

CRY FOR LIFE

by

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FADE IN:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - PROM NIGHT

Lights flash, music thumps. Girls in big puffy dresses and boys in fitted tuxedos. Everyone is laughing, dancing, having a good time.

JESSICA, 17, typical prom girl with pink dress and covered in body glitter, stands in the middle of her friends, her face pale and her smile forced. Everything seems to be moving in slow motion for her, the strobing lights blurring into streaks, the music muffled as if hearing it through water. She is using all of her energy not to pass out.

BECKY, 18, sleek brown dress and elegant makeup, looks at her friend, her smile fades.

BECKY
(low, to Jessica)
You okay, babe?

Jessica forces an exaggerated smile, waves her off.

JESSICA
I'm fine. The dancing's got me all hot.

Becky puts her arm around Jessica's shoulders, they start dancing in unison.

Jessica feels suddenly drained, and Becky has to support her. They try to do this without letting the rest of the group know.

BECKY
(softly)
Come on, Jessie, don't do this here.

(louder to the group)
We're going to get drinks and sit down for a minute. I'm friggin' beat.

They start to walk away.

GIRL FRIEND
(going to grab her purse
off a nearby table)
I'll come with you.

BECKY

NO!

Everyone stops and looks at Becky. She laughs and tries to play off her forceful tone.

BECKY (CONT'D)

You stay here and have fun. We'll bring you back a drink. Then we'll drag your asses all over the dance floor!

The group smiles in unison, placated by her explanation. Becky starts to lead Jessica off the dance floor.

The music dies, the flashing lights extinguish as the house lights flood the large room. Everyone stops dancing and confused chatter breaks out.

Stereotypical PRINCIPAL, mid 60s, walks across the stage to a microphone.

PRINCIPAL

Sorry for the interruption, but there is a police matter that needs attending to. If we could have everyone line up around the dance floor, we can get this over with quickly.

Jessica and Becky stand frozen as the crowd begins to move around them. Jessica looks into Becky's face, tears starting to collect in her eyes.

BECKY

No, it can't be that. It's gotta be drugs or alcohol or something. No one would even know to look for it.

Jessica starts to hyperventilate.

BECKY (CONT'D)

It's not that. Don't do this now, Jessie, keep yourself together.

Becky pulls Jessica into the line forming around the dance floor and holds her upright.

Police and a dog sweep into the gym, starting at the students nearest the door and working their way around the circle. The dog sniffs at their clothing, the men ask questions.

Not finding what they're looking for, they move on to the next student.

JESSICA

Becks, I don't think I can stand anymore. I feel like I'm gonna pass out.

Becky wipes her hand across Jessica's forehead, her hand recoiling slightly at the heat. She plays it off.

BECKY

Don't worry, it'll all be over in a second. Then we'll sit down and get you something cold to drink. Hang in there for me, babe.

The police continue their rounds, the distance between them and the two girls ever shrinking.

They are next in line, and tears are streaming freely from Jessica's eyes, the makeup smudged like a mask around her eyes, mascara streaks running down her cheeks.

The dog sniffs her dress, sits down and barks once.

One of the police officers stands in front of Jessica.

POLICE OFFICER

My friend here seems to like you. What's your name?

JESSICA

(scared, low)
J-Jessica.

The Police Officer kneels down in front of Jessica and touches a red droplet on the floor at her feet.

POLICE OFFICER

Can I ask you to pull up the front of your dress a few inches, just so I can see the padding underneath.

Jessica hesitates, but does as she is asked. A few layers from the top, the fabric is stained red.

BECKY

She just got her period. None of us had any tampons.

The dog is on its feet again, sniffing Becky's dress and free hand. It again sits down and barks once.

POLICE OFFICER

I'm going to need you two to follow me.

The camera slowly pans upwards as the girls are led away and fixes on a light, before panning back down to see...

INT. GIRLS' LOCKER ROOM - PROM NIGHT - 1 HOUR EARLIER

A BOY and GIRL are making out on one of the changing benches. The Boy almost rips off his jacket and vest as the Girl removes her shoes and shawl. She starts to unbuckle the Boy's pants as they kiss, the Boy groping the Girl's chest.

The Girl pushes the Boy onto his back on the bench, finishes unbuckling his belt and pulls open the front of his pants.

BOY

Oh, fuck yeah.

The Girl leans in, a big smile across her face.

GIRL

You want it?

(she squeezes him through his underwear)

Tell me how bad you want it.

BOY

God, so fucking bad. Do it.

The Girl curls the tips of her fingers around the rim of the Boy's underwear, but stops suddenly as she's about to pull them down.

GIRL

What was that?

BOY

Who cares, don't stop.

He tries to grab her head and force her down, but she slaps his hand away.

GIRL

I'm not playing around, I heard something!

A muffled squeak comes out of a locker behind the Girl. The Boy hears it this time.

BOY
What the hell is that?

GIRL
I don't know. Go check it out!

BOY
Yeah? And what if there's a rat in there? I don't think so.

The Girl makes a disgusted noise.

GIRL
What was I about to do, suck your dick or eat you out? Don't be such a woman.

She slaps him hard on the gut and gets off the bench, heads towards the noise. The Boy follows close behind.

LOCKER 13. Another strangled cry, this one louder than the rest.

GIRL (CONT'D)
Oh my god, I don't think it's a rat.

She opens the locker door and screams. The Boy stumbles backward at the sight and falls over the changing bench.

Inside the locker is a baby wrapped in a black T-shirt, sticky, congealed blood covering it and the inside of the locker, its skin tinged with blue. The baby lets out its loudest wail yet.

The camera slowly pans upward as the Boy and Girl run from the locker room and fixes on a light, before panning back down to see...

INT. GIRLS' LOCKER ROOM - PROM NIGHT - 30 MINUTES EARLIER

Becky and Jessica are sitting on the changing bench. Her dress is still fresh and her face bright, but Jessica is moaning through gritted teeth, gripping Becky's hand tightly.

BECKY
(more indignant than sympathetic)
Why didn't you tell me you were pregnant?

The contraction passes and Jessica slumps sideways, bracing herself on an arm. Sweat beads cover her forehead, her face flushed.

JESSICA

I didn't even know until my period stopped. I took one of those tests and it was positive, and I got scared. No one knows.

BECKY

But you're still so tiny, you're not even showing.

JESSICA

(breathless)

I wrap it. It's small, but I can hide it.

BECKY

Who's is it?

The look on Jessica's face says that she wants to lie, but can't.

JESSICA

Danny's.

A devilish grin spreads across Becky's face.

BECKY

Why didn't you tell me you and Danny hooked up? He must have some potent spunk to break through a condom.

Jessica shakes her head.

JESSICA

We were both drunk and didn't use a condom. I don't think he remembers.

BECKY

Why didn't you just get rid of it when you had the chance? They do it anonymously, you know.

Jessica grips Becky's hand as another contraction hits. This one is intense, and doesn't seem to want to go away.

JESSICA
Oh god, I think it's coming.

(moans through the
contraction)
We need to tell someone. I need to
get to a hospital or something!

BECKY
No, Jessie, we can't tell anyone.

Jessica pauses for a moment as she stares into Becky's face.

JESSICA
(unbelieving)
What?

BECKY
Babe, think about it. Your
reputation will be ruined, not to
mention your social life, and your
sex life. Everyone'll be laughing
at you. Do you really want that?

JESSICA
But it hurts so much. I don't
think I can do this alone.

BECKY
You're not alone.

(goes to the door and
locks it, smiles)
You've got me.

JESSICA
This is crazy, we don't know how to
deliver a baby!

BECKY
(angrily)
You want to be known as the girl
who popped out a kid on prom night?
How fucking cliché is that?

JESSICA
But, I just-

BECKY
And think about Danny. Think about
how his life'll be ruined, too.
You can't just think about yourself
here, you know.

Jessica protectively covers her stomach. Becky sits down on the bench next to her, puts her hand on Jessica's shoulder. Jessica starts to cry.

BECKY (CONT'D)

(softly)

We can do this together. And nobody will ever have to know. We'll figure out what to do with it later, but we can fix this now. You don't want to be that girl.

Jessica wipes her eyes.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Come on, Jessie, you can trust me. I'll help you get through this.

JESSICA

Okay.

BECKY

(encouraging)

Okay.

She pats Jessica's hand and gets up. Becky starts to open and close the lockers in front of her.

JESSICA

What are you doing?

BECKY

Looking for something to put the baby in after it comes out. We can't just stuff it in your purse.

She opens several lockers, then finally finds some clothes stored in LOCKER 13. Becky pulls out a black T-shirt and puts it on the bench.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Take off your dress. We can use the ruffle as a pillow.

