

UNDOING

by

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## UNDOING

Characters

A

B

R

PRELUDE

1999. A RUNNING TRACK, ALABAMA

A IS WARMING UP, GETTING READY TO RUN

A:

...

I am in my body

...

I fit perfectly in my body

...

Every cell in my body is listening to me

...

My heart PUMPS my blood RUNS my muscles  
are READY and SET

...

I am flawless

I am flawless

...

I am 16 and I am flawless

...

SHE GOES TO START THE RACE

BLACKOUT

ACTS I - 2

ALBERTVILLE, ALABAMA 2019

B'S LAW OFFICES

B (A SMARTLY DRESSED LAWYER) IS WITH  
TWO CLIENTS, A AND R

A IS IN HER LATE THIRTIES BUT LOOKS  
OLDER. HER SON R IS 19. HE LOOKS LIKE  
HE WOULD BE MORE AT HOME SMOKING A  
SPLIFF IN SOMEONES GARAGE.

B: with respect this is not going work.

A: but - on the phone you said /

B: you cannot do this.

There will be an huge uproar. Fur will fly

A: But isn't that what we / want

B: / or is it feathers I'm never quite sure -  
anyway it won't work

A: You said there was support, you said now  
was the time

R: It's feathers I think

A: (TO R) Hush now.

R: Sorry mom.

A: In our church, Briarwood Church

R: I know the Pastor, he's a fine man

A: In our church people are itching to do the  
right thing, they are behind me on this,  
behind us 100%. Someone has to do  
something.

B: You're right someone has do something -  
but what?

A: Now this personhood thing is the law we  
can do something, that's what they said.

B: Amendment 2, praise god. Did you vote?

A: Course I did. We both did  
(TO R) Come ON, wake up now

R: I ain't asleep.

A: So I thought we could take this terrible situation - which happened against our will, against my sons will - I mean he pleaded with her every day right up until the last moment - didn't you?

R: Yes I did

B: That's good to hear.

A: And we have to make that unborn child's voice heard. All the voices. All the voices that have been drowned out - we have to hear them.

B: God has brought you here so we can do just that.

A: But you said we couldn't, you said /

B: You misunderstand me

A: 'this ain't gonna work!' Seems pretty clear to me

B: Bringing a case against the mother for killing her unborn child -that will never work. But we have other options, things are changing

A: What options?

B: Its not just us any more - Kansas, Missouri, Louisiana - they all have Personhood rights on their statutes now. For the first time since Wade v Roe the pre-born voices are starting to be heard  
(TO R) Here in Alabama your child has a voice. Even now, he has a voice

A: So why cant we sue the mother?

B: Because we have learnt through trial and error and bitter failure, a case against the mother cannot succeed. It never does. Its just the way it is.

A: But why not? She was the one who took that choice, no one forced her.

B: People prefer to see the mother as the victim, trapped into a decision she regrets. And she will regret it believe me

B: She will?

R: She will. I've seen it happen too many times, guilt, depression, low self esteem, ill health brought on by inner turmoil - suicidal thoughts...

R: She seemed fine when I saw her today, she was in Subway getting a chicken melt

A: (TO R) Hush.

B: That side of things is not our business, that is God's business and he will attend to it

A: So what is our business?

B: Our business is to point the finger at the true perpetrators, make them face their crimes

R: You mean - me?

A: (TO R) Are you stupid? Why would it be you?

B: You did your best son.

...

Now, I want you to imagine you are alone

R: Me?

B: Both of you.

You are alone.

You have have slipped from the righteous path but it is not a mortal sin, merely human frailty.

R: OK

A: (TO R) Hush

B: You are alone and terrified, ignorant of the choices you have, the options open to you

No one told you this could happen, not the first time

R: technically it wasn't / the

B: / Or that you have other options open to you

A: ...

B: You are so scared. What if your parents cast you out what then?

A: ...

B: But you've noticed that big billboard in Huntsville, with its great big letters crying out their message

you're desperate

A: ...

B: Those letters PLANNED PARENTHOOD they make it seem like an easy option - so you go in

A: ...

B: They give you a pill, and its all over. It doesn't take long.

A: Just one pill? That's all?

B: One pill and its done.

A: ...

B: A child robbed of all its beautiful potential, its one chance at life, cruelly taken away. Today someone has been killed.

PAUSE

B: Are you OK? Ma'am?

A: (COMING BACK) I'm fine.

B: And its all legal, done by a doctor. But we cant sue the doctor because he's covered by malpractice laws

A: Seems like we cant sue anyone

B: Well now that's not true. After you called I did some checking up. Investigated a few things -

A: Who else is there?

R: Mom I know.

B: Who lures the girls in? Who gives them bad advice and lies about the consequences? Think of those big letters - Planned Parenthood & Women's Wellness Center

Only its not

A: You mean the - clinic?

B: Yes the clinic. And the people who made that pill - the pill that brings death to children everywhere. Legal murder. As prescribed by doctors.

And we're gonna take 'em down. In your name sweet Jesus, in your name.

A: Amen.

B: And in the name of the Father who gave his only begotten child - so that others might live

(TO R) You hear that son?

R: uh

A: Praise him

B: Praise him

A: (HOLDING OUT HER HAND) son -

R: Praise him



## ACT III

NEW MARKET, ALABAMA, 2019

R & A'S KITCHEN

ONE WEEK EARLIER

R IS ALONE, THE FRONT DOOR SLAMS.

A: (O.S) You in there?

