

BIRTH CONTROL

Written by

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FADE IN.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

ANNIE WOODS (31) sits on a sofa with a laptop perched on her lap. She is scrolling through a social media site. She comes across a picture of a new born baby. A caption reads 'OUR BEAUTIFUL NEW BABY BOY'. She smiles at the picture.

She scrolls down to see an image of protestors attached to a news article. The headline reads: 'Protests against the Reproduction Act continue'.

Suddenly the smile fades away and she is lost in thought. She is pulled from her daydream by a knock at the door.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, FRONT HALL - DAY

Annie opens the front door to find KIM (31) standing before her. She grins holding up a bottle of wine.

KIM
Time to celebrate?

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Annie sits on the sofa waiting. Kim enters carrying two glasses of wine.

She extends one glass of wine toward Annie.

KIM
Here you are.

Annie receives the glass and takes a sip. Kim sits down next to her. She raises her glass.

KIM
Cheers. Here's to your divorce.
Good riddance to old rubbish.

Annie clinks her glass against Kim's. Kim takes a sip, but can see Annie is no mood to celebrate.

KIM
What's the matter? You should be happy. You don't have to see that bastard ever again.

ANNIE

I know, but I just keep thinking the one thing I wanted, is now even more unlikely.

KIM

Children?

Annie nods.

KIM

Annie, your 31. You've got plenty of time to find someone and have children.

ANNIE

That's the problem. I don't want to find someone. I don't need a partner, I've done that and it didn't end well. I just want a child.

KIM

Well, I'm afraid that's not going to happen by yourself. Unless you buy some guys sperm off the black market.

Kim smirks, clearly attempting a joke. Annie looks away shamefully. Kim is suspicious.

KIM

You haven't, have you?

ANNIE

A colleague at work did it. She said it was easy. She offered to contact a dealer for me.

KIM

Annie, are you crazy? Do you realise how much trouble you could get into if you're caught?

ANNIE

Yes, but I'm willing to risk it.

KIM

Annie, you're my best friend and I love you, but right now you're being stupid. You need to think long and hard about this, don't rush into anything that you may regret.

(MORE)

KIM (CONT'D)

You will find someone, fall in love
and have children. Just promise me
you won't do anything illegal.

Annie feels backed into a corner. She tries to look away from Kim's intense stare, but knows it won't stop until she gives the correct answer. She looks Kim in the eyes.

ANNIE

Okay, I won't.

Kim smiles and wraps her arms around Annie, embracing her tightly.

KIM

I know it seems impossible now, but
just stay positive. Nobody knows
what the future holds.

Annie looks unsure.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Annie sits at a desk in the dark. The glow of the computer screen lighting up her face. She is reading through the Reproduction Act.

She leans back in her chair and exhales in a frustrated manner.

An email alert pops up. Annie clicks on it. An email opens reading "Your friend contacted me. If you're still interested I have stock. Meet me tomorrow at 13:00, Old Street. Bring £2000 cash."

Annie considers the email for a moment, she looks at the time 11:05PM. She hovers the cursor over the 'delete' button, but can't do it.

She stands up and paces around the room biting her nails glancing over at the monitor. She reads the email again. She is about to click on 'delete'. She stops.

EXT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

A group of protestors chant and wave their banners. They read 'LET GOD DECIDE', 'WE HAVE A RIGHT', 'CHILDREN OF OPPRESSION'

Standing at an upstairs window watching them is STEVEN MARSH (29). He is slender with a kind face and round glasses.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC - DAY

As Steven stands by the window, his wife FELICITY MARSH (27) sits in a chair nervously waiting. She is petite, heavily made up with styled hair.

She looks over at him irritated.

FELICITY

Come away from the window Steven,
and sit down. You're making me
nervous standing there.

He turns to face her. He nods and sits down. He places his hand on hers.

STEVEN

There's no reason to be nervous. We
tick all the boxes. This is merely
a formality for us.

FELICITY

They can still turn us down.

STEVEN

I doubt they will. Just relax.

A door opens and a nurse appears.

NURSE

Mr and Mrs Marsh?

The couple look over and smile.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC, DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Steven and Felicity sit before DR. ADRIAN THOMPSON (56). He is a large man with full beard and bald head. He wears reading glasses as he scans documents from a file.

Steven and Felicity hold hands while they wait anxiously.

Dr. Thompson looks up at them and smiles.

DR. THOMPSON

I must say, I'm very impressed with
your application. Excellent income.
Mr Marsh, you're a teacher. Mrs
Marsh, an environmental lawyer. You
live in a wonderful area of the
city. I don't think I've had a
couple more qualified pass through
this office.

Steven and Felicity grin at each other.

DR. THOMPSON

It seems I have no choice, but to grant you fertility.

Felicity excitedly hugs Steven. Dr. Thompson smiles, stamping their file with a large "Fertility Granted" stamp.

DR. THOMPSON

Steven, if you'd like to sit up on the examination table.

Steven manages to pull away from Felicity's embrace and makes his way over to the table. He hops onto it.

