

STATE LINES

Written by

Rachel Wolf

The Gotham Group
Tony Gil - (424) 288-5498
Max Goldfarb - (424) 288-5419

EXT. WASHINGTON, DC - DAY

A crowded Sunday morning on M Street NW. It's 2024: density is finally back to normal. Politicos, families, college students -- all with uncovered faces -- stroll past red brick townhomes, old-timey lamp posts, and American flags mounted out windows. It's like an Epcot version of where the Founding Fathers went to brunch.

It's the first Sunday of spring, a regional holiday where East Coasters wear insufficient clothing to celebrate the slightest increase in temperature.

SARA JANE (21, white), wearing a quarter-zip sweatshirt, shorts, and sneakers, walks with a small knot of FRIENDS. One is her best friend MAGGIE (22). Maggie has gone full Pagan Celebration: cropped floral bustier, raw-edge short-shorts, espadrilles, ribbons in her hair. It's 62 degrees.

The group passes a grassy area where a big, ancient tree shades a picturesque park bench.

A BOY (7 or 8, white) stands on the bench, looking up at the tree and crying. He's a Norman Rockwell archetype from rosy cheeks to button nose.

Sara Jane notices his distress and stops. As she heads toward him, Maggie calls back:

MAGGIE

Sara Jane?

SARA JANE

I'll catch up with you guys.

Maggie and the rest continue on, and we stay with Sara Jane. Sara Jane approaches the boy.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Hey. Where's your grownup?

The boy sniffles.

BOY

There.

He points down the road to a harried NANNY arguing with a METER MAID about a ticket. So he's not lost.

SARA JANE

What's wrong?

BOY

I threw my hat and it stuck.

He points at the tree and Sara Jane looks up, following the line of his finger. Up pretty high, half hidden by leaves and branches but still visible, is a bright red baseball cap.

SARA JANE
(confirming)
Your hat is stuck in a tree.

The boy snuffles and nods.

BOY
It's my favorite.

Sara Jane scopes the topography of the tree. The lowest branch is too high for the boy, but not for a grown woman.

SARA JANE
Well, we can't have that. You wait right here.

Sara Jane steps up onto the bench and grabs the tree's lowest branch. She swings herself up onto it and starts climbing.

Her sense of mission makes her unwittingly graceful as she ascends, branch by branch, always safe and considered. There's not a reckless bone in her body.

On Sara Jane's face as she pops her head up eye-level with the hat: we watch her expression morph into one of pure horror, then utter disgust.

Flipping around, we see the half-obscured writing on the hat, just enough to recognize:

MAKE A ME---
GREAT AG---

Oh.

Sara Jane moves into a position where she can safely grab the hat. She removes it from its perch, then stashes it down her shirt, where it becomes invisible under her sweatshirt. Her expression of distaste lingers as she descends empty-handed.

The little boy looks up at her hopefully. He can no longer see his hat in the tree, so she must have it.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Your hat was really badly stuck.

The boy looks up at her expectantly.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
 And the words on it were hurtful,
 so the tree wouldn't let it go.

Sara Jane demonstrates how empty her hands are. The boy takes in the lack of hat, whimpers, and bursts into a renewed bout of tears.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
 That hat is gone. But you can get a
 new hat. A better hat.

BOY
 (in-between sobs)
 But-- I want-- MY-- hat.

SARA JANE
 Your hat is lost forever.

BOY
 You said-- you'd-- get it-- for me.

SARA JANE
 Well, don't believe everything
 you're told. And maybe don't throw
 hats into trees. That was a stupid
 thing to do.

And with that, Sara Jane turns on her heel and walks after her friends, leaving the crying little boy behind.

INT. FARMERS FISHERS BAKERS

Maggie is seated for brunch with the rest of the friend group when Sara Jane finally arrives. They've saved her a chair.

SARA JANE
 Thanks, guys. I'm gonna go wash my
 hands.

Sara Jane looks pointedly at Maggie, silently communicating. Maggie resists. Sara Jane persists. Maggie breaks.

MAGGIE
 I guess I'll wash mine too. Again.

INT. FARMERS FISHERS BAKERS - RESTROOM

Sara Jane has beat Maggie to the privacy of the restroom, and is waiting when Maggie bursts in.

MAGGIE

I appreciate your enthusiasm, but
coke is not for First Brunch.
Brunch is for *eating*--

SARA JANE

No! It's not coke. When have I
brought you coke?

Sara Jane zips down her quarter-zip and, surreptitiously like
a dealer, shows Maggie that she has something in her shirt.

MAGGIE

You stole something.

SARA JANE

Just look.

Maggie has to get all up in there to see it properly.

MAGGIE

OHHH my god. Why do you have this?

SARA JANE

I couldn't let him keep it!

MAGGIE

Does he know that it's gone?!

SARA JANE

Yeah, but he's little. Like a
little kid.

MAGGIE

(in wonder/appalled)
What did you do?

SARA JANE

Can we focus? What do I do with it?

MAGGIE

You keep it there! Until it's safe
to dispose of!

SARA JANE

But it feels icky! I think I need
to go home and like burn it or cut
it up or take all the stitches out
with one of those little...

She gestures to indicate a seam ripper.

MAGGIE

Nooo! It's First Brunch! The restaurant is packed, the people are smiling, the birds are singing. Everything's back to normal right before college is about to end. These are the--

SARA JANE

--last best days of our lives. I know. But it's gonna throw off my whole vibe.

Maggie can see this is true. She pulls the hat out of Sara Jane's shirt and sticks the bill into her bustier. There is no room. Practically all of it protrudes.

MAGGIE

Gimme your sweatshirt.

SARA JANE

It won't ruin First Brunch?

But Sara Jane is already taking off her sweatshirt. Maggie wriggles it on, covering the hat. Somehow, it looks amazing.

INT. FARMERS FISHERS BAKERS

The girls sit at the table exchanging eyes over their secret, laughing like nothing's wrong.

INT. "OFF CAMPUS" HOUSE, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

The girls sit in the same positions, only this time around a janky coffee table that has never seen a coffee in its life. Above the couch, a satirical fraternity grid portrait shows the CLASS OF 2024. The same seniors populate the party.

Sara Jane gets up. We follow her into the kitchen of the house, where two HIPSTERS (male) lean against the counter. One breaks off his conversation when he sees Sara Jane.

HIPSTER BRO

That's what I-- Saint Jude! Speak of the angel. Tell him what you told me.

SARA JANE

That if more men were born with uteri, abortion would be in the Constitution?

HIPSTER BRO

No, about how sure you are how they're gonna rule.

SARA JANE

Oh. One hundred percent certain they'll overturn.

HIPSTER BRO

(to his friend)

See? It's a done thing. She follows this shit more than anybody.

HIPSTER FRIEND

Whoa. So it's just like... gone?

SARA JANE

It becomes a state thing. In some states it'll be illegal immediately. In others, nothing will cha--

Maggie appears over Sara Jane's shoulder with two drinks.

MAGGIE

You're talking to boys about abortion.

SARA JANE

It's tomorrow!

Maggie steers Sara Jane back to the living room.

BOY ON COUCH

SAINT JUUUUUUDE! She returns!

You can tell Sara Jane doesn't hate being called a saint. The boy makes room on the couch and the girls squish in.

BOY ON COUCH (CONT'D)

Saint Jude's coming to Myrtle. SHE wants to be at Breakers.

SARA JANE

I am hotel-agnostic. I go where Maggie goes.

MAGGIE

There are better hotels in Myrtle! We finally get a real Spring Break our last year in college and you want to spend it at *Breakers*?

BOY ON COUCH
BREAKERS. BREAKERS. BREAKERS.

INT. "OFF CAMPUS" HOUSE - LATER

Sara Jane finds Maggie on the staircase, drunkenly engaged in "conversation." Sara Jane wears a triumphant expression.

SARA JANE
I'm gonna head out. You good?

MAGGIE
(drunk)
Why are you so happy? You're never
so happy this late.

SARA JANE
You know that urinal they installed
upstairs? Guess what I put there.

Sara Jane just smiles. Maggie takes a second, then catches on: the hat has found its final resting place.

MAGGIE
You didn't.

SARA JANE
Tell the boys they're welcome.

EXT. "OFF CAMPUS HOUSE" - MORNING

Sara Jane, dressed for a protest, stands below a second-story window. She holds two well-lettered signs, each on a long wooden dowel. She calls up:

SARA JANE
MAGGIE.
(a beat)
MAGGIE!

A rustling. Maggie comes to the window and sticks her head out. No one pulls off morning-after hair like Maggie.

MAGGIE
Lemme guess. Last night I told you
to come get me no matter what.

SARA JANE
You did.

MAGGIE
Did you bring me clothes?

SARA JANE
 (no, but)
 I brought you a sign.

Sara Jane demonstrates the signs. One says: "MY BODY MY CHOICE". The other says: "THIS IS VERY BAD." Maggie smiles.

EXT. FIRST STREET NE

Holding their signs, the girls join a throng approaching a protest area. Maggie is dressed for last night's party.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN FRONT OF THE SUPREME COURT

Sara Jane and Maggie stand in a crowd of pro-choice protestors. Sara Jane's phone buzzes. She shifts her sign to one hand and checks the notification: *Roe v. Wade Overturned in Landmark...* she doesn't click through for the rest. It's enough to know it's happened. She shows Maggie, who frowns.

A cheer of celebration erupts from a different group of women and men across the way. Their faces are radiant. They are so happy. They won. Finally. They won.

Sara Jane looks at their fellow protestors. Some crying. Some frowning. A couple look almost crazed.

MAGGIE
 How long do we stay?

A woman PROTESTOR with long gray hair replies:

PROTESTOR
 As long as we can.

SARA JANE
 And then what?

PROTESTOR
 We wait. Alito can't live forever.

The girls look at her. She's serious. Maggie is unfazed. Sara Jane is crushed.

EXT. WASHINGTON, DC

Sara Jane and Maggie walk home from the protest. Maggie is chipper and sincere. Sara Jane is trying to convince herself and not spoil Maggie's mood, but she's failing.

MAGGIE

I'm really glad we went!

SARA JANE

Yeah. I hope it does something.

MAGGIE

Even if it doesn't. We showed up.

SARA JANE

Yeah.

INT. SARA JANE'S DORM ROOM

In Sara Jane's clean, organized, and uncluttered room, she has put up one poster, next to her bed: an Art Deco-style print depicting Saint Jude. Whether it preceded or stems from her nickname is unclear, but it's gotta be the latter.

On her laptop, Sara Jane googles "volunteer rescue pro-choice abortion access." Weeds through some pregnancy "crisis center" sites, finds a likely-looking blog post: "*The case for transporting at-risk minors to out-of-state clinics.*"

Sara Jane reads the headline and lights up. That's the opposite of waiting. As she reads, she gets a call. She absent-mindedly picks it up, focused on the post.

INTERCUT: Bethany (late 50s) is unloading groceries in her beautifully appointed kitchen.

BETHANY

I saw you on CNN.

SARA JANE

They covered the protest?

She clicks on a link in the post: *Choice Access Network*.

BETHANY

Yes, before the announcement. The talking heads liked your sign.

SARA JANE

It's a good one, right? Really cuts through the noise.

The link yields a page with a phone number labeled "*Signal*."

BETHANY

Mm.

SARA JANE
Can you send me the clip?

Sara Jane opens Signal Private Messenger on her phone and texts the number: *Looking to help.*

BETHANY
What for?

SARA JANE
My resume.

BETHANY
This is why I called. Let's talk through that. If you were an employer in this economy and you saw a candidate protesting on TV--

Sara Jane gets a text back: a jumble of numbers and letters ending in *.onion.*

SARA JANE
Mom. The type of employers I'll be looking at consider that a plus.

BETHANY
I do think it's a bit different when you're protesting settled law.

SARA JANE
Roe was settled law! This is the opposite--

Sara Jane pulls up the Tor browser and carefully copies in the URL. The landing page has a warning message: *We screen our drivers and are extremely selective. THIS EFFORT IS NOT LEGAL. You run the risk of arrest and prosecution.* Then a button: "APPLY TO DRIVE".

BETHANY
Well, now the law has changed, and I think it's worth asking what message you send when you don't accept a ruling by the Court, even if you or I may disagree with it. We've seen how fragile rule of law is in this--

Maggie appears at the door. Sara Jane closes her laptop.

SARA JANE
Maggie just came in, gotta go she seems upset, thanks for calling Mom, love you bye.

Sara Jane hangs up and looks at Maggie.

MAGGIE

I think we should try to find a room in one of the smaller properties people have bought out. I think that's where the good parties will be.

SARA JANE

That makes all the sense.

MAGGIE

I want to meet a guy on the beach, not in a hotel, and I don't want to have to tell him I'm staying at Breakers.

SARA JANE

God forbid.

MAGGIE

Does your mom think I'm a crying mess all the time?

SARA JANE

I think her words were "has done wonders for your emotional intelligence."

Maggie guffaws and leaves to make the change. Sara Jane looks at her protest sign, resting impotently against her dresser. *THIS IS VERY BAD*. She opens her laptop and clicks the button: "APPLY TO DRIVE".

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAYS LATER

Sara Jane walks back from class. She gets a call on Signal.

SARA JANE

(surreptitiously)

Yes? Yes, I am available now: can you give me five minutes to get to a private location? Okay, thanks.

Sara Jane hangs up and sprints for her dorm.

INT. SARA JANE'S DORM ROOM

Sara Jane is video conferencing on her phone with a Choice Access Network REPRESENTATIVE (female), who is on voice-only.

REPRESENTATIVE (O.S.)

That just about covers it. The last thing: we're having a hard time staffing volunteers for April 13th through the 21st. We have a lot of appointment availability and all--

Sara Jane's phone buzzes conspicuously.

REPRESENTATIVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Everything okay there?

SARA JANE

Sorry, it's just my mom. If I don't pick up, she texts.

REPRESENTATIVE (O.S.)

Okay then. I was saying that schools are on Spring Break that week so we're having a hard time finding drivers.

Sara Jane has pulled up her Google Calendar. The week in question is blocked by one nine-day event: **!!MYRTLE BEACH!!!**

REPRESENTATIVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You put down in the form that you are available any time but I see that it is GW's Spring Break and I wanted to confirm--

SARA JANE

I'm available. This is more important than Spring Break.

REPRESENTATIVE (O.S.)

To confirm: if offered trips during that week, you do commit to drive.

SARA JANE

Yes. Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE (O.S.)

Okay then. For obvious reasons, we are very protective of our passengers, so we only accept a small percentage of our applicants who volunteer to drive. We are running the background check and, IF you are selected, we will contact you. If not selected, you will not hear back from us or be able to contact us in any way, for our safety.

