gives the nurse a very stern stare.

Stare doesn't faze her. She continues putting the I.V. in Carlene as she looks up for a second at him and smiles down at Carlene.

NURSE SANDY
Keep breathing, in, out.
You're doing good Carlene.

Dr. Offenburger walks in.

DR. OFFENBURGER
Well now. What's going on in here?

Nurse finished with I.V.

NURSE SANDY
She's dialated 4 centimeters and the contractions are now about 5 minutes apart.
(speaks to Carlene)
Carlene, are you still wanting to do this without medication?

CARLENE
Yes. I can do this. Can I have a cold cloth?
(breathing heavy)
Oh God, here it comes again.

Nurse gets wash cloth from cabinet, rinses cold water, rings out and hands it to Matt.
MATT
Here honey.

Puts cold cloth on her head, holds her and and
tells her to breath.

DR. OFFENBURGER
One, two, three breath.
There ya go young lady.
That's it.

Carlene and Dr are breathing together. He is very
comforting toward her.

DR. OFFENBURGER
(to nurse)
I'm heading back to the
other delivery; page me
when she's ready.

NURSE SANDY
Will do.

Matt continues to glance at the t.v. then back at
Carlene. Nurse gives him another angry look.

CARLENE
Oh God, I feel like I'm
going to get...
(throws up,
going
some on
nurse.)
I'm so sorry...
(crying
now)

Matt jerks away, arms flings out. Nurse brushes
him away while she helps clean Carlene. Matt
walks out of room.

NURSE SANDY
Don't you worry about it.
That's why we wear these
beautiful scrubs. Let's
get you cleaned up and comfortable.

Nurse fussing over Carlene. Rechecks her for dilation.

CARLENE
I feel like I want to push!
Oh God!

NURSE SANDY
Hang on girl, let's check.

Nurse's hands under Carlene's sheet. Eyes look up.

NURSE SANDY
(Smiling at Carlene)

NURSE SANDY
You ready? I think it's time.

CARLENE
Oh God yes! Where's Matt?

NURSE SANDY
Getting him now honey.
(Walks out of room and comes right back in. pages the doctor)

MATT
Let's do it!
(Gives her a kiss on forehead)

Carlene vaguely smiles

CARLENE
Okay! I'm ready.

FADE OUT:
Spring Evening, Matt picking Carlene and 8 month Mandi up from church.

CARLENE
Oh Matt...I'm sorry you missed a good service! God is so good. So...what happened to the car? And where did you get this one? (looking around the car)

MATT
Our car's engine blew. I got this one from a friend.

CARLENE
Engine blew? How? It's a new car Matt! We're still paying on that.

MATT
(non-chalant)
I forgot to get the oil changed and the oil hasn't been checked since we got it.

CARLENE
Matt! How could you? What are we going to do now?

Matt tightened hands on steering wheel.

MATT
Hey! I'm working! You are the one who decided to stay home with her! (tosses his head to the side where
Mandi sits in back)

CARLENE
(mouth drops open)
What is that supposed to mean?

Matt picks up speed in car. Face angry.

CARLENE
Matt...slow down
(hand holding tightly to door handle, glances back at Mandi)

Matt abruptly pulls in drive way to house, gets out of car, slams door shut.

Carlene gets out, opens back door where Mandi is strapped in car seat.

CARLENE
(cheerfully)
Hey sweet girl...it's okay...come on. Let's get you inside.
(baby smiling)

Carlene walks into house. Matt is in kitchen pacing back and forth running hands through his hair. Carlene sets Mandi (still in car seat) by the front door.

CARLENE
Matt, Please can we just discuss this?
(walks into kitchen)
I'm not blaming you honey...but..

Matt begins hitting the cupboard, splitting it.

CARLENE
Matt! Stop this! God we have a baby here! Please!

Matt screams out as he opens cupboards and throws dishes, glasses. Carlene panics, begins to walk out of kitchen and he grabs her by the arm.

MATT
Come here!
(backhands her in face)
I'm done! I'm done! I hate your church! I hate having to take care of you and your shit! You hear me?

Matt picks up Carlene and throws her into the trash. She falls backward into the trash can, trash all over floor.

She gets up and runs out of kitchen.

MATT
(screaming)
Awww!
(can hear banging. He is hitting the stove with an iron pan.)

Carlene reaches for Mandi (still in carseat)

CARLENE
Come here honey
(smiles nervously at her,
wiping
tears away
from her
face)

MATT
(grabs
Carlene's
hair, pulls
her
backward
and up)
I could kill you with one
hand. Did ya know that?
(up close
to her
face, hands
close
around her
neck as she
is slammed
up against
the wall)

CARLENE
(tears
streaming
down her
face)
Plea...Please...Matt,
I...I...I'm
so...sooo...sorry. Mandi,
I have to get Mandi Matt.

Matt throws Carlene onto the couch and walks back into kitchen. Banging and breaking of dishes can be heard.

Carlene awkwardly runs over to Mandi. Wiping her face she picks up diaper bag and Mandi's car seat, runs outside to neighbor's house.

CARLENE
(knocking
hard on
door)
Come on! Come on! Please!
A woman comes to door.

CARLENE
My name is Carlene, I'm your neighbor. Please, can I come in? My husband...

Woman opens door with mouth opened.

CHERYL
My name is Cheryl. Oh my god honey. What happened?

CARLENE
Hurry, lock the door. I don't think he'll come over, but we need to be safe.

CHERYL
Come on in...what can I do?

CARLENE
Can I use your phone?

CHERYL
Yes! Here, let me take your baby while you do what you need to do.

Cheryl sweetly and gently gets Mandi out of carseat. Holding her close. Mandi smiling.

CARLENE
(dialing)
You know...she never cried out one time.
(tears streaming down her face as she looks over at Mandi)

CHERYL
Well...now you are a sweet little thing aren't you?

CARLENE
She really is...Hello?
Mom? I need help.

Fade out.

CHURCH SCENE. BROTHER JONES ON PULPIT TALKING TO CHURCH. VERY SOMBER TONE. - MORNING

Carlene holding one year old Mandi. Claudia sitting in pew in front of her. Marlene, Gabe Jr and Caitlyn sitting with Carlene.

BROTHER JONES
I have decided to talk to you this morning rather than preach. You all deserve to know what is going on.

(Organist playing very quietly in background)

BROTHER JONES
There have been rumors and I need to address those today if we are going to continue God's work. You all know Sister Jones has not been in church lately.

(he lowers his head and wipes his eyes with a hanky)

BROTHER ED
(other minister sitting on pulpit)
It's okay brother! We're here. We're behind you.
Church saints agree with Amen!

BROTHER JONES
She has moved away. As you know...there were uh...uh...rumors of us going through some difficult times. She has chosen a different life and I have fought hard but it's in God's hands now. She won't be back.

Church saints agasp.

BROTHER JONES
(lifts head up, facing ceiling)
But with the help of our Lord and Savior we will get through these trying times! God is still good! Halalujah?
(looks out to saints)

Church saints shout Halalujah. Some get up and start praying aloud, speaking in tongues. Organist begins playing louder and upbeat music.

Brother Jones speaking in tongues. Saints lifting hands and dancing, shouting.

BROTHER JONES
(looks over at organist, puts his hand out to stop playing)
Shhhhh...listen folks. I am going to ask you to come up in front of the church and pray for me. Brother Ed, get the anointing oil and
lay hands on me. I am going to need the God's strength to get me through.

(he hands the bottle of oil to Brother Ed and moves off pulpit to front of church. Lifts his hands in air as everyone lays hands on him)

Church mournfully praying.

Fade out.

Carlene is sitting on couch folding clothes. Claudia is sitting in recliner reading her bible. Mandi on floor playing with toys.

CLAUDIA
(still looking down at bible)
You know I had coffee with Brother Jones last night?

CARLENE
You did? That's nice. I'm glad you are there for him mom. He seems to really enjoy your company.

CLAUDIA
Yeah, he's lonely, you can tell. He just seems so lost.

CARLENE
God will get him through this mom.

Claudia looks up from her bible.

CLAUDIA
You know...he talks about you.

Carlene stops folding. Staring at her mom.

CARLENE
What do you mean, he talks about me?

CLAUDIA
(closes the bible)
He likes you Carlene. There's no other way to put it. He said you've always been special to him. I really think if you play your cards right, he might just choose you.

CARLENE
Choose me?
(emphasizes the words)
What does that supposed to mean?

CLAUDIA
(suggestively)
Well...there is another woman who is interested in him, but I don't think he is in her.

