

JANE

Pilot

"Dorothea"

Written by

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Inspired by True Events

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"... we have a very definite revolutionary task to perform
and we are ready for the lifetime of
work and struggle before us."

The Combahee River Collective Statement, 1974

TEASER

THE TEMPTATION'S "BALL OF CONFUSION" PLAYS AS WE INTERCUT:

EXT. DESERTED STREET - NIGHT

SUPER: CHICAGO, MARCH 1972

A pair of lanky, knobby-kneed legs -- a FLOWER-SHAPED BIRTHMARK on the right thigh -- power-walk down a street in the wrong part of town, just about to step off a curb when--

HONK, HONK. A '68 Oldsmobile Cutlass barrels through the intersection and speeds down the street.

The legs keep pushing...

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - SCRUB ROOM - NIGHT

Doors swing open and two feet, sheathed by surgical shoe covers, power in.

EUGENIA LEWELLEN (Black, 27) walks to the wash basin. She wears glasses, but doesn't need them. She just doesn't want the white folks she works with to forget how smart she is.

Eugenia ties on her surgical cap and mask. Suiting up.

EXT. SKETCHY MOTEL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dank. Seedy. No place for our lanky, knobby-kneed BLACK TEEN GIRL (whom we'll eventually know as DOROTHEA THOMAS).

We never see her face.

The Teen Girl passes two vulture-like men who eye her hungrily. She stops at a closed door and KNOCKS.

Just as the door cracks open--

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - SCRUB ROOM - NIGHT

Eugenia briskly scrubs her hands and forearms with antiseptic soap. Something about the way she does it feels like ritual.

She looks out into the adjoining operating room--

INT. SKETCHY MOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT

The Teen Girl anxiously waits as a WOMAN (White, 30s, coke-bottle glasses) counts cash from an envelope.

Across the room, a MAN (White, 30s, greasy hair) sets up a makeshift medical tray: white pills, glass of water, bottle of turpentine, plastic bag.

Finally, the Woman nods at the Teen Girl.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - SCRUB ROOM - NIGHT

EUGENIA'S POV -- ADJOINING OPERATING ROOM

An unconscious BLACK FEMALE PATIENT lays on the operating table. Face covered by a breathing mask.

The SURGICAL TEAM flits about, preparing for the procedure: Instruments lined up on the surgical tray. The Patient's abdomen sterilized with antiseptic. Pubic hair shaved away. A CATHETER threaded between her legs.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SKETCHY MOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT

The Man attaches a THIN RUBBER TUBE to the hose of an INDUSTRIAL VACUUM. A dubious setup.

The Teen Girl sits on a foldaway table, a sheet covers her from the waist down.

The Woman gestures for the Teen Girl to lay back, then squirts Betadine solution between the Teen Girl's legs and wipes at it roughly with a cotton ball.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Eugenia backs into the room, greeted by a Scrub Nurse who helps her into her gown and gloves.

If it wasn't clear before, it is now: EUGENIA IS THE SURGEON.

She moves to the operating table, where the all white Surgical Team waits for her lead.

But Eugenia bows her head and closes her eyes... in prayer.

INT. SKETCHY MOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT

The Man flicks a switch and the vacuum ROARS to life. He approaches the table, where the Teen Girl lays.

The Woman holds her down, as the Man slowly slides the rubber tube between her bent knees.

CLOSE ON: TEEN GIRL'S WIDE EYES -- as TEARS well and fall down the side of her face.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Eugenia's eyes are still closed, head still bowed. The Scrub Nurse looks around at the others, confused and eager to begin.

Eugenia opens her eyes, holds out her hand--

EUGENIA
Scalpel, please.

The Scrub Nurse hands it to her. Eugenia carefully makes an incision across the bottom of the Patient's abdomen.

MUSIC SKIDS TO A STOP AS WE--

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE**INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - OB/GYN WARD - DAY***SUPER: ONE WEEK EARLIER*

The hallways pulse with patients, doctors, orderlies, and visitors. Many of the patients are visibly pregnant.

Metal elevator doors DING open and Eugenia emerges, a WHITE COAT over her turtle neck and corduroys. She approaches the nurse's station and picks up a patient chart, before heading off to--

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - EXAM ROOM - DAY

GLORIA MACDOUGAL (white, 24) sits on an exam table, her pregnant belly making a mound under her gown.

Eugenia and a young white man stand before her -- DR. TIM HILTON (early 20s), a first year resident. The inspiration for Doogie Howser.

TIM

Gloria MacDougal, 24. Fourth pregnancy. 29 weeks. Experiencing cramping and spotting for the last two days.

EUGENIA

Mrs. MacDougal, did you experience cramping or spotting during your previous pregnancies?

GLORIA

(avoiding eye contact)
No.

EUGENIA

Very well. I'm going to do a quick exam just to make sure everything is all right.

Eugenia sits on a stool in front of the exam table.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

Please lean back and place your legs in the stirrups for me.

GLORIA

I thought he was my doctor?

EUGENIA

Dr. Hilton is a first year resident here to observe.

GLORIA

Is there anyone else?

EUGENIA

As a senior resident, I can assure you I'm more than qualified to--

GLORIA

I don't want a colored doctor touching me.

Uncomfortable silence. Then... Eugenia stands. She's dealt with this before.

EUGENIA

Dr. Hilton, you'll perform Mrs. MacDougal's exam.
(for Gloria)
Under my supervision.

Gloria rolls her eyes. Tim's face flushes as he sinks down onto the stool and fumbles to put on a pair of gloves.

Off Eugenia's relaxed, yet obstinate expression...

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Shabby, utilitarian furniture. Eugenia pours herself coffee.

Across the room, DR. KATHY FONTAINE (White, 30) is glued to the TV. Dark under-eye circles reveal she too is an overworked resident.

CLOSE ON: TV SCREEN -- A group of women hold up signs and march in a circle on the steps of the U.S. SUPREME COURT.

Eugenia glances over her shoulder.

EUGENIA

Who's protesting today?

KATHY

Women's groups in D.C. They're hearing that Texas abortion case again.

Eugenia shakes sugar into her coffee, choosing not to respond.

KATHY (CONT'D)
What if it happens?

EUGENIA
I haven't spent a lot of time
thinking about it, if I'm being
honest.

Kathy's head whips around--

KATHY
Really? I can't stop.

Eugenia shrugs as she takes a sip of coffee. She really
doesn't want to have this conversation.

KATHY (CONT'D)
It'd be such a victory. But it
might mean more training for us.

EUGENIA
You think so?

KATHY
Yeah, we would have to learn how to
do the procedures. And it could
even become a new subspecialty,
which would really be wild, but
pretty great, don't you think?

DR. MARY LOUISE HOFFMAN (White, 48) barrels into the room,
saving Eugenia from having to answer.

DR. HOFFMAN
Dr. Lewellen, Dr. Fontaine...

EUGENIA / KATHY
Good morning, Dr. Hoffman!

It's clear this woman instills both fear and respect in her
residents. Dr. Hoffman pours hot water into a Styrofoam cup,
then rips open a Lipton tea bag and dunks it in.

DR. HOFFMAN
Dr. Lewellen, do you have a moment?

EUGENIA
Yes... Is something wrong?

DR. HOFFMAN
It's a private matter.

Dr. Hoffman moves to the door, and Eugenia follows.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
 Good day, Dr. Fontaine.

Eugenia glances back at Kathy, who raises an eyebrow.

INT. DR. HOFFMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Posters and plastic models of the female reproductive anatomy decorate the room. Medical textbooks and paperwork crowd the desk, where Dr. Hoffman and Eugenia sit.

