

THE DIVINE
Episode 1: Magdalene

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INT. CHURCH BAPTISMAL POOLS - DECEMBER 1970, ILLINOIS

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A young girl stares directly at us. She's standing, waist deep in a pool of water. A man stands behind her, but we cannot see his face. They both wear loose white robes.

The girl continues to stare at us in anticipation. A hand reaches up and rests on her head.

BISHOP (V.O.)

The person who is called of God
and has authority from Jesus
Christ to baptize, shall go down
into the water with the person who
has presented herself for baptism,
and shall say, calling her by
name: Sister Ada Waterman, having
been commissioned of Jesus Christ,
I baptize you in the name of the
Father, and of the Son, and of the
Holy Ghost. Amen.

The man then dunks the girl under the water.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD, PEWS - LATER

A group of men stand around Ada, who sits in a wooden chair. They all pile their hands on her head.

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One of the men begins to speak.

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MAN

Ada Waterman, In the name of Jesus
Christ, and by the authority of
the holy Melchizedek Priesthood, I
confirm you a member of The Church
of Jesus Christ of Latter-day
Saints and say unto you, 'receive
the Holy Ghost.'

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We see Ada's mother in the pews smiling at group.

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MAN

Ada, I bless you, may you always
remember this day, always do your
best to follow thy commandments,
and bless you to gain the
knowledge to learn more of the
gospel. I also bless you that you
always keep the Savior as the
foundation of your life.

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(MORE)

MAN (CONT'D)

That you will look to him in times
of uncertainty and know that he
will guide you. This blessing I
give to you in the name of Jesus
Christ, Amen.

CROWD

Amen.

The group separates and we see Ada open her eyes in the chair.

Ada's mother approaches her. She takes her hand and walks with
her back to the pews.

MOTHER

How does it feel, honey? You are
officially part of the church now.

Ada beams back at her mother.

MOTHER

Remember, honey, you'll always
have all the answers you'll need
here. Okay, Ada?

Ada doesn't answer, she stares ahead at the altar.

MOTHER

Ada?

Her mother calls her name another time.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - MARCH 1973, ILLINOIS

Ada, now 11, stands with an empty classroom behind her. She
stares ahead of her still.

TEACHER

Ada?

Ada snaps out of it.

ADA

Yes, Mrs. Richards?

MRS. RICHARDS

I asked you if you could explain
this answer you put down on your
test. Can you?

Mrs. Richards slides a paper over to Ada. There is a question circled that reads "How old is the earth?" Ada has written 6000 years as her answer.

ADA
I don't know.

MRS. RICHARDS
Ada, did you not pay attention in class? We talked about this last week.

ADA
(defensive)
I do pay attention! I just...

MRS. RICHARDS
You just what?

ADA
My mom told me that you were wrong, and I should only believe what the church says. And the church says...
(beat, meek)
The church says the world is 6000 years old and Jesus is coming back soon.

MRS. RICHARDS
I see. And that's why you didn't write what we learned in class on your test?

ADA
My mom told me I shouldn't listen to people that tell me different things...

MRS. RICHARDS
I see. Well maybe I'll have a talk with your mother. You can go Ada.

Ada goes to say something, but holds her tongue. She exits the room.

INT. WATERMAN HOUSE, DINING ROOM - LATER

The family sits around the table. A new addition occupies a chair, a 3 year old boy sitting on a stack of phonebooks.

MOTHER
Your teacher called me today.

Ada does not answer. She stares meekly into her mashed potatoes.

MOTHER

She said you got a bad grade on your test.

ADA

I just did what you told me to...

MOTHER

I know, honey. I'm proud of you. You took my advice and told the teacher what you knew was true, even if it's different from what she said.

Ada looks up a bit.

MOTHER

Don't ever let anyone tell you something different. What do I always tell you?

MOTHER

The church knows best.

ADA

The church knows best.

Ada's mother glances over at their father, who has been silent.

MOTHER

Now, I'll handle Mrs. Richards, and you, I'll take you to Pop's tomorrow after baptisms as a reward.

She winks at Ada.

ADA

Really?!

MOTHER

As long as Dad is okay with us taking a little detour.

Ada's father shrugs.

Ada smiles and continues eating.

INT. CHURCH BAPTISMAL POOLS

Ada again stands before us in the white baptismal gown. She glances to her right for a moment and tries to stifle a giggle.

BISHOP

Sister Ada Waterman, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you, for and in behalf of Johnathan Quinn Parker, who is dead, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

As Ada goes under the water, we move with her

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INT. CHURCH BAPTISMAL POOLS - MARCH 1978, ILLINOIS

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An older face resurfaces from the water. Ada is now 16, and much more practiced at the Baptism. She shakes her head as water streams down her face.

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Ada looks back at the Bishop, who is also slightly older now. He gives her a quick nod, and she steps out of the pool.

INT. CHANGING ROOM - DAY

Ada closes herself into a private stall in the changing room. She drapes the soaked robe over the stall door, and grabs the towel next to it. Another girl enters the stall next to her.

NANCY

Is that you, Ada?

*

*

ADA

Last I checked.

*

NANCY

Ugh! Such a long one today, how many did you end up doing?

*

ADA

I don't know, maybe 25 or 30? The Bishop was moving slow. What about you?

*

*

*

NANCY

Oh my Gosh. You should have seen Matthew. Reading that script like it was the last thing he'd ever do. We must have done 60!

*

*

*

*

*

ADA

60? We were in there for like an hour! How did you get 60?!

*

*

NANCY

I know, tell me about it! Its not fair that you're always with the Bishop.

ADA

I think he likes the familiarity. It's been what, 8 years of this with me? Pretty sure he's just tired of trying to figure out new people.

NANCY

Huh, well at least it works out for you. You're doing the Invocation today, aren't you?

ADA

(startled, rushed)

OHMYGOSH I AM! I'M SORRY BYE I'LL SEE YOU LATER!

We hear BANGING ON THE WALLS OF THE CHANGING ROOM STALL as Ada hops on one foot to get her last shoe on.

Ada bursts out of the door, the wet robe and a towel trailing behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD, ALTAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ada stands at the altar wearing a modest floral dress, hair still slightly wet from the baptism. She faces the congregation.

She glances over to her right, and takes a deep breath.

ADA

D-Dear Father in Heaven, I come before Thee in grateful prayer tonight, thin-thanking Thee for my life and health, for agency, and for a future. Please accept my gratitude for sending Thy Son. I pray that I will follow His example of kindness, forgiveness, and...um...

(beat)

purity.

BISHOP

Thank you, sister Waterman for delivering the Invocation.

(MORE)

BISHOP (CONT'D)
 We shall begin today with the
 confirmation of our recently
 Baptized. As a community, I feel
 it is important to-

Ada lets out a tense breath, and closes her eyes. *

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD, PEWS - LATER

Ada walks the aisles between the pews picking up any small bits
 of trash that have been left and straightening hymnals in in
 the pews. She's diligent, but clearly going through the
 motions. *

We see her father in the background doing the same.

As Ada walks between the pews, a young boy catches up to her,
 walking in the same direction, one row over. He trails behind
 her by a few feet still.

BOY
 (quietly)
 So...uhh...quite the mess in here
 today, huh

Ada does not hear him and continues with her work. She's zoned
 out.

The boy swallows and trots to the end of the pew to meet Ada as
 she comes out of the row.

BOY
 I..uh..Liked your invocation today

ADA
 (startled)
 Jeremy! Gosh, I'm sorry, I was
 just-nevermind, what did you say? *

JEREMY
 (nervous laughter)
 Haha. That's okay. I said I liked
 your invocation, I thought you did
 a good job.

ADA
 I'm glad someone did. I thought I
 messed it up so bad. *

JEREMY

I don't think you did, I thought
it was good, classic.

*
*

ADA

Well, thank you, that makes one of
us.

