

A HAPPY PLACE

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INT. COURTROOM - DAY

SARAH WISEMAN (30's) sits in the courtroom gallery. She anxiously fiddles with her hands while trying to keep her posture poised and her expression emotionless. She's failing at both.

The JUDGE's (40s) voice warps into clarity.

JUDGE

-- has been found guilty of the following offenses: one count of first degree murder, one count of kidnapping, two counts of battery.

Sarah's hand tightens at the listing of each count.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

These crimes are of the most heinous nature, involving unlawful taking of human life and the violation of basic human dignity. The pain and suffering you caused, not only to your victims but also to their families is immeasurable.

Others in the gallery glance at Sarah.

SARAH'S MOTHER (60s) reaches out to take her hand. Sarah doesn't notice as she waits on baited breath. Sarah's Mother places her hand on top of Sarah's.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

The jury has recommended, and this court concurs, that the appropriate penalty for these actions is death.

Sarah takes a sharp inhale, clearly still tense. Sarah's Mother exhales, more at ease and almost proud.

The Judge turns to the PRISONER (40s).

JUDGE (CONT'D)

You will be remanded to the custody of the Department of Corrections, where you shall remain until the day appointed for your execution by lethal injection, in accordance with the laws of the state.

A beat.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

May God have mercy on your soul.

The courtroom erupts into side conversations. Sarah's mother turns to Sarah as she grabs her purse.

SARAH'S MOTHER

Finally! It's done! That demon is going to get what he deserves.

Sarah is silent, still processing. Sarah's mother takes this silence as an indication for sorrow.

SARAH'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I know it won't bring Scarlet back. But with this - justice has been served.

SARAH

(dazed)

I don't really think--

Her voice fades. Sarah's mother waits in the silence, but Sarah doesn't continue speaking.

SARAH'S MOTHER

It's okay darling. Let's just go home.

Sarah nods, and follows her mom out of the building.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - FLASH FORWARD - MORNING

Sarah kneels at a gravestone. She holds a bouquet of flowers and places them down.

SARAH

Good morning, my sunshine.

After a few beats, she removes the older, yet still somewhat fresh, flowers from the vase and replaces them with the new bouquet.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I miss you everyday. I went to the sentencing. Justice is being served.

INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY

The Prisoner sits on his cot, staring straight ahead. Footsteps echo from outside the cell, growing closer. The door opens.

Two OFFICERS (40s) walk into the cell and drop a McDonald's bag at the Prisoner's feet. The prisoner takes out a hamburger and puts it to the side, and reaches deeper in and grabs a My Little Pony Doll. The officers turn and walk down the hall.

OFFICER 1
(spats)
Disgusting.

OFFICER 2
Yeah, but I'm kinda surprised the death penalty held up in court.

Officer 1, out of nowhere, savagely pushes Officer 2 against the wall and holds him by his neck.

OFFICER 1
Don't you DARE say that here. He. Deserves. It. The *family* deserves it. If you think otherwise, you're a disgrace to the state.

Officer 2 struggles to breath, his face becoming red.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - FLASH FORWARD - MORNING

Scene continues as before.

SARAH
I'm trying to understand, baby. But I still don't. You were *alive*.. Why then did this have to happen to you.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Sarah sits in the first pew, dressed in all black. She listens intently as a FATHER MATTHEW (60s) stands at the podium, speaking.

At the front of the chapel, before an altar, is a large framed picture of a beautiful smiling girl of about 10.

FR. MATTHEW
Today we mourn the untimely death of Scarlet Wiseman; an energetic, kind and joyous girl that held a light which was snuffed far too soon.

Fr. Matthew looks up for a beat, his gaze immediately finding Sarah's. She nods at his words, silently crying.

FR. MATTHEW (CONT'D)

She saw the world through that wondrous lens of imagination and naivety. She always saw the good in everything, in everyone. We pray for her spirit, to be welcomed into God's kingdom, returned to Him, our Savior. In His name we pray--

Fr. Matthew's voice fades.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAPEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah stands near the exit, awkward and alone.

Fr. Matthews approaches her.

SARAH

Thank you for the service, Father Matthew.

Sarah pauses, attempting to gather some composure.

SARAH (CONT'D)

She really was the light of my life.

Fr. Matthews nods.

FR. MATTHEWS

And how are you dealing, Sarah?

SARAH

I'm trying. I know she was missing for so long... but there was hope. Now with this, the sentencing--

Sarah pauses for a beat, gathering her thoughts.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I should be feeling closure. Right?

Fr. Matthews places a comforting hand on Sarah's shoulder.

FR. MATTHEWS

For many it might seem that way, with the sentencing especially.

(MORE)

FR. MATTHEWS (CONT'D)
 Though I, and many others, believe
 God is the only one able to have
 such powerful judgment, the modern
 justice system has it's own rules.

Fr. Matthews seems to get lost in the moment of passion. He
 returns to his more passive nature.

FR. MATTHEWS (CONT'D)
 Even though you were not the one at
 the podium with the gavel, it's
 hard to come to terms with the
 process of condemning somebody to
 death. If that guilt is weighing on
 you-

SARAH
 Guilt?

FR. MATTHEWS
 Yes, completely understandable. If
 you ever need to talk about it -
 it's a lot to take on your
 conscience.

Sarah becomes guarded.

SARAH
 I see. Thank you for your support.

He gently squeezes her shoulder and turns to talk to Sarah's
 Mother.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - CURRENT TIME - MORNING

Scene continues.

SARAH
 I should've been able to protect
 you.

Sarah takes in a sharp breath, kneeling by the grave. She
 brushes away any leaves, dirt or grass that was on the
 headstone.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 Even though you're gone, I have
 comfort knowing that--

A beat.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 --You're at peace now.

She shifts, trying not to cry.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 Today is his execution day. He'll
 finally suffer like you did.. He'll
 be gone...

Sarah pauses, stopping at this thought. Her eyes widen.

She quickly gets up from where she's seated, rushing out of the graveyard.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON ENTRANCE - DAY

Sarah rushes through the security line, cutting everyone and running through the metal detector.

SARAH
 Sorry, I'm sorry! Excuse me-

SECURITY GUARD
 Hey! Ma'am, you can't do that -
 STOP!

Sarah weasels her way through and runs into the two officers from earlier.

OFFICER 1
 Hey, are you Mrs. Wiseman?

SARAH
 (frantic)
 Yes, yes. I need to get to the, the
 execution - I need-

OFFICER 2
 Oh yeah, yeah. They're about to do
 it, we were just on our way there.
 You can come watch.

SARAH
 Yes, please.

The officers lead Sarah through the prison hallways, finally arriving at a wide room visible through a large glass window.

Through the glass, the Prisoner is strapped to a chair. A medical personal is inserting an IV into his arm.

Sarah begins angrily beating on the glass.

SARAH (CONT'D)
NO, STOP, YOU CAN'T TO THIS!

The officer's look at each other in confusion and grab Sarah's arm to try and pull her away.

OFFICER 2
Mrs. Wiseman, you have to stay calm
or you can't stay in the viewing
area.

SARAH
I NEED TO STOP THEM!

OFFICER 1
Mrs. Wiseman. He'll be dead in a
second, it's going to be okay.

Sarah stops struggling and bursts into tears. The Officers hold her limp body.

SARAH
(hysterical)
He's not suffering. This isn't
making it better. He deserves to
stay ALIVE in this cruel world!

A beat. She speaks so softly the Officers can barely hear her.

SARAH (CONT'D)
I don't want him near my baby
again.

The Prisoner's head nods down, unconscious. The sound of the EKG tones signal a stop in cardiac activity.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD'S PARKING LOT - DAY

Sarah hums to herself, walking out of the McDonald's with two trays of food - a Big Mac and a Happy Meal.

Immediately she becomes alert. The bench that has her purse and two water cups is empty.

We see a small feet being ushered into a sedan. The car squeals out of the parking lot.

She quickly places the tray down and scans the parking lot frantically. She finds a My Little Pony doll on the ground. She picks it up.

SARAH
Scarlet?? Scarlet?!!

She calls 911, pacing with panic as the phone rings.

PHONE OPERATOR
9-1-1, what's your emergency?

SARAH
(frantic, out of breath)
My daughter is gone-- somebody took
my daughter--

CUT TO BLACK.