CARLENE
Oh my goodness mom! I can't believe we are having this conversation! His divorce is not even over and he is our pastor! That
goes against everything we
been taught. This
conversation is over.
(continues
to intently
fold
clothes)

CLAUDIA
What ever you say Carlene.
But if God's will is in
this there is nothing you
can do about.
(abruptly
gets up,
puts bible
on end
table)
He said he'd like to have
coffee with you this
weekend. Your choice
now...he wants to pick you
up at 7:30 on Saturday.
(walking
out of
room)
Like I said, God's will.

Carlene sits on couch, shaking head. Puts head in
piece of clothing, then looks up in air.

CARLENE
(whispers)
God's will huh?
(smiles)

Fade out.

Evening. Carlene and Brother Jones in his car
parked in empty parking lot.

BROTHER JONES
Sister Carlene, thank you
for having coffee with me.
(shuts car
off, turns
to her)
You are so pretty.
   (gently
   brushes
   strand of
   hair out of
   her face)

   CARLENE

Thank you
   (shyly,
   voice
   shaking)

   BROTHER JONES

Can I kiss you?

   CARLENE

Uh...if you want.

   BROTHER JONES

Do you want me to?

   CARLENE

   (looks
   shyly up at
   him and
   nods her
   head up and
   down.
   Biting her
   lower lip)

Brother Jones moves closer to her and puts his
hands around her face, kisses her passionately.
She responds

   BROTHER JONES

   (whispers)
   Oh...Carlene, I'm so
   attracted to you.
   (he puts
takes her
hand and
places it
on the
front of
his pants)
Kissing continues as Carlene puts her hand on front of his pants. He moves his hand up her dress. She wiggles in seat.

Dissolve in and out of scene with Carlene and Brother Jones entering and leaving hotel. Love music playing-laughing, hugging, kissing, bed scene. Fade out

BROTHER JONES AND CARLENE IN CAR TOGETHER TRAVELING ON ROAD. COME TO A STOP LIGHT. - DAY

BROTHER JONES

Duck!

(pushes
Carlene's
head down)

Hurry! Stay down!

CARLENE

Wha..? Oh my God! What is it?

BROTHER JONES

It's Brother Ed. He's sitting right beside us
(talking
without
trying to
move lips)
Just don't move Carlene.

CARLENE

This is so stupid! I can't take this anymore.

BROTHER JONES

Just stay down, I'll tell you when to get up.
(begins
driving)
Okay. It's good now. You can get up.
(releases
his hand

Mmmmm...touch me.
from her head)

CARLENE
I can't keep this sneaking around up. Can you?
(with sadness in her voice)

BROTHER JONES
(runs hands through his hair)
I know...I know!
(slams hands on steering wheel)
Oh God help me!

CARLENE
I feel so bad sometimes when you're up their preaching...you know...about sin, fornication and that is exactly what we're doing.

BROTHER JONES
(pulls immediately to side of road)
Look at me! What we are doing is not a sin. God understands. It's just...just...complicated. I need to get the church ready for another minister to take over and then we can move on.

CARLENE
You don't think the saints will understand? If we
continue to go to church here?

BROTHER JONES
Oh Carlene, sweety. We can't...we just can't do that. There are others who...
(pulls car back out onto road)
It just wouldn't work.

CARLENE
Why?
(with emphasis)
Because of the other woman in the church who has feelings for you?

BROTHER JONES
Now listen. I never...who told you about her?
(looking at her with sincere eyes)

CARLENE
Mom.
(pouty)

BROTHER JONES
Honey...nothing happened. She wanted it to but it didn't. So that's all I want to say about it. We'll get married. I know it's been over three years and you've been so patient. I'll get things rollin'. Okay?

CARLENE
(scoots over close to him)
Okay...I love you so much.

BROTHER JONES
I love you to.

Fade out

Fade in Carlene is driving on the highway with boxes and suitcases in her car. Pulls up to apartment building. Unpacking things and enters apartment. No furniture is in apartment.

CARLENE
(hooks up phone, dials)
Hi! I made it Todd!
(Carlene calls Brother Jones by his first name now)
I'm going to unpack some things and go get something to eat. I start training first thing in the morning.

TODD
Great! Glad you made it safe. You know this is going to be a good move Carlene. We're a couple hours away from your family but we'll find another church soon.

CARLENE
I'm sure Todd. Hey, how's Mandi? Did you get to visit her yet? I am so glad Marlene is watching her until you both arrive.
TODD
I saw her at the church the other night. She's fine honey.

CARLENE
(twisting phone cord)
Next week can't come soon enough! I wish you both were here.

TODD
It'll go by fast. Hey, I have to get off here. I have a meeting at the church to finalize some things. Call me when you get the arrangements ready for our marriage.

CARLENE
Yes! I meant to tell you. I called the courthouse. There is a judge available next Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Is that good?

TODD
Sure. I'll drive down that morning. We can go out to a nice dinner afterward to celebrate.

CARLENE
Oh, I have to work that night but if you arrive early we can go to an early lunch?

TODD
Perfect! I love you Carlene. Thanks for hanging in there with me. And...don't worry about working too much. I'm
going to get a job...somewhere.

CARLENE
Don't worry about that right now Todd...you've been through so much change. Leaving a church you spent your entire life trying to build and have to start over. I'll do all I can to help. I don't mind working. I love you too. Good night.

TODD
'Night Carlene. Have a good day tomorrow.

Both hang up. Fade out

Fade in

CARLENE WAKES UP. SMILES TO SELF. - MORNING

Stretches, gets out of bed. Turns music on. Dances around the bedroom to the shower.

Hair in rollers. Finds a dress to wear. Dressed.

Picks up phone to call.

CARLENE
Good morning!
(smiling)
I'm so excited. When are leaving?
(looks sad)
Aww...you won't be here for lunch? Okay...well, our ceremony is at 1:00.
(pauses)
Okay, tie up the looses ends then and I'll see you soon, be careful! I love you. Okay, bye.
Hangs up phone, sits on couch holding a pillow close to her. Staring out window, solemn look. Fade out to music.

CARLENE, TODD AND MANDI (5 YEARS OLD) SITTING AT KITCHEN TABLE EATING DINNER. – EVENING

Todd leaves table to take the phone in back room.

Carlene and Mandi eating.

Todd returns.

TODD
You're not going to believe who called.
(_excitedly)

CARLENE
Who?
(eating)

TODD
That was Brother Asel..
(takes a bit of food)

CARLENE
(eyebrows together, sincere look)
Oh! Is everything okay with them?

TODD
Yes! Oh yes it's all good.
He offered me a job
Carlene!

CARLENE
Praise God! That is wonderful honey!
(Reaches over and hugs him)
Oh...wait!
    (hands up
to her
face)
We'd have to move? Where
is it again they live?

MANDI
    (claps
hands
excitedly)
Yea! Yea! Daddy's got a
job.

TODD
    (touches
Mandi's
hand
sweetly)
That's right sweety.
    (looks at
Carlene)
They are in North Carolina.
What do you think?

CARLENE
    (head up
looking at
ceiling,
elbows on
table,
hands
holding
chin)
Well...would you be part of
the ministry? What
position would you hold?

TODD
They wouldn't pay us. We
would help them with an
outreach ministry. We
would live in the church's
apartment for free.
Carlene, this is a great
opportunity for us to get on our feet. Plus...
(grabs her hand)
I know you've been upset about the phone calls from her...

CARLENE
(sneers)
Eve?
(takes her hand away from him, gets up from the table, taking dishes in kitchen)
I don't know why she still calls you. You said nothing ever happened between the two of you.

TODD
Honey,
(walks up behind her, arms around her waist)
Listen, nothing happened. She just needs counsel and prayer.

CARLENE
She has a pastor there now that she can counsel with! She's married for god sake Todd. You aren't her pastor to counsel her anymore...I just hate it when she calls you. I don't know why you have to take her calls in private.

TODD
I'll ask her not to call anymore.
    (tries to kiss her)

    CARLENE
    (walks away from him)
Mandi, are you finished sweetheart?

    MANDI
Yep!
    (gets up from table licking her lips. Jumps into Todd's arms he swings her around)
I love you daddy!

    TODD
I love you too baby.
    (to Carlene)
Come here honey.
    (she moves to him, he wraps arms around her)
Carlene, we're going to make it. You've been working so hard, bringing income in and have been so patient with me. This is a good break for us. I really feel God is in this. I told Brother Asel we'd pray about and give him a call next week.

    CARLENE
    (leaning on his chest, with one
arm around Mandi)
I agree Todd. The change will be good. The distance will do us good.
(staring down at floor with sadness but still in embraced with Todd)
(looks up, eyes wide)
Oh no! I forgot...

TODD
What's that?
(puts Mandi down, she runs to her room to play)

CARLENE
What about Matt? He still has supervised visits with Mandi.