*

Jeremy looks around nervously

ADA

Are you alright? You seem-

JEREMY

(restrained, but bursting)
Can you call me tonight? I want to
talk you, but-
(beat)
uhh tonight.

*

Jeremy pulls a slightly wrinkled piece of paper out of his
pocket.

ADA

I-

JEREMY

Here's my number, call after
dark so my mom doesn't hear
the phone.

As he hands her the number, he scampers out of the church,
trash bag and all. He nearly stumbles on the steps, but catches
himself.

Ada watches this, stunned, unsure of what to make of the
situation.

FATHER

Ada? Where's he going? He told me
he'd help until we were done
today.

ADA

(Beat)
He...um...he said he had to go run
an errand. Something for his
mom...?

*
*

Ada waits a moment, hiding her nervousness.

FATHER

I wish he would have told me that.
Well what can you do. Let's finish
up, I know you've got your own
errands to run.

Ada nods and glances out the door before returning to her task.

EXT. MAIN STREET - AFTERNOON

Ada walks down the street, paper in hand. She turns it over between her fingers, over and over again, but she doesn't open it.

She passes by a small café as she walks down the street. She peeks in the doorway to check the time, thinks for a moment, and walks inside.

INT. POP'S CAFÉ - CONTINUOUS

Ada walks into the café. It's a mom and pop shop, that's moderately busy having just passed the lunch rush.

A young couple, only a few years older than Ada sit together in a booth, both stirring coffee in thick white ceramic mugs. The young man is animated in his conversation

The young man sports a thin mustache and jeans. The young woman with him wears a pair of faded bellbottoms. Ada glances at them as she walks by.

YOUNG MAN

I'm *TELLING* you, babe. Bobby has no idea what he's talking about. It's gonna be a rematch. It's gotta be a rematch. I mean like, come on. Have you *SEEN* that rookie, Welch?

YOUNG WOMAN

I know, I know, we *juust* talked about this.

YOUNG MAN

But babe, you don't understand. The man's got a *canon* for an arm.

YOUNG WOMAN

(beat)
"The man's got a *canon* for an arm" I think I do get it

She looks at him for a moment. They both laugh. She gives him a kiss on the cheek and slides a bit closer.

Ada watches the couple chat idly while drinking their coffee.

CAFE CLERK

Miss? Can I help you?

ADA

Oh! Um. Just a lemonade. Thanks

She trails off.

CAFE CLERK
That'll be fifty cents.

Ada digs around in her bag and pulls out two quarters.

ADA
Thank you

Ada takes the glass bottle and leaves. The couple continues to chat as she departs.

INT. LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Ada enters the library. A SMALL BELL rings as she enters. She squeezes past a few people near the checkout desk, and makes her way into the aisle she's looking for. **The librarian gives her a look as she passes.**

In the same aisle, we find Nancy also looking for something.

ADA
Hey

Nancy does not look up.

NANCY
Hey

ADA
History? What are you looking for?

NANCY
Ugh, I've got to do some research for Hendrickson's paper. You here for Shadow?

ADA
Yeah, my mom heard a new copy came in.
(beat)
Apparently Jeremy said something to her.

NANCY
Oh? I wonder how he found out. He doesn't seem the type to keep track of that kind of thing.

ADA
You think? What kind of type do you think he is, then?

Nancy glances over

NANCY

I don't know, he just seems like
the rest of the boys. Dunno, I
only see him in...

(beat)

Oh, Hendrickson's class. I don't
really pay them much mind.

ADA

(reserved)

Ha. Me neither, he seems nice
though.

NANCY

(accusative)

Whats with the sudden interest?

ADA

What? I was just asking! There's
no sudden interest, he just came
up in the conversation.

Ada finds the book she was looking for. She picks it up. While
looking at the shelf she picks another book up.

ADA

Here. Hendrickson loves "American
Pageant".

Nancy studies it for a moment.

NANCY

Huh. Thanks. I'm gonna keep
looking for a bit though, maybe
I'll find something that he hasn't
seen before.

ADA

Good luck on that. I'll see you
later!

NANCY

See you!

Ada nods and walks away. Nancy continues with her search.

Ada approaches the checkout line. She pulls her library card
from her bag, and steps up. There is a young man at the
counter, no more than 19.

IAN

Ada.

ADA

Ian.

IAN
Shadow or Reality again?

ADA
It's what my mother asked for.

IAN
Is this one coming back?

ADA
(lying)
Of course.

Ian gives Ada a flat look. He checks the book out and hands it to her.

IAN
I'll just go ahead and put another one of these on the order list.

Ada gives him a sneer, and walks out.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Ada departs the library, hands full. She walks down the street, adjusting every once in a while to carry the weight of the large book. *

A mid 50's beater stops at a traffic light right next to her. We hear "Black Dog" by Led Zeppelin. *

Ada glances in the window and sees two boys in the front seat, no more than 18. They both sport long hair and are smoking cigarettes. The one driving thrashes his head around to the song. *

The boy in the passenger seat glances over at Ada, who is still staring. He gives her a nod. *

The exact moment the light turns green, the car jumps and the boys speed off into the distance. *

Ada shakes her head subtly and continues walking. *

EXT. BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

We see Ada and her mother standing side by side in their backyard. A pillar of smoke is rising between them.

We see Shadow or Reality burning in a small fire pit.

Ada looks up at her mother.

ADA
Mom, can I ask you a question?

MOTHER
Of course you can, what about?

ADA
How did you and Dad meet?

MOTHER
Oh, that was so long ago, I hardly remember.

ADA
(playfully)
There's no way you don't remember, tell me!

MOTHER
Oh its such a boring story, honey, you don't want to hear that!

ADA
Mooooooooooooooooom!

MOTHER
Don't give me that!

Ada gives her mother her best pouty face. It worked when she was 8, and she's trying her best to make it work now.

Her mother looks at her and sighs.

MOTHER
Okay, fine.

Ada perks up.

MOTHER
I was only a little older than you are now, just graduated High School. It was summer, so I think I had been working at the bank for a few months then. Four? Five? That's not very important.

Ada listens patiently.

MOTHER
I told you I was a bank teller back when I lived in Philadelphia, right? You remember.

(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

So there I was, working at this bank and my boss comes to me and tells me that I need to go to some training for the bank. And he tells me that the only class is downtown! I told him I couldn't go, I had plans already! SO he looks at me and says "well we can hire someone who will go".

(Beat)

I tell you, I was shocked. So I went. I took the L downtown, and went to this class. I was so mad when I got there, when I walked into the room, I threw that door open like it was the last thing I'd do! And what do you know, I hear a big thud and a shout!

(Laughing)

I snapped right out of it! I looked behind the door, and there was this handsome young man, laying right on his bottom. I knocked him clean out of his chair! So I helped him up, I apologized I don't even remember how many times.

(Beat)

but we started talking, and here's the crazy thing...

(beat)

Turns out, we were BOTH in the All City Band, Orchestra AND choir! And we never ever even saw each other! Well that just seemed too much of a coincidence to just let pass you by, so we started talking. One thing leads to another, and...you know the rest.

Ada looks at her mother, wide eyed.

ADA

You hit him with the door?!

MOTHER

(laughing)

Oh honey, I didn't just hit him with the door, I knocked him right out of his seat!

ADA

And he wasn't mad?

Her mother flicks her hair from her shoulder gently. *

MOTHER *
I guess I was just too *
irresistible to be mad at. *

They both laugh. Ada leans her head on her mother's arm. *

MOTHER *
Well, come on, we should probably *
get dinner started. Your father *
will be home soon. *

Ada's mother turns and walks into the house. Ada stays behind for a moment, watching the book burn in the fireplace, holding the paper tightly in her hand.

