

GROWING GABRIEL

Using new medical techniques, a psychopathic feminist kidnaps a man and forces him to carry her fetus to term.

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INT. BASEMENT

A large basement. Dark, cold, immaculately clean. Cement floor, neatly placed throw rugs. A night table with a lamp. A set of baby books atop - BABY NAMES - WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN EXPECTING - THE HAPPIEST BABY.

In the corner sits monitoring equipment and a hospital bed. Clean white sheets.

A muffled wooden THUMP from outside the room.

In one corner a T.V. and VCR/DVD player are attached high on the wall.

THUMP

A clean metal prison toilet.

THUMP

A cage. Inside, a small cot. Chain and manacle bolted to the wall.

THUMP

The heavy metal door to the basement slowly swings open with a SCRAPE.

The back of a curvaceous woman enters, coasting a wheelchair inside. In the chair slumps a sedated man in his 30's, dressed in a hospital gown. A small, silver crucifix hangs off his neck.

The woman, TOBY, 35, toned, beautiful, her hair in a bun, wears jeans and an untucked shirt. Turning the chair towards the bed she wraps her arms around the man and pulls him up. He groans as she heaves him atop the bed.

She takes a moment to catch her breath and then arranges his limbs. Grabbing leather restraints, she pulls them across his body, straining as she hooks them tight.

Toby lifts the gown, revealing a wide bandage on the man's stomach. Lifting the bandage, she inspects stitches on a large surgical cut.

Bending close to his face she whispers into his ear.

TOBY

You lucky asshole, you're actually starting to glow.

Walking to the door she turns and looks at her captive one last time. She walks out, closing the heavy door.

SCRAPE. WHAM. A lock CLANKS.

INT. BASEMENT - LATER

The man's blood-shot eyes bolt open. GABE - his head flails around, frantically surveying the basement. Looking down he sees the restraints. Every muscle flexes as he tries to get free. His watch rattles against the bed as he strains.

A few frenzied attempts, then he raises his head and screams.

GABE
Help! Somebody Help! Help!

His cries are answered with a sound from the heavy metal door.

CLANK. SCRAPE.

The door slowly opens as Toby walks into the room.

GABE (CONT'D)
Oh thank God. Lady, you gotta help me. Get me outta here.

TOBY
Why would I do that, Gabriel?

GABE
How do you know my name?

TOBY
Gabriel Miller, 29, White, Type AB positive, non-smoker. I chose you out of all them. I chose you to be the carrier.

GABE
Wait. Wait, I know you. You're from the fertility clinic.

Toby doesn't answer. She checks the restraints.

GABE (CONT'D)
What are you doing to me, you crazy bitch?

Toby slaps him.

TOBY
Don't speak to me that way.

GABE
You... you kidnapped me? For my
sperm? I don't underst...

TOBY
Oh, I already have that.

GABE
Then what the fuck am I doing here?

Toby slaps him across the face again. She collects herself.

TOBY
You're going to be the carrier of
my child.

GABE
Listen, just let me go and...

As Gabe pulls his head up to yell and winces in pain.

TOBY
The drugs must be wearing off.

Toby lifts up the bandage again and inspects the surgical
cut.

GABE
What did you do to me?

TOBY
I gave you the greatest of
gifts, nurturing a child to life.

GABE
What the fuck?

TOBY
I had a fertilized egg attached to
your organs. You're carrying my
child. And once you've experienced
the miracle of nurturing a human
being to life, I will tear it from
your body and watch you die a slow
and painful death.

GABE
You sick bitch.

Toby slaps Gabe again. Blood trickles out of his mouth. She quickly turns and walks towards the medical table, picks up a syringe and walks back.

TOBY
You will learn to appreciate the
opportunity I've given you.

Toby injects Gabe in the arm roughly.

GABE
This is fucking insane. You'll
never get awa...

Gabe's head slumps against the table. Toby throws the syringe away.

TOBY
You've got nine months to think
about it.

INT. BASEMENT - BED

Gabe lays strapped to the hospital bed. His gown has been pushed aside and a sheet lays over his hips and legs.

Toby is putting gel on the sensor of an ultrasound machine.

TOBY
It's an amazing opportunity, child
birth. You're making history.

Gabe stares at the ceiling. No answer.

TOBY (CONT'D)
Throughout time humans have been
forced to rely upon women for
strength and nurturing. While you
men play your games, using us as
pawns. You've marginalized us. But
that's all going to change.