TODD
I think it's time we talk about me adopting her Carlene. I love her. And by the way, it's not like Matt takes advantage of seeing her anyway. He didn't have issues with us moving a couple of hours away.

CARLENE
Do you think he'll go for it? I mean like give her up to let you adopt her? You are such a wonderful father to her.
TODD
Let's get in touch with him this weekend and discuss it. I think he'll actually be okay with it.

CARLENE
Oh Todd! That would be so wonderful.
   (hug each other)
Fade out

SHOW ON SCREEN "1994 NORTH CAROLINA"

GOSPEL MUSIC CAN BE HEARD AS CARLENE, TODD AND MANDI ARE PULLING INTO PARKING LOT OF CHURCH WITH U-HAUL CAB ON BACK OF CAR. (NO TALKING) THEY EXIT THEIR CAR. BROTHER AND SISTER ASEL (PASTOR/WIFE) OF THE CHURCH THERE TO GREET THEM. HUGS EXCHANGED. ASEL'S WALK THEM THROUGH THE CHURCH TO THE BASEMENT WHERE A STUDIO APARTMENT IS - FADE OUT - EVENING

Fade in.

CHURCH BASEMENT (APARTMENT) - MORNING

CARLENE
Todd, it's been six months! I don't think I can stay down here another minute. It's just too small. And Sister Asel made it a point to tell me at church the other night. You have got to find a job Todd. I can't do this alone.

TODD
Carlene, I'm doing all I can do. God will provide. You need to have more faith.

CARLENE
I don't know anymore Todd
(wiping hands on dish towel shaking head back and forth, tears flowing)
I don't mind working Todd...matter of fact I actually love it there! Being a teacher assistant at Mandi's school is wonderful and the pay is good but we can't get a house on that alone. Honey you have to find something soon. We have to get out of here...

TODD
(starts pacing the kitchen)
Carlene, I...I...just don't know what else I can do. I thought I would have things figured out by now.

CARLENE
Just go to a car dealership or the mall...get a sales job, anything! You've got to accept it Todd...you're not pastoring anymore. You have to get a real job.
(looks up mouth open)
Oh honey! I'm sorry. I didn't mean it that way...I just...

TODD
No. No it's okay. I...I'll be back.
(walks outside,
car can be 
heard 
leaving 
parking 
lot)

Carlene walks to bedroom, kneels down to pray. 
Fade out 

Fade in 

Todd returns home. Carlene in bed. He gets in bed with her wraps arm around her. Snuggle. 

TODD 
I got a job. God is good. 
(whispers)  

CARLENE 
(sleepy)  
Mmmm... 
(eyes closed)  
Fade out. 

SCENE IS CARLENE EXCITEDLY MOVING BOXES INTO NEW HOUSE. MANDI PLAYING IN THE YARD. HOUSE IS TINY, NO GRASS, SHANTY LOOKING HOUSE. - MORNING 

TODD 
(arriving home from work, walks in house looking around) 
Honey, sorry I've not been a big help with the move this week. Wow! You got so much done. Is there anything else we need to move? 

CARLENE 
(smiling from ear to ear)
Nope! Mandi was big helper. Wasn't you kiddo?  
(pats her on head)

MANDI
I was daddy! Look at my room! Come on daddy!  
(grabs his hand and he walks in her room with her)

CARLENE  
I'm going to start dinner.  
(shouts so they can hear her)

TODD  
(walks in kitchen)  
She is so excited about her own room. Did we get her new birth certificate yet?

CARLENE  
Uh...I think it's supposed to be here in a week. So, how was work? Sell anything?

TODD  
Just a long day on my feet. Sold a washer and dryer. Pray it picks up soon, sixty dollars a week is not worth it.

CARLENE  
Well...with me getting that raise and more responsibilities at the school is helping. But Todd...there is something else I need to talk about.
TODD
What's that?

CARLENE
Church. You've not been going with us, even when it's your day off. That is not like you. Is something going on you need to tell me?

TODD
I don't want to have this conversation Carlene.

CARLENE
(shows him a piece of paper)
Well, we have to talk about Todd. I got the phone bill, do you think I don't read it? She's still calling and YOU (emphasizes)
Are calling her! We are how many states away and this is still going on. Tell me one more time that something didn't happen between you two.

Silence. Todd staring at floor.

CARLENE
Spit it out Todd...I know you've been lying. Something happened and she's holding it over your head.

TODD
.puts head in hands,
begins to
cry)
Oh God forgive me!

CARLENE
(looks up
at ceiling,
tears come
down face,
walks into
living
room,
slumbers on
floor)
God Todd! You didn't!

TODD
She said if I didn't stay
in touch she was going to
tell...
(walks in
living
room, sinks
in
recliner)

CARLENE
I knew it! How long?
(silence)
How long Todd?
(almost
screaming)

Todd briefly looks up at her, puts head in hands.

CARLENE
You were sleeping with her
when we were sneaking
around weren't you?

TODD
I'm so sorry Carlene!
(almost
inaudible,
voice
quivering)
CARLENE
And...Oh my god Todd! When you went back to Ohio for that weekend...did you? Please tell me you didn't...

TODD
I don't deserve you Carlene...

CARLENE
Oh Todd! Oh my god!
(runs out of room to bathroom)

MANDI
(comes out of bedroom)
What's wrong with mommy, daddy?

TODD
Come here honey

Todd reaches arms to Mandi, she jumps up in recliner on his lap.

TODD
Mommy is sad because...um...heard a sad story.

MANDI
What? What happened daddy?

TODD
It's an adult thing honey. But mommy will be okay. She just went to wash her face. She's okay I promise.
(hugging Mandi close)
Fade out.
SHOW ON SCREEN "1999 OHIO" - LATER

CARLENE AND MADDIE IN HOUSE.

CARLENE
Maddie, thank you so much for letting us stay here with you. I really appreciate it.

MADDIE
Carlene, you stay as long as you need to. I know this was a difficult decision for you. What is Todd going to do?

CARLENE
Well...for now he is staying in North Carolina. He said he's wrapping things up and will be back in Ohio. He wants to work it out, but I don't know

(sighs heavily, holding head in hands)

MADDIE
You know...I think you both need some distance right now.

(wraps an arm around her)

Are you going to go back to church anywhere?

CARLENE
(snaps head up)
I don't even want to think about that! Maddie, I don't even know what I
believe anymore! God, when I think of all the sneaking around we did...I just still feel so guilty about that. We were hypocrites Maddie! And now..how could he cheat on me like that?

MADDIE
You know what?
(Stands up, hands on hips)
You need a drink!

CARLENE
No way...
(stands up slowly)
Maddie, I've never...

MADDIE
(interrupts)
Exactly! You know Carlene, I never did believe the way you did. Leaving the church never affected me the way it's affecting you. Never had the guilt, because I knew it was all bullshit. And that's why you need to start somewhere! Come on, let's go.

(Grabs her hand and the walk out of apartment together)

Both are in bar, giggling, drinking. Carlene is gaggy at first sip but then continues.
Transition scenes to Maddie and Carlene at women's clothing store. Carlene trying on pants, giggling.

Scenes of Carlene making changes with appearance, getting hair cut, wearing slacks. Walks with head in air around city, smiling. Fade out

Fade in

LATER - AFTERNOON CARLENE PULLS UP TO HOME, WALKS IN THE DOOR EXCITEDLY

CARLENE
Guess what! I got it!

MADDIE
You got it? That is so great! See, shedding all of those long skirts, adding some make up and cutting that long ass hair does a body good!

CARLENE
Okay...Okay! I get it! It took me a long time to get here so just shut it! (smiling)
Just another month and I can start looking for my own place.

MADDIE
Things are looking up for her Carlene. Hey, by the way your attorney called this morning when you were out. She said the divorce papers are ready to be filed.

CARLENE
I can't believe it's come to this, but you know I feel strong Maddie. I still care about Todd, but I just can't live that controlled life anymore...the church, him not being honest...I have to just move on.

MADDIE
And you are doing that Carlene. Is Mandi doing better?

CARLENE
She's struggling a little with it. I didn't give her details but explained the best way I could to a ten year old. He's picking her up this weekend for a visit. I hope he continues to do that... it would break her heart if he...

MADDIE
Don't think that way. He adopted her because he loves her Carlene. He is a good dad no matter what else I think of him.

CARLENE
True.

Hey, thank you. Thanks for everything. I don't know what I'd do without you.

MADDIE
Oh stop it!
   (jokingly)
You would do the same for me.

   CARLENE
   (shakes her head)
No...I don't think I would.
   (smiling)

Maddie throws a box of tissues at her. Carlene leaves laughing.