INT. WATERMAN HOUSE, DINING ROOM - LATER *

The waterman family sits around the table together. They pass around a large bowl of Chicken A La King, along with a particularly unappetizing bowl of minute rice. *

As the family finishes serving, they join hands. *

FATHER *
Dear Heavenly Father, we're *
thankful for this food and the *
chance we have to spend time *
together as family. Please bless *
those who are not here with us *
with safety. We say these things *
in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. *

The sound of four sets of SILVERWARE CLINKING ON PLATES all go off at once. Everyone begins eating. *

MOTHER *
So, Jacob, how was school? *

JACOB *
It was ok. *

MOTHER *
Just ok? *

JACOB *
Yeah, just okay I guess. *

MOTHER *
Are you having trouble with *
something honey? *

JACOB
(defensive)
No!

ADA
You know, you better get help if
you're having trouble. If you're
the dumbest kid in the class, no
girls are gonna like you.

Jacob gives Ada a blank stare. Her mother gives Ada an
unimpressed glance.

MOTHER
Well, Ada, maybe you can help your
brother this weekend.

ADA
(reflex)
But I was going to be at Nancy's
this weekend! We were going to go
over our English paper! I need to
get an A or else I'm not gonna get
into any decent college.

MOTHER
(under her breath)
Here we go again...

FATHER
I don't think you'd need to worry
about it if you'd at least
CONSIDER going to BYU.

ADA
I don't WANT to go to BYU.

FATHER
I just think it would be good for
you. That's all.

ADA
Good for me? Or just good for me
to meet a husband?

MOTHER
Ada! Do not speak to your father
like that.

ADA
(cooling down)
I'm sorry.
(MORE)

ADA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Just...how many girls *actually*
graduate from BYU?

MOTHER

I don't know honey. I'm sure you
could get a fine education there.

ADA

I don't *want* just a *fine*
education, though. I want a *good*
education. You don't have to go to
BYU to find a husband...

MOTHER

Well we can work that out later.
Let's just...eat as a family for
now.

The table falls quiet for a bit.

JACOB

(meek)

...so are you gonna help me this
weekend...?

Ada sighs.

ADA

Sure, Jake. We can work on it
after church.

INT. ADA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ada lays in bed. The Paper sits on her nightstand, waiting to be opened. We hear faint voices through the walls, but nothing we can decipher.

We hear DOORS CLOSE and LIGHT SWITCHES CLICK as people begin going to bed.

Ada slowly opens her door to look in the hall. She sees darkness under each of other doors. The phone sits on a table, waiting to be picked up.

She closes the door again, and sits. She stares at the clock, waiting for seconds to pass. She paces a bit around her room, picks things up for a moment before putting them down.

She picks up her book or mormon, and tries to read it. Its edges have some wear on them now. She can't keep her attention. She puts it down.

We watch as she goes through this process for a while. The clock ticks past an hour.

As soon as the hour has gone by, Ada silently opens her door. She sneaks out, takes the phone, and brings it into her room.

She opens the paper. Dials the number slowly.

She brings the phone to her ear. We hear HALF A RING then:

JEREMY

Ada?

ADA

(nervous)

Um..yes?

JEREMY

I was starting to think you wouldn't call.

ADA

I just wanted to wait until everyone was asleep.

JEREMY

That...makes sense. I thought I was too weird when I gave you the number, thought maybe you threw it out.

(a beat)

I'm glad you didn't

ADA

What did you want to talk about?

JEREMY

(nervous)

Um...

A long silent beat passes.

ADA

...Jeremy?

JEREMY

I uhh...I like you. Not like like you as a cool friend-which like, I think you are cool-but like I like you more than that. A friend. Like, like like.

Ada turns a deep shade of red. She smiles into the phone.

JEREMY
(extra nervous)
Uhh...are you there?

ADA
Ye-yeah, I'm here. Y-You said you
like like me...?

JEREMY
Um. Yes. Do you like me? Like,
like like me?

Ada pauses for a moment.

ADA
I think so? Yes, I do.

*

We hear a DEEP SIGH from the other side of the phone.

JEREMY
Oh my gosh I was so scared you'd
say no.
(beat)
Do you want to, you know, go with
me?

ADA
Jeremy, you know we can't do that.

JEREMY
We don't have to tell anyone. It
can be our secret.

ADA
(thinking)
Our secret...promise me you won't
tell anyone?

JEREMY
Promise. Cross my heart, hope to
die.

ADA
...Okay. Okay, yeah, I want to go
with you.

JEREMY
Y-Yes?
(giddy)
I'm glad you called Ada.

ADA

Me too, Jeremy. I should probably go before someone catches me, though.

JEREMY

Y-yeah, me too. Goodnight
(sheepishly)
I'll...uh....see you tomorrow

ADA

(thoughtfully)
Goodnight.

Ada hangs up the phone, and carries it back out to the hall table. The lights are still off under the doors.

She returns to her room, lays in bed, and stares at the ceiling, beaming.

INT. ADA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

*

Ada lays in bed, in the same place she was before, still staring at the ceiling. After a moment, an ALARM SOUNDS softly next to her.

She slowly turns it off.

*

She rolls to her side, and watches dust float around in the light. She blows gently and watches the dust dance in the air.

*

*

She rolls back over to her other side and looks at her nightstand.

*

*

Next to her, the paper still lies on the nightstand, well worn at this point. She looks over at it and is stricken with a sort of panic. Her eyes widen.

Ada jumps out of bed and runs right to her closet.

She starts sorting through clothes, trying to find something she likes. She's never had to do this before, worry about how someone thinks she looks.

She shuffles through the hangars some more.

As she frantically searches her closet, she mumbles to herself.

ADA

Ada you've got to be kidding me right now. Why do all of my clothes look like something my mom-mom would wear? Ugh!

Ada pulls out a very old jumper, with polka dots. She gives it a look and puts it back.

*
*

ADA
Okay, well just because some of them ARE mom-mom's doesn't mean anything. Just...just find something, gosh!

She pulls out a classy shirtwaist dress. She sighs and puts it back.

*
*

ADA
What? No, too formal. Why is this so hard?!

*
*
*

MOTHER
(yelling)
Ada!! What's taking you so long?

Ada jumps at her mother's call.

*

ADA
(lying, yelling)
I fell asleep again, sorry! I'm coming give me a minute!
(then, under her breath)
Come on, come on, come on, there's gotta be something.

*

She pulls a slightly wrinkled pleated skirt and blouse from the closet. She deliberates in her head for a moment, pulls out a scarf and closes the closet.

*
*
*

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

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Ada runs down the stairs, bag already over her shoulder. She obsessively tries to smooth out some light wrinkles in her skirt.

*

MOTHER
Finally. You have to walk Jacob to the Bradford's house today, did you forget?

ADA
No, no I didn't forget! See, look! I'm ready.

MOTHER
Yes yes, very pretty. Now, you've got to be going or you'll both be late.

ADA
 I know, I know!
 (then)
 Jake, come on, shoes, now!

*

JACOB (8), hops off the chair he's sitting in and scampers to go put his shoes on.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MORNING

Ada and Jacob walk down the street. Ada still tries to smooth a few new wrinkles out of her skirt, but it's not working well. She looks over at Jacob who returns a confused glance.

*

ADA
 What?

JACOB
 You look funny today

ADA
 (offended, trying to keep cool)
 Hey! That's not very nice, Jacob.

JACOB
 (not sorry)
 I'm sorry.

ADA
 (motherly)
 Thank you.

Ada looks down self consciously for a moment, trying not to take the comment seriously at all.

After a moment of silence, she breaks.

ADA
 (sheepish)
 What do you mean I look funny?

JACOB
 I dunno, you just look different

ADA
 Different how?

JACOB
 Different like different. Like your face is different I think

ADA
 How is my face different??

JACOB

Its all red! Just like last year when I fell asleep after soccer and got all sunburned! Are you gonna be all peel-y like I was?