(MORE)

REPRESENTATIVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Same goes for if something goes wrong on the trip: you get pulled over, the clinic finds out you're not related, whatever. There's no safety net; we only schedule appointments and connect drivers with passengers. After that you're on your own.

SARA JANE

Understood.

Sara Jane hangs up the call. She calls Bethany back.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Hey, sorry, I was on the phone.

BETHANY

Oh. Well, I can call another time if you're busy.

SARA JANE

(conciliatory)

No, now's good, I'm not on the phone anymore. I was just explaining... What's up?

BETHANY

Well, your uncle's coming into town and I thought it might be a good chance to talk to him about private-sector opportunities for after school.

SARA JANE

I am not coming all the way up there to talk to Randy about jobs.

BETHANY

That's the thing: it's during your Spring Break, so you wouldn't miss any class.

SARA JANE

I am not coming home for Spring Break.

BETHANY

Not the whole time! Just the first weekend. You could go to Spring Break for a full week after.

SARA JANE

That's not how it works. You have to commit to the whole time, otherwise the rooms don't work out.

BETHANY

You know, since you brought up money...

SARA JANE

I did not.

BETHANY

After graduation, you'll find that life is much more expensive than you'd expect.

SARA JANE

I'm going to get a job! I told you NGOs don't hire until the summer.

BETHANY

Sweetie, NGOs don't hire at all. Their budgets have been slashed and burned. People don't give in a recession, and if you think government funding is going to causes you care about under this Congress...

SARA JANE

There are still NGOs.

BETHANY

It makes what-NGO-hiring-there-is extremely competitive. They're not looking for the right opinions; they're looking for the right *people*. To be effective.

SARA JANE

You're saying my principles are ineffective.

BETHANY

Sometimes we're more effective when we're willing to bend our principles.

SARA JANE

That sounds unethical.

BETHANY

Just think about it. Randy knows a lot of people who are hiring, even in this economy.

SARA JANE

I will think about it.

She won't. Sara Jane hangs up, then crumples onto her bed.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Ineffective.

Turning her head to the side, she sees her poster of Saint Jude. She focuses in on its subtitle: *Patron Saint of Hopeless Cases and Lost Causes*.

Well, shit. Is that what they think of her?

Her phone buzzes. Sara Jane bats it away. It buzzes again, for the same text. Sara Jane reluctantly checks it. It's a message on Signal: *Thank you for committing to drive. You have 5 matches. First match: You have been matched with a passenger with an appointment on Saturday 13 April 2024.*

Sara Jane jumps up, WHOOOPS and spikes her phone onto her bed. She reclaims it to put on the Red Hot Chili Peppers' "Hump de Bump" and does a victory dance around her tiny bedroom as the music blasts. The bedroom's confines become restricting, so she shimmies out into the dorm suite's common room, dancing on the cheap furniture in pure elation.

The door opens, and Maggie comes in from class. She drops her backpack and joins in. Maggie takes the dancing up to a whole different level. The girls hump the air and bump the furniture, until Maggie shouts over the music:

MAGGIE

GET READY FOR TWO HUNDRED SIXTEEN
STRAIGHT HOURS OF THIS IN MYRTLE.

It takes a moment for that sink in. When it does, Sara Jane stops dancing. Oblivious, Maggie keeps going.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

BY DAY SIX, SOMEONE MIGHT EVEN LET
YOU TOUCH A PLAYLIST.

Maggie realizes that Sara Jane has stopped dancing. Maggie stops dancing. She looks innocently at Sara Jane. Sara Jane's face is ashen: she looks very, very guilty.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
 (already heartbroken)
 What?

EXT. TOWNHOUSE ROW - DUSK, A WEEK OR SO LATER

Open-shirted frat bros in Vilebrequin trunks load a Mercedes-Benz G-Class with cases of shit vodka as giggling fellow-students in bikini tops and jean shorts strap an inflated swan to the roof.

All along the row, the scene is repeated. Two students hanging out windows write on the side of a townhouse in sidewalk chalk: "C U IN MYRTLE."

Sara Jane walks through these last dregs of Spring Break exodus in a short-sleeved blouse, well-cut slacks, and button pearls. This is her "weekend, but take me seriously" look.

A SORORITY GIRL in a sweatshirt and running shorts calls out:

SORORITY GIRL
 Sara Jane! Are you staying with
 Maggie?

Sara Jane looks over her shoulder as she gets to her car.

SARA JANE
 I'm not coming.

The sorority girl looks at her blankly.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
 I gotta do a thing. Solo mission.

Sara Jane unlocks her Ford Fusion hybrid and, with one last superior look at the Greek scene, gets in. As Sara Jane drives off, the sorority girl looks deeply perplexed. Where the hell else could one possibly be going?

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / I-95 - DARK

Sara Jane drives through lush green woods. Her Google Maps is in night-mode. Rather than some rockin' road trip soundtrack, she plays NPR podcasts off her phone:

STACEY VANEK SMITH (O.S.)
 Spring Break conjures up a lot
 images: beaches, keg stands, and...
 shall we say... *human connection*.
 (MORE)

STACEY VANEK SMITH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

But is this quintessentially
American tradition a local
nuisance... or a national blessing?
Today on The Indicator from Planet
Money, the economics of Spring--

Frowning, Sara Jane skips the episode.

TERRY GROSS (O.S.)

From W-H-Y-Y in Philadelphia, I'm
Terry Gross with Fresh Air. Today,
my interview with Caroline Criado-
Perez, feminist, activist, and...

Sara Jane almost smiles. Much better.

EXT. PARKING LOT OFF I-85 - NIGHT

Sara Jane pulls a car cover out of the trunk and stretches it
over the four corners of the car. Then she manages to crawl
under the cover into the car's back seat. It's an undignified
endeavor -- good thing no one's watching.

INT. SARA JANE'S CAR

Windows whited out by the car cover, Sara Jane is nodding off
when her phone rings. Annoyed, she looks at the name of the
caller. Her face softens. She picks up.

SARA JANE

You know, it's not normal to call
someone when you're mad at them.

MAGGIE

What's not normal is being blessed
with your first unrestricted Spring
Break your senior year and then
ditching it on principle.

SARA JANE

I'm not--

MAGGIE

Whatever. Did it work? Do you know
where you're going?

SARA JANE

Just the county so I could plan. I
get the address and stuff tomorrow.

She checks the time on her phone. It's 2:56 AM.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Well, *today*.

MAGGIE
But you'll-- JESUS! I SWEAR TO GOD!

SARA JANE
Maggie, are you driving?!

INTERCUT: BACKSEAT OF A BMW X5

Maggie is in the back right seat next to two sleeping college students and behind a third. A male college student DRIVER pilots the vehicle through the darkness.

MAGGIE
No, they wouldn't fucking let me and now this maniac is changing lanes literally every two minutes and we're going to sideswipe some--

SARA JANE
Why wouldn't they let you drive?

MAGGIE
Patriarchal toxic masculinity bullshit. It's the 20s everywhere but GW, apparently. I stayed dead sober all day so I'd be the best option.

DRIVER
I'm sober.

MAGGIE
You weren't at noon!

DRIVER
I had a nap.

SARA JANE
So tell him you'll take a turn.

MAGGIE
I did he said no.

SARA JANE
Insist.

MAGGIE

Then we get to Myrtle and all anyone can talk about is what a psycho feminazi I am. I don't get off on that. Unlike some people.

DRIVER

It's my car.

MAGGIE

(to driver, but really to Sara Jane)

The car I *intended* to be in is busy helping the "more deserving."

SARA JANE

How are they not more deserving?!

The car abruptly changes lanes, cutting off another car.

MAGGIE

(at the driver)

MOTHERFUCKER!

SARA JANE

(a little concerned now)

Is there a boy in the car you trust more to drive? Maybe he'd switch with someone who's not you.

MAGGIE

You know who could be driving me? You. But no, you had to go save some preggo teenager from no-abortion-land.

SARA JANE

Maggie.

MAGGIE

Oh, Zack's good with women controlling our bodies just not cars.

DRIVER

Just not *my* car.

MAGGIE

Pray for me.

Maggie hangs up. Sara Jane looks at the phone. Nothing she can do about that. She goes back to sleep.

EXT. I-85 - PRE-DAWN

Car cover stowed, Sara Jane is back on the road.

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / FIVE FORKS, SOUTH CAROLINA - DAWN

Sara Jane pulls up to a nice house in a suburb of Greenville. She consults her phone. A Signal message that looks like it was composed by a computer reads, in part:

*ADDRESS: Laurel Street & North Honey Lane Five Forks SC 29681
ADD'L DIRECTIONS: turn L on N Honey park under dogwood*

Sara Jane turns left on North Honey Lane and pulls over under the dogwood tree.

In the shade stands a girl (14, white), who is dressed like Billie Eilish, which is to say: like a goth girl who ate a sneakerhead. Vaguely culturally-appropriative oversized streetwear, dyed green-black hair, layered jewelry with spikes and thorns.

Since, for her own safety, we don't know her name, we'll call her BILLIE.

Sara Jane scrolls down on the Signal text:

*AGE: 14 DESCRIPTION: 5'4", black hair, green hair
TRIMESTER: 2*

Definitely her.

Billie is likewise checking her phone, then looking at Sara Jane's license plate, like you would for an Uber pickup. Knowing that the plate will match, Sara Jane turns off her podcast and smiles invitingly. Billie avoids eye contact, opens the passenger door, gets in.

SARA JANE

Hi!

(beat - no hi back)

I'm Sara Jane.

BILLIE

Cool.

SARA JANE

I guess we should head out. You buckled up?

Billie is not. She rolls her eyes and starts to fasten her seat belt. Warmth didn't work, so Sara Jane tries her best "cool older mentor" voice:

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

It's not just for safety -- you know, both Carolinas are primary seat belt states, so they can pull you over just for that.

BILLIE

I know, I live here.

SARA JANE

Right. Um, lap belt lower. May I?

BILLIE

No.

As Billie adjusts the lap belt, she pulls her oversized streetwear tunic out over it.

SARA JANE

Okay.

Sara Jane is clearly bothered by her inability to see whether the lap belt is positioned safely.

BILLIE

It's fine. "My body my choice."

This shibboleth, even spoken in Billie's bitter, sardonic tone, jolts Sara Jane out of her anxiety.

SARA JANE

Okay, let's get out of here.

She types the address of a DC Planned Parenthood (1225 4th St. NE) into her car's GPS navigation system and pulls out from under the dogwood. They begin to drive out of the neighborhood.

Buried in her phone, Billie types furiously. Sara Jane looks over, silently asking what's up. Billie feels her gaze.

BILLIE

What?

SARA JANE

Nothing.

They make their way to the highway.

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / I-85

BILLIE

We're on 85 for a while right?

SARA JANE
About seven hours, until Richmond.

BILLIE
Will we go through Grover?

SARA JANE
I dunno, is it on I-85?

Billie looks out the window, straining to see the signs, and then appears to look up the exits on her phone.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Why Grover?

No response.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
What's in Grover?

BILLIE
Nothing, don't worry about it.

Sara Jane glances to see Billie zooming in on Google Maps, tracking where they are. Billie clocks her glance and moves her phone to where Sara Jane can't see it, sending texts from an awkward angle on her right side. Sara Jane takes a deep breath and focuses on the road.

As they pass the junction with Route 29, Billie perks up. She scans her surroundings, alert. When she sees the *Welcome to North Carolina* sign, Billie sends one last hidden text, then puts down her phone and stares straight ahead.

Sara Jane continues to drive.

SARA JANE
Do you have music on your phone
that you like? I can pull the aux
out of my--

Sara Jane pulls the aux out and offers it to Billie. In the newfound silence, she can hear a lone trill far, far behind them: **a police siren.**

Sara Jane looks at Billie. Billie looks smug as hell. It's the look of someone who knows you lost and is waiting with delicious anticipation to watch you find out. Billie plugs in her phone. Bruce Springsteen's "State Trooper" swells ominously as the siren approaches. She had it cued up.

Instinct taking over, Sara Jane pulls sharply onto an exit she nearly passed, taking the off-ramp at screeching full speed, then pulls a hard left to cross over the freeway.

On the straightaway over the freeway, Sara Jane yanks the aux cord like a leash to grab Billie's phone. The car swerves dangerously toward the edge of the overpass as Billie struggles in surprise--

BILLIE
The fu---?

-- but Sara Jane comes up with the phone, disconnects it, and drops it into the driver's door pocket, out of reach.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Like that's going to help you!

SARA JANE
What the hell did you do?

BILLIE
They already have your plates,
fucktard.

Sara Jane stops the car at the end of the overpass, and Billie starts to undo her seatbelt to jump out of the car.

Seeing this, Sara Jane accelerates and pulls onto an access road running parallel to the highway going the other direction. Billie holds on tight.

SARA JANE
How do they have my plates?

BILLIE
I texted them in as soon as you
crossed state lines with a minor.

SARA JANE
Why?!

BILLIE
So they'd arrest you.

SARA JANE
You signed up for a ride!

BILLIE
An *illegal* ride to *kill a baby*!

SARA JANE
Jesus. You're--

BILLIE
An undercover pro-life activist who
just entrapped you into kidnapping.

Sara Jane floors the gas, kicking up a trail of dust.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Which is a federal crime, for the
record.

This sinks in. Sara Jane slows down. The dust dies. But they're still going too fast for Billie to bail.

The cop car is rapidly approaching, going the other direction on the highway. He doesn't seem to have spotted them. Yet.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
The safest thing to do is
surrender.

The cop car whizzes by.

SARA JANE
So you don't need an abortion.

BILLIE
NO!

SARA JANE
Ok.

BILLIE
Do you realize how offensive that
is? You just asked me if I need to
commit baby murder.

SARA JANE
So I'll just take you back home.

BILLIE
Great idea.

Sara Jane turns the car, but instead of merging back onto the highway, she cuts over it again and re-enters the freeway headed north, safely far behind the police car.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Home's the other way.

SARA JANE
I think you told the cops where you
live. So there are probably cops
there waiting for me.

BILLIE
What? Noooo. That's craaaazy.

SARA JANE

You don't have to do this, you know. Whoever put you up to it, we can find a way to get you out.

BILLIE

Whoever put me up to it?

SARA JANE

Even if they're an adult, someone you trust, a pastor-- it's really not okay to use you like this. I know it's a heavy thing to hear--

BILLIE

Wow. Fucking *listen* to yourself.

Up ahead, a shipping truck merges left from behind another shipping truck and drives alongside it.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

You literally think I'm some sort of puppet.

But instead of passing the other truck, the merged truck coasts beside it.

SARA JANE

(about the trucks)

That's not normal.

BILLIE

No, no fourteen-year-old girl could *possibly* hold an ethical conviction!

SARA JANE

(to Billie)

I didn't say that!