Fade out

FADE IN CARLENE AND MADDIE MOVING BOXES INTO HER NEW APARTMENT. - AFTERNOON

   MADDIE
   I think that's it! Come here Mandi, give aunt Maddie a hug.
   (hugs Mandi)
I love you sweety. If you ever want to just come over and spend the night let me know.
   (to Carlene)
Hey...don't forget, have fun too! I'm always here if you need a sitter and want to get out. Okay?

   CARLENE
I know
   (reaches for Maddie, they embrace)
Love you Maddie, and thanks for putting up with us all these months.

   MADDIE
(gets in her car)
Love ya's!
(waving goodbye)

Carlene and Mandi (arm in arm) waving good bye to Maddie as she drives away.

CARLENE
How about we go in there and make our first dinner together?

MANDI
Sure! Pizza?

CARLENE
Whatever you want kiddo!

Both run into apartment smiling ear to ear.

TRANSITION TO NEW DAY. CARLENE PULLS INTO APARTMENT PARKING LOT. MANDI IS SITTING ON FRONT PORCH WITH ANOTHER GIRL. - AFTERNOON

CARLENE
Mandi? How was school today?
(looks over at other girl questioning ly)

MANDI
Good. Glad it's Friday! Can sleep in tomorrow.

CARLENE
(to girl)
Hi there, I'm Mandi's mom. What's your name?

SANDY
(Mandi's friend)
I'm Sandy. I live right there
(points to apartment
beside there's)
Mandi is in my class.

CARLENE
Well Sandy, it's lovely to
meet you. Now if you'll
excuse me, I have to get
inside and get some dinner
started.

MANDI
Can I stay with Sandy
tonight? Please mom,
please?
(hand up closed
together begging)

CARLENE
I would have to meet your
parents first Sandy, are
they home?

SANDY
Yes! I'll go get 'em

CARLENE
How about if I go with you?

SANDY
Okay!

All walk over to Sandy's apartment. Introductions
can be seen. Mandi & Sandy jump up and down,
squeal. Carlene is seen walking back to apartment
with Mandi

Mandi is packing a bag, Carlene gives her hug,
shuts door.

Fade out
CARLENE BEING PICKED UP BY CO WORKERS. PULL UP TO BAR, EATING, HAVING DRINKS AT LOCAL BAR. MUSIC IS LOUD- NIGHT

Co-workers pull Carlene on dance floor. All dancing, laughing. Co-workers walk back to table, Carlene continues to dance.

CARLENE
Woooo!
(dancing with beer in hand)

MARK
(co-worker)
Hey,
(trying to get Carlene to come back to table with him)
Come on Carlene. We're getting ready to leave. Come on and me and Mary will take you home.

CARLENE
Awww!
(shakes her head)
Nah...I'm not ready. I just met this guy and he's so fun Mark!

MARK
I'm not sure about this Carlene, you don't even know him. Come on...
(grabs her arm)

KEITH
Hey, it's okay. I can take her home.

CARLENE
See? He can take me home.
(slightly slurred speech, appears drunk)

MARK
What's your name?

KEITH
My name is Keith. I have a group here with me if you would like to speak to them. I promise, I'll make sure she gets home safe.

One of Keith's friends (Jim) closeby. Comes in on conversation.

JIM
Hey, what's going on?

KEITH
It's okay...this is Carlene's co-worker Mark. He's just checking me out making sure I'm safe to take her home later. She wants to stay a little longer.

JIM
Oh man!
  (slaps
  Keith on
  arm)
He's great man! He's our
local prosecutor. Can't
get any better than that!
I promise, she's in good
hands.

MARK
  (reluctantly)
Okay...I'm still not
thrilled with it but if
something happens to her I
swear...

KEITH
Here, take my number.
Here's my I.D., I promise,
she is safe with me.

Mark and group of co-workers leave the bar,
looking back and shaking their heads at Carlene.

Carlene and Keith continue to dance with each
other.

Music fades to slow music. Carlene and Keith in
each other's arms dancing slowly and kiss.

Fade out

FADE IN

FOLLOWING MORNING. KEITH DROPPING CARLENE OFF AT
HOME, KISSES HER EXCHANGE NUMBERS — MORNING

KEITH
I'll call you. How about
going out on a real date?

CARLENE
I'd love that...and...I had
fun last night. Thanks for
being so sweet and dropping me off.

Kiss one more time. Carlene rushes out of car to house. Fade out

FOLLOWING WEEKEND. MANDI CAN BE SEEN GETTING IN TODD'S CAR. WAVES BYE TO CARLENE. CARLENE WALKS IN APARTMENT.

CARLENE
Well now...all alone. What to do...what to do on a Friday night.  
(rubs hands together  
gets on phone)  
Hey Maddie. What are you doing tonight?  
(pauses)  
Oh, okay. Well I'll call Gabe, see if he'd like to meet me for dinner and a drink.  
(pauses)  
...don't worry Maddie! I would never drive after drinking.  
(pauses)  
Okay, love you too.

Fade out

Fade in to bar scene. Carlene and Gabe having drinks together. Music loud. Karaoke is being set up.

GABE JR
This was fun Carlene. But I have to go. How about I drive you home and we'll get your car in the morning.

CARLENE
No! They're going to start Karaoke. Just stay for a couple more and we can sing together.

GABE JR
I can't sis.

CARLENE
(looks sad)
Okay...I'll call Maddie to come and get me if I need to. But I'll be fine.

GABE JR
Promise you won't drive Carlene. You haven't been drinking very long, and I would feel horrible leaving you if...

CARLENE
(interrupts)
Hey...seriously it's fine! I'll call Maddie if I need to. Go on...I'll be fine.
(Both hug and Gabe exits)

Carlene singing karaoke, drinking, laughing.

People begin to exit. Carlene is only one left.

BARTENDER
Closin' up young lady. Can I call a cab for you?

CARLENE
No. No. I'm fine. I have my own car. I seriously feel fine.

BARTENDER
(shakes head)
Whatever...see ya...

Carlene walks outside to darkness. Keys out to unlock door, keys drop to ground, picks them up, unlocks door. Rolls windows down, puts gum in mouth, pulls out very slowly. Driving very slow, cautiously. Pulls up to intersection, goes through red light. Can see lights behind her.

    CARLENE
    Shit!  God damn it!
     (pulls car over side of road)
    Fuck!  Fuck!  Fuck!
     (hits steering wheel with hands)

    OFFICER
    Ma'am.  License and registration please.

    CARLENE
     (struggling to find them, finds them, hands them to office)
    Did I go through that light?  I thought it was still yellow.

    Officer looking at her I.D.

    OFFICER
    Have you been drinking tonight Miss?

    CARLENE
     (flashlight in her eyes)
    Um...well, I had a couple of beers with my brother
earlier. But I feel fine, really!

OFFICER
You drove through a red light ma'am. You're eyes are bloodshot. Can I have you come out of the car please?

CARLENE
(begins sobbing)
Seriously? Can you just take me home and I'll pick my car up tomorrow? Please, I can't... I can't...
(crying, hands in head)

OFFICER
Ma'am I really you need to get out of the car.

Carlene gets out of car. Somber music plays as she is seen walking a straight line. Cars pass by looking. Her head down, she stops and leans against the car. Officer places her in backseat of cruiser. Drives away. Fade out

Fade in

Carlene is seen walking out of court. Maddie waiting on her outside.

MADDIE
(gives her a hug)
So what happens now?

CARLENE
(tears)
I lost my license for six months, will be put on probation and can't drive
until I get the license back! God! I really screwed up. I'm so embarrassed Maddie.

MADDIE
I told you to call me Carlene!

CARLENE
(jerks away from Maddie)
You know...you have drivin' and so has a lot of people I know after having a few drinks! Nothing happened to you guys. I make one mistake! One mistake Maddie! God, I get no breaks.
(falls back onto stump of court house)

MADDIE
Carlene, it's no excuse at all, but you just (emphasizes)
Started drinking. Doesn't make it right for me, or anyone! But you are just trying to fit all those lost years in a single day. It doesn't work like that Carlene. Moderation, pace yourself.

CARLENE
(staring out at cars driving by)
I know...I know...I have to go to this stupid three day inpatient thing with other
people who actually are alcoholics!

MADDIE
(begins to giggle)
Well...just pretend like it's church.

CARLENE
(shoves her with her shoulder)
Not funny girl!
(both smile and stare out at traffic)
You know...I'm glad no one was hurt, but I guess this is another story I'm going to tell huh?

MADDIE
Well...you are certainly full of 'em. Come on, let's go home. Guess I'm your new chauffer huh?
(walking toward car)
Does Keith know about this yet?

CARLENE
Yeah, I called him. He was sweet. You know we don't see each other anymore.

MADDIE
Since when?

CARLENE
Since two weeks ago. It was fun, an experience but we're just friends now.
Both walk to the car, Maddie pulls out of parking space.

Fade out.

Fade in

CARLENE HAVING NIGHTMARE. - NIGHT

CLAUDIA
You're going to hell
Carlene!
(screaming, hair is bright red, surrounding her face, one tooth in front, eyes bloodshot, flailing a belt on a child)
Get your ass I here!

Transition to preacher on pulpit

BROTHER JONES
(screaming from pulpit, hands pointing at child sitting in front row)
Get her Sister! Get her!
For thus saith the Lord, spare the rod spoil the child!

Child is on knees, white dress, head in hands, lips murmuring but nothing coming out

BROTHER JONES
You didn't pay your tithe
Carlene!
(his eyes
bloodshot,
veins
popping out
on forehead
and side of
head, red
faced)

CLAUDIA
Damn you to hell! Damn you!

Carlene seen in bed, tossing back and forth.
Tears streaming down face, jerks up!

CARLENE
Oh God! Help me! I can't
stand this.
(sobbing,
lays head
back on
pillow.
Stares out
at night
sky)

FADE OUT

Following morning Carlene sits at table looking in
phone book drinking cup of coffee.

CARLENE
(dialing on
phone)
Hello? Yes, My name is
Carlene. I would like
um...well, I would like to
talk to someone. Yes!
Yes! That's it, a
counselor.
(pauses)
Yes I have insurance.
Okay. Tomorrow would be
great! Thank you so much.
Puts phone down. Lifts head in air, lets out huge sigh.

CARLENE SITTING IN MEDICAL BUILDING. TECHNICIAN (DEBBIE) YELLS CARLENE'S NAME OUT LOUD. - MORNING

DEBBIE
My name is Debbie, I'll be going over some paperwork with you before you see your counselor. How are you today?

CARLENE
I'm okay Debbie. Thank you.

Carlene can be seen signing forms. Debbie leaves her alone in the room. Returns and walks her to another door.

DEBBIE
Carlene, this is your counselor, Susan. Good luck to you.

CARLENE
Thank you. (pauses, stands in place)

SUSAN
(gets up from desk, reaches her hand to her)
Carlene? It's a pleasure. Come, have a seat dear.

CARLENE
Thank you. (sits in chair holding
SUSAN
So, what can I help you with today?

CARLENE
Nightmares. Uh, well, I guess you'd need for me to explain it. See, I just recently stopped going to church and...and...well, I had to live a certain way. I couldn't cut my hair, wear make up or dress in men's attire.

SUSAN
What do you mean by men's attire Carlene?

CARLENE
You know! Pants, stuff like that. So, now I do and well, it's kind of weird. I got myself in trouble when I went out drinking by myself. Now, I'm really sorry about that and it won't happen again, but since then I've had so many nightmares. I can't sleep and I'm just wondering if I'm going to hell. I'm so confused.

(shakes her head back and forth, looks down at floor)

SUSAN
Carlene, it sounds to me like you've been raised this way?
CARLENE
Yes, all of my life. I'm the last sister out of all my brothers and sisters to have left it. I was married to a preacher too. I'm thirty-three years old now and I'm acting like a teenager.

SUSAN
Carlene, it sounds to me like you are just fine. You are just experiencing new feelings, new things out there that you never got to experience before. Am I right so far?

Carlene nods head up and down.

SUSAN
So, now you're feeling guilt over your mistake and fear over your changes?

Carlene nods head up and down.

SUSAN
Just know Carlene, you are not going to hell just because you are not going to church, or because you decided to change your appearance. That is not what God is about. Do you understand? Sounds to me you are going through some depression over leaving this group. Are you having a difficult time sleeping?

CARLENE
Yes!

SUSAN
Okay, when you leave here today, I'm going to introduce to our medical doctor on staff. He will prescribe you something to help you sleep. Why don't we meet each week to follow up?

CARLENE
Okay. Thank you. I just feel better already knowing I'm not going to hell.

Carlene is seen walking out of medical building, driving away. Turns radio on, smiling.

Carlene drives to Maddie's home to pick Mandi up.

CARLENE
Hi babe!
(gives her a hug)

MANDI
Hi mama. Can we go stay here for dinner?

CARLENE
No...we have..

MADDIE
Stay! We're almost finished with the grill. We have plenty. So, how did it go?

CARLENE
Well, after seeing the counselor she sent me to the medical doctor there. Gave me some pills to sleep so hopefully that'll help with the nightmares too.

MADDIE
Good. Going back?
CARLENE
You know, I don't think I need to. She told me what I needed to hear. She said there is no way I'm going to hell just because I've made changes. I think I'll just take it day by day. I felt better just hearing it from someone else I guess.

MADDIE
Damn girl! You could've paid me to tell you...as I did! But I understand too, God you were in it so much longer. And believed!

(shakes head, sets table)

CARLENE
(helping her set table)
Yeah, well, moving forward right?
(smiling)

MADDIE
Talking about moving on...there is a party at the policeman's bar next weekend. Want to go with us?

CARLENE
I don't know Maddie...I still on probation. I don't want to get in trouble.

MADDIE
You're fine! You'll be safe with the police up there. They don't even
know you...no one will recognize you. It's a Halloween party and it's so fun, plus you can dress up and no one would really recognize you!

CARLENE
Okay! Mandi is with Todd that weekend so...
(looks down, pauses)
Yeah, I'll go. Why not?

Fade out.

FADE IN - EVENING. CARLENE AND FRIEND JOYCE WALK IN THE POLICEMAN'S BAR. BAND IS PLAYING ROCK MUSIC. MOST EVERYONE IN COSTUME'S.

CARLENE
Joyce, I'm not so sure I should be here.

JOYCE
Oh stop! You are just fine. Now just loosen up and let's have a drink.

CARLENE
I can't believe Maddie couldn't make it! She knows more people here than I do. Guess dating a cop helps huh?

JOYCE
I guess.
(to bartender)
I'll have a bourbon and water, Carlene will have a...
(looks at Carlene)

CARLENE
(looking around)
Oh! Sorry, I'll just have a Miller lite. Thanks

Women get their drinks and sit down at island bar. Talking and laughing.

JOYCE
Carlene, I'm going to say hi to some folks. You okay here?

CARLENE
Sure, go ahead. I'm okay. Just don't leave me!

JOYCE
I got ya girl!

Joyce gets out of seat to mingle. She is seen hugging other people and talking. Carlene sipping on her beer, nodding her head to the beat of the music. A man pulls up a seat beside her. She nods at him. He smiles.

GEORGE
Hi there. I'm George.

CARLENE
Nice to meet you George. (extends hand) I'm Carlene.

GEORGE
I know.

CARLENE
Do I know you?

GEORGE
Well...I don't know if you remember me, but we met a few months ago.

CARLENE
Are you a police officer? Oh! I know! My sister's boyfriend! He's a policeman and had a party a few weeks ago...was it there?

GEORGE
No Carlene, I was one of the State Troopers who was with the arresting officer when you were taken in for DUI.

Carlene freezes. Looks down at her beer, looks up at him and begins to leave. He lightly touches her hand.

GEORGE
Hey, it's okay. You're safe here. I felt so sorry for you that night. If it was up to me I would've just taken you home. But...the process was already beginning and my partner had to follow through with the arrest.

CARLENE
Oh My God! Wow. Well, I'm not driving if that's what you're wondering. I've learned my lesson!

GEORGE
You know...I could take you home.

CARLENE
Oh, that's not necessary. I have a ride.
GEORGE
Here, Here's my card. Call me sometime. Maybe we can go out for coffee sometime.

CARLENE
Uh...okay?

George gets up, walks up to bar, walks back to Carlene with a beer.

GEORGE
Here, this is on me.
(walks away)

Joyce walks back to Carlene.

JOYCE
Hey, havin' fun?

CARLENE
You will not believe who just bought me a drink!

JOYCE
Who?
(stretching the word, smiling)

CARLENE
George! The trooper that stopped me! Well, it wasn't really him who did it, he was actually in the car with him, but can you believe that?

JOYCE
Hmph! Not surprised. Be careful with some of these guys Carlene. Not all of them are so trustworthy.

Carlene looks around, sipping on beer
CARLENE
Oh, I don't know about that... he was nice and... Holy Shit! I think I know that guy!
(looking at a very distinguished older man walking in the bar)

JOYCE
Oh, that's Judge Stokes. His first name is Rey. How do you know him?

Carlene ignores her and walks right up to Rey.

CARLENE
Hi there.
(smiles from ear to ear)
You are the judge who divorced me. I'm Carlene.
(extends her hand)

REY
(shakes her hand with enthusiasm, smiling)
Hey young lady, if I was married to you I wouldn't have divorced you!
(giggles)

CARLENE
(laughs)
No! That's not what I meant...