R: In the kitchen

A ENTERS KITCHEN IN HER SUNDAY BEST.  
DISHEVELLED

BEAT

R: Uh - how was church?

A: ...

R: Did you stay after?

A: ...

R: You know, for a - coffee, words of  
fellowship -

A: Well. In a way I did. You could say that.

R: What do you mean?

...

Are you - OK mom? You look a little

A: A little what

R: A little / upset

A: / Don't

R: Don't what?

A: I said don't. Don't even start to pretend  
you don't know

R: Don't know / what

A: / I said DON'T

SHE PUSHES HIM AGAINST THE WALL

What have you done? What have you done to me this time?

R: Mom - listen - its OK

A: You must think I'm stupid

R: I don't / I

A: / You must think I've got a fine case of the stupids going on

R: I don't think that - I know you / ain't

A: / Well I think you might be right for a change.

Youth club.

(LAUGHS, BITTER)

Youth Club.

And me so happy so pleased you finally got yourself a nice girlfriend - a nice girl from a nice family and now you're going to the 'youth club' regular I must have done something right, I'm actually proud of you for a change -

SHE HITS HIM IN THE FACE, HARD

why shouldn't I be proud - just once

SHE HITS HIM AGAIN IN THE FACE, IN THE NECK, THE CHEST, SHOULDERS, ARMS.

I was never proud at school, not even one time, I wasn't proud when you lost your job, I wasn't proud when that policeman bought you home drunk that time

R DOESN'T DEFEND HIMSELF, JUST PROTECTS HIS FACE. HE'S OBVIOUSLY DONE THIS BEFORE, A LOT.

R: Mom - please

A: Why shouldn't I be proud - just once

R: Mom

A: You two must have been laughing -

Well I hope you enjoyed yourselves -

I hope you enjoyed doing what you were doing and laughing at me and

SHE'S SLOWING DOWN

R: we - didn't - laugh

A: didn't you

SHE STOPS, GETTING HER BREATH BACK

I suppose that's something

Maybe I should be proud of that

PAUSE

R: Who told you

A: The Women of the Covenant. They took me out 'for little a word' after the service. So thank you for that.

R: I'm sorry mom

A: Oh it's fine don't mention it I love being told by a bunch of ugly bitches that my son, my son I gave everything up for, I threw my whole career away for, my special talent, my chance at life - I'd have been the first in my family to go to college you know that

R: I know

A: I had a sports scholarship

R: I know

...

Mom she was 16

...

- its not a - crime

A: (LAUGHS) Oh you don't know do you  
You don't know what they told me

R: That - that me and Ellie had been leaving the youth club early and

A: I think I must have known that - somewhere - anyway they told me something else, something quite different, something else that ain't a crime - except in the eyes of God

R: ...

A: And do you know what that thing is

R: ...

A: Do you?

...

...

I can see you do

R: How could they know?

A: Because someone saw her go in.

The Women's Centre, Planned Parenthood, the abortion clinic whatever you want to call it. Someone saw your nice little girlfriend with her nice figure and her nice hair - going in with her nice family with her mommy and daddy. How nice is that. How. Supportive. Supporting her in her choice.

Then they felt they had to tell one of the elders - who obviously had to tell me. Shit on them /

R: Shit

(he is crying)

Its not my fault mom, I said she'd go to hell

A: You think I care what happens to her?

R: I told her not to but she said - she was too young and it weren't nothing to do with me

A: How can I go back to my own church now?  
The only place I have left, the place  
where my friends are, the Pastor -

R: I'm so sorry mom

A: All these years - everything I've given  
you - my whole life trying to do the right  
thing - bringing you up. And now - this.  
You give me this - how can you do this

R: Mom I'm / sorry

A: / why didn't you stop her? Tell her you'd  
take care of her, tell her you loved her

OVERLAPPING SPEECH

R: She didn't want me taking care / of her

A: / You could have left, just like your /  
daddy did

R: why should my life be over cos of a few  
cells growing, I got cells too / that's  
what she said

A: cells have got nothing to do with it /  
have they

R: / she wanted to finish high school, go to  
college

BEAT

A: So did I, so did I

SHE TURNS AWAY FROM HIM, SCARED AT  
WHAT SHE MIGHT DO

R: Mom - are you - OK

...

mom

can I fix you something

...

can I - help

...

I didn't want her to do it

...

I begged her not to do it

A: (LOOKS UP)

R: Every day I begged her

A: You did? You swear?

R: Yeah

I'll do anything to fix this, I didn't  
want to kill a baby

...

I love you mom

A: Come here now

R: I'm sorry

A: Come here

SHE HOLDS HIM

## EPILOGUE

1999. A RUNNING TRACK, ALABAMA

A IS WARMING UP, GETTING READY TO RUN

A:

...

I am in my body

...

I fit perfectly in my body

...

Every cell in my body is listening to me

I am the only one in our family who will finish high school and get a scholarship to study sports science at AU

I may have a boyfriend but nothing too serious and definitely no kids.

I run down fields across dirt tracks spraying leaves and mud and trees clattering through bridges and grass and the sound of frogs and everything inside me is in place in time in tune as I jump over stones there's sun in my legs my colours are pink and yellow and deep russet as I run perfectly in my body in my life in this moment.

My heart PUMPS my blood RUNS my muscles are READY and SET

...

I am flawless

I am flawless

...

I am 16 and I am flawless

...

BLACKOUT, SOUND OF A STARTING PISTOL

THE END