

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE -
DAY *Principal Barnes hugs Kate.*

PRINCIPAL BARNES I'm so sorry, Kate. *(beat)* I haven't told many people this, but when I was young -- younger than you...I lost a child too.

Kate's stunned. Looks like she feels terrible.

KATE I'm...I'm really sorry.

PRINCIPAL BARNES It's okay. It was a long, long time ago. Still hurts sometimes. But eventually...you move on. You have to. *(beat)* Have a seat.

Kate sits down.

PRINCIPAL BARNES (CONT'D) I got a phone call from a very upset parent. That's how I found out about...you know. Frankly, I'm not sure why you didn't feel like you could tell me.

KATE I freaked out -- a student asked why I wasn't fat and I just froze up and then another student was saying I killed my baby and I didn't know what to do.

PRINCIPAL BARNES I'm not angry with you -- but I need to be clear that this doesn't happen again.

KATE It won't. I promise that.

PRINCIPAL BARNES By "not happening again," I mean that you don't discuss any controversial topics -- things the school board deems "family matters" with your class. *(beat)* No sex. No god. No drugs and alcohol.

KATE Okay, I...

Kate straightens up in her seat, takes a deep breath. She seems...exhausted.

KATE (CONT'D) ...I can't keep doing this. I

feel awful.

PRINCIPAL BARNES (confused) I know this all must be hard for you --

KATE No. You don't understand. *(beat)* I have to be honest with you.

PRINCIPAL BARNES What do you mean?

KATE Principal Barnes...I wasn't ever pregnant.

Principal Barnes looks shocked.

KATE (CONT'D) I lied -- to the class and to you --because I was scared.

PRINCIPAL BARNES But...you vomited in class.

KATE I know. And when that happened I didn't know what to do because the truth is --

PRINCIPAL BARNES Oh, my god -- are you really ill? Is it cancer?

KATE No, well, yes. I have a disease, but, um... *(beat)*...it's alcoholism.

KATE I've been working on it. I'm one-hundred days sober. When that happened I'd been out drinking and was hung over and --

PRINCIPAL BARNES You vomited in front of children because you were hung over?

KATE Yes.

PRINCIPAL BARNES And lied, saying that you were pregnant?

KATE Well, a student asked if I was pregnant -- and "yes" just kind of fell out of my mouth.

Principal Barnes looks disgusted.

PRINCIPAL BARNES That's sick, Kate.

KATE I know.

PRINCIPAL BARNES No, I don't think you understand how wrong that is. To lie to me -- to the children. You know I felt so terrible for you when I found out that you had a mis -- ? *(beat)* -- how can you play with people's emotions like that?

KATE I was sick.

PRINCIPAL BARNES Jesus...you told us you had a miscarriage.

KATE I'm sorry.

PRINCIPAL BARNES I threw you a baby shower.

KATE I'm really sorry. I am. I've been wanting to tell you the truth because honesty has become really important to me. I'm in AA now and doing the steps and working with a sponsor and everything.*(beat)* It's really hard. I mean, I think my husband might hate me, and --

PRINCIPAL BARNES I'm sorry, but what you did is totally irresponsible.

KATE I know.

PRINCIPAL BARNES *(beat)* I can't have you here anymore.

KATE *(surprised)* Am I being fired?

PRINCIPAL BARNES No, no -- the state wouldn't allow that without a report. I'm not going to write a report. Because, frankly, I have no idea what that report would say.*(beat)* But I'm forcing you to take of absence and I think it's best interest if you find a job elsewhere.

KATE Listen -- I'm really sorry, but I'm

doing the right things now.

PRINCIPAL BARNES I believe you -- or I want to. I really do. But honey -- I believed you before. *(beat)* I'll have a sub take over your class starting tomorrow. It's late enough in the year that we can just say you're having personal problems --

Principal Barnes looks at Kate.

PRINCIPAL BARNES (CONT'D) -- which seems to be the truth.

KATE Principal Barnes --

PRINCIPAL BARNES Not another word. I'm upset right now -- very upset -- and I think I'm doing you a favor by not reporting you.

Kate struggles to say something, to try to explain herself but no words come out until she musters --

KATE Thank you.

Kate stands, defeated, and leaves the Principal's office.