REY
I know what you meant. I do remember you. You were married to a preacher right?

Flirting with each other.

**CARLENE**
Right. I can't believe you remember me. I'm sure you see a lot of people in your line of work.

**REY**
You were the one who I couldn't forget.

**CARLENE**
(looks down, almost embarrassed)
Well, that's sweet. Thank you.

**REY**
Come with me, I need a drink. What are you drinking?

**CARLENE**
Miller lite, but that's okay...I...

Rey ignores her, is up at the bar, returns with another beer for her.

Both are at the island bar, seen talking, laughing together. Music continues, loud. Everyone dancing.

**REY**
You dance?
(shouting)

**CARLENE**
Not very well, but I think it's fun!
   (shouting over music)

Rey grabs her hand and they go out on dance floor. Laughing, dancing closely, bumping backside, flirting with each other.

Music slows. They both stop dancing and head back to island bar.

   REY
   Wooo! Takes a drink.
   (seems out of breath)

   JOYCE
   (walking up to them at the bar)
   Hey girl, it's time. We gotta go.
   (to Rey)
   Hello Judge. Nice leg work out there.
   (smiles at him then at Carlene)

   REY
   (gives Joyce a hug)
   Joyce! So good to see you. You really have to leave so early?

   JOYCE
   Some of us have to work in the morning Judge.

   REY
   Can I take you home?
   (to Carlene)
CARLENE
Uh...no thank you. I have to get home. But thanks for the dance and drinks. I had so much fun.

REY
Well...hey wait a minute. Here,
(gets out pen and grabs a napkin, writing)
Here's my number. Give me a call. I'd love to take you out to a nice dinner.

CARLENE
Oh, I don't know...

REY
Nothing more than dinner. You have to eat right?

CARLENE
Yes, but...

REY
But nothing. Just meet me here next Wednesday. I'll take you to that nice steakhouse around the corner.

CARLENE
I'll think about it.

REY
Okay, that's all I can ask. Take care kid!
(gives her a hug)

Joyce drops Carlene off at apartment. Carlene walking up to her apartment door.
JOYCE
(yells out window)
Carlene, call him! He's good people!

CARLENE
(walks back to Joyce's car, leans in window as Joyce rolls it down)
Listen, I've had a DUI, he's
(emphasizes)
A Judge! Do the math...don't think he'd be interested.

JOYCE
You'd be surprised. He's a great guy Carlene. Just call him. You do gotta eat, right?

CARLENE
Goodnight Joyce! Drive safe.
(not looking at her, waving her off with her hand)

Fade out

REY IS IN CARLENE'S APARTMENT. MADDIE IS THERE STANDING BY MANDI. - NIGHT

MADDIE
She'll be right down. This is Mandi. Mandi can you say hi?
Mandi looks up at him. Shyly smiles

REY
Mandi, what grade are you in?

MANDI
Fifth.

REY
Great! Well there's your mom
(looking at Carlene entering room)
Hi there
(gives her a hug)

Mandi looks at him, squeezes brows together, crosses arms.

CARLENE
Mandi, did you meet Rey?

REY
We did indeed! She's a pretty young lady.

CARLENE
Yes she is.
(to Mandi)
Listen, we won't be long. I want you to finish your homework. I'm just having dinner and will be home. Okay?

MANDI
Yeah,
(walks out of room)

MADDIE
She'll be fine. I'll make sure she gets her math done.

CARLENE
Thanks again!

Rey and Carlene walk out of apartment.

Scenes transition of them flying to New York, walking into Broadway shows, flying to Las Vegas, gambling. Scenes of Rey wining and dining Carlene. Lots of laughter, fun scenes. Scene of him taking her to Aruba, Caribbean.

CARLENE AND MANDI EATING DINNER TOGETHER AT THEIR APARTMENT - AFTERNOON (MANDI IS 14 YEARS OLD)

CARLENE
Mandi, I need to ask you a question.

MANDI
Hmmm?
(taking a bite of food)

CARLENE
Rey and I have been dating for three years now. He's asked me if we would like to live with him. You know...us all living together.

MANDI
(stops eating, looks away, then back at food)
Here? In our apartment?

CARLENE
No honey
(laughs)
He wants to buy us a new house? You know...something big for all of us?

MANDI

(raises eyebrows, smiles)
A new house? Wow! Where?

CARLENE
You know where your friends live in the new housing addition?

MANDI
No way! No freakin' way! Mama!
(excitedly)

CARLENE
Yep! Those! There is one that was newly built, never lived in. It's huge Mandi. We would have such a great life there.

MANDI
Yes! Yes! Yes!
(gets up and hugs Carlene)

CARLENE
We're going to go look at the house tomorrow night. Wanna go?

MANDI
No, you guys go. I have band practice. Can you pick me up after? Sandy isn't going. She has to go somewhere with her parents.

CARLENE
Sure. Okay...

(gets up to clear dishes)
You get workin' on that homework. I'll clean up here.

Mandi leaves room. Carlene dials on phone.

CARLENE
Rey? She's good!
(pauses)
She's actually excited.
(pauses)
Yep! Yep! Okay, see you tomorrow. What? No! I'm so upset Rey...it's been a month since Pete's visited her!
(pauses)
That's right, his loss.
(pauses)
She called and left him a few messages but no call back. She was hurt at first but now she's mad. It just breaks my heart.
(listening)
Thank you. That means alot Rey. I'm glad you're there for her too.

CARLENE
Love you too.
(Hangs up, crosses her arms, closes eyes and smiles to self)

A QUICK SCENE WITH CARLENE AND REY WEDDING DAY. THEY AND MANDI CAN BE SEEN GETTING OUT OF LIMO. WALK TOGETHER INTO AN EXTRAVAGANT PARTY. DANCING,
DRINKING. REY AND CARLENE DANCE TO CELINE DION'S "HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN LOVE". REY AND MANDI DO A DANCE TOGETHER WITH MUSIC TO "BROWN EYED GIRL." CARLENE LOOKING AT A DISTANCE WITH TEARS. - EVENING

SCENE'S WITH REY THROWING PARTIES. LOTS OF DRINKING, FRIENDS, PLAYING POKER. - NIGHT

   CARLENE
   (in bed, Rey comes to bed.)
Rey?

   REY
   (sleeping on side, back against Carlene)
Hmmm?

   CARLENE
   (turns light on)
Rey? I need to talk to you.

   REY
I'm tired. Turn the light off...we can talk in the morning.

   CARLENE
Rey. You've been saying that for the last month. We need to talk now.

   REY
   (turns over, sits up)
Fine. What is it Carlene?
CARLENE
Now...you know I don't mind a party now and then. I love our friends, but Rey, every weekend? Seriously? We need to spend more time just alone! Just me, with only you. And with Mandi too.

REY
You know if I recall, you didn't seem to mind the parties when we were dating, but married a year now and you want to change?

CARLENE
Honey, I'm just saying...I need more than that.

REY
You know...if I recall I have provided a pretty good life for you. You've would've never been to the places if not for me. Hell, I even invited Mandi to Rome with us. Who does that?

CARLENE
(rolls back over on her side, turns light off.)
Forget it. You just love to please yourself and I can't compete with that. You don't even touch me anymore...
(sniffling)

Rey turns over abruptly. Fade out.

FADE IN. CARLENE IN HER CUBICAL AT WORK. TWO CO-WORKERS, ELAINE AND JANIE WALK IN. - MORNING
CARLENE
Hey ladies, what's up?

ELAINE
Listen, we are planning a backpacking trip to Europe. Do you think you'd like to come?

CARLENE
Wow! That's huge Elaine. Hmm..I'm not sure. That's kind of costly isn't it?

ELAINE
There are some great deals right now. From researching, the airfare and the Euro rail pass will be the most. We can stay in hostel's which is going to be less than hotel's.

CARLENE
You know..this sounds like what I need right now. Let me talk to Rey about it first. Things aren't the greatest right now.

JANIE
What's going on?

CARLENE
Nothing really...just a bump in the road...don't really want to get into it right now.

ELAINE
Well (walking away)
Let us know, because we're going to start planning next week.
CARLENE
Sounds good.

FADE OUT:

Fade in to Carlene, Elaine, Janie landing in Paris France.

Transitions scenes to sight seeing The Louvre, Noter Dam Cathedral & eating lunch under the Eiffel Tower. Taking pictures of each other, laughing, self timed pictures. Continue scenes to being on Euro Rail, hiking with backpacks, in/out of hostels in Austria, Switzerland and Germany. Fade in scene to Rome Italy, night.

CARLENE
This is absolutely been the best trip girls!
(looking around at people dining outside of cafe's while all three are walking streets of Rome)

ELAINE
(looking at map)
Hey guys, stop. Janie and Carlene stop and stand beside her)

JANIE
What? Are we lost?