She put the sensor on his stomach and searches for the baby.

TOBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
There it is. Look.

Gabe looks away. He doesn't want to see.

TOBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
It's a girl.

For the first time we see Toby smile. She stares at the screen. Gabe turns to look at her. She looks back, pure joy in her eyes, but he doesn't return the emotion.

Toby puts the equipment back, but the image remains on the screen. She turns and walks towards the medical table, back to Gabe.

Gabe finally looks at the screen, his eyes filling with tears.

INT. BASEMENT

Toby sits in a rocking chair watching the television and eating a cup of yogurt. Gabe sits on the ground in the cage, his left leg shackled to the wall. Gabe's beard has grown longer and his belly slightly sticks out.

Toby's belly matches in size.

TOBY

This has to be my favorite Lifetime movie. I've seen it at least a dozen times.

GABE

Why?

TOBY

It shows how women can be strong without losing their feminine side. I know I've always...

GABE

Why are you doing this? Why me?

TOBY

Years ago a man did something that guaranteed I could never bear a child. So now a man is going to carry mine.

Toby stands and turns off the T.V.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You were the best candidate. Healthy, graduate degree, and you volunteer at the children's hospital. One nice, neat package.

GABE
But, how am I pregnant?

TOBY
Medical science has come a long way, Gabriel.

GABE
I didn't do anything to you.

TOBY
You walked into that clinic. You gave your sperm, confident that some woman was going to carry your seed and bear your child. All without one bit of support from you. You help subjugate all women.

GABE
This is so crazy.

TOBY
Hey, I don't want this kind of negative energy surrounding my baby. I need you to stay positive while you bring her to term.

GABE
You've got to be fucking kidding me. I'm not staying here.

TOBY
Either you'll help me, or you'll never leave this basement.

GABE
You're just going to keep me alive down here forever?

TOBY
No... but don't worry, I'll think of a nice story to tell my child.

Gabe look at her in disbelief. Toby smiles.

INT. BASEMENT

Gabe sits on the floor inside his cage rocking back and forth. His beard has grown longer and his stomach bigger.

The metal door suddenly swings open.

CLICK. SCRAPE.

TOBY
Don't call me that.

 GABE
You broke my hand!

 TOBY
See what you did? This is all your
fault.

 GABE
God damn you!

Toby grabs the crucifix around Gabe's neck. Tugging hard the necklace snaps.

 TOBY
Looks like God damned you.

She runs out of the room leaving the cage door and basement door open.

Gabe watches her go. He begins to pull on his shackle and tries to pull the chain from the wall. His efforts peak and then trail off quickly. Pain and exhaustion taking it's toll as he passes out.

BLACK

The muffled sound of a heavy slamming followed by a rattle is heard.

Once - SLAM

Twice - SLAM

Hurried footsteps run down stairs. Heavy breathing with gasps of fright.

SLAM

CLINK. SCRAPE. The single silhouette of the door opens into the basement. Gabe inside the cage. His stomach is much larger. He's very unkempt, full beard. The room is a mess.

He runs with all his force and SLAMS into the cage door, turning his back to the bars at the last moment.

Toby rushes in, screaming. She's wearing a hat and jacket. Her belly bulges out from the fake pregnancy stomach. Just got home.

TOBY
 Stop it! Stop it!

A rush again. SLAM

 TOBY (CONT'D)
 Fucking stop! You're killing her!

SLAM

Toby's face goes cold. She stands limp for a moment.

Gabe stops and looks at her, apprehensive. He quickly rushes to the bars. SLAM as he rattles them. A guttural, animalistic SCREAM bellows from within him. Pure male rage burns in his eyes.

Toby reaches into her jacket pocket. A gun. She points it at him.

 TOBY
 (dryly)
 You leave me no choice.

Gabe stares, then slouches. Drops to his knees. Crying.

Toby goes to the medical table and removes the syringe. She approaches him. He accepts the shot with no retaliation.

INT. BASEMENT - LATER

The cage door closes shut. Gabe slowly comes to, his sedation wearing off. He watches as Toby undresses the hospital bed. Piles the sheets on the ground.

 TOBY
 That was quite a scare. But she's
 alright.

 GABE
 How did you become like this? Don't
 you think this whole thing is an
 affront to God?

 TOBY
 Ever since I can remember I've
 wanted a child. Someone to nurture.
 Teach.

She stops and turns to face Gabe.