ADA

(embarrassed)

What? Red? No, you're seeing things Jacob.

JACOB

I don't look red though, so its gotta be you

ADA

Jacob! I'm not red!! Stop saying I'm red or I'm gonna tell Mrs. Bradford that you're lying again, and she won't let you and Michael go to the park today!

*

JACOB

(scared)

Ok! ok! You're not red I'm sorry.

ADA

Thank you.

Ada huffs and starts walking faster. Jacob struggles to keep up, but tries his best.

They arrive at the Bradford's house. Ada drops Jacob off, and goes on her way to school.

EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - MORNING

Ada stops before she walks into the school. She takes a few deep breaths, looks around, smooths out her outfit one more time, and steps forward.

Jeremy stands by the school entrance, looking around nervously. He's dressed in a white button down and black slacks. His shirt is poorly ironed.

*

*

The two of them spot each other through the crowd of people. They both nervously look away briefly before Ada makes her way across the concourse.

Ada approaches Jeremy, neither of them hold the others' gaze for very long.

ADA

...hi

JEREMY

...hi

They both laugh a little and smile. They walk inside.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

Ada and Jeremy walk the halls together. They arrive at Ada's locker, and she begins unloading things from her bag.

ADA

So...um...are you busy after school today?

JEREMY

I uh, usually just kind of hang out in the library most days...so uh no I'm not busy

ADA

I have to help out at the church today...

(beat)

...Do you want to come? I'm sure my dad would appreciate the help

JEREMY

Oh! Um. Yes, I mean, sure. Are you sure your dad is ok with it? I don't want to like, seem suspicious or anything.

ADA

People come help all the time. Just tell him your mom told you to "contribute to the community" or something like that.

JEREMY

Oh ok. Yeah I can do that. Yeah.

ADA

(warmly)

Okay then, I'll see you after school.

JEREMY

Uh...yeah. I'll see you then.

The hallway has emptied out. The two of them stand at Ada's locker alone. They stand with each other for a long beat, both nervously looking around. After another silent moment, they give each other a light hug and Ada walks off.

Jeremy stands alone in the hall, red faced. He has a sudden realization that he never dropped his things off, and rushes off to his own locker.

EXT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Ada and Jeremy stand outside the church. Jeremy shuffles nervously.

ADA

Okay, what are you gonna say to him?

JEREMY

Uh...He-Hello Mr. Waterman do you need any help with handiwork around the church today? I want to help out because I want to...uh...because my mom told me I should be more involved...and I wanted to ask if I could help out today

ADA

(constructive)

Okay, yeah. I think you can be a little more comfortable. Relax, just tell him you want to be a little more involved, and tell him I told you he could use the help. Okay? Ok one more time.

A beat of sweat forms on Jeremy's forehead.

JEREMY

Okay...
(a deep breath)

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD, ALTAR

JEREMY

(nervous)

Hello Mr. Waterman, I told Ada I want to be more involved with the church, and she said you could use some help

Ada's father stands at the altar, kneeling down with a screwdriver.

FATHER

She did, did she?

He gives Ada a look. Ada gives him a "you know I'm right" look. He returns a resigned gesture.

FATHER

Now that I think about it, I do have quite a few things on my list that have been waiting for checkmarks. How are you with a drill?

JEREMY

Um...pretty good, sir. I helped my dad with the outlets in my house last month...sir.

FATHER

Great. Be here Wednesdays and Thursdays after school? Maybe a few Mondays too, but only after holidays. As for today, I could really use a trash run in the back offices.

(to Ada)

You know where I'm talking about, go show him.

Ada's father returns to his task under the altar. Jeremy gives Ada a big, warm smile. Ada returns it.

ADA

Come on, I'll show you.

The two of them walk through a door in the back of the Chapel Ward. After a moment, we see them grasp each others' hands through the window in the door.

CUT TO:

INT. YOUTH GROUP ROOM - 2 MONTHS LATER

Ada sits in an empty youth group room on a faded yellow sofa. She reads a textbook, taking some notes. On the table in front of her are a multitude of other text books.

It is the late afternoon, a beam of golden sun shines through the window, illuminating dust flowing slowly in the air. Ada's bag sits next to her, and another, larger bag sits to her right.

The silence is broken by a door opening. Jeremy walks in, covered in some kind of dust. Ada gives him a smile with a bit of disgusted curiosity underneath.

ADA

I like the new look, very modern.

JEREMY

Your dad had me in the crawlspaces today. I didn't know that much dust could exist anywhere.

Jeremy pats himself off. A visible dust cloud comes off of him. He sits on the couch, which seems equally as dusty as he sits down. Ada sits with him for a moment before covering his shoulder her own jacket, and leaning on him.

They sit like this for a long moment, enjoying the bliss of the shred of intimacy they get to share.

Their moment is interrupted by the sound of the doorknob. Both of them, with incredible efficiency, assume a position of doing homework. Ada returns to her book, Jeremy picks his notes up. Ada begins reading.

Ada's father opens the door and looks in.

ADA

Okay, so what were the three main causes of the Civil War?

JEREMY

Umm...

FATHER

States' Rights. Jeremy, I need you back down in the crawlspace again, we missed a bit.

Ada and Jeremy give each other a quick glance, then Jeremy gets off the couch.

ADA

I should probably get going anyway, Mom said she needed help with dinner tonight.

Ada's father and Jeremy walk out of the room as Ada begins to pack up. She gives a quick glance to the hallway, writes something in Jeremy's notebook, and leaves.

INT. YOUTH GROUP ROOM - LATER

Jeremy walks back into the room, covered in dust again. He begins packing his things up. He reads the note left for him in his notebook.

We do not see it, but he smiles and puts his things away. He checks the time on his watch, and rushes out of the room.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

Ada and Jeremy stand at Ada's locker, a practiced ritual now.

ADA

So how long did my dad keep you yesterday? He didn't come home until way after dinner.

JEREMY

It wasn't that long. Only a few minutes. He did say he had to take care of a few things as I was leaving though.

ADA

So what did you do after you left? We both know you didn't study for the history test today.

JEREMY

I...um...ended up helping my mom with some chores...?

ADA

Oh you help around the house? Lucky me.

She gives him a flirty smile, and closes her locker.

ADA

Good luck on the test. Remember: States' Rights.

JEREMY

State's rights. Thanks. See you at church after?

Ada looks over her shoulder and smiles. She trots off. Jeremy leans against the lockers beaming for a moment before heading off to class.

INT. YOUTH GROUP ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ada and Jeremy sit on the faded yellow couch. We hear rain tapping on the window, as they both just lean against each other.

ADA

Do you not have to go today?

JEREMY

Your dad told me he didn't need me today. Something about the crawlspace leaking. I dunno. I just told him I'd come study with you, seeing as I totally failed that **Hendrickson's** test today.

*

ADA

You should have been studying yesterday, I told you.

Ada adjust and cuddles up on Jeremy's arm.

ADA

Maybe we should *actually* study today.

JEREMY

I'll manage somehow. I just want to sit for a second.

The two of them sit in silence for a moment. Serenity defined.

Jeremy tries to reach over to his bag without disturbing Ada, but fails, and the stillness of the moment breaks.

Ada pulls on his arm and gives him a serious look.

ADA

Hey...can I tell you something?

JEREMY

Always. What is it?

ADA

I...I'm really glad you gave me your number that day. I just...I'm glad. Really.

JEREMY

Me too.

They look at each other for a long beat. The sound of the rain starts to fade away.

Jeremy and Ada kiss. They sit, embraced on the faded yellow couch, books and papers strewn about on the table before them. The world fades away as they share this moment.

All is well until the sound of jingling keys breaks the silence. They take half a second longer to assume their positions as the Bishop enters with a young man.

BISHOP

And this is the room you'll be leading-

(to Ada and Jeremy)

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know anyone would be in here.