BILLIE

And, even if she did, planning political action based on that conviction is out of the question.

SARA JANE

(to herself)

It's a rolling roadblock. They're on the police radio.

BILLIE

No way she could have looked around at where our country is headed, thought "this is fundamentally not okay no matter what the law is," and decided to DO SOMETHING about it.

SARA JANE

Shut up for a sec.

There it is: another siren. Behind them.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

That's bad.

BILLIE

You thought there'd be just one cop? Have you never seen one of these on YouTube? It's over.

SARA JANE

It's over when there's a helicopter.

Both girls look out the window at the sky. Comedic timing demands there be a helicopter. But... the skies are clear.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

It's not over.

As the siren nears, Sara Jane approaches the right-hand shoulder, gauging an attempt to get around the trucks.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Do you think we can make it?

BILLIE

The fuck do you mean "we"?

SARA JANE

We, the two of us, in this car.

BILLIE

No!

SARA JANE

Alright.

Sara Jane pulls off the highway and onto the access road. The police car isn't far behind.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
I don't understand how this happened. Did they not vet you?

BILLIE
Oh, they did. But I'm actually a fourteen-year-old girl.

SARA JANE
So you posed as a legitimate beneficiary.

BILLIE
To infiltrate and bring down the network.

SARA JANE
And keep everyone who actually needs a ride to an abortion from getting one.

BILLIE
Bingo.

A beat.

SARA JANE
Fuck. You.

For the first time, we see Sara Jane **angry**. She is balls-to-the-wall pissed. The new police car, now close on their tail, ups its siren to a greater level of urgency.

Sara Jane pulls off the access road and drives through a dusty patch. The dust cakes her car, obscuring her plates. Then she cuts into a field bordered on all sides by roads.

BILLIE
They see you. It's fucking flat.

Behind her, the cop car makes a call: it'll be faster to go around the field and cut her off on the other side. Sara Jane rummages in her center console, looking for something. She comes up with a bandana and a lighter. She rolls down her window, lights the bandana on fire, and drops the flaming bandana out the window.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Holy shit.

As the field begins to smoke within the firebreaks formed by the roads, Sara Jane guns it. She exits the field under smoke screen, chooses a direction, and drives.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

There's nowhere for you to go. You are three states away from anywhere they support baby-killing, and you can't go to D.C. 'cuz I told them that's where you're headed. Look around. No ivory tower libs, no coastal elites. You're trapped.

Sara Jane looks around, apprehensive. Billie's right. Sara Jane makes a pinching motion on her maps app, zooming out: pinch... pinch... on the third pinch, she sees something. An epiphany dawns triumphantly over her face.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

What. Where are we going?

EXT. THE COAST

On the beach: Maggie, in a perky triangle bikini top and extremely short jean shorts, is piggy-back riding around the beach on the back of the bro whose driving she so abhorred. Her phone, in her back pocket, buzzes for an incoming call.

MAGGIE

(laughing)

My butt is ringing! Lemme down, lemme down.

The driver doesn't comply, so Maggie wriggles, eventually spilling into the sand. She staggers up, still laughing, and checks who's calling.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

It's Sara Jane.

Suddenly stern, Maggie straightens her posture, as if this will help her sound sober on the phone. She accepts the call.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I made it here alive. No thanks to you.

INTERCUT: INT. SARA JANE'S CAR

Sara Jane is back on a paved road. Billie tries to grab the phone as Sara Jane talks to Maggie.

SARA JANE

Great news.

MAGGIE

You changed your mind and you're coming to Myrtle.

SARA JANE

I changed my mind and I'm coming to Myrtle.

MAGGIE

Really???!

SARA JANE

Literally driving in your direction.

All trace of Maggie's anger is instantly obliterated. She is beyond thrilled. She hops up and down repeatedly.

MAGGIE

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!! YAY YAY YAY YAY!

SARA JANE

Is it awesome there?

MAGGIE

It is so awesome here.

BILLIE

FUCK YOU WHOEVER YOU ARE.

MAGGIE

Who's that?

SARA JANE

What?

BILLIE

CALL THE POLICE!

SARA JANE

Experimental album. Very weird. This track is called "Pygmy Aunt Lydia." You like it?

BILLIE

VERY FUCKING FUNNY.

SARA JANE

Send me a pin, okay? Somewhere I can leave the car.

MAGGIE

Okay. Just to warn you, I'm a tiny bit drunk, but I will try to be sober enough to do that.

SARA JANE

I'm four hours away.

MAGGIE

I said I'll TRY.

INT. SARA JANE'S CAR, I-385

Sara Jane has moved her phone to her left-hand side, safely out of Billie's reach from the passenger seat. Billie's is still in the door.

BILLIE

What if you take the SIM out and then give it to me?

SARA JANE

No.

BILLIE

But then I literally cannot make calls.

SARA JANE

No.

BILLIE

What if--

SARA JANE

No.

BILLIE

Are you going to say anything but "No"?

SARA JANE

No.

BILLIE

Are you going to say "No" next?

SARA JANE

No.

BILLIE

HAH.

SARA JANE
Ten points for Slytherin.

BILLIE
What I want to do is use offline
maps to find a good place for you
to drop me off.

SARA JANE
I'm not dropping you off.

BILLIE
What's the alternative?!

SARA JANE
I drop you off, you call the
police, the police know I'm going
to Myrtle.

BILLIE
You're the one who said where
you're going!

SARA JANE
I know. That was a mistake.

BILLIE
So now I'm trapped in a speeding
car because YOU are bad at this.

SARA JANE
No, you're in a speeding car
because YOU decided to entrap me in
an attempt to ruin other women's
lives.

BILLIE
A baby doesn't ruin your life.
Being killed before you're born
ruins your life.

SARA JANE
Not being conceived ruins your
life. Your parents not meeting
ruins your life. Your ethical
argument is based on an arbitrary
point before viability. I'm not
going to debate you.

BILLIE
Because you can't!

SARA JANE

Because it's not worth it. You literally are not worth the effort.

BILLIE

But the person you thought I was when you picked me up, she was?

SARA JANE

Yes. I preferred her.

BILLIE

I have to pee.

SARA JANE

Go ahead.

Bluff called, Billie has no intention of wetting herself.

BILLIE

You'll have to stop for gas.

Sara Jane looks at her gas meter.

SARA JANE

We've got a while. It's a hybrid.

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / I-20 E

Sara Jane glances at the gas meter. Getting down there. But she's had time to formulate a plan.

SARA JANE

So, would you say you consider yourself a feminist?

BILLIE

UGH.

SARA JANE

I realize that, regionally, the term has come under a smear campaign.

BILLIE

"Regionally?"

SARA JANE

Dolly Parton disavows it, which is a whole pile of bullshit.

BILLIE

Get her name out of your mouth.

SARA JANE

I'm just curious what it means to
someone like you.

Billie turns and speaks directly to Sara Jane.

BILLIE

No, I'm not a feminist, because I'm
not a victim, and I don't think
women are victims, and I think
telling everyone that we can't
protect ourselves and we need
society to change around us is
actually counterproductive to the--

As Billie declaims, Sara Jane very subtly edges the car onto
an off ramp without slowing down. Billie is too wrapped up to
notice, until they take a sharp turn. As the car swings
around, Billie realizes that something is up. Sara Jane blows
past the gas station, BREAKS to a sudden stop, throws the car
in park as she unclicks her seat belt, and, keys in hand,
springs out the door.

Caught off guard, Billie fumbles manically at her seat belt.
Sara Jane runs around the front of the car, opens the back
seat door, and catches Billie as she darts out.

Sara Jane pulls Billie around, fiddles with something on the
edge of the door with her key, and shoves Billie into the
back seat before she slams the door shut.

Billie immediately tries to open the door, but by the time
she realizes it's child locked, Sara Jane has darted around
the back of the car and child-locked the other back door.

Billie screams at Sara Jane through the rear window:

BILLIE (CONT'D)

You are not a feminist! You know
that?! I bet you think you're a
feminist but you couldn't do this
to me if you didn't hate females!

Sara Jane pops the trunk, revealing poster board, markers,
and a set of sturdy wooden dowels like the one from her
protest sign. Sara Jane grabs a dowel, slams the trunk
closed, and returns to the open front door of the car.

Billie pulls on the inside door handles and bangs on the
windows to no avail. Just as Billie thinks to climb up front,
Sara Jane wedges the dowel between the headrests of the two
front seats, barring her way.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

I don't know if it's because I'm younger than you or because I'm cooler than you or because I think differently than you do--

SARA JANE

It's that one.

Sara Jane shuts the passenger door, muffling Billie. She surveys her handiwork. She did a good job. She gets back in the car.

EXT. GAS STATION

Sara Jane pumps gas as Billie bangs on the windows. Sara Jane checks her phone: a text on Signal and nine texts from Mom.

She opens the Signal text: *Your pickup has not been confirmed. Please ask your passenger to confirm your pickup.*

Sara Jane calls the number. Nothing. It disconnects immediately. She texts back: *My passenger is an anti-choice activist who called the police. They have my plates. Please instruct.*

Sara Jane looks at the texts from Bethany. The first one is about Uncle Randy. She types and sends without reading the rest: *Hi. Busy. Talk soon.* Immediately, a call from Bethany comes in. Sara Jane picks up, then looks like she regrets it.

BETHANY (O.S.)

Did you read my messages?

SARA JANE

Yeah, tell Uncle Randy I say hi.

BETHANY

He has some very interesting thoughts on career paths.

SARA JANE

Mom, this is not a great time.

BETHANY

Well that's why I called. I thought we could schedule a FaceTime--

SARA JANE

I gotta go.

Sara Jane hangs up. Bethany immediately calls back. Sara Jane declines the call. She sees a new Signal message: *This automated system does not recognize your response.*

She finishes gassing up the car.

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / I-20 E

Back on the road. Billie sits sullenly in the back seat. NPR plays very loudly from Sara Jane's now safely out-of-reach phone. They shout over the program:

BILLIE
YOU SAID YOU CHANGED YOUR MIND.
THAT'S A LIE. I LIED TO AN ENEMY.
YOU LIED TO YOUR BEST FRIEND.

SARA JANE
YOU'RE MAKING A FALSE EQUIVALENCE.

BILLIE
IT'S NOT EQUIVALENT. WHAT YOU DID
WAS WAY WORSE.

SARA JANE
YOUR BRAIN IS BROKEN.

BILLIE
WHAT?

Sara Jane turns up NPR even louder.

EXT. MYRTLE BEACH ALLEY - HOURS LATER

Maggie teeters in a generous parking spot behind a nondescript building. A jacked-up 4x4 pickup spots the opening and lightly beeps at Maggie, on the assumption that she is drunkenly loitering.

MAGGIE
Taken! Move along!

Maggie isn't drunkenly loitering. She is drunkenly guarding. Huge difference. Mostly in ferocity. The pickup beeps again. Maggie makes wild shoo-ing motions with her arms.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I'm saving this spot!

The pickup beeps one last time, but Maggie stamps around in a circle, clearly more willing to be run over than to budge.

Grudgingly, the pickup moves along. The SUV behind it follows suit. Maggie waves it along.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
That's right! Plenty more spots
somewhere else.

As Maggie is yelling after the interlopers, another car beeps at her. She spins to verbally attack it--

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Were you not--!

-- it's Sara Jane's car, with Billie in the back seat.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Finally!

Sara Jane waves Maggie out of the spot, and this time she steps aside. Sara Jane parallels expertly, then gets out of the car. Maggie barrels at her and hugs her tight. Throughout the girls' conversation, Billie bangs on and makes faces against the window of the car.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
What the fuck is happening. Who is
that?

SARA JANE
That's the girl I was supposed to
drive.

MAGGIE
Why is she still here?

SARA JANE
She heard me tell you where I was
going.

MAGGIE
Okay. And we've imprisoned her
because?

SARA JANE
She's some sort of baby zealot who
signed up just to get me arrested.
She called the cops.

MAGGIE
You're fucking me.

SARA JANE
Not an expression.

Maggie looks at Billie.

MAGGIE

No. Uh-uh. This is not part of Spring Break.

SARA JANE

The minute she has access to a phone, the police will know where to find me.

MAGGIE

Imagine a set containing all things Spring Break. THAT is not an element of the set.

SARA JANE

I just need some time to think through how this doesn't completely blow up my life.

MAGGIE

I'm Sara Jane, I'm down for the cause. What's that, Maggie? You *told* me I could get arrested?

SARA JANE

For helping someone access an abortion! Not for kidnapping a pint-sized Phyllis Schlafly.

MAGGIE

Oh, so it's only okay to get arrested for something noble.

SARA JANE

Uh, yeah.

MAGGIE

What's your plan? Is there a plan?

SARA JANE

We do Spring Break. I figure this out. Everybody's happy.

MAGGIE

We do Spring Break. With her.

SARA JANE

Babysitting someone with impaired judgment is an element of Spring Break.

MAGGIE

That's supposed to be me. I am the one we babysit during Spring Break.

SARA JANE

You have excellent judgment!

MAGGIE

I am drunk off my ass, Sara Jane!

SARA JANE

And yet look at this parking spot!

A beat. Maggie looks Sara Jane up and down.

MAGGIE

Did you bring a swimsuit?

SARA JANE

For my drive to western South Carolina? No.

MAGGIE

Well, you can't wear that here.

SARA JANE

I'm not gonna go in the water.

Maggie looks at her. Sara Jane takes off her pearls. Good enough? Maggie's face answers: Nope.

Maggie gestures Sara Jane toward a nearby tourist shack. It is indistinguishable from the thousands of crappy tourist shacks that populate beachfronts from Venice to Key West. Sara Jane might as well be facing the gallows.

MAGGIE

Gimme the keys. I'll crack the window.

(off Sara Jane's look)

So she can breathe.

Sara Jane tosses her the keys. Resolutely, she walks toward the shack.

INT. TOURIST SHACK

Sara Jane enters the shack and examines the wall behind the checkout counter. It's hung floor to ceiling with row upon row of clear plastic torso mannequin reliefs boasting a wide variety of garishly colored and cheaply made bikinis, uniform only in their extreme skimpiness. Sara Jane is appalled.

The SHOPKEEPER follows her gaze to a bikini near the top on the far right. It's patterned in the Confederate Flag.

SHOPKEEPER
You want that one?

SARA JANE
Tell me you don't still sell any of those.

SHOPKEEPER
I don't still sell any of those.

SARA JANE
Why do you even have that up?

SHOPKEEPER
People still buy it sometimes.

Sara Jane is not amused.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
Look, if you don't like that one I got others. Look, here.

He uses a hook to pull down a black bikini printed on each breast with a seven-pronged marijuana leaf.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
Everyone likes this one.

He clocks her reaction.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
No?

