

Responsibility

Written by

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INT. AUDITORIUM - SIDE OF STAGE - DAY

An unseen CROWD murmurs. Camera flashes POP.

Dapper in his tailored suit, GOVERNOR RAINÉ (40s) adjusts his cherry red tie. For a last minute look, he pivots to PA SUSAN KALE (20s).

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
Lay it on me. How's the hair?

She smiles, blushes - flattered he respects her taste.

SUSAN
Perfect, Governor Rainé. As always.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
You sure, Susan? God demands honesty from his flock. And I'm a man who can take constructive criticism.

SUSAN
(shrugs)
I've none to give. Not a strand out of place.

Rainé beams, pats her cheek affectionately.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
Just what I needed to hear. Now if you'll excuse me, I've history to meet.

He swivels towards the stage. But before he takes a step -

TARA (30s) sticks a frazzled head through a side door. Barely out of view of the room, she frantically waves.

TARA
Pssst! Brian, over here!

Governor Rainé's eyes widen. Susan's narrow, confused.

SUSAN
Governor, who is that... woman?

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
(chokes)
Oh, no-one important.

He points towards Tara, then the door. His meaning loud and clear: "Get lost - out!"

But Tara's having none of it. She calls again.

TARA
Brian, we have to talk!

Pushing a surprised Susan aside, Raine marches over to Tara.
Cornering her, he angles his body to block the stage.

GOVERNOR RAINE
(hisses)
Tara, what the HELL are you doing
here? Pardon my French, of course.

TARA
Brian -

GOVERNOR RAINE
Don't call me that! Not in public.
You know the rules.
(beat, soothing)
We'll have dinner tonight at your
place, OK? My wife's off on one of
her silly cruises, so I could stay
over. She won't suspect a thing.
Just - please go shopping...
somewhere. Use that card I gave you.
But right now I'm busy. I've got a
VERY important speech to give.

Tara's eyes glimmer with tears.

TARA
That speech is why I'm here. You have
to postpone it. Please!

GOVERNOR RAINE
Jeezus Christ. Women...

He starts to turn away. Tara darts forward, whispers.

TARA
Brian, I'm pregnant!

GOVERNOR RAINE
(freezes, gulps)
You sure?

Tara nods, holds out a POSITIVE PREGNANCY TEST. Raine slaps
his hand down on it, fast.

GOVERNOR RAINE
You see those cameras? Put that away!

A curious Susan cranes her neck towards the two. Raine
fidgets, whispers to Tara... annoyance morphing to alarm.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

That's disgusting. It's covered with pee, isn't it?

Tara pockets the stick. Rainé wipes his fingers with a handkerchief - grossed out.

TARA

I felt you had to see. Make it real.

She locks eyes with Rainé. Emphasis on every word.

TARA

I want an abortion.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

That's out of the question. So, you're a bit confused...

TARA

I was confused coming over here. But the way you're acting *now* tells me exactly what I need to do!

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Tara -

TARA

Waving me off like some annoying bug! I can just imagine what you'll do when I start showing. Or when it -

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

"It"?!? You mean the baby.

TARA

Has diapers to change! You think *pee* is the worst thing to touch?

SUSAN

Governor, the press is waiting!

Rainé grabs Tara by both arms, holds them a BIT too tight.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Stay in the hall. We'll talk *after*.

Rainé stalks away. Susan starts to ask a question. He throws an annoyed palm in her face.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Don't. Go. There. EVER.

INT. CENTER STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Raine preens at a PODIUM. Unseen REPORTERS buzz . For this moment, the center of the universe - or at least the state - is right here.

The governor waves, clears his throat.

GOVERNOR RAINE

Gentlemen, ladies too: today is a day we make history! When we stand together with one voice and declare we will no LONGER allow the genocide of the unborn in our great State!

Murmurs from the crowd. A few BOOs are quickly hushed up.

GOVERNOR RAINE

I hereby sign our legislature's ban on all abortions from fertilization onward. As of this instant, all murder clinics are shut down. And mark my words - there WILL be no "exceptions". All life is innocent and to be protected. Those who threaten our most vulnerable citizens will face justice and felony charges. That includes abortion "doctors", taxi drivers, anyone who assists such a heinous act. Yes, that includes the so-called "mothers". For when they look into their hearts and are honest, they know full well it is *their* actions which have created life. So they have the responsibility to nurture it, help it grow.

Raine whips out a document, signs with a flourish.

REPORTERS surge forward. Raine shoves the document at Susan.

GOVERNOR RAINE

Thank you all for your time. But no further questions. We're done here.

With that, he walks away.

Through the side door, to a lobby - where Tara waits.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Raine doesn't turn his head. He just walks. Tara winces at his frozen smile. Trails as the two whisper back and forth.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

You wanted to talk, *darling*? Now's the time. But whatever you do, don't make a scene.

TARA

While I was waiting, I made some calls. I've got a friend who does medical services off the books...

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

I thought you knew me better than that. No means no. I don't have a hypocritical bone in my body.

TARA

But your marriage -

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Isn't family values. It just didn't work out, OK? But *this* family deserves a chance, too.

He shoots a meaningful eye at Tara's abdomen.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

So there'll be no "friend taking care of it". And no flights out of state. Don't get any bright ideas. You're having our baby. It'll be easy. A win-win: you go and vacation somewhere for nine months. After which, I will pay for its support. Off the books, of course.

TARA

But...

Rainé's voice hardens.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

And remember that NDA you signed? So don't you ever think about calling the press, or writing some tell-all book. Or I'll sue you so hard you'll miscarry from stress. And we don't want that - do we, dear?

TARA

Maybe? Um, er, no?