Ada gives a nervous laugh. Her face is SHADES redder than normal. Jeremy stares directly at his book, completely still.

ADA

Ha. Yeah, my dad lets me use this room to study on weekdays sometimes. Its just easier than the school library, you know...?

The Bishop gives them a look of the slightest suspicion, then accepts this.

BISHOP

And you? *

JEREMY *

I was just...um...I was just picking something up for Mr. Waterman... *

ADA *

(stepping in) *

His measurement notes. Here, he leaves this darn book everywhere. *

JEREMY *

(nervous laughter) *

HA, THERE IT IS. THANK YOU. *

(beat) *

I'll...uh...be going now... *

Jeremy begins to slowly exit the room, his things still sitting on the table and couch. *

BISHOP *

Very well, Mr. Cole. Thank you. Sister Waterman, I trust you'll tidy this up before leaving? *

ADA *

Of course, Bishop, thank you.

The Bishop and young man leave.

Ada lets out a deep, tense breath. *

After a long moment, Jeremy comes back in. *

ADA

You really need a better cover
next time. *

JEREMY

I was flustered! Its like my brain
just blanked for a second. *

ADA

You're lucky I was here to catch
you. *

JEREMY

Measurement book...What did you
even give me? *

Jeremy opens the notebook. It has nothing inside. *

JEREMY

Lucky indeed. *

ADA

Listen! I did the best I could. *

JEREMY

I know! That was a little too
close for me though. *

ADA

Me too. I think I should go for
today, I don't want to push our
luck any more than we have
already. *

JEREMY

Can I see you tomorrow? *

Ada begins gathering her things. *

ADA

Well, we've got seminary tomorrow,
so we can *study* after. *

Ada begins to leave. *

Jeremy perks up at the last second. *

JEREMY

Wait if you weren't here I
wouldn't have needed to- *

Ada is gone, Jeremy sighs. *

Ada gives Jeremy a small peck on the cheek, and begins leaving. She looks back before exiting the room.

Ada walks down the hall. She rounds the corner, than breaks into a short, controlled, burst of excited energy in the hall. She collects herself and takes a deep breath.

She continues walking.

INT. WATERMAN HOUSE, DINING ROOM - EVENING

The waterman family sits around a large dining room table. There are 4 of them, they each occupy their own side of the table.

They each take a moment to serve their own plates. They don't talk much as they pass around various serving dishes.

A hefty meatloaf, overcooked broccoli, too-yellow Mac and cheese, and a pot of beans make their way around the table.

Ada and Jacob instinctively take only a few pieces of broccoli. Jacob goes to put the pot back in its place.

MOTHER

No you don't. Not tonight, mister.

She takes the pot and scoops extra onto Jacob's plate. He looks at it, mortified.

MOTHER

I am not throwing more broccoli away because you can't just eat it.

She gives Ada's plate a glance. She seems satisfied with the amount. Ada shoots Jacob a look of "you gotta play the game".

The family joins hands. They all bow their heads. Ada peeks one eye up at Jacob who is still having a depressed staring contest with his broccoli.

FATHER

Dear Heavenly Father, we're thankful for this food and the chance we have to spend time together as family. Please bless those who are not here with us with safety. We say these things in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

*

Simultaneously, they all begin eating. Jacob pushes his broccoli to the side of his plate for later.

FATHER
 (between bites)
 So, you know, how was school
 today?

The question isn't really directed at either sibling, but Ada decides to speak up first.

ADA
 It was okay, I have to come up
 with another speech idea for Mrs.
 Coman next week.

MOTHER
 Another one?

ADA
 Yes, mom, another one. It's speech
 II! We have to do a lot of
 speeches!

FATHER
 Oh yeah? What's this one going to
 be about?

ADA
 I don't know, I think Mrs. Coman
 might be a little tired of hearing
 about Seminary.

FATHER
 (stuck up)
 Well then that's all the more
 reason you should pick it. Some of
 those teachers could use a
 Seminary of their own.

JACOB
 (excited)
 You could do it about dinosaurs!
 Mrs. Williamson taught us about
 them today!

*
 *

A tense silence falls on the table. Ada glances at her father.

FATHER
 (restrained)
 Dinosaurs, huh? What about them?

MOTHER
 (meek)
 Graham, don't start this at the
 table...

FATHER

No, Marie, I want to hear what
Jacob is learning about Dinosaurs.
(to Jacob)
So? What are you learning, Jacob?

Jacob does not pick up on the social tension. He perks up at the question and adjusts excitedly in his chair.

JACOB

Oh! Well there were lots of them
but not at the same time because
some of them were in the...
(Slowly)
Chersasic time...
(pause)
And then some were in the...
(very slowly)
Cresaysitch time.
(another pause)
but that was MILLIONS of years ago
and they're all dead now but
sometimes we find bones and people
have to put them together like a
puzzle

FATHER

Hm. Interesting. And did you
teacher make sure to mention that
all of that is a story that
scientists made up?

JACOB

Um...no?

FATHER

Because it is. All of that is just
stories and lies to lead us people
of faith astray. You make sure you
tell her that next time.

MOTHER

Graham!

FATHER

What? I just think it's ridiculous
that hacks like her are allowed to
feed our children lies and pass
them off as "science".

MOTHER

Its not that big of a deal, just
let it go.

FATHER

I will not! We went through this with the school with Ada as well. We told them. We told them clearly that our children were not to be taught these **fantasies** of "dinosaurs" and "evolution" in school.

He huffs.

FATHER (CONT'D)

It's absolutely ridiculous that we have to rely on Seminary for our children to receive a proper education. Unbelievable.

MOTHER

But they *do* get a proper education, isn't that what's important?

FATHER

(louder)

After we correct all the lies! These...these commies think they can come into our schools fill our kids' heads with **GODLESS** propaganda! I don't know how the school allows it.

The table falls uncomfortably silent.

Ada's mother gets up and walks over to the kitchen. She pulls a glass bottle of milk from the fridge and walks back to the table. *

Without speaking, she refills the father's glass. *

ADA

The...uh...meatloaf is good, mom.

MOTHER

Thank you, honey.

The table falls silent again.

Ada's mother returns the bottle to the fridge and comes back over to the table. She runs her hand across the father's back comfortingly as she passes. *

Ada stares at her father for a long beat. He sits straight in his seat, forcefully eating his meal. *

Jacob continues eating, making his way through the broccoli, too scared to complain.

Ada's mother stares into her plate, hardly eating.

Ada clears her throat a little.

ADA

So...um...Mr. Cooper thinks I
should go out for band this
summer...

MOTHER

Oh? Does he?
(to FATHER)
What do you think about that?

FATHER

(cooling off)
That's great.

MOTHER

Both your father and I were in
All-City band when we were young,
did I tell you that?

ADA

I think you mentioned it. Mr.
Cooper says that I could pick up
French Horn for marching band. He
says its not much different from
trumpet...

MOTHER

You hear that, honey? French Horn.
(To Ada)
Your father used to play the most
beautiful French Horn.
(to FATHER)
You could show her a thing or two!

ADA

I'd just have to spend some time
at band camp over the summer...

MOTHER

That's good, get you out of the
house a bit.

ADA

Yeah...

The table falls into an awkward silence.

FATHER
Marching band, huh?

ADA
Yeah...they..uh..play at all the
big school events...
(beat)
Pep rallies...
(beat)
competitions...

Ada comes to a stressful realization.

FATHER
Football games?

ADA
...yeah, those too.

FATHER
And when do those start?

ADA
Um...in the fall.

FATHER
And what days do they play?

ADA
(bracing)
...Sundays.

FATHER
So they play after church.

ADA
Um...sometimes...? I think

FATHER
So you can miss the ones *during*
church.

Ada looks over at her mother, who offers no assistance.

ADA
There's not a lot that overlap.

FATHER
Good. So you won't miss too many
games.

ADA
I...

(MORE)

ADA (CONT'D) *

(beat) *

Mr. Cooper says we should... *

(beat) *

He says we have to be at all the
playoff games... *

(beat, quietly) *

Which are on Sundays... *

FATHER *

And did you tell him that you
can't do that? *

ADA *

I... *

(beat) *

I didn't. *

Ada's father suppresses his emotions. *

FATHER *

And why didn't you? *

MOTHER *

Graham, we don't need to do this
right now. *

FATHER *

No, Marie, we do. *

(to Ada) *

Why didn't you tell him? *

ADA *

I just thought.... *

(beat) *

I just thought it wouldn't be a
problem if I missed...just a
few... *

FATHER *

Just a few what? *

ADA *

(bracing) *

I thought it would be okay if I
missed a few days of church. *

FATHER *

So you thought some school band
was more important than your
faith? *

ADA *

What? No! That's not what I said! *

FATHER

That's exactly what you said. You said you were **deciding** to skip church, to *abandon* the church so you could go off and do whatever you wanted.

ADA

Its just a few Sundays! I'm not *abandoning* the church!

FATHER

See, this is how it starts. It starts with "just a few Sundays" and then its every other Sunday, and soon enough, you'll be traipsing around with...with who knows what kind of people.

ADA

No! That won't happen, I promise!

FATHER

(heating up)

Have you forgotten what the church has done for you? After all these years?

ADA

(upset)

What? No, dad, I haven't. I...Mr. Cooper just thought I'd be good for the band...

FATHER

TO HELL with what Mr. Cooper said! I don't want you missing church.

ADA

I just thought...

FATHER

YOU JUST THOUGHT WHAT? That it would be fine to turn your back on the **ONLY** people who will take care of you? For what? A high school marching band?.

MOTHER

Graham?

FATHER

WHAT?

MOTHER
 (overly calm)
 I think we can talk about this
 later.

FATHER
 Later...
 (scoff)
 Its always later. Later enough for
 BOTH OF MY CHILDREN TO ABANDON
 THEIR FAITH, AND TURN INTO...
 (beat)
 INTO GODLESS ATHEISTS.

MOTHER
 Honey...

FATHER
 I WILL **NOT** ALLOW THIS FAMILY TO BE
 LEFT BEHIND AT THE MILLENNIUM.

As he shouts this, he slams his glass on the table. It
 shatters, spilling milk and glass all over the table.

He sits for a moment, hand still clenched. Blood begins to leak
 out from his fist. He takes a deep breath.

FATHER
 Excuse me.

He rises from his seat and exits.

The rest of the family sits for a long silent beat.

ADA
 (softly)
 I'm sorry.

MOTHER
 It's okay, honey. I'll take care
 of your father.

Jacob sits in his seat, staring at a large shard of glass on
 his plate.

Ada's starts to collect the plates.

MOTHER
 Let's just get these cleaned up
 for now. Why don't you two go
 start getting ready for bed.

JACOB
 Bed? Its only 7:30!

Ada takes him by the hand and shushes him. Ada's mother stands at the table, slowly collecting plates and glasses.

EXT. CHURCH CONCOURSE - MORNING

Families greet each other and make small talk as they filter into the church. Ada walks up to the church, lagging slightly behind the rest of her family.

Ada spots Jeremy across the concourse. They make eye contact. Ada gives him a light gesture of "meet me there" towards a bench and continues walking.

The family gets to the door to the church and begins entering.

ADA

I'll be in in a minute! I just need to ask Nancy about some homework.

Her mother nods. Her father doesn't look back, and the family, sans Ada enters the church.

Ada sits on a bench and feigns tying her shoe.

Jeremy sits down next to her.

JEREMY

So? What's up?

ADA

I really need to talk to you after service today.

JEREMY

We've got Sunday school, but maybe we can hang around after?

ADA

We can be a little late, they won't miss us. Please, just for a little bit.

JEREMY

Okay, okay. I'll figure out an excuse. I'll...uh...meet you....?

ADA

Um, they don't have youth group today, so we can meet there. Okay thank you

Ada gets off the bench and walks off quickly. Jeremy sits on the bench by himself for a moment, waiting for an appropriate gap before entering the church himself.

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD, PEWS - CONTINUOUS

Jeremy walks into the ward and sits with his mother. She gives him a glance. He returns it, and adjusts himself in the pew. He looks ahead and sees the back of Ada's head sitting with her family. There's a noticeable gap between her and her father.

Ada sits, back straight, next to her father. She's trying to create as much space between them as possible, still reeling from the night before.

Ada's father hands her a hymnal and gives her a look of civility. Not compassion, not warmth, just civility. No more, no less.

Ada returns an uncomfortable smile, and takes the hymnal.

INT. YOUTH GROUP ROOM - LATER

Ada paces back and forth in the youth group room, glancing at the clock every few seconds.

She peeks through a crack in the door into an empty hallway.

She walks back and forth silently talking to herself, rationalizing her emotions.

She glances at the clock again.

She sits down on the yellow couch, her leg bounces for a few seconds, then she gets back up and keeps pacing.

She continues walking in circles, until we hear the sound of the door.

Jeremy walks in, unassuming. Ada immediately rushes over for a tight embrace.

JEREMY

Hey, hey, are you okay?

Jeremy hugs her back for a moment, until Ada releases him.

ADA

Did you have any trouble getting away?

JEREMY

No, I think my mom bought the whole "I want to check some of the work Mr. Waterman and I did" story. What's going on?

ADA

Oh my gosh I don't even know. Has my dad ever seemed...like...really angry to you?

JEREMY

I mean, we both get a little mad at the guys who built this church, but that's normal, isn't it?

ADA

Not like that, like REALLY mad. Like, MAD mad.

JEREMY

I don't think so. Did something happen?

ADA

Last night at dinner he totally went berserk at me and my mom...well, mostly my mom. I've never seen him like that. And he won't even look at me today, like I'm some kind of like, disappointment or whatever.

JEREMY

Why'd he go berserk? Did your mom say something to set him off?

ADA

I mean...not really? I don't even know why its bothering me so much, or why I'm telling you this, I just...I don't have anyone else to talk to about this, and I'm...I'm scared

JEREMY

(comforting)

Hey now, I'm here. Don't feel bad for wanting to talk to me.

(beat)

Lets sit down for a second. We can get to Sunday school in a minute, but you're too worked up to go out there now.

ADA

Okay. okay. Just a minute. I'm sorry I made you do this, I feel so bad...

JEREMY

Don't feel bad, its okay.
(longer beat)
Okay, so this might not be the best time for this, but I think I have something to make you feel better.

ADA

Hm?

Jeremy digs in his pocket for a second, and pulls out a simple box.

He hands it to Ada.

JEREMY

I...uh...wanted to give this to you yesterday, but you kinda ran out so fast.

Ada opens the box, carefully. Inside is the CTR necklace from the jewelry shop.

Ada looks at it. A wave of unexpected emotion begins to well up.

JEREMY

Do you uh...do you like it...?

ADA

You bought this...for me?

JEREMY

Um, yeah. I went after helping your dad the other day...it's really nothing, I mean, if you like it that's cool.

ADA

Jeremy...

Ada puts the box down lightly on the table and embraces Jeremy again, this time without the anxiety, without the stress. An embrace of bliss and comfort.

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD, ALTAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Ada's father walks around the Altar, checking his work to make sure there's been no wear. The bishop approaches him, silently.

BISHOP

I'll have you know it is holding up quite well, Elder Waterman.

FATHER

Thank you, Bishop. I'm glad I can help out where I can.

BISHOP

Your work is greatly appreciated, as is your family.

FATHER

Thank you, Bishop. I appreciate hearing that.

BISHOP

Speaking of them, is Sister Ada around? I would like to have a word with her about doing next week's invocations.

FATHER

She's in Sunday school with the rest of the girls, isn't she?

BISHOP

I stopped in already, and did not find her there. I was hoping that you might have some insight into her whereabouts.

FATHER

(restrained)

I'm sure we can find her. She's probably...helping someone out...it wouldn't be the first time that made her late.

BISHOP

Might you help me find her, then?

FATHER

Of course, Bishop.

INT. YOUTH GROUP ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Jeremy stands behind Ada, looking in a mirror above a sink. He struggles to clasp the necklace behind her neck. She admires the necklace for a moment before taking over the clasp from Jeremy.

INT. CHURCH HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

The Bishop and Ada's father walk down the halls. They check rooms as they progress. They see a room illuminated with light at the end of the hall and begin walking.

INT. YOUTH GROUP ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Ada turns around and gives Jeremy an affectionate look. He returns the look, admiring her and the necklace. They both smile and blush a bit. Ada leans in for a kiss.

INT. CHURCH HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Ada's father and the Bishop approach the door at the end of the hall. It is cracked open and we can see some light pouring in through a window.

INT. YOUTH GROUP ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Ada and Jeremy share a tender kiss by the sink. Ada wraps her hands around Jeremy's shoulders and holds him tightly.

The door opens.

Ada's father and the Bishop stand in the doorway, watching Ada and Jeremy try and separate themselves in a panic.

JEREMY

Um. Uh. Mr. Um. Mr. Wate-
Waterman....Bishop...

ADA

We were just...um...we were just
uh, just...-

Ada's father gives her a furious glare.

FATHER

Ada.

ADA

Um. Dad...I can explain.

FATHER

I don't want to hear it.

(beat)

Go wait in the Bishop's office.

Her father looks to the Bishop, who nods.

Ada and Jeremy begin to leave.

FATHER

No. You stay.

Jeremy stops dead in his tracks. Ada stops with him.

FATHER

Did I tell you to stop?

ADA

Wh-

FATHER

GO. WAIT IN THE BISHOP'S OFFICE.

Ada recoils and walks out. She looks back at Jeremy, who returns a frightened glance.

INT. BISHOP'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Ada sits in a wooden chair in front of the Bishop's desk. It is pristine. The desk is a polished mahogany, with meticulously placed crosses, crucifixes, and a scale model of the Temple.

She sits, alone in this room for what feels like an eternity. She closes her eyes and takes a few deep breaths, but she can't calm herself down.

With every small adjustment to her posture, the chair gives a seemingly deafening creak.

Ada tries to distract herself by looking at decorations on the walls. There are old photos of the Bishop while the church was being built, dated "May 7th, 1942".

She goes to pick something up off of a bookshelf, but stops herself in fear of being caught meddling. She returns to her upright posture in her chair.

She closes her eyes and takes a few more deep breaths. She mutters something under her breath, but it is too quiet for us to hear.

Minutes pass, Ada still sits in the chair. Her posture is beginning to give out, but she straightens out every time she catches herself. She listens carefully for footsteps outside of the door.

She swallows and touches the necklace still around her neck.

In a panic, she begins rushing to take the necklace off, fumbling with the clasp. Eventually it gives, and she removes the chain. She searches her person for a place to hide it.

She has no pockets, no bag. She tries a few different options, around her shoulder, in her shoe, hanging on her waistband, none of them work.

Discreetly, she sticks the chain in her bra. She flinches at the cool metal, but the feeling doesn't last, as she hears the doorknob engage behind her.

The Bishop enters the office. He walks slowly, purposefully over to his desk and sits down. He does not look at Ada. Shortly after him, Ada's father enters. He stands by the door and shuts it slowly behind him.

Ada sits in the chair, and looks between them. The Bishop sits straight behind his desk, and shuffles between a few papers. He puts them into a drawer.

Ada's father stands by the wall, not leaning against it. His hands are held behind his back, in a "parade rest" stance. He flexes his jaw muscles, doing his best to remain restrained.

Ada adjust uncomfortably.

BISHOP
Sister Waterman.

ADA
...yes, Bishop.

BISHOP
Before we have this discussion,
would you like to explain
yourself?

ADA
Um...I

Ada looks back at her father, who is quietly seething.

ADA
I don't think so...

BISHOP

Very well. I assume you understand the gravity of our current situation, do you not?

ADA

I think so, Bishop.

BISHOP

So if I may ask, what exactly is the gravity of your situation, Sister?

Ada is a deer in the headlights.

ADA

Um...well the church says that...um...

BISHOP

The church warns against this sort of behavior, sister. This sort of thing, especially for a girl your age, directly leads to the descent into sin.

ADA

But we weren't eve-

FATHER

ADA. Listen to the Bishop.

Ada's father steps forward, and stands next to Ada in her chair.

FATHER

I will NOT have you defend this... heresy in front of me.

ADA

What?! Heresy? We weren't even do-

*

Ada's father slaps her across the face, hard.

We can see the imprint of his hand on her face. A red band beginning to form where he wears his wedding band.

FATHER

(quietly)

Do. Not. Raise your voice at me.
Now listen to the Bishop. Mrs.
Cole

*

Ada sits in her chair, red faced, eyes watering, hands trembling. Her posture begins to fail.

BISHOP

Now, sister waterman. We take this very seriously here. You are a promising young woman, and we cannot allow you to continue down this path. It is one that leads to a life outside of God. One that leads to premarital sex, masturbation, and prostitution.

(beat)

I want you to know, Sister, that we do this for you.

The door begins to engage. Ada's mother walks in. She meekly takes her place next to Ada, but behind her husband.

ADA

I'm sorry Bishop. I just thought...

FATHER

You thought what, Ada? What did you think?

ADA

I didn't think it was wrong. I thought it would be okay.

She looks up at her Mother, who looks back with guilt.

MOTHER

(compassionate)

Ada, honey...

Ada gives her a look of hope.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

We all know you know better. We raised you better than this.

Ada deflates.

ADA

I-

Before she can get a word out, the door opens again. This time, Jeremy and his mother enter. The room is now uncomfortably full.

MRS. COLE

My son has something he would like to say.

She forcefully nudges Jeremy forward, who is nearly as red faced as Ada.

*

JEREMY

I...um...

MRS. COLE

Spit it out.

JEREMY

I don't want to be around you
anymore, Ada.

Ada looks up. Its not quite sinking in yet, but we see her
begin to crack.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

I don't think it's a good idea for
us to see each other anymore.

(beat)

I need to focus on becoming a
better part of this
community...and I can't do that
with you...

He still has not made eye contact with Ada. His mother gives
him another sharp jab.

MRS. COLE

And?

She looks at Ada's parents with venom in her eyes.

JEREMY

And I don't want to be associated
with someone with such...

(beat)

with such compromised morals...

Jeremy's eyes begin slightly water.

It is taking everything in Ada's power to not burst into tears,
but she holds out. She turns around to face the Bishop again.

Jeremy's mother grabs him by the collar and leads him out of
the room.

MRS. COLE

(to Ada's Parents)

Now keep your whore of a daughter
away from my son.

They exit.

Ada's father looks to Ada with a pointed anger. Her mother
looks down at the floor.

The room sits in silence for an uncomfortable moment.

BISHOP

Well. Sister, your father and I
have already discussed
your...consequences for
participating in this sinful
behavior, and for participating in
such behavior within the walls of
this church.

Ada has tuned out at this point. She stares out of the window
in the Bishop's office to the suburban horizon.

The Bishop continues talking, but we can't hear what he is
saying.

Ada is fixated on the window behind him. A flock of starlings
bob and weave in the distance. The amorphous cloud of black
birds shifts and transforms in the distance.

*
*
*

BISHOP

Is that clear, Sister Waterman?

Ada snaps back to her senses after a moment.

ADA

Yes, Bishop, of course.

BISHOP

Very well. Elder Waterman, you may
go. I trust you will deal with
this appropriately in your own
home.