He stares at her hard.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
I know what you want. I keep this one special. Or everyone would be wearing it.

He pulls from behind the counter a high-waisted thong printed with the words *DO NOT GRAB* above a downward arrow.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
Eh? You hate the flag one, you like this one.

Sara Jane takes a long look at the bikinis and scowls.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Montage as Sara Jane tries on bikinis over her sensible, sporty underwear (as is hygienic and the rule):

- A neon-yellow bottom's left side is entirely straps.

Sara Jane looks at herself in the mirror. Concerned.

- A firetruck red top covers only the top half of her breasts.

Sara Jane looks at herself in the mirror. Creeped out.

- A purported one-piece slices from her ribs to her crotch, leaving her sides, hips, and bikini line exposed.

Sara Jane looks at herself in the mirror. Angry.

INT. TOURIST SHACK

Sara Jane returns to the shopkeeper empty-handed, in her original clothing.

SARA JANE

Do you have any coverups?

The shopkeeper comes out from behind the counter and shows her to a rack of giant oversized t-shirts printed with ideal beach bodies.

EXT. MYRTLE BEACH ALLEY

Billie screams at Maggie unintelligibly through the barely-cracked backseat window.

Holding her old clothes under her arm, Sara Jane walks out wearing a dress-length t-shirt printed with the ideal beach body... of a man. Maggie once-overs her 'fit.

MAGGIE

Well done. Totally inconspicuous.

Sara Jane heads to put her old clothes in the trunk. Maggie grabs them, stomps over to a trash can, and throws them out.

SARA JANE

Hey!

MAGGIE

They were suspicious.

SARA JANE

Very sophisticated hiding spot. I'm sure no one will think to search the trashcan next to my car.

A drunken spring breaker wanders up to the same trash can and pukes into it.

MAGGIE

I'm a genius.

Sara Jane takes the car cover out of her trunk and starts to fit it over the rear of the Fusion.

SARA JANE

She called in my plates, so.

MAGGIE

You're gonna leave her in there with it covered?

SARA JANE

Serves her right.

(beat)

Of course I'm not.

(beat)

Her screams would draw attention to the car.

Maggie's satisfied.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

You hold her while I put the cover on. She might try to kick you or something. Be ready.

Sara Jane opens the door and Maggie catches Billie by the arm as she tries to rush past her.

BILLIE

HELP! HELP! POLICE! HELP!

People driving by see two girls play-fighting. None stop.

Maggie struggles to hold Billie as Sara Jane finishes pulling on the car cover. By the time Sara Jane is done, Maggie has hold of Billie's wrists behind Billie's back. Sara Jane steps out from behind the car, and Billie stops struggling to look at her wardrobe change.

It's one thing to kidnap her. It's another to bite her style.

EXT. BOARDWALK

Sara Jane and Maggie each have death-grip hold of one of Billie's arms, linked in a warped Wizard of Oz silhouette.

In front of them rushes the boardwalk, thick with tourists and bicycles. Beyond it, obscured by the bustle: a broad stretch of sand and, further, the ocean.

Sara Jane and Maggie each take a deep breath and walk forward into the Frogger nightmare before them.

- A bike almost kills them.

- A herd of drunken partiers in matching T-shirts move at the pace of a beached whale.

- A man on rollerblades swivels by at breakneck speed.

Sara Jane reaches the other side and takes a concerted first step across the threshold. Then she pulls Billie and Maggie forward. They stop and catch their breath.

Ahead of them is a Hieronymus Bosch dystopian wonderland of Spring Break, stretching as far as the eye can see.

EXT. BEACH

With Myrtle's titular beach in front of them, Maggie spots her and Sara Jane's friends: a knot of familiars within the balkanized landscape. Maggie waves her free hand and yells:

MAGGIE
LOOK WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN!

Maggie's driver friend waves at them. He's playing Edward Forty-Hands, each hand taped to a plastic-bottle forty. Struck with inspiration, Maggie runs toward the group, leaving Sara Jane to double her grip on Billie.

SARA JANE
Maggie the Cat's a literary figure,
so that was very clever.

BILLIE
I know.

Sara Jane does a double-take.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
I love that movie.

SARA JANE
It's a play.

BILLIE
Okay, but the movie's good.

SARA JANE
I'd have cast a blonde.
(off Billie's look)
We agree the text is amazing.

BILLIE
It's weird watching old stuff where
queerness was this whole problem.

SARA JANE
You're not homophobic?

BILLIE
Why would I be homophobic?

Sara Jane just stares at her.

Maggie returns, somehow already much drunker. She holds a forty and a roll of tape.

MAGGIE
Both of you, hold this.

She shoves a forty into their hands and tapes Sara Jane's left and Billie's right hand to it, effectively handcuffing them together.

The driver appears behind her with two more forties and helps Maggie tape them to Sara Jane and Billie's remaining hands. Maggie pulls out her phone and snaps photos of the two girls.

SARA JANE
Maggie.

MAGGIE
Leverage.

BILLIE
I'm not drinking ANY of this.

MAGGIE
Then Sara Jane has to drink all
three. Spring Break!!! Wooooooo!!!

Maggie is led back to the group by the driver.

Billie jangles her wrists in an attempt to wriggle out of the tape, which proves impossible.

SARA JANE
You're spilling.

BILLIE
You're an accessory to murder.

SARA JANE
If you spill, they won't undo the
tape. That's how the game works.
(off Billie's stare)
They're very strict about it.

Billie SLOSHES malt into Sara Jane's face.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Ugh!!!

BILLIE
I don't play games with kidnappers.

Sara Jane stands with her eyes shut, unable to wipe the malt out of her eyes with her fortified hands.

SARA JANE
Oh, I'm sorry. Are we here because
of MY insane deception?

BILLIE
Covert action.

Billie tries to make a break for it, dragging blinded Sara Jane forward. Sara Jane sits down hard in the sand, and Billie can't make any progress against her anchor.

Sara Jane blinks the malt out of her eyes and SLOSHES malt at Billie. Billie dodges most of it, then smiles triumphantly. Sara Jane stands up and slowly pours out all her remaining malt. Then she BOPS Billie on the head with the empty.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Ow!

Unclear if it actually hurt. It is plastic.

SARA JANE
Nothing you can do. If you hit me
back it's a game.

Billie whacks at Sara Jane, but Sara Jane parries. A beat of tension... then... they laugh. Billie strikes, lands one, but Sara Jane is quick on the response-- the two duel with their empty forties: bop BLOCK bop bop WHIFF! Billie squeals... Sara Jane takes advantage of her longer arms... as they spar:

BILLIE
Maggie the Cat would be pro-life.

SARA JANE
Absolutely not.

BILLIE
Her whole thing is having children
is the source of our power.

SARA JANE
In 1950s Mississippi. Which was
fucked.

BILLIE
And now's not fucked?

Sara Jane does another double take. Billie lands a bop.

SARA JANE
It doesn't have to be.

Maggie reappears with scissors, speaks to Billie.

MAGGIE
Did she finish them?

BILLIE
Yup. All three. Right?

Sara Jane reacts to this new confederacy, then yes-and:

SARA JANE
(slurring)
All by my self. No help from YOU!

MAGGIE
OH my gawd did she have to feed you
the last one??

Billie demonstrates how she put her left-hand forty to Sara Jane's mouth. Sara Jane is too tall: she has to kneel to make it plausible. Maggie takes a pic.

SARA JANE
You have to stop that.

MAGGIE
It's exculpatory!

Sara Jane stays kneeling and looks at Billie.

BILLIE
So?

Billie holds up her hand taped to Sara Jane's and the forty.

SARA JANE

No way.

BILLIE

Where am I gonna go? I don't have a car or a phone or know anyone here. I'm fourteen around piles of college students there's probably predators everywhere. You're the devil I know.

Maggie looks at Sara Jane. Sara Jane gives her the non-verbal OK. Maggie cuts the tape holding the two girls together.

The moment she's free, Billie **bolts**.

SARA JANE

Fuuuuuuuuuck.

Maggie helps Sara Jane to her feet, and they both sprint after Billie.

MAGGIE

What just happened?

SARA JANE

She likes Tennessee Williams.

MAGGIE

What?

Sara Jane tears the forty from her remaining hand and blatantly litters.

Billie's excessive jewelry thumps against her collarbone. Running on dry sand is hard, and she looks a little off-balance. Maggie and Sara Jane give chase.

Sara Jane gets out ahead of Billie. Sara Jane drives her inland... where Maggie is waiting.

Maggie catches Billie, and Sara Jane quickly helps to restrain her, both aided by the fact that Billie seems direly unwilling to fall forward. She and Maggie each have Billie by the upper arm. Everyone's out of breath:

BILLIE

FUCK you.

MAGGIE

Now what?

SARA JANE

We have to un-brainwash her. That's the only way to neutralize the threat.

MAGGIE

Like talk to her until she sees reason.

SARA JANE

It's the only path forward. That I can think of.

BILLIE

You fucking megalomaniacal--

Billie starts struggling again.

MAGGIE

(to Sara Jane)

You know, for a minute I thought maybe this could be an adventure, like a mission we could do together. Like I was not ready to drop everything and man the trenches, but here you were, pushing me in and maybe it would be fun.

SARA JANE

And you no longer feel that way.

MAGGIE

No!

Sara Jane scans the beach.

SARA JANE

We just need her to hold still.

Sees a solution thirty feet away.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Come on.

Sara Jane leads them to a five-foot hole in the sand being dug by two DRUNK GUYS. Sara Jane shoots Maggie a look: drunk guys are her portfolio.

MAGGIE

Hi. We have an emergency.

EXT. SAME - MINUTES LATER

Billie is buried in sand up to her neck. Sara Jane and Maggie stand over her.

SARA JANE

You're full of shit. Every time I have a period, that's an egg that *could* have become a baby! Whoosh! Flush! Down the toilet! I've been fertile for six years times twelve cycles that's--

BILLIE

Your period eggs aren't fertilized!

SARA JANE

So one cell is okay to flush down the toilet but two cells... no, *that's* a sacred human life.

BILLIE

A fertilized egg is still one cell. But now it has the baby's DNA.

The edge of a wave slides up the sand... comes within a foot of Billie's head...

SARA JANE

So you have one cell that could -- given some luck and 24 weeks developing in a womb -- become a baby.

... the wave stops! ... then recedes. Billie can just see it out of the corner of her eye.

BILLIE

A cell that's fixed as to who it becomes.

SARA JANE

No. Identical twins. One cell can become two babies, so it's not fixed. Unless you think identical twins are the same baby.

BILLIE

Maybe they are until they aren't.

SARA JANE

So when does that happen? When they're born?

(MORE)

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

They're the same person inside but once they leave the womb they're not? What about when only one fetus survives? Definitely not the same person then.

Another wave creeps up... closer... closer... it comes within inches of Billie's neck...

BILLIE

Right after the egg splits!

... and recedes.

SARA JANE

So it wasn't a specific baby before it split.

BILLIE

It was! You are totally off topic!

SARA JANE

No, it's your whole argument. You say that fertilization makes a specific baby, but I've just proved that it doesn't. It's way more nuanced than that, and when you decide a fetus is a baby is always on some level an arbitrary bright line that reflects your own value judgments on the effects of that choice.

As Sara Jane speaks, a third wave slides towards Billie. Just as Sara Jane finishes, the wave SMACKS Billie's neck, spraying her with salt water. As Billie SPUTTERS and the wave recedes, a beach ball descends from the heavens and BONKS her on the head.

BILLIE

Nothing you say could justify ending a human life.

SARA JANE

I can't understand how you can be exposed to valid arguments and still hold opinions that are so incredibly wrong!

MAGGIE

We are not going to solve abortion right now.

SARA JANE

Were you not listening? I just solved it.

MAGGIE

She wants the law to protect fertilized eggs, you want the law to respect people's control over their own bodies. We can't have both. You disagree on which is more important.

SARA JANE

Okay so you were listening.

MAGGIE

And I do not want to be! I want to be winning an eighth in a wheelbarrow race!

Maggie sits down in front of Billie's head.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Look. I'm not gonna convince you your beliefs are wrong.

SARA JANE

Even though they are.

MAGGIE

Even though they are. But can we come to some sort of cease fire here? She was literally trying to help you!

BILLIE

And she ended up burying me and my unborn child under 80 pounds of sand.

SARA JANE

Well, you, anyway.

BILLIE

Me and my fetus then! What is it with you people and your words? You have buried me and my unborn fetus under 80 pounds of sand.

Neither Sara Jane nor Maggie is certain she heard correctly.

SARA JANE

You're actually pregnant?

BILLIE
I AM ACTUALLY PREGNANT!

Sara Jane and Maggie exchange a look. Frantically, they start digging Billie out with their hands. As they dig:

MAGGIE
(to Sara Jane)
You said she was faking.

SARA JANE
(to Billie)
You said you didn't need an abortion!

BILLIE
I don't need an abortion!

MAGGIE
You are a child! Of course you need an abortion!

SARA JANE
How did you become pregnant?

BILLIE
Completely none of your business.

SARA JANE
Not if you couldn't consent.

BILLIE
Oh, so now the law gets to tell me what I can do with my body.

SARA JANE
I'm not talking about the law.

BILLIE
Seems like a legal question.

SARA JANE
Was the father in a position of power over you?

BILLIE
I did this myself. Like Juno.

MAGGIE
You implausibly jumped Michael Cera before resolving all confusion by coming out as gay?

BILLIE

No, I used a syringe. I don't think you watched that movie right.

MAGGIE

I don't think *you* watched that movie right.

SARA JANE

What you're saying is you got pregnant on purpose.

By this point, Billie is mostly uncovered. She emerges from the sand like a swamp monster to speak her coda:

BILLIE

I got pregnant on principle.

Free of the pit, Billie throws sand in Sara Jane and Maggie's faces and bolts again. This time, the girls catch her before she can get anywhere. Maggie holds Billie's arms behind her back as Sara Jane faces her. Sara Jane is furious.

SARA JANE

Maggie's right: I don't give a shit what you think or how you got pregnant or whether or not you end up okay.

BILLIE

You do or else you wouldn't have applied to drive. Your mistake was assuming that everyone thinks like you.

SARA JANE

Wrong. There are literally thousands of people who have been placed in a terrible position by your idiocy. They deserve help. They deserve to end up okay.

BILLIE

And I don't?

SARA JANE

No. I would never have chosen to help you.

BILLIE

Not if I were in mortal danger?

SARA JANE

I would watch you drown.

Billie glares at Sara Jane and hooks her foot back behind Maggie's ankle and yanks. Thrown off balance, Maggie lets go of Billie so as not to drag her pregnant body down as Maggie falls on her ass. Sara Jane darts to help Maggie and yells after Billie:

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

That's right! Get outta here! You deranged fucking coward.