Rainé pats Tara on the back.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Good. Then it's settled. Lighten up!
Negative emotions can hurt a baby's
development. Remember: dinner at your
place, tonight!

INT. TARA'S LIVING ROOM

Pretty impoverished. Tara may be the Governor's "girl", but
poverty didn't get the memo... yet.

The doorbell rings. Tara swings it open - greets RAINE with
an alluring smile.

He's holding flowers with a "Congratulations on Your Bundle
of Joy!" card. He hasn't changed the suit. Just the tie.

Tara's stunning in a sequin dress. All curves. Raine eyes
her, impressed.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Well, let's hope you keep that
figure.

Tara's smile drops as soon as Raine's back is turned.

INT. TARA'S KITCHEN - LATER

An Italian meal, all the works. Romantic music plays.

Raine leans back - full. Tara tries to match his happy vibe,
though her mannerisms seem slightly strained.

POP! She opens a red wine bottle. Lifts a glass - pours.

She sets it down for Raine. Pours another. The governor
arches an eyebrow, concerned.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Honey, in your condition -

TARA

I know. Drinking's absolutely NOT
allowed. But I have to toast this
moment, don't I?

She raises her glass, tilts her head - sweet and coy.

TARA

To US.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
As a family. An informal one, of course.

He sips. Swirls his glass. Sighs.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
See? I KNEW you'd warm up to the idea after the hysterics stopped. I mean, no offense. That's a natural reaction... at first. But then you calmed down, saw the light.

He drinks again. Tara strokes his arm. Purrs.

TARA
What should we name our baby, Brian?

Rainé giggles. That wine's getting to his head awful quick.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
Brian Jr? Sure. But ONLY if he's a boy. None of this transgender bullshit in my house!

He snorts - nearly spews wine out through his nose.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ
Oooops. Sorry about the language...
(dabs his nose)
And this. But we're intimate enough, aren't we? I mean - I put a baby in you. So a few harsh words and fluid leaks between lovers can't hurt!

He waves at Tara's stomach, an uncoordinated move. Then...

THUD. Rainé pitches face first into spaghetti. Out cold.
Tara dabs her lips daintily with a napkin. Stands up.

INT. UNDISCLOSED WAREHOUSE OR BASEMENT - LATER

The world morphs from pitch black to plain old blurry.

Rainé moans, slowly opens his eyes. He's stretched out on a GURNEY, bloody hospital gown covering his chest.

Tara looms over him. Waves a hand in Rainé's face.

TARA
Hey, sleepyhead... you awake?

She turns to KEVIN NELSON (30s, bald with scrubs.)

TARA

I *think* he's awake. He IS moving.
Though when Brian dreams, he
sometimes farts...

Kevin shines a light at Raine's pupils. The Governor
reflectively cringes. Blinks.

KEVIN

Yep. Your boy here's a real trooper.
Regained nominal consciousness
quicker than I thought.

Kevin putters off. Raine groans.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

W...where am I?

He attempts to sit up. Realizes he's strapped down. He
struggles against his restraints - but he's too weak.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

Tara! What the hell did you do?

TARA

(giggles)

Kevin did most of it. I just watched.

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

You drugged me. Why? How could you?

TARA

It's not my fault you drink too much.

She pauses, thinks it over.

TARA

But it's just as well you went out
with a bang. And a mean hangover.
That's going to be your last hoo-rah
for the next nine months!

GOVERNOR RAINÉ

What the *fuck* are you babbling about?
Let me go, stupid bitch!

Tara leans back. Whoa. Those words hurt. She lays a gentle
finger to his lips.

TARA

Shhhh. You know, someone told me
negative emotions can hurt a baby's
development.

She removes the upper strap on the gurney. Raine tries to grab her.

Tara dances back. He growls, starts to sit up.

But discovers his STOMACH'S in the way. Raine paws at his abdomen, confused.

GOVERNOR RAINE

What's this?!?

TARA

It's called a stomach, darling.
Perhaps you carb loaded tonight a bit too much?

Raine unsnaps a button, takes a peek. Yup, it's his ACTUAL STOMACH - extended like a pregnant women in the ninth month!

Tara reaches over to a table. Lifts a filled wine glass (this one's white) and smiles.

TARA

Oh, don't worry. The "baby's" fine.
My friend Kevin transferred the fertilized egg to your lower intestine. Plenty of nutrients for it to feed on there.

GOVERNOR RAINE

But... this can't be. I'm not!!

Kevin waves happily over Tara's shoulder, proud as punch at mention of his handiwork.

KEVIN

Governor Raine, you're making history. Uterus transplants aren't a stable science yet. So that bump you have is my new invention - an artificial extender that preps your internal, uh, cavity, to give the baby room ample to grow. Better too much, than too little, of course!

Raine tries to wriggle off the gurney. Tara gently shoves him down.

TARA

Shhh. Rest now. I used your credit card to book a B&B in the Bahamas. Go vacation there nine months. You wouldn't want your wife to see you in that... condition, right?

GOVERNOR RAINE

Oh my God. My wife -

TARA

Doesn't have to know. No-one does.

Her smile hardens.

TARA

And don't you TRY getting any "bright ideas" to terminate it. That's a felony now, remember? Sweetheart, just look into your heart and be honest. You know it's YOUR actions that created life. So you have the responsibility to nurture it. Help it grow.

GOVERNOR RAINE

I didn't -

TARA

I believe the term you used before you overdosed on linguine, Dear, was "put a baby in you." So I've returned the favor.

She coos, strokes his hair - SEVERAL strands out of place.

TARA

Sleep now. We'll talk later.

She slips from the room with Kevin. Turns out the light, waves.

TARA

I'll let Susan know you're on a sabbatical.

Stuck in hell alone (well mostly), Raine SCREAMS.

FINAL FADE OUT: