

Sarah:

When you were growing up, you heard all about the wages of sin, but you never thought you would wind up here. You were a good Baptist girl. You helped your parents, went to church and followed the ways of the Lord.

When you were 14 you met Mark. He was 16 and had just moved to your town. He went to your church and your school. He was fascinating and you fell in love with him. He was a good Baptist boy, and your parents supported the relationship. Your older sister took the two of you out on carefully choreographed dates. On your 15th birthday you snuck a kiss for the first time.

Everything was going perfectly. You started to talk about what would happen after high school. You went with him to his junior prom, and afterwards he asked you to marry him. It was perfect. Your parents were delighted. The wedding would be after you graduated from high school.

That summer your parents gave you more freedom than you had ever had. Mark was your fiancé now and could be trusted to take care of you. It was over that summer that he convinced you that, since you were engaged, it would be alright to sleep with him. At first, everything was fine. Then, late that summer, you found yourself pregnant. You were terrified.

You talked with Mark about your options. You were good Baptist kids, so abortion was out of the question. Your only option was to get married right away. However, when you told your parents, they were aghast. They forbade you to see Mark. Premarital sex was a sin, and he had led you down a dark path.

You snuck out that night for the first time and cried on Mark's shoulder all night. Hearing the news, he began to hatch a plan. On the first day of school, instead of your school books, you would pack everything you needed into your backpack. He would pick you up from the bus, and you would run off together. You would find another city and get married there. He had been working part time in construction and could start working full time.

The plan worked. You arrived in a new city and began to get settled. Between the two of you, you were able to put down a deposit on a tiny studio apartment. Mark found work and you were able to get a part-time job at a fast food restaurant. It wasn't much, but you didn't starve. Two months later you were working when you suddenly found yourself doubled over in pain. You could barely croak out any answers to your manager, who called an ambulance. You got to the hospital, but it was too late. You had lost your baby.

Mark took you home and comforted you. Over the next few weeks, however, he started to become more distant. When the hospital bills came, he freaked out. Neither of you had the money to pay them. The fights became vicious and frequent. One day he hit you. The next morning, you woke up and he was gone.

You stayed in the apartment and cried for two days. You thought about going back to your parents, but you were afraid they wouldn't take you in. With your tiny salary, you couldn't pay the rent, and soon you were evicted. Since then you have been going from shelter to shelter, and sometimes you have gone without. You were able to keep the job for a while, which paid for your food, but you just got fired for not keeping your uniforms clean and being late a few times too often.

Tonight is your 17th birthday. It has been a little over a year since you got

pregnant and ran away from home. Bad as it was, your job kept you fed. Now you don't even have that. You can't stand the idea of crawling back to your parents at this point, even if they would take you back. You're afraid that they would just turn their backs on you, but in some ways you're more afraid of going back to live with them. They would never let you out of their sight again and you wouldn't go a day without a lecture on what a horrible person you were. They would probably tell you that losing your baby was God's punishment for what you did. Worse yet, they might be right.

You're rapidly running out of options. At this point, you have very little to offer except yourself. You have never slept with a man besides Mark and you can't imagine turning that deeply to sin. Right now, you don't see much else you can do besides starve. You tried praying, turning back to God, and going back to church. It didn't help. If God can't help you, who can?

You're here tonight because you don't want to be alone on your 17th birthday. You also have some vague hope that these people might be able to help you. Most of them don't have anything to offer, but they have managed to make it through somehow. Maybe one of them can show you a way out.

Who You Know:

Misty – Misty is a whore. She's washed up and her life of sin has turned her inside out. If you can't escape, she's what you'll be in 20 years.

Rich – Poor guy. He worked hard and deserves a better life than this.

Chris – Chris is dashing and romantic, if twenty years older than you. Of course, you remember how dashing and romantic turned out last time.

Hetty – Hetty is crazy.

Alfred – Alfred is crazy.

Manny – Manny has suffered far too much for one lifetime. No one should go through what Manny did.

Alex – You don't understand the kids who are here even though they have homes to go back to. At the same time, Alex is a lot of fun and you like hearing Alex's stories. You would miss the conversations if Alex got some sense and went home.

Flash - The only thing you can be relatively sure of is that whatever Flash says isn't actually true.

Cracker Jack – Jack is terrifying, particularly because what Jack has to offer is so tempting. Jack offers escape. The drugs could provide a way out for your mind, if not your body.

Corvus – Devil worshipping pagan.

Mel – Mel always has a fire going, some stew to eat and stories around the fire. This fire is a better place to be than most places down here.

Rose – Rose is a year younger than you and already a whore.