TOBY (CONT'D)

There is no god. If there were,
then what kind of God would deny a
woman her only desire?

They sit in silence. Gabe is surprised for a moment and places his hand over the lump in his belly.

TOBY (CONT'D)

I will create with science what God
has denied me.

She kicked. The baby actually kicked. Toby didn't see.

GABE

(smiling)

His knowledge is infinite, and he
has your answers. You're just too
afraid to accept them.

TOBY

I've accepted, Gabriel. And I know
my fate. The question is if you've
accepted yours.

She takes the bundle of sheets into her arms. The baby kicks again. This time she does see it.

TOBY (CONT'D)

What was that? Did she kick?

No answer. Toby walks to the bars of the cage near Gabe. She reaches to place her hand on his stomach. Gabe pulls away.

Rage boils into Toby as her face flushes red. Then she calms.

TOBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

She will be beautiful. A true
miracle. Wouldn't you like to be
there for her first birthday?

GABE

I would...

Gabe tilts back as though he's lost in thought, but something is wrong. He's too tense, all his muscles tighten. A wince of pain enters his face.

TOBY

Gabriel?

Gabe's head rears back and smashes into the basement wall with a CRACK. His body pulls tight and begin to convulse.

TOBY

Look, I didn't want it to come to this. I never wanted to hurt you. If you cooperated, everything would be easier for us both. But I have to have this baby, and you men must learn a lesson.

Toby stares at Gabe as he prays, eyes closed.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You can't just ignore me. You have to talk sometime.

She realizes that she won't get through to him. Walking to the door, she turns.

TOBY

No one can hear you.

SCRAPE. SLAM. CLANK.

GABE

...and give us strength. Amen.

Gabe lowers his hands and sighs.

INT. BASEMENT - CAGE

Gabe sits in the cot, manacle attached to his leg, reading WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN EXPECTING. A halve-eaten plate of chicken sits on the cement floor.

Gabe looks to the door and then lifts the edge of the cot. He pulls out his watch from under the cot and looks at it, then replaces it and lays on the floor.

He begins to breath heavily, and kicks his legs.

SCRAPE as the basement door opens.

Gabe breaths heavier and closes his eyes. He is going into a seizure, writhing around, the thick metal chain flops about.

As soon as Toby enters, she sees him.

TOBY

Oh shit. Oh shit. Not now. Don't you hurt her!

She races to the cage door and fumbles it open.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You fucking bastard! Don't you hurt her!

Toby grabs Gabe's legs and forces him to his back. She pulls a key from her pocket and struggles to unlock the manacle.

CLICK

Gabe stops writhing and bolts up. He grabs the plate of food and swings with all his might.

SMASH against her head. A spray of blood dots the bars of the cage and sheets of the cot.

A look of pure shock splashes across Toby's face as she struggles to stay conscious. Her eyes scream out in anger. Then she slumps over.

GABE

You crazy fucking bitch!

INT. OUTSIDE BASEMENT CAGE - LATER

Dim lights bounce from the ceiling. Toby groggily awakes as her vision begins to gain focus. She strains to stand, stopped short, the chain pulls taught.

TOBY

S... Sophie...

Gabe stands near the cage, his hand rests on his stomach.

GABE

She's O.K. I felt her kicking.

TOBY

I'll find you. You will never have her.

GABE

On the contrary, you'll never have her. You'll never see her again, Toby. She'll never even know who her mother was.

Gabe glides over to the T.V. and turns it on. He inserts a DVD.

TOBY

Gabriel, look... I was just waiting. I was going to let you go.

(MORE)

TOBY (cont'd)
All I ever wanted was to raise my
daughter in peace.

Gabe scoffs as he presses play. A doctor in a white lab coat appears on the screen.

DOCTOR
(from T.V.)
..and it isn't uncommon to feel a
disconnect after the pregnancy. The
key is to remember you're not
alone. Do not be afraid to ask for
help from your family and
friends...

GABE
Her first laugh. First steps. Her
first words will be 'daddy'.

Toby begins to cry for the very first time. She lays back in the cot and moves her hands across her barren womb.

Gabe goes to the medical table and takes out the gun. He walks to the door and grasps the handle. A dim light touches his face as he turns.

GABE (cont'd)
Sophie... I think I'll keep that
name.

He places the gun on the ground and kicks it to the cage. It slides across the floor. At the some moment, he slides the door closed with a SCRAPE and CLANK.

FADE TO BLACK