Sara Jane extends a hand and pulls Maggie up.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

You okay?

MAGGIE

Yeah. I'm fine. Thanks. I half thought you'd chase after her and leave me here on my ass.

SARA JANE

Never.

Sara Jane's phone buzzes. A new message reads: *Your passenger's appointment in Washington, DC is in **4 hours**. Please drive safely. Only the passenger can update or cancel an appointment.*

Sara Jane looks miserable. Billie is already completely out of sight through the crowds.

MAGGIE

What does it say?

SARA JANE

Nothing new.

MAGGIE

(realizing)

We need to go after her.

SARA JANE

Yeah. Unless your idea of the last best days of our lives involves visiting me in prison.

A very HOT GUY walks by. He makes eyes at Maggie. A symbol of everything/one she could be doing. Maggie whines.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

She can't be far.

EXT. BOARDWALK

Billie rushes through the crowd, focused in her frenzy but being careful not to bump her belly against anyone. She sees them up ahead: two large, uniformed BEACH COPS. Billie speed-walks and plants herself in front of them.

BILLIE
Help! I've been kidnapped!

The beach cops look at her, startled.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
I just ran away! I can describe my
abductor--

One of the beach cops takes out something to make notes on.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
--she's about five-eight, wearing
an oversized t-shirt--

The minute she says "she," the beach cops relax.

BIG BEACH COP
Over a swimsuit?

BILLIE
No, I don't think so. Actually I
don't know. But her name is Sara
Jane and I memorized her license
plate number! It's 5-N-H-H-9-0--.

TALL BEACH COP
You're saying you've been
kidnapped?

BILLIE
Yes. In a car probably registered
to the kidnapper.

TALL BEACH COP
But you got away.

BILLIE
Yes, but my kidnapper is here, at
this beach. Standard procedure in
this kind of a case--

TALL BEACH COP
Are you hurt?

BILLIE
No.

BIG BEACH COP

You raped?

BILLIE

I feel like that would go under
"hurt."

BIG BEACH COP

Not all rapes result in injuries.
They taught us that. No bruises or
cuts or anything and the victim
might still be raped.

BILLIE

I'm not raped! Why does everyone
keep asking that?

TALL BEACH COP

You don't seem particularly
distressed.

BILLIE

The law doesn't require me to be
distressed. The law requires me to
be transported across state lines
without the consent of my legal
guardians. Which I was.

TALL BEACH COP

You're a minor?

BIG BEACH COP

Are you drunk?

BILLIE

No! I'm pregnant.

She lifts up her shirt to flash her pregnant belly. This
alarms the beach cops. They throw their hands up in a "not
touching you" motion.

TALL BEACH COP

Jesus. Go home!

BILLIE

You're supposed to take me back to
the station!

BIG BEACH COP

We're on duty right now. But if you
sit on that bench right there, when
we go back to the station, we'll
come and get you and bring you with
us. Okay?

BILLIE
She'll get away.

BIG BEACH COP
But you know her plates, right?

BILLIE
And where she parked the car.

BIG BEACH COP
'Atta girl. Sit tight. Any of these
frat boys pick a fight with you,
tell 'em you're with us.

Off Billie.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE BOARDWALK

Sara Jane and Maggie prowl the border between the boardwalk
and the beach. Maggie is holding a cold water bottle.

Sara Jane's phone buzzes. She ignores it. It buzzes again.
And again. Then, the long, sustained buzz of a phone call.
Sara Jane waits it out. It finally ends. And then rings again-

Sara Jane picks up the call.

SARA JANE
Mom. I know Uncle Randy is there
but I told you I can't talk today.

BETHANY
I got a call from the Grover Police
Department. It's in North Carolina.
Asking if your car has been stolen.

SARA JANE
Because it's registered to your
address.

BETHANY
Well, has it?
(off Sara Jane's silence:)
Sara Jane?

SARA JANE
Just... don't call them back.

BETHANY
It's either stolen or it isn't. I
can stay on while you check.

SARA JANE
Yeah, I can't. I'll call you later.

Sara Jane hangs up.

MAGGIE
Have you called the organization?

SARA JANE
Can't. The number I have is a bot.

MAGGIE
Shows the importance of human connection.

SARA JANE
Shows the importance of better screening.

A COLLEGE GIRL is stumbling drunkenly around in circles as a group of fellow students point and laugh.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Look. No number to text for that.

The bullying continues. The girl looks *really* drunk. She trips over a soft cooler. No one helps her.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Fuck it.

Sara Jane grabs Maggie's water bottle and sprints off. Maggie reacts. Sara Jane approaches the stumbling girl and ducks under her arm to support her, offering her the water bottle.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
There we go. Standing up is not working so hot. Maybe we sit down. Do you have a friend to call?

The girl jolts at her touch and bats the water bottle away.

GIRL
Get the fuck off me.

The girl straightens and backs away smoothly of her own power. She's not wasted. She was doing a bit.

SARA JANE
Oh.
(awkward silence)
You seemed super drunk.

GIRL

And you thought all these people
were just standing there laughing
at me.

Now, all these people are standing there laughing at Sara Jane. Ironic. Sara Jane slinks back to Maggie.

Maggie's phone rings. It's *SJ'S MOM*. She shows Sara Jane.

SARA JANE

Don't answer that.

EXT. BOARDWALK BENCH

Billie watches the scene. Swimsuit-clad college kids cluster in caste-like bunches. They're all drunk, and most are openly vaping, but one group seems to be having much more fun than the others. They are louder. They laugh more. The women are more beautiful. The men look richer. One woman doubles over in giggles as she pulls out an "ironically" discordant bottle of Veuve and a handful of red Solo cups. Billie groks it immediately: they're the POPULAR KIDS.

She watches as her beach cops troll the sands, making less-popular kids ash out joints and hide handles better. As the cops approach the popular kids, the woman with the Veuve pops the cork, spraying the cops with Yellow-label.

The tall cop steps in and takes the bottle from her. Other students gather around defensively. From Billie's vantage point, she can hear snippets of conversation:

TALL BEACH COP

... can't have glass on the beach.

VEUVE GIRL

They don't sell Veuve in plastic
bottles.

Billie watches the confrontation escalate. Two cops round up a handful of instigators. As the cops herd their charges back toward the boardwalk, Billie perks up. If they're taking people to the station, they'll come and get her.

Billie watches the cops put the popular ringleaders in a Jeep and drive off. They do not come back for her. Billie lets this sink in. Then she scans the beach for a NEW GROUP of popular kids. There. They'll do.

EXT. BEACH

Sara Jane and Maggie search for Billie. They see some of the same groups Billie did, from a different angle. Farther down the beach is a boardwalk stage, in front of which has gathered a large crowd. Maggie catches Sara Jane's eye and gestures toward the stage. Head that way?

SARA JANE

Smart. Crowd maximizes her chance
of borrowing a phone.

That is not why Maggie wanted to go, but she pretends it was:

MAGGIE

Yeah. Exactly.

EXT. BEACH

Billie's new group is on the move. She tries to fall into step with them. The group morphs amoeba-like to avoid her.

BILLIE

Hey.

A gangly boy looks at her weird. He continues walking. She singles out the girl in the group who looks most like her.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Hey.

EILISHY GIRL

(go away)

Hey.

This is not working. Billie keeps awkwardly tagging along as the group approaches the boardwalk stage. There's Spring Break programming in progress. A bikini'd girl on stage has thrown up her arms in a "victory" sign and screams in triumph. The crowd cheers.

At the far edge of the large crowd, Sara Jane and Maggie prowl for Billie. Maggie covertly watches the stage.

The victor skips toward the edge of the stage and crowd surfs off to the side, where a knot of people forms around her, pumping her up in the air like it's a Jewish wedding.

BILLIE

The girl with the most friends
wins.

EILISHY GIRL

Naw, she goes to our school. She doesn't know any of those people.

As the new group of popular kids wanders off, Billie focuses on the victor being fêted by her own personal crowd. On stage, an M.C. (male) takes the mic:

M.C.

Ladies, it's time for the event we've all been waiting for. The t-shirts are dress-length but after what happened last year, we need you to keep your bottoms on throughout the contest.

Boos from the crowd.

M.C. (CONT'D)

I know, I know. Don't let it deter you! Marge will check you in to the right of the stage.

Billie looks over to where a line of contestants is forming. She gets a rebel gleam in her eye. She approaches MARGE, who looks at Billie's face approvingly then eyes her pregnancy.

BILLIE

What? My body's not beautiful?

Marge digs through a pile of t-shirts and pulls out one.

MARGE

This should work. Top underneath is optional.

BILLIE

So I'm in?

MARGE

Go get 'em kiddo.

EXT. STAGE / CROWD

Billie is on stage left, the last in a line of contestants. She has swapped her streetwear for the white t-shirt, but has kept her bra on. Not so her adult competitors. From Billie's POV on the stage, we watch as the other contestants compete:

- A contestant is sprayed with water from a hose nozzle -- she swats at the water while squinching up her face. Soaking wet, her white t-shirt now translucent, she sashays toward the JUDGE: a frat boy sitting on a chair.

- A different soaking wet contestant pumps her ass backward into the judge's face.

- Another contestant slow-vamps burlesque-style, teasingly, then climactically invites the judge to motorboard her through her wet shirt.

Out in the crowd: Sara Jane taps a spectator on the shoulder and shows her a photo of Billie on her phone. The spectator shakes her head and returns to watching. Nearby, Maggie has her phone out too, but shirks to watch the show.

On stage: Billie looks determined. It's her turn. She walks out to center stage. In her giant white t-shirt, she is a notably different shape than the others were. A couple of supportive whoops from the crowd.

MAGGIE

Ohmygod. SARA JANE!

Maggie struggles to get Sara Jane's attention.

Billie faces the hoser like a bull. Just as the spray bursts from the nozzle, she flips around to take the initial impact with her back, protecting her stomach. She arches back to get her face, then rolls so the top of her head takes the impact as she soaks her front.

Maggie pushes through the crowd toward oblivious Sara Jane.

Billie steps out of the spray and then slowly, seductively turns to profile. Her now-translucent t-shirt clings to the contour of her belly and she positions her hands in such a way that the crowd realizes: she's not fat, she's pregnant. Somehow this is harder to get behind.

Sara Jane gets a text: *Your passenger's appointment in Washington, DC is in 2 hours. Please drive safely. Only the passenger can update or cancel an appointment.* She frowns.

Billie starts funky-dancing. Lots of elbows and knees and hitchhiker thumbs. There are Olive from *Little Miss Sunshine* vibes, but inverted. Instead of being inappropriately sexy, she's being inappropriately... not sexy?

Behind Billie, the judge motions exasperation at his neglect. The crowd giggles and, sensing that she is not holding her audience, Billie checks behind her to see the judge's act. Unperturbed, Billie motions to the M.C. to give her the mic. He does. Billie taps the mic, testing it. She turns.

BILLIE

Feeling a little neglected?

Sara Jane's eyes JERK to the stage, just as Maggie pushes through to her. Immediately, Sara Jane guns for the stage, pushing in vain against the crowd.

Billie burlesque-walks toward the judge, then abruptly stops.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

So you're ready to admit you're the father...

The judge throws up his hands and hops out of the chair, pantomiming "Not responsible!" The crowd giggles. Sara Jane keeps trying to push toward the stage, but she's repulsed. Maggie catches up to her, but they can't make any headway. They're stuck. They watch Billie, who addresses the crowd:

BILLIE (CONT'D)

I'd like to talk to you about getting pregnant.

The crowd giggles uncomfortably.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Now, I'm a couple years younger than most of you, but that doesn't make me an idiot: my guess is getting pregnant ranks as pretty much the number-one Spring Break worst case scenario.

The crowd laughs.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

But let me spin that around for you. Isn't getting pregnant -- *being* pregnant -- bringing new life into the world -- isn't that the most powerful, magical thing that anyone on earth could possibly do? And isn't it crazy -- unfair almost -- that only half of us humans are physically able to do it? Talk about superwomen.

Some supportive whistles and whoops from women in the crowd.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

But with great power comes great responsibility. Uncle Ben stole that from Churchill who stole it from Voltaire. Fortunately, the application in this case is easy:
(pauses for effect)
Don't kill the baby.

That's a mood shift. The crowd is hushed.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

I know what you're thinking: postpartum depression is real, no one kills their baby in their right mind, et cetera et cetera. Let me narrow it down: don't kill the baby before she's even born.

Whoa.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Now, a lot of you are thinking: of course not, that's insane. But at the same time, you know that every year nearly a million babies are killed by their mothers before they're even born. And, guys, I'm letting you off the hook for this one. The feminists are right about something: this is a female issue. We're the ones killing babies. And we're the ones who can stop it.

A woman cheers. Another woman yells: *FUCK YOU!* In response, someone else yells to Billie: *KEEP GOING, GIRL!*, and is echoed by a smattering of support for Billie. Taken aback, Sara Jane looks in vain for the source of the smattering.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

There is a long tradition of personal responsibility in this country. It's tied to respect. Respect from your countrymen. Respect from yourself. For too many generations, women have been denied respect. We've been told we don't matter.

Calls of: *That's right!* Billie sees Sara Jane in the crowd. They lock eyes. Their eyes remain locked as Billie finishes:

BILLIE (CONT'D)

It's time we took responsibility. For ourselves. For our power. For the lives we create. Because when you look at it straight: a choice between life and death is no choice at all.

She drops the mic and the crowd roars. Sara Jane fumes, immobilized by the roaring crowd. The M.C. retrieves the mic.

M.C.

Give it up for this little
firecracker! Whether you agree with
her or not, you've gotta admit:
it's sexy when a woman speaks her
mind!

Billie is helped gently off the stage, where she is surrounded by a knot of ADMIRERS. Sara Jane lunges in the direction of Billie's exit, but still can't part the crowd.

An admirer praises Billie:

BLONDE GIRL

You're so confident! I can't ima--

A SENSITIVE FRAT BRO interrupts her:

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

That really resonated with me. My high-school girlfriend had an abortion while we were together and it's never sat well with me.

REDHEAD GIRL

You are just the frickin' cutest!

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

I'm attracted to independent women, but we don't even talk anymore, and I'm like: I had a kid that I didn't even get to meet, you know.

The redhead girl links her arm possessively around Billie's.

REDHEAD GIRL

You have to come back with us, I want to know everything about you. Isn't she just girl power personified?

As this latest group moves away from the stage, Billie moves with it, this time in the very middle.

Sara Jane sees Billie disappear and looks around for Maggie. Sighting her, Sara Jane gestures that Maggie should follow her out the back of the crowd. Once free, they run around the crowd to where Billie left the stage, but... she's gone. Nowhere in sight. Sara Jane gets a text from Bethany: *PD says your car seen in western NC. I have reported it stolen. Send me vid if not stolen.*

SARA JANE

GOD DAMN IT!