FATHER

Thank you, Bishop.

Ada rises from her chair, and they begin walking out, her
parents following closely behind.

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD - CONTINUOUS

As the family exits the church, Ada spots Jeremy kneeling at
the altar, his mother close behind.

Ada looks away, closing in on the door.

EXT. CHURCH CONCOURSE - MOMENTS LATER

The Waterman family exits the church. Jacob sees the family
walking, and runs up to join them.

This time, he catches the uncomfortable silence, and just walks along.

INT. WATERMAN CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ada and Jacob sit in the back seat of the family station wagon.

Jacob looks over to Ada who does not return the glance. She looks out of the window, watching the suburban life fly by her. We see the following through her eyes.

- A girl sitting on the hood of a convertible talking to a young man drinking a soda.
- A punk in a leather jacket and Ramones t-shirt drinking a coffee and smoking a cigarette at a bus stop.
- A couple holding hands sitting together on a bench.

Ada watches as what could have been her life passes by. She stares mournfully out of the window.

FATHER

The Bishop has agreed to come in before the baptisms tomorrow for your confession.

ADA

Alright.

FATHER

Your repentance will begin tonight.

ADA

Alright.

FATHER

And you will report directly to the church after school, EVERY DAY.

ADA

Alright.

Ada still stares through the window.

Her parents share a look. Her mother sighs, and turns her head in her seat, trying to look behind her.

MOTHER

Ada, you understand why we're doing this, right?

ADA

Sure.

MOTHER
Ada.

ADA
What?

MOTHER
Do you understand why we're doing this?

ADA
Sure.

MOTHER
(flat, calling ada out)
Ada.

ADA
What?

MOTHER
Do you *really* understand why we're doing this?

ADA
Do you want me to be honest? Or do you just want me to tell you what you want to hear?

FATHER
You will **not** speak to your mother like that, Ada.

MOTHER
It's fine, honey. Yes, Ada, I want you to be honest with me. Do you understand?

ADA
Then no. I don't understand why everyone is making such a big deal out of this.

MOTHER
It IS a big deal, young lady. Your actions reflect on us as a **family**. When you act...loose like that, it makes us look like we haven't taught you properly.

ADA
(Getting louder)
But you have! You taught me that I'm supposed to get married.

(MORE)

ADA (CONT'D)

I'm supposed to have kids. I'm supposed to raise a family, just like you did. How am I supposed to do that if I'm not allowed to-

MOTHER

Yes! Ada, you're supposed to do those things! But you're *not* supposed to turn into some kind of...some kind of **harlot** along the way!

This stings. Ada sits back in her seat.

ADA

I just...I thought it was okay. It didn't feel wrong.

MOTHER

It never *feels* wrong, honey. That's what makes sin so tempting. We have to overcome it. That's our job as people of faith.

ADA

(resigned)

Yeah. I guess you're right.

Ada leans her head against the window and closes her eyes.

INT. ADA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Ada sits on her bed with her worn copy of the Book of Mormon. She takes a moment to sit with her thoughts. The LDS paraphernalia on the walls seems so trite to her now.

Ada pulls the necklace from earlier out of her shirt. She holds it in her hand, running her finger along the smooth silver. She flops down on her bed still holding the necklace.

Ada begins to cry. Lightly at first, then full on sobbing. She tries her best to keep quiet. Tears stream down her face. We sit with her as she cries for a long moment. We are her only witness.

INT. WATERMAN HOUSE, DINING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The rest of Ada's family sits at the dinner table, one seat empty.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. BISHOP'S OFFICE - MORNING

Ada sits across from the Bishop. It's the same room, same chair as the previous day.

Ada sits with her hands folded in her lap, waiting.

BISHOP

So, Sister Waterman. Have you confessed your sins to your family?

ADA

(meek)
Yes, Bishop.

BISHOP

Then we can begin your repentance to the lord.

The Bishop straightens in his chair.

BISHOP

So, when did this...affair begin with Brother Jeremy Cole?

ADA

A few months ago. February.

BISHOP

And who initiated this relationship?

ADA

What's going to happen to Jeremy?

BISHOP

We have left Jeremy's repentance up to his family. Please answer the question, sister.

ADA

Oh...um...I did, Bishop. I called him one night.

BISHOP

And to what extent did this relationship progress?

*

Ada turns red.

ADA
Does that really matter, Bishop?

BISHOP
It all matters in the eyes of the
Lord, sister.

ADA
(deep sigh)
We...We held hands sometimes. We
would spend time together after
seminary. We...
(beat)
We only kissed twice.

BISHOP
Are you positive that is as far as
things went between you two?

ADA
Yes, Bishop.

BISHOP
Was there talk of progressing
further?

ADA
What? No, Bishop. There was not.

BISHOP
Relax, sister. I am only trying to
help in your repentance. Now, do
you express the utmost faith in
our lord and savior, Jesus Christ?

ADA
Yes, Bishop.

BISHOP
And do you hereby forsake the sin
of breaking Chastity?

ADA
...Yes, Bishop.

BISHOP
Then by the word of our Lord, I
guide thee to repentance. Your
atonement will begin next week.
You may now kneel at the altar,
and ask for forgiveness of God
himself.

ADA
Yes, Bishop. Thank you, Bishop.

Ada begins to turn. *

ADA
(nervous)
Um...Bishop? *

BISHOP
Yes, Sister Waterman? *

ADA
What exactly will my repentance be
like? *

BISHOP
That is between only you and the
lord, sister. *

Ada looks down, visibly distressed. *

BISHOP (CONT'D)
But, within these walls you will
be expected to participate more
actively in the functions of the
church. This will start with
today's Baptisms for the Dead. *

ADA
(unsure how to phrase)
Will...um...will the baptisms help
me as well...? Will
they...um...wash this away...? *

BISHOP
No, Ada. They will not. Your
forgiveness is between only you
and the Lord. There is no easy
road to take. *

Ada holds a defeated stare. *

ADA
Thank you, Bishop. *

Ada rises from her seat.

BISHOP
Matthew will be working with you
for our Baptisms today. So you are
aware.

Ada stops for a moment, and then walks out of the room without
a response.

INT. CHURCH CHAPEL WARD, ALTAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ada kneels by the altar, hands clasped together. She tries to focus and pray, but she cannot keep herself on task. Every few seconds, she opens her eyes a peek, and glances around. The chapel is empty.

Ada sighs and continues trying to pray. After a bit, she finally falls into a sort of focus, until she is interrupted by the church bells. She sighs again, gets up, and walks toward the back of the church.

INT. CHANGING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ada opens a locker, and retrieves a baptismal gown. As she closes it, we see Nancy, just entered, doing the same.

ADA

Hey. I'm with Matthew for baptisms today.

NANCY

(curt)

Cool.

*

Ada recoils. Nancy walks off toward the changing stalls.

Ada closes the locker. She walks over to her changing stall.

ADA

So, who are you with today?

NANCY

The Bishop asked for me today.

*

ADA

Oh. Uh...Good for you.

NANCY

Yeah.

*

Ada stops for a moment. We hear Nancy exit her stall. Ada sits on changing stall bench, still dressed for a long moment. She pulls her feet up onto the bench, and holds her legs tight to her chest. She rests her head on her knees and stares into space for a long beat.

*

*

*

*

CUT TO: *

INT. CHURCH BAPTISMAL POOLS - MOMENTS LATER

Ada stands in a baptismal pool. Her eyes are puffy and red, cheeks **already** wet. A figure, slimmer than the one we saw last time we were here, stands behind Ada in a white robe. He grabs her tightly by the shoulder. *

MATTHEW

Sister Ada Waterman, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you, for and in behalf of Caleb Johnson Andrews, who is dead, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

We watch as Ada is roughly dunked into the water. We don't follow her this time, but watch as she is pulled from our view.

CUT TO BLACK