DR. HOFFMAN
 The department is establishing a subspecialty in maternal-fetal medicine--

EUGENIA
 Oh! That's wonderful.

DR. HOFFMAN
 -- It's been a mission of mine for years. We'll be the only hospital offering it in the Midwest, which will make us a leader in treating high-risk pregnancies.

Eugenia nods intently, following along.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
 What are your plans after the Boards?

EUGENIA
 I'm hoping to join a family practice on the Southside. There aren't many OB/GYN's treating--

DR. HOFFMAN
 Black women?

Eugenia nods again.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
 That's very noble.

EUGENIA
 It'd be nice to practice within my community.

DR. HOFFMAN

When you interviewed here, you said that your mother was the reason you wanted to become an OB/GYN, correct?

EUGENIA

My parents wanted a big family, but my mother almost died while in labor with me. I'm surprised you remember.

DR. HOFFMAN

I was very impressed. I still am.

EUGENIA

(flattered)

Thank you.

DR. HOFFMAN

Don't thank me. It's the truth, or I wouldn't say it. We'll be offering one fellowship every year for the program. I'd like to offer the inaugural one to you.

EUGENIA

That would be incredible!

DR. HOFFMAN

I'm happy to hear you're interested.

EUGENIA

I am, absolutely. But--

Dr. Hoffman raises an eyebrow. *There's a but?*

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

I would just need to talk to my family and fiancé--

Dr. Hoffman glances at Eugenia's ring finger. Nothing.

DR. HOFFMAN

I didn't know you were engaged.

EUGENIA

The wedding is in a few months. I've kept a low profile at work. It's hard enough--

DR. HOFFMAN

I understand. Congratulations.

Eugenia smiles graciously.

EUGENIA
I really am honored.

DR. HOFFMAN
It's a big decision. I can give you
a week to think about it.

As Eugenia rises to leave--

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)
Please don't share any of this with
your peers.

Eugenia nods, her excitement mixed with bewilderment.

EXT. STREET - CHATHAM, CHICAGO - DAY

A middle-class Black neighborhood at the beginning of spring.
Sky is clear blue, but the trees are bare.

A TEEN GIRL'S GIGGLE.

DOROTHEA THOMAS (Black, 16) walks past well-kept houses.
Tall, thin, and pretty -- a fair-skinned Beverly Johnson. Her
handsome boyfriend, CURTIS MAYWEATHER (Black, 17), carries
her books. They could be prom royalty.

They slow in front of a house with green awnings, then stare
into each other's eyes. Oh, that young love...

CURTIS
(low, husky voice)
Can I come inside?

DOROTHEA
My momma will be home in an hour.

CURTIS
I'll make sure to leave by then.

He strokes Dorothea's chin softly. She shrugs away.

DOROTHEA
Curtis, I can't...

CURTIS
Did I do something wrong? You been
acting different.

DOROTHEA

No, I just don't want to get in trouble.

CURTIS

You sure it ain't something else?
You can tell me.

Curtis flashes a reassuring smile. *Damn, he's sweet.* Dorothea kisses him. It deepens, getting more passionate--

A CAR DOOR SLAMS.

EUGENIA (O.S.)

You know your momma would be hot as fish grease if she saw you carrying on like that...

Dorothea snatches away from Curtis to see Eugenia leaning against her '67 Ford Fairmont, parked on the curb.

Dorothea smiles sheepishly at Eugenia, then takes her books from Curtis.

DOROTHEA

I'll call you after dinner.

Curtis sighs as he takes off.

EUGENIA

I hope you're as into those books as you are that big-headed boy.

DOROTHEA

You sure you're not my momma?

EUGENIA

I'm just sayin'... Stay focused.

DOROTHEA

Curtis is sweet. He loves me.

EUGENIA

Girl, boys are like buses. One is always pullin' up every 15 minutes.

Dorothea considers this for a moment.

DOROTHEA

Eugenia, when did you really know Wallace was The One?

EUGENIA

Dor, you're in high school. You're too young to be thinking like that.

DOROTHEA

You and Wallace were in high school when you started going together.

EUGENIA

(flatly)

That was different.

Dorothea rolls her eyes: *Sure it was.*

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

Listen, I know it's exciting now. But you're young and you have a bright future ahead of you. Don't get distracted... all right?

DOROTHEA

All right.

They share a smile. More like sisters than neighbors.

EUGENIA

You can always come to me, if you need to talk about anything.

Dorothea nods and watches Eugenia make her way up the walkway of the house next door. She disappears inside.

INT. LEWELLEN HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eugenia, now in a beautiful WEDDING GOWN, tries to stand very still on a small stool. The cream-colored lace makes her brown skin look rich. Still, she has little patience for--

JOYCE LEWELLEN (59), who flits about, tucking and pinning things into place. Even with glasses askew and pins jutting from her lips, she's regal and sharp.

EUGENIA

This is why we should've bought--

JOYCE

You're my only child. I wasn't putting you in no store-bought dress. And even then, I'd still be the one doing these alterations.

As Joyce places another pin, Eugenia's body stiffens.

EUGENIA
 Momma, I have some good news.

JOYCE
 Hold on, Ginny, I'm trying to
 concentrate...

Her hand slips and a pin pushes through the fabric--

EUGENIA
 Ouch!

JOYCE
 Well, if you'd be still...

EUGENIA
 You did that on purpose.

Joyce pauses to give her daughter a look: *Stop being a baby.*

JOYCE
 All right, I'm done with that
 draping. Go on and tell me your
 good news.

EUGENIA
 (so excited)
 Dr. Hoffman offered me the
 hospital's new fellowship in
 maternal-fetal medicine. It would
 be the first year and--

JOYCE
 (suspicious)
 A fellowship?

EUGENIA
 Yeah, it's a really big deal,
 Momma! I'd be helping women with
 difficult pregnancies, saving them
 and their babies.

Eugenia waits for her mother's response. Joyce is silent.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)
 I thought you'd be happy for me.

JOYCE
 I just think it'll be a lot to take
 on with a new husband. Marriage
 takes a lot of work, Ginny.

EUGENIA
 I know, but--

JOYCE
Don't tell Wallace... Not yet.

EUGENIA
I need to give Dr. Hoffman my
answer soon.

JOYCE
Take some time to think about it.
On your own. And then if it's
something you really want, we can
discuss it as a family. All right?

EUGENIA
Yeah, all right, Momma.

Eugenia sighs, deflated.

JOYCE
I told you to hold still.

Joyce pretends to jab Eugenia with another pin.

INT. LEWELLEN HOME - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Eugenia sets four spots at the table as Joyce brings in the
food: green beans, smothered pork chops, and mashed potatoes.

EUGENIA
Dang, Momma. You put your foot in
this meal.

Joyce grins proudly. The sound of KEYS JINGLING in the door
catches both of their attention--

EUGENIA / JOYCE
Wallace? / David?

THE REVEREND (O.S.)
Who else would it be?

A man comes around the corner into the room. A lion of a man,
DAVID LEWELLEN (61) is a husband, father, business owner, and
preacher. Everyone calls him THE REVEREND -- except for Joyce
and Eugenia.

EUGENIA
Hi, Daddy...

She pecks her father on the cheek as he loosens his tie and
takes a seat at the head of the table.

JOYCE
Where's Wallace?

We HEAR the door again. Eugenia's fiancé, WALLACE HARPER (Black, 28) hurries in. Tall, dimpled smile, deep chocolate skin -- the boy is *fine*.