MAGGIE

Okay. Let's take a break.

I/E. MOTEL

College students rail lines off of dirty counters and try to knock each other over using only their butts.

Sitting on a lounge chair by the pool, surrounded by college students, Billie holds court, telling some sort of story. A butt-naked cannon-baller slices across the foreground to the pool as, behind him, Billie gets to her punchline and everybody laughs.

EXT. MOTEL POOL

Billie floats on her back in the center of the motel pool. Others hang around the pool's edges, but where she is, she's blissfully alone.

The gentle curve of her pregnant belly arcs gracefully over the water. Our little bundle of disaster is utterly, entirely, and blissfully at peace.

As we relish the quietude, the camera spins slowly around her at water-level, and we track how very young she is. Her face in profile, eyes closed. Her hands, her feet. Then, from overhead, her full body star-fished in pure calm.

We hold there.

And hold...

And hold...

Until the thinnest trail of red liquid curls out into the pool's clear water, stemming from between her legs. There's no pain, so she's oblivious. In another context, the patterns the blood makes would be beautiful.

A girl sitting on the edge of the pool is the first to see the blood. She screams and pulls her feet out of the pool.

Her female FRIEND, standing next to her chest-deep in the water, catches her gaze and follows it. The friend sprints through the water toward Billie, reaching her first as the sensitive frat bro jumps into the water.

Billie's eyes jolt open, her peace shattered by her rescuers.

BILLIE

What the--

She sees the blood.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

No.

FRIEND

(to the party)

She's fine! It's just her period.

BILLIE

No it's not.

The friend looks at Billie, sees her pregnancy, gets it.

FRIEND

How many weeks?

BILLIE

Eighteen.

The friend divides by four and her face falls. You don't need experience with pregnancy to know: that's not enough.

FRIEND

(to the party)

We've got to get her to a hospital.

On that signal, the sensitive bro scoops Billie up and carries her to the edge of the water. Startled, Billie thrashes at first, but by the time she's being lifted out of the pool, she's given herself over to the rescue circus.

DRUNK GIRL

Clench your vaj and elevate. Keep the blood inside.

FEET IN WATER GIRL

Does anyone have a car?

EXTREMELY DRUNK GUY

Not if she bleeds on it.

SOMEONE

Call 9-1-1!

SOMEONE ELSE

Don't! They'll make her pay for an ambulance.

ANOTHER PERSON

Hide the coke! And anything else illegal!

The sensitive bro carries Billie out to the parking lot, where he sets her down gently on a curb, minding her head.

Billie lies on her back with her legs tightly crossed and also up in the air as she listens to the debate:

SOMEONE ELSE (O.S.)

I don't see why someone isn't just driving her.

SOMEONE (O.S.)

Who?

SOMEONE ELSE (O.S.)

Anyone! You!

SOMEONE (O.S.)

I'm drunk.

SOMEONE ELSE (O.S.)

And that has stopped you so many times in the past.

SOMEONE (O.S.)

It's Spring Break. I'm not getting arrested to drive some chick I don't know to the E.R.

An Uber pulls up. We stay on Billie's face.

SOMEONE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

See, they're here. She'll be fine.

SOMEONE ELSE (O.S.)

So it's not worth getting arrested to keep a girl from bleeding out.

SOMEONE (O.S.)

Not some rando girl who I. Do. Not. Know. From. Shit.

The sensitive bro looks down at Billie. His head looms like a surgeon from the perspective of the operating table.

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

I have a car but I'm too drunk to drive.

BILLIE

I need you to find someone for me.

EXT. BEACH, OFF FROM THE CROWDS

Sara Jane and Maggie walk on the beach, off from the crowds.

Ahead of them, upwind so sound travels toward them, MURIEL (late 30s or greater, black) on a beach blanket minds a small group of KIDS (all genders, black) playing with shovels and pails and maybe a Barbie or two.

Sara Jane and Maggie sit down, facing the water.

One of the kids, TARELL (7 or 8), bounds around Muriel.

TARELL

But I wanna SWIM! Please let me swim. Please! Please.

MURIEL

You can go to your knees, I told you.

TARELL

That's not swimming, that's *wading*.

MURIEL

I don't know what to tell you. I can't watch you in the water and watch everyone else here. And you need someone to watch you because you know what will happen if you drown.

TARELL

My mom will be mad.

MURIEL

Have you ever seen your mom mad before?

TARELL

No.

MURIEL

Do you want to see that?

TARELL

No.

Sara Jane's face has lit up. She looks at Maggie. Maggie's face falls.

MAGGIE

Dude.

SARA JANE
I gotta do it.

She gets up and walks toward Muriel. Maggie bites her lip.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Hi, my friend and I couldn't help
but overhear -- I'd be happy to
take him for a swim.

Muriel clocks Sara Jane. What to do about this.

Tarell also hears her. He starts jumping up and down.

TARELL
Yes! Yes yes! SWIMMMINGGGG!

Tarell runs in circles.

TARELL (CONT'D)
Swimming swimming swimming.

MURIEL
That's very kind of you. I just
can't responsibly let him go off
with a stranger.

SARA JANE
I completely understand. We will
stay right in front of you. Totally
in sight.

TARELL
Right in front! Charge!

Tarell punches his arms like a flying superhero and barrels
toward the water.

MURIEL
Tarell!

Muriel stands up and begins to start after him, but stops as
if tethered to the other children.

MURIEL (CONT'D)
Tarell!

Sara Jane strips off her cover-up, throws it toward Maggie,
and is already after Tarell. In her sporty underwear, she
steps into the water at his side.

If you thought she was going to bring him back to Muriel, you
haven't been paying attention. Attentively, Sara Jane follows
Tarell out into the ocean.

As they approach the break, Sara Jane lifts Tarell up so he isn't knocked over.

Beyond the break, Tarell swims in circles as Sara Jane watches him. He's a safe swimmer. The break was the risky part.

Sara Jane sees Tarell tiring out.

SARA JANE
You can float, you know.

She floats on her back, demonstrating. Keeps her head up to keep an eye on him.

Tarell flips over onto his back and floats.

The sky is blue.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Perfect, isn't it?

Tarell is vertical again, bobbing.

TARELL
Kinda not.

SARA JANE
(playing along)
No? Why not.

TARELL
(coy)
I dunno.

SARA JANE
(still playing)
You can tell me.

TARELL
Maybe cuz...

He trails off.

SARA JANE
Cuz what?

TARELL
Cuz you're here?

Sara Jane's face falls.

SARA JANE
Do you wanna go back?

TARELL

Yeah.

SARA JANE

Stay with me. I'll help you with
the break.

EXT. BEACH, OFF FROM THE CROWDS

Sara Jane walks behind Tarell as he sprints out of the water.
Tarell rushes back to Muriel and the other children.

As Sara Jane ascends the beach, the sensitive frat bro
approaches at a run from the direction of the boardwalk.

Maggie balls up Sara Jane's t-shirt.

MAGGIE

Sara Jane!

The sensitive frat bro hears the name and homes in on them.

Sara Jane puts up a hand for the shirt. Maggie throws it.
Sara Jane catches it. The sensitive bro catches his breath.

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

Your friend sent me.

MAGGIE

Who?

The sensitive bro is momentarily caught up by the vision that
is Maggie. But he stays on-mission.

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

The little pregnant girl.
Something's wrong with her.

SARA JANE

Yeah, we figured that out.

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

Wrong with the pregnancy. They took
her to Tideland. She asked me to
get you.

MAGGIE

Us?

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

No.

(to Sara Jane)

Just you.

Sopping wet, Sara Jane pulls on the shirt.

Tarell is chasing and hugging the other kids, making them wet. Since they're watching the frat bro, Tarell manages to catch them off-guard.

SARA JANE

And?

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

She's asking for you.

SARA JANE

I bet she convinced you she's some sort of victim, huh?

MAGGIE

Dude.

The bro notices that they have an audience of children.

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

Can we maybe have this discussion on the way to your car?

Sarah Jane gets that this discussion is not for the children. She turns to Muriel, who is pulling Tarell off of someone.

SARA JANE

I have to go. I--

MURIEL

(relieved)

Go!

(fastidiously polite)

Thank you so much for your help.

(honest)

No one's asking for you here.

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

Great, let's go.

Sara Jane registers what Muriel said as the bro sprints back toward the boardwalk. Maggie follows. Then, like someone whose identity is shattering behind her eyes, Sara Jane.

We stay behind with Muriel, who watches them go.

MURIEL

Fucking white women.

A beat. Then:

TARELL
 You said "fucking"! You said
 "fucking"!

The other kids join in with Tarell, all chanting together.
 Muriel reacts. The gift that keeps on giving.

EXT. E.R. ENTRANCE

Billie arrives alone in an Uber at the entrance to the E.R.
 She opens the car door. No one comes to help her in. She
 waddles out and slams the door shut. The UBER DRIVER rolls
 down the front passenger window.

UBER DRIVER
 I'm gonna have to charge a clean-
 up. I know this is not what you
 wanna hear, but this is my
 livelihood.

BILLIE
 It's not my account.

UBER DRIVER
 Ah. So you don't mind if I give
 them one star.

BILLIE
 Give them zero. Zero stars.

Billie waddles to the doors, which whoosh open automatically.

INT. E.R. RECEIVING ROOM

Billie waddles into the E.R. It's full of carpetbagging
 college students who have partied a little too hard:

- A boy holds a bag of frozen vegetables to his head,
 whimpering into his stars-and-stripes bandana.
- A girl lies on a bench, her swollen ankle raised high in
 the air.
- A girl in pajamas' eyes have swollen shut. She holds
 eyeglasses in one hand and a contact case in the other.

Billie doesn't know whom to talk to.

Someone barely visible across the room is hysterically crying
 and yelling. A nurse walks over to quiet her down. Billie
 clocks that. Close on her as she closes her eyes and opens
 her mouth to scream.

EXT. MYRTLE BEACH ALLEY

Maggie and the sensitive frat bro reach the covered car first. It's a flirty race, where Maggie's been leading but once they get to the car, he grabs her around the waist and holds her back so he can slap the car before she does. She squeals in delighted protest.

Sara Jane trots up sullenly behind them.

Maggie playfully bats the bro away (he quickly releases her), then tosses Sara Jane the keys. Sara Jane doesn't catch them. They hit the ground with a clank.

SARA JANE

I'm not going.

MAGGIE

What the fuck.

SARA JANE

She's not gonna suddenly be a good person.

MAGGIE

So? She's in trouble.

SARA JANE

She's lied about that before.

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

She was definitely bleeding.

SARA JANE

Not my problem.

MAGGIE

Who are you?

SARA JANE

The point of finding her was to get her to pretend that none of this ever happened. If she's at a hospital, that's a credible third-party record. The only chance I had was there being no hard evidence. But now that there is... it's out of my hands. Nothing to be done.

MAGGIE

You're serious.

SARA JANE

I don't know how to destroy hospital records. That's beyond my capabilities.

MAGGIE

(disgusted)

That's not why you should go. You spent all day being so obsessed with helping people, and now here's someone who needs you, actually asking for your help.

SARA JANE

Why her? Why not literally anyone else?

MAGGIE

Why not someone you could feel good about helping?

SARA JANE

Is that so wrong?

MAGGIE

It's selfish.

SARA JANE

I don't have a right to be selfish?

MAGGIE

You do. It just doesn't help.

Sara Jane's phone buzzes. It's Bethany. Sara Jane picks up on speaker.

SARA JANE

Now Maggie really IS upset, because she wants me to drive my car, which I don't want to do for several reasons, including because you reported it stolen and driving it anywhere right now is itself a crime.

BETHANY (O.S.)

Hello to you too.

SARA JANE

And you know what? Maybe you're right. Maybe I *should* get a job in the private sector and buy a car that is registered solely to ME.

BETHANY (O.S.)

Don't you want to know why I'm calling?

SARA JANE

No!

BETHANY (O.S.)

The police in Grover asked where you were and I told them you were on Spring Break in Myrtle Beach, but I'm calling to ask what hotel.

SARA JANE

You told them I'm in Myrtle Beach.

BETHANY (O.S.)

(sincere)

But it sounds like your car wasn't stolen after all, so now I don't know what's going on.

SARA JANE

No, you don't!

BETHANY (O.S.)

(hurt)

Well, I would if you'd tell me.

SARA JANE

Or you wouldn't need to if you trusted that I know what I'm doing!

Bethany hangs up. Sara Jane stares at her phone. Maggie and the sensitive frat bro stare at Sara Jane.

MAGGIE

That's it. I'm done. I have stuck by you all day today, after you tricked me into thinking you came here to "do Spring Break." You don't care about Spring Break. You never cared about Spring Break. You're only here because it's the last place you thought they'd look for someone as principled as you. I told you from the start that this was a bad idea, and you did it anyway, and here we are.

SARA JANE

(bitter/biting)

If I'd known I was so unworthy of your company, I wouldn't have come.

MAGGIE

That's what you don't get. I'm glad you're here. This is what being a person is. Helping people even though they're wrong.

SARA JANE

I can't help someone who has shitty beliefs.

MAGGIE

Why the hell not?

SARA JANE

She doesn't deserve it.

MAGGIE

You've tried everything else.
(to sensitive bro)
C'mon... what's your name?

SENSITIVE FRAT BRO

Cody.

MAGGIE

C'mon, Cody. You've gotta meet my friends.

Maggie starts toward the beach. Then she stops, turns back:

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Someday you'll realize that you need help you don't deserve. And you'll be too sanctimonious to ask for it.

SARA JANE

I don't want anything I don't deserve.

MAGGIE

You do. And when you're ready to admit it, call me. And not before.

Maggie storms off. Cody obediently trots off behind her.

Sara Jane is left all alone. She storms silently. Then she picks up her keys and starts to uncover the car.

INT. E.R. RECEIVING ROOM

Billie goes through an intake checklist with a nurse.

RECEIVING NURSE
And how long have you been
experiencing these symptoms?

BILLIE
I dunno. My grasp of time is fucked
today.

RECEIVING NURSE
So just today.

BILLIE
Yeah, just now. Like it just
started.

RECEIVING NURSE
Do you have a primary care
physician in the area? Or an O-B-G-
Y-N?

BILLIE
No. I don't live here. I'm bleeding
from my vagina and it feels like
something is like coming out.

RECEIVING NURSE
Right. Sounds like a spontaneous
abortion. I'll put you in for a
room and we'll have a doctor
confirm.

BILLIE
I'm sorry, a what?

RECEIVING NURSE
Hun, the doctor will tell you.

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / US-17

Sara Jane drives.