Dr. Thompson removes an auto-injector from a packet labelled "Priapidine". The name "Therapeutae Pharmaceuticals" can be seen written upon it.

Steven rolls up his sleeve. Dr. Thompson punches the auto-injector into his arm and presses the button with his thumb. He removes it and places cotton over the tiny wound.

DR. THOMPSON

Okay, all done. If you just hold the cotton in place for a few seconds.

Steven rests his finger on the cotton.

DR. THOMPSON

Now, you'll need to wait twenty-four hours before having sexual intercourse. You'll be fertile for thirty days. If in that time you haven't been able to conceive you may have another injection, but depending on circumstances it may require a small charge. Is everything clear?

Steven and Felicity nod smiling.

DR. THOMPSON

Excellent.

STEVEN

Thank you, doctor.

Dr. Thompson shakes Steven's hand. Felicity stands and shakes the doctor's hand.

FELICITY
Thank you, doctor.

DR. THOMPSON
Not at all. Good luck conceiving.

Dr. Thompson grins.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Steven is pacing up and down the room biting his nails.
Felicity steps out of the bathroom holding a pregnancy test.

STEVEN
Well?

FELICITY
It takes a few minutes.

Felicity sits down on the bed. Steven sits down next to her placing an arm around her shoulder. They stare at the test.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Annie sits on the toilet staring at a home pregnancy test.
She waits nervously, taking a deep breath.

She stands up placing the test on the side of the sink and stares at herself in the mirror. She closes her eyes.

ANNIE
(Whispering)
Please, God.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Steven and Felicity are still sitting waiting anxiously.

The test shows 'Negative'. Felicity drops her head in disappointment.

FELICITY
False alarm.

Steven rubs her back affectionately and kisses her forehead.

STEVEN
Don't worry. It'll happen eventually.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - EVENING

Annie glances at her watch and without looking reaches out to pick up the pregnancy test. She avoids looking at the result for a few more seconds - then looks down.

A huge smile forms on her face. The test shows positive. She throws a hand over her mouth in delighted shock.

She bursts into tears of happiness.

INT. ANNIE'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY - EVENING

A loud knock at the door.

Annie opens the door to find a plain clothes DETECTIVE (35) with a young uniformed POLICE OFFICER (28), standing before her. The Detective holds up his badge.

DETECTIVE
Mrs Woods?

Annie stares at them frightened.

ANNIE
Yes.

TITLE: 8 MONTHS LATER

INT. VISITORS ROOM, PRISON - DAY

People sit around at tables in front of their prisoner relatives who all wear bibs to identify themselves.

Kim waits nervously. She spots a pregnant Annie enter the room and smiles. Annie returns the smile and makes her way over. She sits.

KIM
Hey, how are you?

ANNIE
I'm not too bad. I may be in
prison, but this little thing makes
all that fade away.

Annie looks down at her belly and strokes it.

KIM
It can't be long now.

ANNIE

One month. It's just upsetting I won't be able to keep him, but you'll take good care of him, won't you?

KIM

Listen, Annie. I looked into the adoption process, and as much as I'd love to have him, they won't let me.

ANNIE

Why not?

KIM

Some bullshit law that prohibits children of convicted criminals being adopted by people they know. They don't like the idea you could still see him.

Annie starts to well up. Kim places her hand on Annie's to calm her.

KIM

It's okay, we'll figure something out. Try to stay positive.

She looks down at her belly again, placing two protective hands over it.

ANNIE

I won't let them take you away from me.

She looks up at Kim.

ANNIE

I won't let them.

Kim stares at Annie, concerned.

INT. FERTILITY CLINIC, DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Steven and Felicity sit before Dr. Thompson holding hands. Felicity is on the verge of tears. Dr. Thompson stares at them apologetically.

DR. THOMPSON

I'm sorry to say this, but we've exhausted all avenues. 3 injections, plus I.V.F.

(MORE)

DR. THOMPSON (CONT'D)
At this stage I'm afraid there's
not much more we can do.

STEVEN
There's not much more we can
afford.

A tear runs down Felicity's face.

DR. THOMPSON
Of course, there are other options.

STEVEN
What kind of options?

DR. THOMPSON
Adoption.

Dr. Thompson picks up and leaflet and passes it over to
Steven.

DR. THOMPSON
There are many children out there
looking for a loving family. I
could submit a recommendation,
possibly fast track you. You're
beyond all qualifications, so I
can't see it being a problem.

Felicity bursts into tears. Steven comforts her.

DR. THOMPSON
Once again, I'm very sorry. I
understand how you must feel.

STEVEN
Thank you doctor. We'll consider
it. Come on, honey. Let's go.

Felicity struggles to stand, but Steven is able to support
her. They head toward the exit.

INT. PRISON HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Annie is in labour, though no one around her, but a midwife
and the doctor. Her wrist is handcuffed to the bed.

The scream of a baby crying.

Annie is out of breath as she watches the midwife clean her
baby boy. She wraps him up and cradles him. Annie reaches out
toward her.

ANNIE

Let me see him.

The midwife looks over at Annie sympathetically. She hesitates and then starts moving closer.