He plants a kiss on Eugenia as soon as he lays eyes on her. They smile at each other, all googly-eyed.

THE REVEREND
Enough of that. Let's eat.

INT. LEWELLEN HOME - DINING ROOM - LATER

Eugenia, Joyce, Wallace, and The Reverend all chow down. Eugenia watches as The Reverend cuts into his pork chop and chomps on a bite, then Wallace does the same exact thing.

It's such a cliché, all she can do is smile before taking a bite of her green beans.

JOYCE
How was the store today?

WALLACE
Busy, but good.

THE REVEREND
Wallace is really proving himself as manager.

The Reverend nods at him in fatherly approval. Wallace beams. Joyce winks at him.

JOYCE
That doesn't surprise me at all.

Eugenia's parents love them some Wallace.

THE REVEREND
Ginny, how the white folks at that hospital treating you?

EUGENIA
It's good, Daddy. Real good. I mean, besides the white woman who asked me not to touch her.

THE REVEREND
(indignant)
They got some nerve.
(MORE)

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

How many centuries did they come
and lay up with us at night when we
were slaves? And how many of 'em
don't mind us raising their kids
and cleaning their houses?

Wallace chuckles. Joyce nods in agreement. Eugenia sighs.

EUGENIA

C'mon now, Daddy. Not all white
folks are prejudiced.

THE REVEREND

Enough of 'em are.

He looks at Eugenia pointedly. She surrenders, taking a bite
of food.

JOYCE

Did y'all see the news from
Washington this morning?

The Reverend slams a fist down on the table, proving his
disdain. Eugenia takes a sip of water. *Here we go...*

THE REVEREND

It's abominable. Those women should
be ashamed of themselves.

WALLACE

What's going on in Washington?

JOYCE

All them white ladies is excited
because the Supreme Court is
hearing that case from Texas. They
think if they make enough noise,
they'll get their way.

WALLACE

I just don't get why any woman
would want to do that.

EUGENIA

Because they don't want a child.

A pause as everyone looks at Eugenia, then each other--

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

(putting out the fire)

I certainly don't believe in that--

JOYCE

I would hope not.

EUGENIA

-- But not every woman wants to be a mother. Is that so bad?

JOYCE

Children are a blessing.

THE REVEREND

And if they don't want children, then they shouldn't be getting themselves into that kinda trouble.

JOYCE

Mmhmm...

Eugenia takes another bite of food.

INT. LEWELLEN HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER

In the dark, Eugenia and Wallace kiss passionately on the sofa. Wallace's hand slowly snakes its way under Eugenia's shirt up towards her--

A HARD SLAP on the wall. The lights cut on. Joyce shuffles in, wearing her robe and hair rollers.

Eugenia and Wallace slide away from each other, stifling laughter.

JOYCE

I surely hope y'all are leaving room for the Lord.

She disappears into the kitchen.

WALLACE

Soon we won't have to worry about nobody cutting the lights on.

Eugenia holds up a finger to her mouth. *Shhh*. A drawer is SLAMMED in the adjacent kitchen, silverware RATTLES.

WALLACE (CONT'D)

We'll finally be Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Harper.

Eugenia points a finger at him.

EUGENIA

I'll be *Doctor* Harper.

WALLACE

Of course, baby.

Eugenia chuckles, rests her head on Wallace's shoulder.

WALLACE (CONT'D)
Can I ask you a question?

EUGENIA
You just did.

Wallace playfully jabs her in the rib. Eugenia giggles.

WALLACE
What was that stuff about at the
dinner table?

EUGENIA
Oh, come on. You know I didn't mean
nothing by it. I was just playing
devil's advocate.

WALLACE
But you know how your daddy is.

EUGENIA
I sure do.

Joyce passes through again, cutting a sideways glance--

JOYCE
We have church in the morning.

Then she disappears up the stairs.

Wallace and Eugenia listen for the bedroom door to close
before they break into another fit of laughter.

EUGENIA
Come on. I can't marry you if my
momma kills you.

She pulls Wallace up from the couch.

PRE-LAP: A choir's rousing rendition of "WHAT A FRIEND WE
HAVE IN JESUS."

INT. MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

The splendor of a packed Black Southern Baptist church on
Sunday morning. Music, clapping, swaying -- if the Holy Ghost
were anywhere, it'd be in this room with these people.

In the front row: Joyce and Eugenia, Dorothea and her mother,
MRS. CHARLENE THOMAS (41).

They all look nice, but it's clear Joyce is the First Lady, in her elegant purple suit and matching ornate hat.

Eugenia smirks at Wallace, who accompanies the choir on the piano. He looks real good in his Sunday Best.

Dressed in pristine black robes, The Reverend slowly makes his way to the pulpit. Shaking hands, patting backs -- a shepherd adored by his flock.

The song reaches its crescendo and The Reverend steps behind his lectern.

THE REVEREND

In the first chapter of Jeremiah,
the Lord says: *Before I formed you
in the womb I knew you, before you
were born I set you apart...*

People WHOOP and AMEN as they settle into their seats.

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

Let us reflect on that: God loves
us so much, we were all created
uniquely in His image. Talk about
undeserved favor, am I right?

A chorus of MMHMMs ripples through the church.

Dorothea SIGHS, leg shaking wildly. Mrs. Thomas cuts her a look: *Child, if you don't stop...*

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

(gaining momentum)

But we take for granted all He's
given to us. We defile our bodies.
We live in ways that don't bring
Him glory. We are selfish.

The Reverend has hit his stride. Folks CLAP and STOMP in response. Eugenia and Joyce nod soulfully.

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

All of a sudden, having pre-marital
sex is liberation. Murdering your
own flesh is liberation. But we
know true liberation is only
through our Lord and Savior.

The fervor of the church builds -- and so does Dorothea's anxiety. She bites a fingernail, on the verge of tears.

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

We're at a crossroads. There are people who want us to forget what God has given us. But we cannot afford to do that. We cannot afford to let the Enemy win. We cannot afford to give up our salvation.

Everyone is on their feet now, activated by his sermon -- including Eugenia.

Her jubilation is interrupted by Dorothea knocking into her, as she darts up the aisle and out of the sanctuary.

INT. MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH - RESTROOM - DAY

Eugenia tiptoes into the room. She hears SNIFFLING coming from inside the single stall.

THE REVEREND (O.S.)

And that's exactly what Jesus is comin' to do.

EUGENIA

Dorothea? What's wrong?

Eugenia tries to open the door, but it won't budge.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

You know you can tell me whatever it is. I won't say anything to anyone. I just want to help.

The stall door flies open. Dorothea stands there: eyes red, cheeks wet, face splotchy.

DOROTHEA

I just want it to go away.

EUGENIA

What's wrong?

Eugenia reaches out for Dorothea--

DOROTHEA

(wailing)

I'm pregnant!

Dorothea crumples to the floor in hysterics. A pitiful, scared little girl. Eugenia is kneeling on the floor with her, taking Dorothea into her arms.

EUGENIA

Shhh, it's gonna be all right.
Everything is gonna be all right.

THE REVEREND (O.S.)

*Because He, and He only, is our
liberation and salvation.*

Off Dorothea burying her face in Eugenia's arms--

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**EXT. MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY**

Eugenia and Joyce greet and chat with the Congregation. Eugenia watches as Mrs. Thomas drags Dorothea by the elbow to the side of the church.

MRS. THOMAS
What has gotten into you?!

DOROTHEA
Ow, Momma, you're hurting me...

MRS. THOMAS
Just wait until we get home. You gonna be in a world of hurt.

Mrs. Thomas regains her composure and glides toward Joyce.