ELAINE
Well...we were supposed to be here, but I'm confused.
It's not where the bus is supposed to pick up us.

CARLENE
So? Let's go ask someone?

ELAINE
Absolutely not. We're smart, we can do this.
(Continues looking at map then around at signs)

CARLENE
Seriously? It's dark Elaine, it's our last night and we have an early flight tomorrow back home. Come on, let's just keep walking and ask someone.

JANIE
Yea, I agree with Carlene. It's dark and I don't want to be out all night wondering the streets in Rome.

ELAINE
Fine! Come on...
(all three continue walking)

JANIE
Hey, there's a guard.

CARLENE
Where?

JANIE
By those flags. Man, look at all those flags...

CARLENE
I'm not so sure about this, it looks like an army base or something...

(stops, Elaine and Janie continue forward)

Italian woman (standing guard) dressed in army fatigues exits a booth speaking in Italian, pointing to them, holding hand up to stop. All girls stand still, eye balling each other.

ITALIAN WOMAN

(in Italian)
Stop! Hold it there. What are you doing here?

We all freeze.

CARLENE
Uh...lost? We are lost.

Elaine gets map out and points to the map.

ITALIAN WOMAN (English)
Lost? One moment.
(walks back in her booth, can be heard talking on walkie-talkie, static and a man's voice in Italian talking back to her)
ITALIAN WOMAN

Wait there.
(to girls)

JANIE
(begins
nervously
giggling)

ELAINE
Janie! Stop it.

JANIE
I can't help it...
(snorts)
When I get nervous I laugh.

ELAINE
Oh my god! You guys...this
is the United Nations!

JANET
No!

CARLENE
(looking at
all the
flags)
That makes sense. Holy
crap you guys! I hope
we're not in trouble...

Italian man in fatigue clothing rushes out with
great presence. He and woman guard talking,
pointing to girls, in Italian. Italian man walks
up to Carlene, Elaine and Janie. Smiles down at
them.

ITALIAN MAN
(speaking
English
with
Italian
accent)
Hello. My name is Tony. I
am United Nations officer.
So...you are lost? Yes?
ELAINE
Yes. If you could just show us here on the map...

TONY
(interups)
Come. Come with me now. We will get you transportation.
(He walks toward building, looks behind to make sure they are following him)

CARLENE
(whispers as she is walking along side Elaine and Janie)
...guys, I don't think we should do this...

JANIE
Do you have another option? Plus, this is the United Nations building. It's safe!

Tony holds door open for the three women. They look around in awe as they enter the building of the United Nations. There are two more guards smiling at them. They walk up to the girls and greet them with handshakes.

TONY
Welcome to the United Nations of Roam. Come, (motions for them to
follow him.
They walk
into a
large room
with long
tables and
T.V. is on
a stand.
More guards
watching
and
gesturing
at T.V.,
speaking
loudly in
Italian.)
We are watching football,
'eh I think you call it
soccer in the United
States... we just finished
dinner. Hungry?

ELAINE
No. No we're fine. We
just need to get to our
hotel. We have an early
flight tomorrow.

TONY
Certainly. But first, we
have desert and wine
together.
   (he motions
for another
guard to
help him
pour wine
and places
desert
plates in
front of
the women)

Scene with girls watching soccer, cheering for the
U.S. and guards cheering for Italian team. Wine
being poured, eating cake, taking pictures of
Tony, girls and UN guards. Tony takes the women on tour of the building.

Women and guards on balcony drinking wine. Night. Scenery is amazing, city can be seen with lights all around. Tony pulls chair close to Carlene. Elaine watching close by, with frown on face.

TONY
(whispers something in Carlene's ear. Carlene shyly smiles and looks away in distance)

ELAINE
(gets up)
I think we should head back. We have an early flight. We appreciate the entertainment and enjoyed your company. Will you be taking us back to the hotel or do we need to find other transportation?
(to Tony)

TONY
Aww..stay, stay, only few more moments...
(English is choppy)

ELAINE
No. We need to go now.
(gives Carlene stern look)

CARLENE
(looking at Elaine)
Yes, I agree. We do have to go.

TONY
Fine, I understand.
(gets on phone/walkie talkie, speaks in Italian)
(To girls)
The car is ready. Georgio and I will take you now. Come, Come..
(motions for girls to follow him)

Carlene is in back seat middle of car with Tony on her right, Elaine on her left. Janie is up front with Georgio driving.

Tony leans close to Carlene.

TONY
(whispering)
Here, take my card.
(Carlene sneakly takes it while looking at Elaine)
Please call me. I will wait by the sea for you when you can return.

Elaine looks over to check on Carlene and gives Tony stern look. Car pulls into hotel parking lot. All get out.

TONY
Remember, keep in touch.
You are beautiful woman.

CARLENE
Thank you for the ride.

TONY
Promise?

CARLENE
Sure.
(smiles up at him)
Why not?

Elaine standing at front entrance to hotel. Janie already inside.

ELAINE
Come on Carlene...

TONY
Go. Your boss is waiting.

Carlene laughs and walks in hotel with Elaine.

Scene where girls are on airplane. Plane takes off. Fade out.

CARLENE AT HER OFFICE. CELL PHONE RINGS. SHE WALKS OUTSIDE TO ANSWER - MORNING

CARLENE
Hello?

TONY
My love. How are you?

CARLENE
Tony! Hi! I'm good, good. I'm surprised you called.

TONY
Yes? I told you I would.
CARLENE
Tony, I may have to get a different cell phone so we can talk. My husband is on this plan...

TONY
I understand. I will email you Yes?

CARLENE
Actually that would be best. Do you still have my email address?

TONY
I do yes. I email you something today and you answer soon. Yes?

CARLENE
I will. Good to hear your voice.

TONY

Carlene closes phone, walks in office. Sits at computer, smiles as she begins working on paperwork.

Looks up and sees light come on computer for email notice. Clicks open. It reads: My love, amore, I told you I wait by the sea for you. Now, you come to see me soon, Yes? If you can?

Carlene responds: I would love to come back to Italy. I have to make arrangements first. Things are not well with me and Rey. I will contact you next week.

Tony: Si amore.

Carlene scoots back in her chair, smiles nervously and gets back to work.
CARLENE AND REY AT HOME. MANDI IN HER ROOM. - AFTERNOON

CARLENE
(walks into Rey's office. He's doing paperwork)
Rey, can we talk?

REY
Sure. Sit.
(motions for her to sit. He pushes back from his desk. Still in chair, leans back w/authority. Hand on chin)

CARLENE
(sits on chair, head down, hands wringing)
What do you think about counseling? Me, you?

REY
Carlene, seriously?
(scoots back up to desk, looks at computer, not making eye contact with her)
Not gonna happen kid.

CARLENE
Are you for real?
(angry tone)
You know...when the time comes Rey...remember this day.

REY
(ignores her, continues to work on paperwork)
Close the door when you leave.

Carlene gets up from her chair, moves to doorway, stares in at him, tears come to her eyes. Closes door. Walks out of office. Goes to Mandi's room.

MANDI
Hey!
(looks like she's doing homework)

CARLENE
Are you about done with your homework honey?

MANDI
Just one more problem then yes!
(sighs with relief)
When's dinner?

CARLENE
I thought you and I could go get something.

MANDI
What about Rey?

CARLENE
He's playing poker tonight at the policeman's club.
MANDI
Can we get pizza?

CARLENE
Sure. I'll order it and we can go pick it up. You want to drive? You need the practice...

MANDI
Yes!

(puts right arm up excitedly)

LATER THAT EVENING CARLENE AND MANDI AT TABLE EATING PIZZA.

FADE IN:

CARLENE
Honey, I have something to talk to you about.

MANDI
(takes a drink)

What?

CARLENE
I know you can feel some of the tension between me and Rey lately. I need to get a way for a few days and do some thinking.

Mandi stares up at her.

MANDI
Where mom?

CARLENE
Mandi, I need you to trust me okay?

MANDI
Yeah
CARLENE
Honey, I'm serious.

MANDI
Okay! Okay! I trust you. Gosh, what's going on?

CARLENE
Do you remember the officer I met in Italy with my girlfriends? The one that works for the United Nations?

MANDI
You goin' back to Italy?
(Eyes widen)

CARLENE
(closes eyes, hands over eyes, puts them down)
Yes. I am. And I'm only telling you, Maddie, Marlene and Caitlyn. NO ONE (emphasizes)
Else knows. Okay?

MANDI
I guess...What about Rey?

CARLENE
Mandi, this is serious. I am only telling you this because I'm going so far. You know I don't like
lying, but I just can't
tell Rey about this. You
have to trust me. He knows
I'm going away for a few
days but I didn't give him
details. I don't want him
to know this right now.
I'll let him know when I
feel the time is right.
Look at me sweety.