She gets a text on Signal: *Your passenger's appointment in Washington, DC is in **1 hour**. Check-in is in **30 minutes**. Please drive safely. Only the passenger can update or cancel an appointment.*

She fishes Billie's phone out of the driver's door and tries to unlock it. She can't. She tosses it on the passenger seat.

It lights up on impact and we see its background: Billie scowling at the camera in a pop star crouch. Sara Jane looks at the photo, and her expression changes. She drives faster.

INT. HOSPITAL

The real Billie is in a wheelchair sitting on a pile of gauze-like pads as a nurse wheels her toward a room with other NURSES standing in front of it.

NURSE

I need that room. We've got a spontaneous abortion.

BILLIE

I DON'T WANT AN ABORTION.

The nurse wheels Billie into the room.

NURSE

You don't have a choice in the matter. That's what "spontaneous" means.

BILLIE

I AM MORALLY OPPOSED TO ABORTION.

The nurse puts a gown and a stack of paper sheets on the bed.

NURSE

Hun, you're having a miscarriage. You can be morally opposed all you want, that's just the medical term. This is happening whether you want it or not.

BILLIE

That's not fair.

NURSE

Not a bit. Up. You have a bed now; other people need the chair.

Billie waddles to the bed. Looks at the pile of paper sheets. Billie spreads the sheets out on the bed.

EXT. E.R. ENTRANCE

Sara Jane pulls up in front of the E.R. She gets out of the car and lopes toward the sliding doors. A passing HOSPITAL WORKER notices that no one is in the car anymore.

HOSPITAL WORKER

Miss, you can't leave that car there.

SARA JANE

I need to--

HOSPITAL WORKER

You're not the only car at the emergency room. If you can run like that you can park the car.

Sara Jane returns to her car. From her POV, we move forward in the car toward a sign that reads "Hospital Parking." Sara Jane drives down a ramp toward a parking gate. She rolls down the window and ferociously punches the button for a ticket.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Billie lies on the hospital bed with her pelvis elevated. She looks at the door. No one comes in.

I/E. PARKING GARAGE

Sara Jane prowls the lines of full parking spots on one of the highest floors of the garage, looking for an opening.

OTHER PART OF GARAGE:

The car parked, Sara Jane grabs a pair of sweatpants out of the trunk and pulls them on. She now has her wallet.

Sara Jane's phone buzzes: *You have missed the 30-minute check-in for your passenger's appointment. Failure to appear will revoke your approval as a driver.*

She closes the trunk, beeps her car locked and looks around for the stairs. They are at the other end of the garage. Naturally. She sprints toward the stairs.

GARAGE STAIRS:

Sara Jane climbs the stairs around and around down down down.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Billie stares at the ceiling. It is made of particle-board tiles separated by half-inch white bands. It has those dots that could take a lifetime to count.

EXT. E.R. ENTRANCE

Sara Jane trots toward the whooshing doors.

INT. E.R. RECEIVING ROOM

Sara Jane enters the E.R. and looks around for Billie. Not there. She approaches a desk where the same receiving nurse is seated. She shows the nurse Billie's photo on Billie's phone background.

SARA JANE

Hi, I'm looking for this patient?
She's having some sort of pregnancy
complication.

RECEIVING NURSE

And you are?

SARA JANE

Sara Jane Wrightship.

RECEIVING NURSE

Are you family?

SARA JANE

Yes.

RECEIVING NURSE

Mhmm. And what's the patient name?

Sara Jane stares at her dumbly.

RECEIVING NURSE (CONT'D)

I can't look her up from a picture.

That's entirely reasonable. Here's the thing: "Billie" is not Billie's name.

We can see it on Sara Jane's face: that is a thing she should know. Then the mask goes up. She is in full lying mode.

SARA JANE

I don't know what name she would
have given.

The nurse is unimpressed.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

She's been through a lot. She has
some fake IDs. She's fourteen.
She's pregnant. Something's wrong.
Black hair with green roots. There
can't be another one. She asked me
to be here. She sent someone across
town to get me.

(a beat)

(MORE)

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Please don't make her go through
this alone.

RECEIVING NURSE
Give me your I.D. If she's here,
I'll have someone ask her.

Sara Jane hesitates. Then she gives the nurse her driver's license. The nurse takes the driver's license and makes a photocopy of it. She takes a slip of colored paper headed "visit request form" and scribbles "family" in a box, then staples it to the photocopy.

RECEIVING NURSE (CONT'D)
You can sit down now.

Sara Jane retreats to an empty chair. She can see the receiving nurse give the form to the nurse who wheeled Billie to her room. The nurse asks the receiving nurse who the family member is. The receiving nurse nods toward Sara Jane. The other nurse clocks her, then leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

The wheeling nurse enters the room. She takes Billie's blood.

BILLIE
Where's the doctor?

NURSE
He's coming. Just as fast as he
can. This lady says you called her?
Do you want me to let her in to be
with you?

The nurse shows Billie the photocopy of Sara Jane's driver's license. Billie looks at the black-and-white scan. Then, she bursts into tears.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Hun?

Billie nods.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Okay, then. Sign this.

Billie signs. The nurse leaves and, still lying on her back with her pelvis raised, Billie continues to quietly sob.

INT. E.R. RECEIVING ROOM

Sara Jane waits. She texts Bethany: *I'm sorry. I was awful. That wasn't about you.* The three dots float on her screen: Bethany is typing. They disappear. After agonizing seconds, Bethany's reply comes through: *It's okay, sweetie. Turns out Randy is very unhappy at work. His job lacks meaning. We'll talk when you're ready.*

RECEIVING NURSE (O.S.)
Sara Jane Wrightship?

Sara Jane jumps up and trots over to the desk.

RECEIVING NURSE (CONT'D)
You can see her. She's in 216.

The nurse points at the doors to the hall of rooms. Sara Jane walks to the doors. Ceremoniously, she opens them and walks through.

INT. E.R. HALLWAY

Sara Jane finds Room 216. She opens it and walks in.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Billie is tear-stained but not crying. She sees Sara Jane.

BILLIE
You came.

SARA JANE
I thought this might be a sting.

She sits down next to Billie.

BILLIE
I wish it was.

SARA JANE
I... I'm sorry something's wrong.

BILLIE
The nurse said I'm having a miscarriage.

SARA JANE
What did the doctor say?

BILLIE
He hasn't come.

SARA JANE
How long's it been?

She picks up Billie's chart. It says *Abigail Bentley*. ABBY.

ABBY
I dunno.

SARA JANE
This you?

ABBY
Yeah.

SARA JANE
Abigail or Abby?

ABBY
Abby.

SARA JANE
What do you want me to do? Do you
want me to go try to get him? Do
you want me to call your mom?

ABBY
I wasn't gonna tell her until it
was six months and no one could
stop me.

SARA JANE
I think you have to tell her now.

ABBY
(aggressive)
I don't need you to think for me.

SARA JANE
(matching her tone)
So I'll just sit here and be quiet.

ABBY
(softly, sincere)
Yeah.

Sara Jane is caught off-guard. She sits back down next to Abby. Silently.

Sara Jane puts out her hand.

It hangs there for a moment.

Abby takes it. And squeezes hard.

Sara Jane looks at the wall and thinks.

After a long time, she says:

SARA JANE

It would be better if this could
happen near home.

ABBY

Yeah.

They sit together. For long enough that when the doctor comes
in, we almost don't want him to.

The DOCTOR knocks and enters. He glances at the girls.

DOCTOR

Good, you've elevated. Is there
leakage of fluids?

ABBY

Yes. I am leaking.

DOCTOR

Any vaginal bleeding?

ABBY

Yes.

DOCTOR

Any contractions? Do you feel any
movement?

ABBY

Maybe, should I?

DOCTOR

Let's take a look. You're how many
weeks?

ABBY

Eighteen.

He looks. With a speculum. We focus on faces.

DOCTOR

Yeah, this is an inevitable
spontaneous abortion.

Sara Jane reacts to hearing the term for the first time.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

It's only a matter of time -- the products of conception will come out eventually. I'd have to do an ultrasound to be sure, but most likely it's an incompetent cervix. Unusual in your age cohort but could be the result of past trauma to the area. Have you ever had a D&C? Any other type of cervical trauma?

ABBY

No.

DOCTOR

Huh. Genetic, then. Rare, but it happens. Not usually so young. But it's definitely an incompetent cervix. You're already too far dilated for a cerclage.

SARA JANE

What are you saying?

DOCTOR

The time for intervention on this was weeks ago. She's so far dilated, as soon as we tip her down it's gonna slide right out. But the good news is, next time you get pregnant, get a little cerclage at fourteen weeks, sooner if you want, that'll hold it in through full term.

ABBY

What's a cerclage?

DOCTOR

It's a little band, like a loop? That stitches it together. It's the treatment for an incompetent cervix.

SARA JANE

Can you stop calling her cervix incompetent?

DOCTOR

That's just the medical term.

ABBY

Could stress or running or being buried in sand have caused this?

DOCTOR

Absolutely not. It's a problem with your cervix, not with the fetus. Have you had contractions the last couple of days?

ABBY

No.

DOCTOR

Then there's no way you could have known. No one puts a prophylactic cerclage in a teenager.

ABBY

But what did I do wrong?

DOCTOR

Probably nothing. Are you ready?

ABBY

No.

DOCTOR

You're gonna lie upside down forever?

ABBY

Would that work?

DOCTOR

No.

ABBY

Okay.

The doctor removes what's propping up Abby's hips and guides her into a sitting up position. And, just as the doctor said, something slides out onto the bed. It's an orb the size of Abby's hands, cupped together. Or an apple, if that's easier.

The sac is glazed with blood but itself is somewhere between clear and amber, filled with a translucent fluid. It looks unearthly, like an egg from an alien world. The doctor puts it in a plastic tray.

DOCTOR

En caul. You don't see that every day. Do you want me to pierce it and expose the fetus?

ABBY
She's in there?

DOCTOR
Yeah.

ABBY
I want her to stay in there. It
looks... warm.

DOCTOR
Okay. I'll send someone in for it.

The doctor leaves.

SARA JANE
You don't want to hold it?

Abby shakes her head.

ABBY
I know what it looks like. This is
nicer.

A nurse comes in and takes the tray. Sara Jane holds out an
arm to stop her.

SARA JANE
(to Abby)
Do you need more time?

Abby takes one last look at the orb. Then she shakes her head
no. The nurse takes the tray away.

Abby and Sara Jane sit in silence.

The nurse comes back with a menstrual pad.

NURSE
You can get dressed now.

INT. E.R. RECEIVING ROOM

Abby and Sara Jane stand at the desk. Abby wears her clothes.

RECEIVING NURSE
Come back in a week for a follow-
up.

ABBY
I am never coming back here.

RECEIVING NURSE

Well, call then, to get the report sent to your doctor. No baths, no swimming, showers only, no strenuous exercise, no sex, no tampons, no douches. Come back if something smells bad, if you have a fever, if you have a elevated heart rate, if you feel weak or dizzy, or if you're bleeding through more than one pad an hour.

ABBY

I'm never coming back.

RECEIVING NURSE

To an emergency room. Any emergency room.

A beat.

SARA JANE

That's it?

RECEIVING NURSE

You're free to go.

SARA JANE

What can she expect today, tomorrow, this week?

RECEIVING NURSE

Ma'am, I am not the internet. Ask your primary care doctor or a friend who's had a miscarriage. This is an emergency room and there are patients to attend to.

Off the girls.

EXT. E.R. ENTRANCE

Sara Jane and Abby stand side-by-side outside the entrance to the E.R. Sara Jane gets a final message on Signal: *You have missed your passenger's appointment. Your approval as a driver has been revoked and future appointments have been reassigned.*

ABBY

Was that Maggie?

SARA JANE
No, the Network. We missed your appointment, so I'm not allowed to drive for them anymore.

ABBY
You don't seem mad.

It's a good observation. Every past text has provoked Sara Jane. For the first time, she doesn't care.

SARA JANE
I guess I'm not.

She and Abby stand there, at a loss. The silence goes on a little too long.

ABBY
Okay, gimme my phone.

Sara Jane pauses, considers her instinct not to, then does. Abby checks her texts.

SARA JANE
I can drive you home.

ABBY
You can't. There's cops at my house. And all around it.

SARA JANE
Shit.

ABBY
It's fine. Just take your plates off and don't go home for a few days.

SARA JANE
That's not gonna work.

ABBY
I'd call them off but they'd only believe me in person.

SARA JANE
Yeah, I just had that thought.

A beat. Abby opens up her camera in selfie mode and records:

ABBY
Hey. My name is Abigail Bentley and I'm of sound mind or whatever and not under any sort of duress.

She lifts up the phone to get Sara Jane in the shot over her shoulder, standing a non-threatening distance away.

ABBY (CONT'D)

That's Sara Jane. I don't know her last name but if you're watching this, you do.

Abby walks the phone around so you get a sense for the safety and normalcy of the situation.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Yeah, so. As you can see from the metadata of this video, we are still in South Carolina and I'm not kidnapped. It was all just a joke that got out of hand. If I say anything else on the stand, which I might, I'll be lying. I made this video to prove that we never left the state, and I'm going to send it to her. Please consider it grounds for reasonable doubt or whatever. Thanks. Peace and love.

Abby turns off the video.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Turn on your bluetooth.

Stunned, Sara Jane does.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Okay, accept it.

Sara Jane does.

ABBY (CONT'D)

You've got it?

Sara Jane opens the video file.

ABBY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Hey. My name is Abigail Bentley and I'm of sound mind or whatever--

Sara Jane stops the video.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Now take me to the bus station. The Greyhound runs through Greenville.

SARA JANE

Okay.

(beat)

Wait here. I'll get the car.

EXT. BUS STATION

Sara Jane and Abby stand in front of a bus. It's boarding.

SARA JANE

You'll call your mom when you get to Greenville?

ABBY

Naw. I don't want her to know what happened.

SARA JANE

So you'll take an Uber.

ABBY

It's her account. She'd see.

SARA JANE

You want me to sign mine in?

ABBY

No.

SARA JANE

What'll you do?

ABBY

What do you care? You have the video. This is over for you. Like it never happened. No one will prosecute against that and I can't take it back.

SARA JANE

That's true.

ABBY

Yeah, it is.

SARA JANE

Goodbye, I guess?

ABBY

Bye.

SARA JANE

Goodbye, Abby.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS

Abby sits alone in her row, the green in her hair oddly complementary of the 90s upholstery on the seat: red, yellow, indigo, green, and lots of cyan -- speckles, wisps and circles too big to be dots.

She tries to turn on her phone. It won't start up. Battery's died. Abby looks bored. Then, thinking, she looks sad. She shakes herself out of it and looks around for something to distract her. There's nothing. It's a bus. For a minute, it looks like she's going to cry. But she doesn't.