A prison guard enters the room and steps between the midwife and Annie. The midwife hands him the baby and he turns to leave. Annie sits up and reaches out, her manacled wrist pulling at the bed frame.

ANNIE

No, don't take him. Let me see him.
Please.

A second guard steps toward Annie and holds her down.

ANNIE

Please, don't take him away.

She watches in agony as the guard exits through a set of doors and they slam shut.

TITLE: 3 MONTHS LATER

INT. TOWN HALL - DAY

A crowd of Male and Female protestors sit before a stage. MICHAEL (30s) stands at a podium speaking to the followers.

Annie enters the room and makes her way through the crowd. She takes a seat amongst them and listens.

MICHAEL

Our God given right, taken away from us, why? Because some of us aren't married, don't earn enough money, are considered too old or just made mistakes in our youth, like most young people do. All we want is to be mothers and fathers, and for that we are arrested and imprisoned. I say this has gone on too far and it's time for us to take a stand. Time for us to take back the human rights that have been denied to us. Time for this Government to yield to the will of the people. We are the Gods of creation, the Gods of life. We decide. Not them.

The crowd stand to clap and cheer.

INT. TOWN HALL - LATER

Members of the group speak amongst themselves in groups. Michael is shaking hands with various members as they praise him. Michael catches Annie solemnly waiting, watching him.

Michael excuses himself and approaches Annie. He smiles placing comforting hands on her shoulders.

MICHAEL
How are you doing, Annie?

ANNIE
Did you find it?

Michael nods.

MICHAEL
Come over here.

Michael leads Annie away from the crowds.

INT. TOWN HALL - DAY

Michael and Annie stand by the side of the stage where it's quiet. He picks up a briefcase and opens it. He takes out a folder full of documents.

MICHAEL
This is everything I could find on
the people who adopted your son.

He holds out the folder. Annie grips it, but as she pulls back Michael holds on tight. She looks up at him frustrated. He stares deep into her eyes.

MICHAEL
Think long and hard about this.
Once you cross that bridge,
there'll be no going back.

Annie snatches the folder from his grasp. She flicks through the documents to check them. Satisfied, she closes the folder.

ANNIE
Thank you.

She turns and walks away. Michael watches her leave.

INT. ANNIE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Annie sits at a table reading through the contents of the folder. Photographs and documents are spread out. A gun sits upon them.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE - DAY

The doorbell rings. Felicity approaches the front door and opens it. She smiles.

FELICITY

Yes?

ANNIE (O.S.)

Good afternoon, Mrs Marsh. My name is Rachel Smith, I'm from social services. I've just come to see how you're doing with the new addition to your family.

FELICITY

Oh yes, of course. They said someone would be coming. Please come in.

Felicity steps aside allowing Annie to enter. She wears an ID badge on her collar and is carrying a clipboard and handbag. Annie looks around the well-decorated home as Felicity closes the door.

FELICITY

Please, come through to the living room.

Annie follows Felicity into the next room.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

As Annie steps into the living room she spots a tiny baby in a crib. Felicity approaches him to check he's okay.

FELICITY

Here he is. Our little bundle of gorgeousness. This is George.

Annie stares at the child as Felicity picks him up.

FELICITY

Would you like to hold him?

Annie smiles.

ANNIE

Please.

Felicity carries him over to Annie. She takes him in her arms, finally able to hold her child.

FELICITY

Can I get you a tea or coffee?

Annie is lost in the presence of the child and doesn't hear Felicity's question.

FELICITY

Miss Smith?

Annie registers the question and smiles.

ANNIE

Tea, please.

Felicity smiles and leaves the room. Annie stares at the baby in her arms.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Felicity enters the kitchen. She fills the kettle with water.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Annie is still mesmerised by the child. She hears the kettle in the next room boiling loudly. She glances out the door briefly.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

The kettle finishes boiling. Felicity pours two cups.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Felicity enters the living room with two mugs of tea.

FELICITY

I hope you don't mind soya milk-

She stops in her tracks when she sees the room is empty. George is missing.

She drops the two mugs on the floor.

EXT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE - DAY

Felicity bursts through the already open front door. She looks around the street, but there is no sign of Annie.

She screams, tears welling up in her eyes.

INT. STEVEN & FELICITY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Steven is consoling Felicity on the sofa. His arm wrapped tight around her as she stares into space, her eyes red and teary.

A FEMALE POLICE OFFICER sits opposite with a notepad.

FEMALE POLICE OFFICER
Had you seen the woman before?

Felicity remains zombie-like.

FEMALE POLICE OFFICER
Mrs Marsh? We could really do with
a description of the woman.

STEVEN
Honey, please, tell them.

Felicity looks up the officer.

FELICITY
Please, find my baby.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A campfire burns brightly in the darkness. Annie sits by it staring into the light, deep in thought.

The sound of a baby crying pulls her from her daydream. She gets up and approaches a small tent. She enters.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Annie sits down next to the child lying in a makeshift crib made with a sleeping bag. She picks him up and rocks him gently.

ANNIE
Ssh. Mummy's here now. Everything's
going to be just fine.

FADE OUT.