MANDI
I got it mom!
(pauses)
So...is this like a you
know..um...are you and this
guy...

CARLENE
No honey. He's a friend
and I have some time and
just need to get a way.
It's an adult situation and
I promise you I'll tell you
more soon. But are we
clear?

MANDI
Yes. Clear as glass!
(laughs)

CARLENE
(reaches
over and
hugs her
close)
I love you so much Mandi!
You know you are my world.
(kisses her
on neck and
cheeks)

MANDI
Yeah, yeah...okay that's
enough. I love you to
mama.
Fade out.

FADE IN. CARLENE IS SEEN ON PLANE, TONY PICKING HER UP AT AIRPORT. HUGS. HE KISSES HER ON CHEEK. - EVENING

TONY
I can not believe this!
You are here my love.

CARLENE
(looks up
in his
eyes)
I...I can't either.

TONY
You seem nervous...Why?

CARLENE
(shakes head
smiling)
Nervous, excited. Can't believe I'm doing this...?

TONY
Come
(walks her
to
passengers
side of
car)
Get in amore...we go to a villa I rented in Ostria on the beach.

CARLENE
The beach? Oh Tony!
Sounds relaxing...
(she is getting comfortable
in car, shifting)

Car is seen driving. Fade out.
Scenes flash in and out with Carlene and Tony with picnic on beach, lay in each other's arms, kissing, drinking wine. Shower together in villa. Carlene drying hair as Tony enters the bathroom.

TONY
Amore, I have friends coming over. Remember my team you met at the UN?

CARLENE
(stops drying hair)
Oh! Yeah, Yeah, some of them. Georgio...uh I can't remember the others' names.

TONY
Well. They will be here tonight. We eat and enjoy the summer evening together. Yes?

CARLENE
Sounds lovely.
(Smiles as he kisses her forehead)

Evening, outside, patio from villa. Tony, Carlene and friends sitting around large table with only candles lighting. Everyone toasts Salute! Eating, drinking, everyone talking in Italian. Carlene observing, appears lost for a moment. Tony interrupts her stare.

TONY
(whispers)
Amore, problem?

CARLENE
No. No.
(nervously)
Well...it's just....I kind
of feel left out of the
conversation. It's
difficult for me to
understand...

TONY
Awww...Yes! I see? I am
sorry my love. No problem.
They are talking about
work, family. I translate?
Yes?

CARLENE
Don't worry...it's fine.
I'll just enjoy the
evening.
   (smiles at
   him)
   (He leans
   in to kiss
   her as
   friends
   clap and
   shout
   something
   in Italian.
   Carlene
   turns head,
   shyly.)

TONY
Do not be embarrassed
amore. They mean well.
They are happy you are
here.

CARLENE
   (Smiles at
   the group)
Gracia!
   (All cheer,
   Gracia!)
Salute!
   (raises her
glass)
Fade out.

Fade in and out (morning) of flashes Tony taking Carlene on tour of Sistine Chapel and taking pictures of each other, Tony asks tourists to take pictures of them together. Dining at local market, outside with wine and gelato. Continued flashes into the evening of Tony and Carlene at the Treve Fountain, tossing coins.

Transition to Carlene at airport. Tony has his arms around her.

TONY
I will miss you Amore.

CARLENE
Me too.
(looks up at him)
I had so much fun Tony. Thank you.

TONY
Call me when you are home.

CARLENE
Tony...
(pauses)
I don't know what will happen with me and Rey...

TONY
Shhh...do not speak of this. We, me
(points to self)
You,
(points to Carlene)
Had a love Amore. We had love if only for a moment.
(hugs her
tighter)
If you wish to return to
me...I wait.

Carlene tears up. Wipes her eyes and they kiss.

CARLENE

Good bye Tony.
(walking
away as
their hands
are seen
releasing
slowly.)

Fade out.

Fade back in to hospital scene from beginning:

Carlene is sitting up in hospital bed. Hands
twisting tissue in hand. Face red from crying.

SOCIAL WORKER:
Wow Carlene. You've lived
an incredible life. What
happened after you came
back from Rome?

CARLENE
Rey and I ended up
divorcing. It was not an
ugly divorce, but... it was
just embarrassing.

SOCIAL WORKER:
Why?
(writing on
clipboard)

CARLENE
Another marriage down the
tubes.

SOCIAL WORKER:
Okay...let's move forward.
Tell me about your
relationship with your current husband...uh....AJ?

CARLENE
Yes. AJ. He is amazing.
He's my best friend...

(As Carlene is talking about her and A.J. show soft scene of her standing beside him on their wedding day in front of small group/pool side. Sunny day)

CARLENE
Marrying A.J. was the best day of my life. His mom walked him down the small aisle and his father walked me. It was wonderful because they too shared the same anniversary day.

Carlene looks out window as she continues talking to social worker.

CARLENE
But I haven't been honest with him about how I've been feeling.

SOCIAL WORKER:
And why is that Carlene?

CARLENE
I'm not sure...I just am afraid...afraid...afraid...of what I really don't know.

SOCIAL WORKER:
Carlene, I think you do know. Do you think he'll look at you differently?

Carlene begins tearing up again, snifs, nods head.

SOCIAL WORKER:
You know...you said he was your best friend. I
believe that. I know you believe that. So just trust that.

Social worker's pager goes off. She looks down at it and excuses herself for a moment.

Carlene lays head back and sighs big sigh.

Social worker returns.

SOCIAL WORKER
Carlene, we have a hospital that is prepared for you. It's a wonderful mental health facility and you will get the help you have wanted and needed for a long time. This is a great beginning for you Carlene. I'll call your husband and let him know where you'll be.

CARLENE
Thank you. I'm just so tired.

SOCIAL WORKER:
It'll be another 45 minutes for them to be here. Do you want to continue talking or would you rather rest?

CARLENE
I'd rather keep talking.

SOCIAL WORKER:
Okay....so your brother...

CARLENE
William. He and I didn't talk for about three years...I wanted, well I asked him to go to
counseling with me. I...I was just...
(holds head with hands)
God! It's so damn hard talking about it....I was so mad at him! He refused to get help and this is what happened!
(flails hand out expressively)

SOCIAL WORKER
Suicide?

CARLENE
Yeah...suicide. If he'd just...or if I'd...
(tears streaming down face again)

SOCIAL WORKER
You know Carlene, it was not your fault. Obviously he had some issues he did not resolve and depression. You said you reached out right?

Carlene nods head.

SOCIAL WORKER
He made those choices, not you. He made the choice to not get some help. But you are. You are strong Carlene. It takes strength to walk in here and say help me. You are making the right choice to be healthy.

CARLENE
I know this...I do. I
guess it'll just take
time...I just get so mad
because he left me without
resolving anything.

SOCIAL WORKER
Just give this time. It's
okay to take time out to
get some help. I'm glad we
found the right place for
you to go to.

(looks up,
E.M.T's
walking in
room with
stretcher)
Okay dear, it looks like
they're ready for you. I
did call your husband. He
said he loves you and he's
proud of you.

Carlene tearing up, nodding as she gets up on the
stretcher.

Soft music ("Safe & Sound" by Taylor Swift OR "It
ain't over" by Maurette Brown Clark) playing as
she is wheeled out into ambulance. There is a
blanket wrapped around her. Inside ambulance she
is laying on the stretcher looking outside. Dark,
snowing. E.M.T. woman sitting beside her.
Ambulance pulls into hospital. Music continues
playing softly as scene's of her going through the
process of admission. Her face is red, eyes
swollen from crying, still appears
distraught...fade out.

FADE IN:

Music "Here for you" by Neil Young playing. Sun
is shining, even though snow on ground. A.J.
pulls into hospital picking up Carlene. She is
smiling. She drops her bags and runs to his arms.
Fade out as they are hugging.
Transition in with music "Good Life" by One Republic. Scene's Fade in/out Carlene sitting in therapist office. Show different scenes with her and therapist (cry, laugh, smile,) and close with scenes of her signing copies of her book at book signing, volunteering and playing outside with her dogs, hiking with A.J.

THE END.

CARLENE LIVES IN GRANVILLE, OHIO WITH HER HUSBAND A.J. SHE ADOPTED TWO RESCUE DOGS AND CONTINUES TO VOLUNTEER.

CARLENE FORGAVE HER MOM HOWEVER SHE HAS NO RELATIONSHIP WITH HER.

CARLENE FORGAVE HER BROTHER AND HAS FOUND PEACE AND STRENGTH BY LETTING GO OF WHAT SHE CANNOT CONTROL.

Copyright (c) 2014 This screenplay may not be used or reproduced without the express written permission of the author.