EXT. E.R. ENTRANCE

A police car is parked in front of the emergency room, like Sara Jane was. No one makes the cop move his car. His partner walks out of the emergency room, gesturing in exasperation: they missed them.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS

The bus is stopped at the Greenville bus stop. Abby's not paying attention. People file past her for the door.

BUS DRIVER (O.S.)
GREENVILLE.

Abby starts. She looks up. Abby exits the bus, trying to power up her phone. It's still dead. Abby looks up.

In front of her, sitting like a pin-up girl on the hood of her dusty, plateless Ford Fusion, is Sara Jane.

Abby reacts, then speaks:

ABBY
You drove four hours to meet me at
the bus station.

SARA JANE
That is what I did.

ABBY
Why.

SARA JANE
I was worried you wouldn't tell
your parents about the miscarriage.

ABBY
I wouldn't.

SARA JANE
They need to get you some therapy.

ABBY
They're not really therapy people.

SARA JANE
Exactly. You've had a pretty
traumatic day.

ABBY
So you drove four hours to meet me
at the bus station.

SARA JANE
Yes.

ABBY
Fuck you.

SARA JANE
Huh?

ABBY
That's right. Fuck. You.

SARA JANE
I probably should have expected
that.

ABBY
What was your plan?

SARA JANE
I was gonna offer you moral support
while you talk to your parents
about what happened.

ABBY
And your earlier concern about the
police presence at my home somehow
evaporated.

SARA JANE
No. I believe you that your home is
surrounded by cops.

ABBY
And your plan for that was...

SARA JANE
To avoid them. By taking some sort
of secret backroad local alleyway,
which you would tell me about.

ABBY
Because in this plan I'm on board.

SARA JANE
Yes.

ABBY
Because you drove four hours to meet me at the bus station.

SARA JANE
Yes.

ABBY
Well, fuck you and your grand gesture and your absolutely crackbrained plan which truly expands the definition of idiocy.

SARA JANE
You don't like the plan.

ABBY
The plan is bad.

SARA JANE
It's provisional.

ABBY
What I don't like is you. You think you're better than me, and I feel like you're winning, and fuck you.

SARA JANE
I'm winning? The law is on your side!

ABBY
And somehow you still don't respect me! You just keep going like I don't even matter. Like I don't deserve to think for myself.

A beat.

SARA JANE
You're right. I do think that.

Abby looks up at the gravity of the admission.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
I think you're wrong about pretty much everything, in a lot of hurtful ways.

ABBY

Fuck you.

SARA JANE

I can't do anything about that. I really can't, and it kills me. There's nothing I can say or do that will change your mind. But I can do this. Because I know you need it, and I think you know too.

Abby doesn't retort.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

You're going to need help to get through the next few weeks. That's why we need to talk to your parents.

ABBY

By running a police gauntlet back to my house.

SARA JANE

Yes.

ABBY

You're gonna get us both killed.

SARA JANE

Police don't shoot white girls.

ABBY

Let me drive.

SARA JANE

Absolutely not.

ABBY

I know the area and you don't. You said it yourself, it's the whole crux of your plan.

SARA JANE

Right, but you can just tell me where to go.

ABBY

Not if things get hairy. There won't be time -- you gotta go on instinct.

SARA JANE

Can you even drive?

ABBY
My mom can do it. How hard can it
be?

SARA JANE
Yeah no.

ABBY
It shows you're not kidnapping me.
If I'm driving, I'm in control.

SARA JANE
That actually makes sense.

ABBY
Yeah.

SARA JANE
And you want that: to be in
control?

ABBY
Yeah.

SARA JANE
Okay.

ABBY
Okay?

SARA JANE
Okay. Fuck it. Let's do this.

Sara Jane tosses Abby the keys. Abby catches them.

Sara Jane goes around to the passenger side door and gets in
the car. Abby gets into the driver's seat. Both buckle up.
Abby adjusts the seat and the mirrors and looks at the dash.

ABBY
Where do I put the key?

SARA JANE
The key can be anywhere in the car.

ABBY
Then why did you throw it to me?

SARA JANE
So you'd have control.

Abby considers. Nods.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Now put your foot on the break and press the ON button. Can I turn on your lights for you?

(off Abby's nod)

Okay, keep your foot on the break. I'm gonna put it in drive. Now, when you take your foot off the break, it'll start to go. Now, gas, breaks, and steering. The car's automatic, so that's all there is.

ABBY

What if I need to go backwards.

SARA JANE

Brake to a stop and yell "reverse" and I'll shift for you. Then gas.

Abby starts to slowly pull out of the parking spot. Sara Jane takes out her own phone and also Abby's phone.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Just practice driving around the lot while I do some recon. Unlock your phone for me?

Abby puts her thumb on her phone without taking her eyes off the road. It unlocks. Sara Jane opens both phones to Google Maps and starts tapping on them.

ABBY

What're you doing?

SARA JANE

Checking possible routes for reports of police cars and checkpoints. Hopefully your neighbors are flagging all of them.

ABBY

Dum spiro spero.

SARA JANE

Huh?

ABBY

"While I breathe I hope." State motto. You ready?

SARA JANE

Yeah. Avoid Woodruff. There's one near it and whatever SC-14 is.

ABBY

Copy.

Abby pulls out of the parking lot a back way and onto a road.

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / GREENVILLE

The area around the bus stop has wide, spacious roads and well-kept strip malls, peppered with woodsy conifer trees.

Sara Jane pulls up alternate routes on the two phones, checking stretches of road ahead for little teardrop icons indicating police presence.

SARA JANE

I think the general strategy is to avoid big roads...

ABBY

Groundbreaking.

SARA JANE

... and to cross them as far away as possible from where I can see the police are stationed.

ABBY

Got it.

Abby drives the jerky, halting way of someone just learning.

SARA JANE

So, if we keep going straight we hit a cop in four blocks. Let me check right versus left.

ABBY

I can't just sit here at the intersection.

SARA JANE

Right! Turn right and then left.

Abby turns right. Instead of turning left, she goes straight.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

I said left! There's another cop ahead!

ABBY

You didn't say when to turn left!

SARA JANE

The immediate next left! Pull over.
Now make like a U-turn and then a
right. Good. Now pull over behind
that SUV and wait a second.

Abby does. Sara Jane puts the car in park and pores over the map. Abby looks over at it. Sara Jane has focused in on the major road just up ahead.

ABBY

There are like twelve cops all
clustered together on that road?

SARA JANE

I think it's one cop and he's
driving back and forth.

ABBY

And people are reporting him at
different points.

SARA JANE

Yeah.

ABBY

Can we go around?

SARA JANE

We could if we knew how far he was
driving.

ABBY

This is hard.

SARA JANE

We just need to cross without him
noticing.

Sara Jane rolls down the window and leans out to try to scope out the street.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

I can't see around the SUV.

This sparks an idea.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)

Okay. Here's what you're gonna do.

I/E. SAME - MINUTES LATER

Sara Jane is twisted around in the passenger seat, watching the street behind them. Quickly she faces front again.

SARA JANE
Okay, this one. Close but not touching.

A GIANT SUV passes them, and Abby pulls out behind it. As the intersection with the major street approaches, she rides the tail of the SUV, completely eclipsed by its left.

A COP CAR drives past on the major street. The Fusion tailgates the SUV across the intersection.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Now pull off.

Abby turns onto another small road, losing the SUV. Sara taps at the phones.

ABBY
I know where we are. I can get us home from here.

SARA JANE
Fantastic. All clear.

I/E. SARA JANE'S CAR / ABBY'S NEIGHBORHOOD

The neighborhood has become residential. Sidewalks, trees, happy suburban houses.

ABBY
We're two minutes away.

Abby turns the corner. Up ahead, heading straight at them is a POLICE CAR. Abby slams on the breaks.

ABBY (CONT'D)
REVERSE!

Sara Jane puts the car in reverse. Abby pulls back around the corner and reverses down the block she just came up.

ABBY (CONT'D)
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME THERE WAS A COP THERE?

SARA JANE
He wasn't on the map!

Abby reverses into an intersection and stops.

ABBY
FORWARD!

Sara Jane puts the car in drive. Abby pulls forward.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Why wasn't he on the map??

There's a siren now, the police car definitely saw them and is following them. Sara Jane fusses with Google Maps.

SARA JANE
No one reported him! I can only see what's on the app!

ABBY
The app is not useful unless it shows ALL of the cops!

SARA JANE
It showed a lot of the cops!

ABBY
Just not the one chasing us.

SARA JANE
It shows him now. I reported him.

They pass another police car, which joins the chase.

ABBY
How about that one? Was that one on the app?

SARA JANE
That one was.

A third police car appears as backup, behind the other two. And then, noisy overhead: a helicopter. It's over.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Okay, we should look for a public place to pull over, with lots of witnesses.

ABBY
We're not pulling over.

SARA JANE
We're not?

ABBY
We're not there yet.

The Fusion continues to speed erratically down the street. The lead police car gains on them from behind.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Is he gonna bump us?

Sara Jane turns around in the passenger seat to look.

SARA JANE
If he does, accelerate. It'll lessen the impact.

ABBY
Right. Obviously.

The police car doesn't bump them. Instead, it SHOOTs a barbed net off its front at the Fusion's back wheel. The Grappler Police Bumper net is tied to a line secured to the front of the police car.

Abby characteristically swerves just as the net is shot and it MISSES.

SARA JANE
Fuck yeah!

Sara Jane turns back around front and sees straight ahead and rapidly approaching: Abby's family's home.

It's the nice house from the beginning, with a picturesque windowed breakfast nook in its center. Through the tall, paned windows, we can see that the breakfast nook is currently empty.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Abby?

The police car SHOOTs a SECOND NET at the other back wheel.

The net HITS the Fusion's wheel and WRAPS around the tire, puncturing it and tethering the Fusion to the front of the police car. Abby feels the impact, mistakes it for a bump, and ACCELERATES.

The cop car slows to a stop and we watch the line reel out.

The Fusion hurtles on collision course for the house. Unless the police tether stops it in time, the Fusion's gonna crash into the house. The Fusion jumps the curb, hurtles across the front lawn -- there's still time for the leash to stop it! -- until it CRASHES into the breakfast nook.

The front of the car crumples, glass and dust flies everywhere, airbags deploy. *Then*, the tether on the wheel-net goes taut. Twelve inches too late.

More police cars pull up, sirens blaring, and park in the street, blocking any escape. OFFICERS dismount and approach.

Sara Jane raises her hands in the air. Abby's have fallen off the wheel, obscured by the now-flaccid airbag.

ABBY'S MOM and DAD burst out of the house and rush toward the car. They are shockingly normal-looking upper-middle-class people who have changed out of their work clothes. A female officer holds them back.

The officer approaching Abby's door calls an order:

OFFICER
I need to see your hands.

Abby raises her hands.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
Good, keep them there. Now open the driver side door.

Abby does, looking shell-shocked.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
Does anyone have any weapons?

SARA JANE
No. We come in peace. Abby, you okay?

ABBY
I think so.

OFFICER
Step out of the vehicle please.

Abby stumbles out of the car. As she does, we see that the seat is wet with her blood.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
Miss, are you injured?

Abby looks at the seat, then down at what used to be her lap. She says calmly:

ABBY
Oh. That's just my miscarriage.

Sara Jane stifles a snort of laughter. Abby's parents react.

ABBY'S MOM

Your what?!

OFFICER

(to Abby)

You're the one who lives here?

(off Abby's nod)

We've got her! She's safe!

An EMT appears and wraps Abby in a space blanket. The officer walks around to Sara Jane.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Is this your car?

SARA JANE

Yes, but--

OFFICER

This is your car?

SARA JANE

Yes.

OFFICER

You are--

SARA JANE

Sara Jane Wrightship.

OFFICER

Sara Jane Wrightship, you have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you. Do you understand the rights I have just read to you? With these rights in mind, do you wish to speak to me?

As the officer reads Sara Jane her rights, Sara Jane watches as Abby talks to her parents, out of earshot but visibly animated. It looks... productive.

When the officer is done speaking, Sara Jane asks:

SARA JANE

Am I under arrest?

OFFICER

We're gonna go ahead and take you in.

Sara Jane puts out her wrists for handcuffs, and, like the savvy woman she is, says absolutely nothing.

The officer begins to walk Sara Jane over to a police car. Abby notices and breaks off talking with her parents to trot over to Sara Jane. Tight on Abby in her space blanket as she approaches the cop car that Sara Jane is being ducked into.

Tight on Sara Jane, her head is being protected by the officer so it won't hit the top of the door.

ABBY
Officer, wait!

The officer does. Bent over, Sara Jane is the same height as Abby. Abby and Sara Jane lock gazes.

An imagined future passes behind their eyes: Sara Jane leans over the back of Abby's chair as Abby rejects an *ABORTION IS MURDER* bumper sticker in favor of a *LET'S TALK ABOUT ABORTION*; Abby learns to drive, Sara Jane in the passenger seat; Abby saves Sara Jane a seat for her high school one-act questioning when life begins; Abby comes to Sara Jane's college graduation, where Sara Jane gets top honors and a prize for community service; Abby dances with Sara Jane at Maggie's wedding.

They both see it. We can see it on their faces.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(to Sara Jane)
I told them.
(to officer, but really to
Sara Jane)
Go easy on her. Will you?

Off Sara Jane.

INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Sara Jane is being given her one phone call. She stands at the police phone, observed by a female OFFICER, and dials.

INTERCUT: INT. HOTEL ROOM - BREAKERS

Maggie is woken up in Cody's bed by the insistent buzzing of her phone. She looks at the number, doesn't recognize it. But, given recent events, she picks up.

AUTOMATED PHONE VOICE
This is a call from Greenville
County--

Sara Jane waits for the call to be picked up. When it is:

SARA JANE
Maggie?

MAGGIE
Yeah.

SARA JANE
So, I had a lot of time to think last night.
(nothing from Maggie)
No sleep. Lots of thinking.
(still nothing)
You said to call when I was ready to admit that I need something I don't deserve. There's a lot of things. I don't deserve your attention, or forgiveness, or the benefit of the doubt, or to interrupt your Spring Break. I don't deserve to play hero--

MAGGIE
Or abduct small children from their guardians.

SARA JANE
Yes. That. Definitely done with that. And, after what I put you through yesterday, the thing I least deserve is your help.

Maggie's sitting up, listening, taking it in.

SARA JANE (CONT'D)
Maggie, will you come and bail me out?

Maggie takes a deep breath, the kind where you close your eyes. When she opens them again, the barest smile pulls at the corner of her mouth.

MAGGIE
Cody, find your keys. I'll drive.

TITLE: STATE LINES

Credits roll alongside a montage of the photos Maggie took, vertical videos of Abby's wet t-shirt performance, and the video Abby self-taped.

Each is labeled as a courtroom exhibit.