MRS. THOMAS (CONT'D)
Please tell the Reverend today's service was something special. And I do apologize for Dorothea.

JOYCE
I understand, Charlene. I'll give him your sentiments.

Mrs. Thomas moves away from them, then whips her head back--

MRS. THOMAS
Come on, Dorothea. Now.

Dorothea bows her head and follows her mother, avoiding eye contact with Eugenia. Joyce waits until they're gone...

JOYCE
You know what that was about?

EUGENIA
Just something about her boyfriend.

JOYCE
Fast tail girls get fast tail problems.

EUGENIA
Momma...

Joyce shrugs, before greeting a new family. Eugenia watches as Mrs. Thomas's car peels off from the curb.

I/E. WALLACE'S CADILLAC - MOVING - DAY

Wallace hums along to a Motown song as Eugenia stares out of the window.

WALLACE

Man, your daddy was on fire today!

Eugenia nods faintly, her attention somewhere else. She only snaps to when Wallace makes a turn.

EUGENIA

Boy, why you turning down Maple?

I/E. WALLACE'S CADILLAC - LATER

Eugenia looks out of her window at a modest single-story house with red and white awnings over the windows.

Wallace opens the passenger door and helps her out.

EUGENIA

Where are we?

WALLACE

I wanna show you something.

He pulls on her hand and guides her to the front door.

INT. THE HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Eugenia stands in the empty room, taking the space in. Dust collects at the baseboards. Old wallpaper peels away. There are faint marks going up one of the walls. Ages and heights.

Eugenia looks up at Wallace, speechless. He grabs her hand and leads her into the--

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK

On top of a yellow counter, a small gift box with a bow. Eugenia stares at it.

WALLACE

Open it.

Eugenia slowly pulls up the top.

CLOSE ON: A SILVER KEY.

WALLACE (CONT'D)

Welcome home.

Eugenia looks back down at the key, so Wallace can't see the perplexed look on her face.

WALLACE (CONT'D)

I bought it. For us. I was gonna wait until the wedding to tell you, but it's been hard enough keeping it in.

He wraps his arms around Eugenia's waist from behind, rests his chin on her shoulder.

WALLACE (CONT'D)

What do you think?

Eugenia turns to face him with a half-assed smile.

EUGENIA

I'm... speechless.

WALLACE

I know it needs some work, but you know your momma loves decorating. And The Rev and I figured we could tackle the big stuff on weekends.

EUGENIA

My parents know about this?

WALLACE

Yeah. They helped with the down payment.

As Eugenia places the key back in the box, Wallace studies her face.

WALLACE (CONT'D)

You're not excited.

EUGENIA

It's a lovely house. I just wish we could've made this decision together.

WALLACE

I wanted to do something nice for you. You know, a real home for when we start our family.

EUGENIA

I appreciate it. I do. But... What if we waited for a little while?

WALLACE

What are you saying?

EUGENIA

Think about how nice it'd be to enjoy just being a married couple for a bit.

She snakes an arm around his waist playfully, trying to change the mood. She knows she can't tell him the truth. Not like this.

Wallace steps away from her, hurt.

WALLACE

I thought we had a plan?

EUGENIA

We do. But--

WALLACE

I've been waiting on you for ten years, Eugenia.

They stare at each other in silence. Though only a few feet apart, it feels like a whole world is between them.

Wallace charges out of the room and Eugenia is left in the empty kitchen, holding the box.

EXT. THOMAS HOME - EVENING

Eugenia climbs the steps to the porch and KNOCKS on the door. Mrs. Thomas opens up, wiping her hands against her apron.

MRS. THOMAS

Eugenia, how are you?

EUGENIA

Hi, Mrs. Thomas. I'm well. May I speak with Dorothea?

MRS. THOMAS

She's grounded, after her appalling behavior at church today.

EUGENIA

I was hoping to give her a little bit of sisterly advice.

Mrs. Thomas nods, persuaded.

MRS. THOMAS
Only for a few minutes. She's
helping me with dinner.

She disappears into the house. Moments later, Dorothea steps out, shutting the door behind her.

DOROTHEA
Hi, Eugenia.

EUGENIA
(jumping right in)
Have you taken a test? Gone to the
doctor to make sure--

DOROTHEA
Shhh!

She steps down off the porch, looking back towards the house.

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)
Yes, I passed my algebra test. I
took it last Friday.

EUGENIA
And how long were you... studying
before you took it?

DOROTHEA
About two months.

Eugenia holds Dorothea's hands in hers.

EUGENIA
You should tell your parents.

DOROTHEA
No, I can't.

The front door opens--

MRS. THOMAS
Dorothea, I need you to get in here
and cut up these potatoes.

DOROTHEA
Yes, ma'am.
(hushed voice to Eugenia)
I just want this to go away. Since
you're a doctor, I thought maybe
there's somebody you know who
could... make it go away.

MRS. THOMAS

Dorothea, unless you wanna starve
to death...

Dorothea quickly looks over her shoulder, then back at
Eugenia -- brows knit in desperation.

DOROTHEA

Please, Ginny. I'm a good girl. I
just made a mistake.

Dorothea skips up the steps. She gives Eugenia a final
pleading look as she shuts the door.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Eugenia makes herself a cup of tea. She's so lost in her own
thoughts, she doesn't hear Kathy plop down on a SQUEAKY
leather chair only a few feet away.

KATHY

Eugenia? You all right?

Finally, Eugenia snaps to.

EUGENIA

Yes, sorry. I've just got some
stuff on my mind.

Kathy points to the chair across from her--

KATHY

You wanna talk?

Eugenia considers the offer, then sits.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Tim told me about that woman who
wouldn't let you touch her. I know
it can be difficult for you, but
you're a damn good doctor, Eugenia.
Everyone knows it.

EUGENIA

Thank you. But it's not that...

KATHY

What is it then?

Eugenia inhales, exhales a deep breath.

EUGENIA

My neighbor is pregnant. She's still in high school. She wants to... end it.

KATHY

Oh...

EUGENIA

I care about her very much. But I don't know how to help her.

KATHY

(low voice)

I know people who could help.

EUGENIA

(surprised)

You do?

Kathy makes sure no one can overhear outside the room, then--

KATHY

There's this group called Sister Jane. A girlfriend of mine told me about them. They help women. I'll get their number for you.

EUGENIA

That's kind of you, Kathy, but I'm not sure. She's so young and--

KATHY

You don't have to call them, but at least you'll have the number.

PRE-LAP:

GLORIA (O.S.)

Ow, ow, ow! It hurts, it hurts!

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - GLORIA'S ROOM - NEXT DAY

Tim, the first-year resident, fumbles through performing a cervical exam on Gloria as Eugenia observes.

He removes a BLOODIED latex glove from underneath Gloria's hospital gown.

EUGENIA

What do you think, Dr. Hilton?

TIM

She's five centimeters dilated. And about forty percent effaced.

GLORIA

That can't be right-- *Oww!*

Gloria's face tightens as she tries to breathe through the pain of her contraction.

EUGENIA

We need to get her into surgery.

TIM

But she's only--

GLORIA

No! It's too early.

EUGENIA

You're in labor and the baby is distressed. If we don't--

GLORIA

I'm not having this baby yet. You can't make me. It's too early.

EUGENIA

(losing her patience)

Listen to me: Both you and your child's heart rate are too high. You're halfway to being fully dilated. I know this must be incredibly scary, but you're actually hurting your baby at this point. I am a very good doctor and if you let me, I will do everything I can to help both of you.

Gloria looks from Eugenia to Tim, who nods.