Jessica hesitates. Becky looks offended.

BECKY (CONT'D)

I thought we were sisters.

Nodding slowly, Jessica gets up and lets Becky unzip the back of the dress; it falls to the floor. She steps out of the ruffle and bunches it into a ball, placing it on the bench where her head will be.

Jessica is now in her bra and panties, with the ace bandage wrapped around her belly fully visible.

Becky goes to help with the wrap.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Does it hurt?

JESSICA
Only sometimes. Not too much.

Jessica rolls the wrap and throws it on the floor.

BECKY
Take off your panties and lie down.
I'll put the T-shirt under you to
catch the baby with.

Jessica hesitates.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Babe, I think we're way past being
shy.

Jessica offers an uneasy smile before taking off her panties and lying down on the bench. Becky straddles the bench and looks between Jessica's legs.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Holy shit, your vag is huge. It
looks like there's a softball
coming out of it.

Jessica lets out a wail.

JESSICA
That's the baby, he's crowning. Oh
god, he's coming already.

She grits her teeth against the pain, almost a constant moan escaping her lips.

BECKY
Aren't you supposed to breathe or
something?

JESSICA
Fuck my breathing! Get him out of
me, GET HIM OUT!

BECKY
You gotta push, babe, come on! We
gotta do it this way, remember?
Just bite down and PUSH.

Jessica grips the sides of the bench and cries out as she pushes, her back arching into the air. Becky is still, T-shirt draped over her hands, waiting for the baby.

It finally comes out, and Jessica collapses, panting.

Becky holds the baby in her hands, wipes its face with the shirt.

The baby doesn't move. Its arms hang limp, its eyes stay closed.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Jessie, it's not moving. The baby isn't moving.

JESSICA

(very out of it)

What?

BECKY

Y-Your baby, it's not moving. I think it's dead.

Jessica sits up as best she can on the bench and looks at the bundle in Becky's hands.

Becky puts the baby in Jessica's lap, glad to be rid of it.

It still hasn't moved.

All Jessica can do is cry. She holds the bundle to her chest and rocks back and forth with it as her wails fill the room. Becky can do nothing but watch. She looks more sick than sympathetic.

Becky finally places her hand on Jessica's shoulder to get her to stop moving.

BECKY (CONT'D)

(slightly forced)

I'm so sorry, babe.

She pulls Jessica's head to her chest, glances down at the baby in disgust and looks away. She looks at her watch.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Come on, there's nothing we can do for him now. Everyone's going to wonder where we are, we've got to go. He's gone, Jessie.

Jessica does not look up at her face.

BECKY (CONT'D)

You hear me? We can't do anything for him anymore.

(trying to put on a friendly tone)

He's a baby Angel now. He's safe, okay?

Jessica nods slowly.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Let me take him. We can't tell anyone about it now, but we can take care of him later, okay? We'll make sure to take care of him after everyone leaves.

Jessica reluctantly gives Becky the bundle. She wraps the baby securely in the T-shirt and places it back in LOCKER 13.

The two girls move as if some unspoken bond has been reached. They move into the showers and Jessica washes off the blood, Becky making sure her hair doesn't get ruined.

BECKY (CONT'D)

It's for the best. Your future would have been ruined if you'd had a baby. You wouldn't have been able to go to college in September, god only knows what kind of life you would have had. Might have ended up one of those trailer people working at a diner for the rest of your life. No, it's better this way.

Jessica does not respond. There are no towels in the room, so they have to use paper towels from the dispenser to dry her off when she is finished with her shower.

Becky continues to talk, but Jessica no longer hears what she has to say.

Once she is back in her dress, Jessica stands in front of the sink mirror and Becky helps her reapply her makeup. All Jessica can do is stare blankly.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JESSICA'S BATHROOM - PROM NIGHT - TWO HOURS EARLIER

Jessica looks into the mirror as she applies makeup to her face for prom. Her hair is all done up in curls, her dress smooth, her skin flushed with excitement.

She sings a song under her breath, a children's lullaby. Jessica winces slightly as she gets hit with her first contraction, the pain is light and passes quickly. She glances down at her belly and rubs it gently. A wide smile spreads across her lips.

JESSICA
(whispering)
Hey baby.

A car honks its horn outside the house, and she glances out the bathroom window. Jessica turns around, looks into the mirror one last time and pops her lips.

Jessica turns off the light and EXITS.

FADE TO BLACK.