



DQP's thoughts on platforming:

Now you are within the phase of "I want to hear this read between you and me." If you're open to that, we could set up a meeting and do a recording. There is still some hesitation, but it is closer to the "audience can see a message" and inching away from open-ended thoughts. The only thing I hope the committee does not dwell too deeply about is the politics of the world when Ash was born or Dr. Franklin was born. Perhaps the way to remove the "was Ash's birth illegal?" is to find ways to state that the law was passed not too long ago. Using Luna against Dr. Franklin is a great choice. Play around and realign these arguments and see how it births a climatic point that seems like things are ironically never going to be in control and what is broken is forever broken.

Birth Control

By Nico Juber

Contact:

Nico Juber
310-463-7277
nicolj@gmail.com
Dramatists Guild Member: 103101

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ASH (female identifying or gender nonconforming), 20s

DR. FRANKLIN (male identifying), 50s

PLACE & SETTINGS – Small town, USA, 2031



SCENE 1

(ASH sits alone in a doctor's office. She's wearing a paper gown and sitting on the end of an exam table, legs dangling. DR. FRANKLIN knocks once, then pokes his head in the room.)

DR. FRANKLIN

Hello, Ash. Sorry to keep you waiting.

ASH

It's okay.

(He walks in.)

DR. FRANKLIN

How's your mother been? I haven't seen her at church lately.



ASH

Fine, although not thrilled that the smoke from the desert fires have been keeping her from doing her morning walks again. How's Luna?



DR. FRANKLIN

Great. Luna and Tim moved to California two months ago. He found a job in carbon capture, near San Francisco.

ASH

That's good to hear.



DR. FRANKLIN

What can I do for you today?

ASH

I...

DR. FRANKLIN

Yes?



ASH

I'm pregnant.

DR. FRANKLIN

I see.

ASH

I missed my period last week, then I bought two different types of tests online, just to be sure, and both were positive-

DR. FRANKLIN

We can draw blood to confirm.

ASH

I did labs at urgent care over the weekend.



DR. FRANKLIN

Okay, well, I'll go ahead and get you on my calendar for first thing Friday morning. Make sure not to eat anything after 8 the night before.

ASH

But-

DR. FRANKLIN

Did you have any questions about the procedure itself?

ASH

No.

DR. FRANKLIN

It's very routine. You just need someone to take you home.

ASH

Okay, but-

DR. FRANKLIN

In the future, we'll need to get you on a more reliable birth control.



ASH

Dr. Franklin-

DR. FRANKLIN

Yes?



ASH

I want to keep my baby.



(Dr. Franklin is silent for a moment.)

DR. FRANKLIN

You know that's not possible here. There are only a handful of states where you can still carry to term. If you can get over to California, and stay there for a while-

ASH

I can't afford to just leave.



DR. FRANKLIN

Is there any way your mom can help?

ASH

No. I've been supporting her for the last two years.



DR. FRANKLIN

What about the father?

ASH

I haven't told him. I can't tell him. I-

DR. FRANKLIN

Then maybe the timing isn't right... this time.



(Beat.)

DR. FRANKLIN (CONT.)

I understand this is hard.

ASH

It's my body. You can't force me to do this.



DR. FRANKLIN

It is your body. That's why they outlawed childbirth here in the first place-

ASH

But-

DR. FRANKLIN

-pregnancy creates an unreasonable burden on the body. Plus, you have to leave the workforce to recover from birth-

ASH

Please-

DR. FRANKLIN

-not to mention overpopulation, the carbon footprint alone. Without the financial resources to support a baby to begin with-



ASH

What happens if I don't show up on Friday?



DR. FRANKLIN

You'll be fined.

ASH

I'll work extra shifts.

DR. FRANKLIN

If you wait past sixteen weeks, they'll put you in jail. Then the procedure is much more serious.

ASH

That's not fair.

DR. FRANKLIN

There's nothing I can do.

ASH

Can I see the baby, just once? An ultrasound?



DR. FRANKLIN

No.



ASH

Look, I know you have a machine, you checked me for fibroids last year-



DR. FRANKLIN

I could lose my license.

(Beat.)

DR. FRANKLIN (CONT.)

There's nothing to see at this point, Ash. Just a collection of rapidly multiplying cells.



ASH

This. This is the reason women don't go to doctors anymore. I thought you were different.

DR. FRANKLIN

Because you're Luna's friend? Because I've known you since you were in middle school? That's why I don't want to put you in danger!

ASH

People around here are huddled in cheap motels, delivering babies off the grid. If anything happens to us, or to the baby-



DR. FRANKLIN

This never has to happen, with good birth control-



ASH

Birth control isn't foolproof.





DR. FRANKLIN

Which is why we have these early procedures!

(Ash thinks for a moment.)

ASH

Why did Luna and Tim really move to California?



DR. FRANKLIN

Tim had a fantastic opportunity-

ASH

Carbon capture pays nothing.

(Beat.)

ASH (CONT.)

She's pregnant.

DR. FRANKLIN

Yes.

ASH

You're supporting them.



DR. FRANKLIN

Yes.



ASH

Then help me, too!

DR. FRANKLIN

She's my daughter.

ASH

Well, congratulations.

DR. FRANKLIN

I'm sorry. I've already had to expand my practice to bring in enough money to cover the move-



ASH

Everything about this is wrong.

DR. FRANKLIN

Ash, please, just... go home. Meditate. Take a warm bath. Whatever you have to do to make sense of things. I don't want to see you end up with a criminal record, okay?



(Beat.)

I'll see you on Friday.

(The lights fade to black...

THE END)