GLORIA

Fine.

EUGENIA

(to Tim)

Get her prepped. I'll meet you in the O.R.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - EVENING

Decked in her scrubs, Eugenia performs a C-section on a sedated Gloria.

Assisting Eugenia, Tim places a retractor inside the incision Eugenia has just made as a Surgical Nurse suctions blood. Eugenia makes another incision, and the AMNIOTIC SAC partially balloons out of the uterine wall.

CLOSE ON: EUGENIA'S EYES -- SET, FOCUSED, IN HER ZONE.

She pulls the BABY from Gloria's body: A BOY. He's tiny and delicate. She hands him to the Surgical Nurse.

EUGENIA
You have a baby boy.

TIM
Dr. Lewellen...

The Surgical Nurse holds the baby boy, who does not cry, move, or make a sound. He is breathing, but something is clearly wrong.

GLORIA
(mumbling)
He's not crying... Why... Why isn't he crying?

PRE-LAP:

EUGENIA (V.O.)
The baby has Moebius Syndrome. It causes paralysis of the facial muscles and delayed development.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - GLORIA'S ROOM - LATER

Eugenia holds a patient chart and addresses Gloria and her Husband. Tim stands to the side.

GLORIA
Oh, God...

Gloria wipes away tears. Her Husband holds her tight.

EUGENIA
There are therapies to help. But he'll always be weaker than other children.

Gloria sobs into her Husband's chest.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)
We'll give you some time alone.

Eugenia quietly exits the room, with Tim following her to--

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Eugenia hands the chart to Tim.

EUGENIA

Follow up in a bit. Check her incision and keep an eye on her blood pressure. I need to speak to Dr. Hoffman about something.

Tim nods, taking the orders.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - DR. HOFFMAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dr. Hoffman sits behind her desk, hunched over a stack of paperwork. A KNOCK.

DR. HOFFMAN

Come in.

Eugenia steps into the room.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Hello, Dr. Lewellen.

EUGENIA

Do you have a moment?

Dr. Hoffman nods and gestures for Eugenia to sit.

DR. HOFFMAN

Is this about the fellowship?

EUGENIA

I just had a patient deliver a pre-term baby at 29 weeks with Moebius.

Dr. Hoffman waits for Eugenia to continue...

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

Should I file a report?

DR. HOFFMAN

For?

EUGENIA

Shouldn't we call the police? We both know what causes Moebius Syndrome.

DR. HOFFMAN

You don't know that for sure.

EUGENIA

So... That's it? We're not going to do anything about the fact that she tried to kill--

DR. HOFFMAN

(stern)

Dr. Lewellen, that woman is your patient. And your job is to make sure your patients receive the best treatment you can offer. That's all. We don't go prying into their personal histories. And we surely don't make judgements about them.

She returns to her paperwork. Eugenia leaves the room.

I/E. EUGENIA'S FORD - MOVING - NEXT MORNING

Eugenia drives slowly through her neighborhood, lost in thought. A MOTOWN SONG plays low through the stereo.

She spots a familiar figure walking ahead: Dorothea. Eugenia slows along the curb and rolls her window down.

EUGENIA

You want a ride to school?

Dorothea climbs in and Eugenia pulls away from the curb.

The two ride in silence, except for the MUSIC still playing through the stereo. Finally--

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

How are you feeling?

DOROTHEA

I'm fine, I guess. I just want things to go back to normal.

EUGENIA

Dorothea, what you're asking is dangerous. Haven't you read the papers? Or seen the news? Some of these women die.

DOROTHEA

Of course I know. But I'm not ready to have a baby.

EUGENIA

You wouldn't have to raise it. If you told your parents, you could--

Dorothea's eyes get big with terror.

DOROTHEA
No, no! I can't do that.

EUGENIA
Your parents love you. They'll
support you. They'd help you find a
good home for the baby.

DOROTHEA
They'd disown me! I can't tell
them.

Eugenia sucks in a deep breath.

EUGENIA
What you're asking, it's not right.
It's a sin.

DOROTHEA
Pull the car over.

EUGENIA
Dorothea, please--

DOROTHEA
Pull the car over!

Eugenia pulls along the curb. Before the car has fully
stopped, Dorothea flings the door open--

DOROTHEA (CONT'D)
Thanks for nothing.

She jumps out and SLAMS the door closed, then takes off
running down the street.

Eugenia holds her hands in her lap and leans her forehead
against the steering wheel. In prayer.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**I/E. LEWELLEN SHOE STORE - DAY**

STOREFRONT WINDOW POV -- Wallace arranges a display of men's loafers as The Reverend tends the register.

The bell over the door CHIMES and TWO BROWN BOOTS step into the store--

WALLACE

I'm sorry, but we're about to close for lunch.

Wallace and The Reverend look up to see a smiling Eugenia, holding two grease-stained brown paper bags.

EUGENIA

I brought you boys some lunch.

The Reverend smiles and rubs his hands together, but Wallace is less than enthused.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

Daddy, do you mind if Wallace and I talk for a bit?

INT. LEWELLEN SHOE STORE - BACK ROOM - DAY

Eugenia and Wallace sit across from each other at a small table, a greasy food bag located halfway between them.

Eugenia pushes the paper bag towards Wallace. He doesn't budge.

EUGENIA

Your favorite. Two Portillo's dogs with extra relish.

WALLACE

You think this will fix everything?

EUGENIA

No, but... I can't take you being mad at me anymore. It's been a hard couple of days, and I just really need--

Wallace shakes his head.

WALLACE

It's always about what you need,
ain't it?

EUGENIA

Wallace, the house really is
lovely.

WALLACE

This isn't about the house.

EUGENIA

Then what is it?

WALLACE

It's always been about you. Your
goals. Your dreams. Your career.
Where do I fit in?

EUGENIA

You're part of all those things.

WALLACE

And that's the difference between
you and me, Eugenia. For me, you
are my dream.

Eugenia opens her mouth to speak, but what is there to say?

WALLACE (CONT'D)

You should go.

EUGENIA

Wallace, please...

She reaches for him, but he stands.

WALLACE

I'm hurt, Eugenia. And I have a
right to be, even if you don't like
it. Just give me my space.

Eugenia searches Wallace's face for a glimpse of something,
anything -- but Wallace is stone. She sighs and leaves.

INT. LEWELLEN SHOE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Eugenia, holding back tears, emerges into the main room. She
marches past rows of shoes towards the door--

THE REVEREND (O.S.)

Ginny, wait a minute.

Eugenia turns to see her father coming out of his office.

EUGENIA

I need to get home, Daddy, so I can
rest before my night shift--

The Reverend approaches his daughter and wraps an arm around Eugenia's shoulder.

THE REVEREND

You know I try not to meddle.

She raises an eyebrow: *Really?*

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

Wallace is a good man.

EUGENIA

I don't want to have this
conversation right now.

THE REVEREND

(a command)

Just listen.

Eugenia shifts her weight, giving in.

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

Every day, you make your mother and
I proud. You're smart, ambitious,
and faithful. You're a good girl.
But soon, you'll be married. And
you're going to have to fill your
role as a wife. A wife lets her
husband lead, Ginny.

EUGENIA

So I'm just supposed to let Wallace
make every decision for me? I don't
get a say?

THE REVEREND

That's not what I'm saying at all.

The Reverend stares at her, trying to bridge the gap.

THE REVEREND (CONT'D)

That boy would move heaven and
earth to make you happy.

Eugenia knows this is true, but still--

EUGENIA

I need to get home.

Eugenia turns away from her father abruptly and walks out.

INT. LEWELLEN HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Joyce sits on the sofa, sewing the hem on Eugenia's wedding gown, which is back on the dress form. In the background, *THE MARY TYLER MOORE SHOW* plays on the TV.

Eugenia enters the room, saddle bag on her shoulder and a coat in her arms.

EUGENIA

I'm heading to the hospital, Momma.
I'll be home tomorrow around
lunchtime.

Eugenia tip-toes across the rug and kisses Joyce's cheek.

JOYCE

Don't forget. We still need to pick
out the floral arrangements. Try
not to be late.

Eugenia nods and heads toward the front door--

EXT. LEWELLEN HOME - NIGHT

Eugenia skips down the porch steps toward her Fairmont.

She hears HUSHED ANGRY VOICES nearby, and stops to see TWO DARK FIGURES arguing a little way down the otherwise quiet street. She squints to make out who it is--

The two figures step into the soft, warm light of a street lamp. Eugenia recognizes Dorothea, in a PINK PLAID PEACOCK, and Curtis.

DOROTHEA

So I'm just supposed to go there by
myself?

CURTIS

He gave me a month's worth of
advanced wages for this. I have to
show up for my shift--

EUGENIA

Dorothea? Is everything all right?

Eugenia moves closer. Dorothea stares her down coldly.

DOROTHEA
We're fine. Leave us be.

A long, uncomfortable silence. Eugenia moves back to her car, but she doesn't take her eyes off of them.

CURTIS
Just take this. Please.

Eugenia sees him hold out a WHITE ENVELOPE toward Dorothea, who snatches it out of his hand violently.

EUGENIA
Are y'all sure everything is OK?

DOROTHEA
What do you care?

And with that, Dorothea storms off into the darkness.

Curtis quickly shuffles away in the opposite direction, past Eugenia. He avoids her gaze.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - OB/GYN WARD - NIGHT

A DING as the elevator doors SLIDE OPEN. People step out and disperse. Eugenia is the last to exit.

She passes the nurse's station, then stops and looks towards Gloria's closed door.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - GLORIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

A gentle KNOCK on the door, then Eugenia steps in.

The room is dark -- the only light comes in from the hall. Gloria lays with her back facing the door.

EUGENIA
Mrs. MacDougal, are you awake?

ANGLE ON: GLORIA'S SPLOTCHY, TEAR-STREAKED FACE. EYES OPEN.

Eugenia lowers herself into a chair. She clasps her hands together and bows her head.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)
(whispers)
I prayed to the Lord--

GLORIA
Why are you here?

Eugenia looks up. Gloria is still turned away from her.

EUGENIA

My apologies, I thought you were sleeping.

GLORIA

Please leave me alone.

EUGENIA

I'd like to pray for you.

Gloria turns to face Eugenia. *Is she for real?*

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

You're Catholic, right?

Eugenia points to the silver cross hanging from Gloria's neck. Gloria closes her eyes. Eugenia bows her head.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

(reciting Scripture)

I prayed to the Lord and He answered me. He freed me from all my fears. In my desperation I prayed, and the Lord listened. He saved me from all my troubles. Amen.

Eugenia lifts her head and looks at Gloria, whose eyes are still closed. Eugenia stands and heads towards the door.

GLORIA

I panicked. My youngest wasn't even six months yet...

Eugenia stops and turns back to Gloria.

GLORIA (CONT'D)

I kept thinking... I'm 23 and all I've done with my life is take care of babies.

EUGENIA

My fiancé wants us to start a family as soon as we're married. I feel guilty that I don't.

GLORIA

What kind of mother does this to her own flesh? I'm a monster.

EUGENIA

No, you're not. If the Lord gave you your boy, it was meant to be. His grace is always bigger than our errors.

Gloria watches as Eugenia disappears out of the room.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - LATER

Eugenia, changed into her white lab coat, heads down the hallway for the beginning of her shift. Kathy spots her from the other end of the hallway and walks toward her.

KATHY

I have something for you.

Eugenia takes a moment to register--

Kathy holds out a small rectangle of newspaper. A clipping that reads: "PREGNANT? DON'T WANT TO BE? CALL YOUR SISTER JANE AT 555-4421."

EUGENIA

Oh, right. Thank you, but I don't--

Eugenia studies the clipping for a moment, then slips it into the pocket of her lab coat.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

Thank you. I appreciate it.

Kathy smiles at Eugenia.

KATHY

Anytime. I'll see you later. I've got a patient ready to deliver.

As Kathy takes off... Suddenly, an older white woman in nurse's scrubs -- NURSE LANSON (White, 47) -- is running toward Eugenia.

NURSE LANSON

We've got a situation in the E.R.

From Nurse Lanson's expression, Eugenia knows it's not good.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Eugenia and Nurse Lanson quickly march through the E.R.

NURSE LANSON

She's pretty young. No one saw the car that dropped her off. An orderly said a woman dragged her in, left her in a chair, then ran out...

The energy of the E.R. is frenetic, chaotic -- a different world compared to the warmth of the OB/GYN ward.

NURSE LANSON (CONT'D)

We can't stop the bleeding. It's the worst I've seen in a long time.

Eugenia nods in earnest as they finally arrive at a trauma partition, closed in by a curtain. In the gap between the curtain and floor, we can see shoes scuff and flit around.

Eugenia looks down and sees small puddles of BLOOD on the floor. She pulls open the curtain--

A Black teen girl lays unconscious.

THE LOWER HALF OF HER BODY IS COVERED IN BLOOD.

Tim and another First-Year Resident work quickly around her. The Girl's face is covered by a bag valve mask, as a Nurse squeezes the ventilation bag.

Eugenia slides her hands into Latex gloves, then jumps into the fray--

EUGENIA

Do we have blood on the way?

NURSE LANSON

Three bags of O neg.

EUGENIA

Vitals?

TIM

There's a pulse, but her breathing is shallow. Heart rate is 40 BPM. BP is 70 over 48.

EUGENIA

Do we know what happened?

NURSE LANSON

Based on the excessive bleeding and damage to her labia and vagina, probably a vacuum.

EUGENIA

Dear Lord...

She lifts the sheet draped over the Patient's bloody thighs and examines her pelvis.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

We need to get her into surgery now. Get an O.R. set up.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

We're back to the surgery we saw at the end of the TEASER. The steady BEEPING of an ANALOG HEART RATE MONITOR, as a needle scratches VITALS on paper.

Eugenia stands over the Patient's lower abdomen, making a second incision.

EUGENIA

Retractor, please.

Tim steps forward and inserts the retractor. The Patient's reproductive organs are now visible through the open cavity in her body--

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

This poor girl...

Everyone winces as they finally get a good look at the pure CARNAGE before them: prolapsed uterus, a large chunk of the cervix missing, blood pooling around it all. It's horrific.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

I need suction.

Nurse Lanson (the Scrub Nurse from the Teaser) suctions the excess blood from the cavity.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

We'll have to perform a total hysterectomy. Dr. Hilton, what is the first step?

TIM

Uh, O-synthetic suture of the fundus for traction. Then incise the left round ligament.

Eugenia nods in approval.

EUGENIA

You may proceed.

Tim steps forward, picking up a clamp. Eugenia watches intently as he brings forward the Patient's mangled uterus and clamps the ligaments holding it in place.

But then something catches Eugenia's eye--

A FLOWER-SHAPED BIRTHMARK ON THE PATIENT'S THIGH.

Eugenia GASPS and stumbles backward, bumping into the surgical tray. Instruments CLATTER to the ground, making everyone whip their heads toward her.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

Oh, no. No, no, no... Dorothea!

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**EXT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

Eugenia sits on a bench, in front of the Emergency Room entrance. She is hunched over, face buried in her hands. Coat draped over her scrubs.

She rocks back and forth as she recites a prayer:

EUGENIA

The Lord is my shepherd--

DR. HOFFMAN (O.S.)

Your friend is out of surgery.

Eugenia looks up, eyes big with fear and cheeks wet from crying. We haven't seen her like this -- undone.

Dr. Hoffman approaches.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

She's stable.

EUGENIA

Oh, thank you, Jesus.

Dr. Hoffman sits down next to her and places a hand on Eugenia's shoulder.

DR. HOFFMAN

How old is she?

EUGENIA

Sixteen. She asked for my help and I told her no.

DR. HOFFMAN

You'll make yourself sick, thinking that way.

EUGENIA

She won't ever be able to have children.

DR. HOFFMAN

Dr. Lewellen, this is not your fault.

EUGENIA

Is there anything I can do?

DR. HOFFMAN

We need her parents' information,
so we can notify them.

EUGENIA

I'll do it. I'll bring them. They
should hear it from me.

Eugenia wipes at her eyes, her cheeks.

DR. HOFFMAN

Are you sure?

Eugenia nods wildly. Dr. Hoffman offers a sympathetic smile.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

It's a shame, isn't it? How much
these women and girls will risk
when they're desperate.

The two women hold each other's gaze for a moment. Then Eugenia watches as Dr. Hoffman makes her way back to the hospital, disappearing inside.

SILENT MONTAGE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

MAHALIA JACKSON'S "TAKE MY HAND, PRECIOUS LORD" PLAYS AS:

-- I/E. EUGENIA'S FORD - Eugenia, distressed and drained, as she drives through her neighborhood.

-- EXT. THOMAS HOME - Eugenia knocks on the door. A LIGHT goes on through a window. MR. THOMAS (Black, 40s) opens the door in his robe. His face falls as the news hits him. He calls back into the house...

-- EXT. THOMAS HOME - Eugenia, Mr. Thomas, and Mrs. Thomas rush out of the house and dash down the porch, toward Eugenia's Ford Fairmont.

-- EXT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - Mr. Thomas grasps onto his wife's shaking shoulders as they follow Eugenia to the hospital entrance.

-- INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - They erupt from the elevator in a fearful frenzy.

-- INT. DOROTHEA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - Dorothea is unconscious. Pale and small, we see her as the little girl she really is. Her parents enter. Mrs. Thomas cradles Dorothea's face, kisses her cheeks. Mr. Thomas kneels at her feet in prayer. Eugenia watches them from the doorway, then leaves--

END MONTAGE

EXT. HARPER HOME - DAWN

The sky is violet. The sun has not risen. Eugenia rings the doorbell.

The door opens to reveal a half-dressed Wallace.

WALLACE
Eugenia? It's the crack of--

EUGENIA
(voice shaking)
I just need you to hold me. Please.

Wallace takes her in -- red eyes, puffy face.

As if a reflex, he brings her into him, hugging her tight. Eugenia lays her head on his chest and her whole body sighs.

INT. HARPER HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Eugenia sits at the dining table. Wallace places a cup of tea in front of her, then sits next to her.

EUGENIA
I'm sorry if I woke your momma.

WALLACE
Don't worry about it.

Eugenia places her hands on either side of the steaming cup.

EUGENIA
I've never seen anything like that,
Wallace.

WALLACE
Have you told your parents?

EUGENIA
(choking up)
I just came here.

Wallace strokes her cheek.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)
You asked me where you fit in.

WALLACE
We can talk about that later.

EUGENIA

This is where you fit in, Wallace.
You make me feel safe. With you, I
can melt and be undone. Because you
always put me back together. So you
fit in, all right?

Wallace nods and kisses her forehead.

WALLACE

It's a damn shame. Her parents must
be beside themselves.

EUGENIA

How could someone do that to her?
She's just a child.

WALLACE

They're monsters, Ginny. That's all
there is to it. Don't go trying to
make sense of it.

Eugenia takes a sip of her tea, the gears in her head
spinning.

I/E. EUGENIA'S FORD - MOVING - MORNING

As Eugenia backs out of the driveway, she waves to Wallace,
who stands on the porch of his house.

It's still too early for people to be on the road. As Eugenia
drives through the streets of Chicago, her eyes scan --
searching for something.

Finally, she spots it and pulls over.

I/E. PHONE BOOTH - CHICAGO STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Eugenia bounces with nervous energy as the DIAL TONE comes
from the phone. She holds the SISTER JANE CLIPPING.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(through phone)
Hello?

EUGENIA

I got this number from a friend. I
really need your help.

Off Eugenia, trying not to let her rage boil to the surface.

EXT. STREET - WEST TOWN, CHICAGO - DAY

Eugenia's Ford Fairmont pulls up along the curb and stops. She clambers out, looking across the street to--

A GRAY BRICK BUILDING WITH SMALL SQUARE WINDOWS.

INT. WEST TOWN BUILDING - DAY

Eugenia climbs staircase after staircase in the slightly rundown building. The stairs CREAK under her weight as she finally arrives on the landing of the fifth floor.

She pauses to catch her breath momentarily, then heads down the hall toward--

APARTMENT 5G.

Eugenia takes a deep breath and KNOCKS. No response. She knocks again... The door slowly opens halfway.

A woman with frizzy hair -- RUTHIE SIEGERMAN (White, 34) -- sticks her head through the partially opened door. Though her face relaxed, we can tell she's on edge. She's always on edge.

RUTHIE
May I help you?

EUGENIA
Yes, I'm here to see Jane.

Ruthie examines Eugenia for a moment, then finally opens the door and ushers Eugenia in.

INT. SISTER JANE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Eugenia looks around the apartment. It's modestly furnished in neutral colors. A few green plants liven it up.

EUGENIA
It's different than I imagined.

RUTHIE
Can I get you water? Tea?

Finally, Eugenia remembers why she came here.

EUGENIA
A sixteen-year-old girl is in the hospital right now. She had to have a hysterectomy.

Ruthie's eyes flash with shock and sadness.

RUTHIE
That's awful--

EUGENIA
(voice shaking)
A vacuum cleaner almost tore her
apart. She almost died. She'll
never be able to have children.

Ruthie takes a step back, now sensing Eugenia's anger.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)
Are you the ones who did it? Did
she come here?

RUTHIE
Miss, I promise you we had nothing
to do with--

EUGENIA
That's what you do here, right? You
butcher desperate girls!

RUTHIE
Absolutely not. We help them.

EUGENIA
Bullshit!

RUTHIE
I think you should leave.

Ruthie moves for the door--

PATRICIA (O.S.)
Hold on. Let her speak.

A woman emerges from the back: PATRICIA MADERA (Latina, 31).
Jet black hair and square glasses. A knowingness about her.

EUGENIA
I want to know how someone could do
that to her!

Tears now stream down Eugenia's face.

EUGENIA (CONT'D)
She's only sixteen. She's just a
little girl.

Eugenia's chest heaves as the guilt and devastation rush out of her. She sobs. Patricia's face softens. It's heartbreaking to watch. Ruthie is still suspicious.

As Eugenia cries, Patricia slowly reaches out to Eugenia and embraces her. At first, Eugenia stiffens... but then, she lets herself be held.

PATRICIA

I am so sorry for what happened to your friend. It's terrible. If she had come to us, we would've taken care of her.

Eugenia breaks apart from Patricia's hug, recomposes herself--

EUGENIA

How can you say that?

Patricia takes Eugenia in: First, her splotchy and exhausted face, then the scrubs underneath her coat.

PATRICIA

You're a doctor, aren't you?

EUGENIA

Fourth year OB/GYN resident.

PATRICIA

Follow me.

Patricia heads toward the hallway... Ruthie steps forward and gently tugs on Patricia's hand.

RUTHIE

I don't think that's a good idea.

PATRICIA

It's OK. I trust her.

Eugenia skeptically follows Patricia. Ruthie hangs back.

Patricia stops in front of a closed bedroom door. She slowly turns the knob and reveals--

INT. SISTER JANE APARTMENT - PROCEDURE ROOM - DAY

What should be a bedroom has been converted into a HYBRID MEDICAL EXAM/OPERATION ROOM. Surgical tray. Operating table. Simple medical supplies: latex gloves, antiseptic solution, sterilizing alcohol, etc.

Though the set-up is rudimentary, it's clear that no one could be harmed here. These women know what they're doing.

Eugenia's mouth drops -- she can't believe her eyes.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE**INT. SISTER JANE APARTMENT - PROCEDURE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Eugenia stands in the door frame, taking everything in. She looks back at Patricia and Ruthie.

EUGENIA
How did you... ?

PATRICIA
This is what we do. Women deserve better than some back alley operation.

Finally, Ruthie steps forward to join Patricia.

RUTHIE
We would never hurt anyone the way your friend was hurt.

Suddenly overwhelmed, Eugenia pushes past the women toward the front door.

Before leaving, she turns back to them.

EUGENIA
I'm... I'm sorry.

And she's gone.

Off Ruthie's and Patricia's perturbed looks--

INT. LEWELLEN HOME - DAY

Eugenia drags herself through the front door, face long and shoulders heavy with exhaustion.

Upon the sound of the door closing--

JOYCE (O.S.)
Eugenia? Is that you?

Joyce hurries to the foyer, with The Reverend and Wallace trailing closely behind her.

WALLACE
Where did you go?

JOYCE
Wallace told us what happened.
We've been worried sick.

Joyce wraps Eugenia up in her arms, holding her daughter tight. After a moment, Eugenia peels herself away.

EUGENIA

I'm sorry. I went for a drive to clear my head.

THE REVEREND

How you holding up, Ginny?

EUGENIA

I'm tired, Daddy. I just want to sleep.

JOYCE

Your father and I are going to visit the Thomases at the hospital.

EUGENIA

(to Wallace)

Are you coming?

WALLACE

I gotta open up the store.

EUGENIA

I think I'm going to rest.

She heads for the stairs, then The Reverend says--

THE REVEREND

You should come with us, Ginny. Represent the church.

Eugenia nods. Duty calls.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - OB/GYN WARD - DAY

Flanked by The Reverend and Joyce, Eugenia slowly makes her way down the halls. The Reverend carries his large, leather-bound BIBLE and Joyce carries a floral arrangement.

Eugenia avoids making eye contact with her hospital colleagues.

Finally, they arrive at Dorothea's room.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - DOROTHEA'S ROOM - DAY

Eugenia watches from just inside the doorway as Joyce holds Mrs. Thomas, offering strength and comfort. At Dorothea's bedside, Mr. Thomas and The Reverend pray over her body.

Dorothea still sleeps. She's so pale, she almost looks dead.

It's all too much for Eugenia, who turns to leave the room. Joyce notices.

JOYCE

Ginny?

EUGENIA

I'm sorry, Momma. I can't be here.

And Eugenia is out the door...

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Eugenia power-walks down the long hallway with her head down, trying to keep it together. She doesn't notice Dr. Hoffman moving toward her--

The two women collide.

EUGENIA

I'm sorry.

Dr. Hoffman observes the flustered and unraveling Eugenia.

DR. HOFFMAN

It's all right. Come with me.

INT. UNIV. OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL - DR. HOFFMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The two women sit at Dr. Hoffman's desk.

DR. HOFFMAN

Do you need time off?

Eugenia shakes her head vehemently.

EUGENIA

I just can't see her like that.

DR. HOFFMAN

We expect her to make a full recovery. You do know that?

EUGENIA

I've known her since she was born.

DR. HOFFMAN

The police came this morning. When she wakes up, they'll be back.

EUGENIA

You think the people who did this
can be caught?

Dr. Hoffman takes a moment, deciding whether to go with
honesty or consolation.

DR. HOFFMAN

(honesty)
It's unlikely.

Eugenia processes this.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Your father is a pastor?

EUGENIA

Yes. A reverend.

DR. HOFFMAN

Did you know I grew up Catholic?

From the look on Eugenia's face, this is a revelation.

EUGENIA

You did?

DR. HOFFMAN

It used to be hard for me to
empathize with anyone who didn't
want children. I didn't understand
how any woman could terminate.
Especially in our work. We see how
hard some women try. We see how
happy they are when their children
are born. And how devastated they
are when they don't make it.

EUGENIA

What changed your mind?

DR. HOFFMAN

I simply don't believe any girl or
woman deserves to die because she
can't imagine anything worse than
having an unwanted child.

Those words hit Eugenia like a freight train.

DR. HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Sorry if I offended you.

EUGENIA

You didn't.

Dr. Hoffman looks at the clock on her wall.

DR. HOFFMAN

I have a surgery scheduled. Stay in here as long as you need.

EUGENIA

Thank you, Dr. Hoffman. For everything.

Dr. Hoffman comes around to Eugenia and takes her hand.

DR. HOFFMAN

She will survive this. And so will you. We are resilient creatures, us girls.

With that, she's gone.

Eugenia sits in the aftermath of her words. Then, something sparks... and Eugenia is out the door as well.

EXT. WEST TOWN BUILDING - EVENING

Once again, Eugenia's Ford Fairmont pulls up along the curb.

INT. WEST TOWN BUILDING - EVENING

Eugenia KNOCKS rapidly on the door of Apartment 5G.

EUGENIA

(to herself)

Come on, come on... God, please let them still be here.

The door cracks open and Ruthie peers out. Upon recognizing Eugenia from earlier--

RUTHIE

We really are sorry about what happened to your friend, but--

EUGENIA

I know. I'm not here about that. I brought a peace offering.

RUTHIE

Miss, please, I don't want any trouble. Just let us go about our business.

EUGENIA

I said terrible things earlier. I can't take them back. But I want to help you. Please, come with me. It'll take two minutes.

Off Ruthie, considering Eugenia's plea--

EXT. WEST TOWN BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Ruthie follows Eugenia out of the building and to the curb where Eugenia's Fairmont is parked.

Eugenia looks around to make sure no one is looking, then unlocks her trunk and lifts up the lid--

A SINGLE BLACK TRASH BAG.

Ruthie looks from the trash bag to Eugenia in confusion...

EUGENIA

No one deserves to die for not wanting a child. I may not agree with the work you do, but I can see you take great pride in doing it safely. And you care about the women you help. So... You should be able to continue helping those who need you.

Eugenia leans into the trunk and opens the mouth of the trash bag to reveal--

A HODGEPODGE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND INSTRUMENTS.

Ruthie looks at Eugenia incredulously. *Who are you?*

EUGENIA (CONT'D)

As long as you make sure the women you help are safe, I can bring you the supplies you need to do it.

ANGLE ON: RUTHIE AND EUGENIA FROM THE TRUNK -- Ruthie's shock and Eugenia's anxious uncertainty.

ARETHA FRANKLIN'S "RESPECT" STARTS AS WE--

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT