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Category: Short Story

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## Church Glass

The shitty carpet pokes my back like thorns. The church probably can't get any better because the pastor is the one buying things. The stained glass window stretches high above me from my vantage. I've seen my cat laying like this in the window light. It's like I'm bathing in rainbows. Saturday school is the stupidest thing. I just got out of school. Why do I have to study Jesus? Sorry Jesus, I swear I don't want to go to hell. Speaking of which, I'm "in bible study" but I'm not learning anything about psalms that I don't know. I can still hear the teacher going on about following the light of the Lord and not walk in step with the wicked. But Mommy made me memorize most of this part already, so I'm looking out the window instead. Magenta, orange, purple, and green all surround the Virgin Mary. I looked at her absurdly pale glass face. I picture the glass shatter but I don't know why. Suddenly I'm not too interested in the window anymore so I lay down my head on this shitty itchy carpet.

Psalms are surrounding me, trapping me. It's like I can almost feel them around my wrists, holding them down until I see if I can drop them to my sides. I feel like a sinner but when do I not, and maybe I'm right. I take deep breaths and try to let the Lord in again. I think I'll be fine and I'm still right where I was. At some point, we were dismissed and now it's just me... and the teacher who is at his desk with all of those wooden ships on it.

"Good afternoon"

"Ah! Good afternoon Jesse! Did you enjoy today's bible study?"

"Um. Yeah, I did. God seemed kind of scary in some parts though. Why is He so mad?"

"God loves everyone! Don't be scared, God is there to help you"

"But it's just... I don't know"

"If you have a doubt or worries. You can schedule some time before next sabbath"

"Really?"

"Of course. Give me your phone and I can give you my number"

"Oh ok"

"Alrighty I'll see you soon"

"Yeah, see ya!"

The church is terracotta gradient bricks and big elegant windows. I've always loved the windows of churches. I always choose which way to go into the church randomly. This time I go into the doors to the sanctuary. There's an insane amount of steps to the office. At a younger age I kind of thought it's because they didn't want anyone to go up there. And I don't think I want to go up there now but I have too.

It's now early in the morning, and there is enough time to get away before dark.

When the pastor texted me I didn't show my parents. It's only because scheduling this meeting didn't seem very interesting. I swear that was the only reason. I didn't want this, I don't think. I don't think it even mattered. It's so frustrating that it didn't matter. It wouldn't matter if I even did show them. I am the one marring his holiness. When I can't think of his motive maybe they are right. Who has led whom to what path when I am the one farthest from God.

But I'm starting to think I don't believe in my God if He instigates this. I'm starting to think about eternal perfection and if these are the people who get that, maybe the burning pools of lava and fire and red hot pokers will be more comforting than when he touched me. I'm starting to think that if believing in Him makes me feel like I

deserve to burn and makes me feel wrong for not wanting what He told the pastor I want and makes me feel like a stupid sinning whore. Then maybe I don't need to believe and I don't need to stay. Maybe all of this glass that holds me back and holds my hands not like love but like holding them down and reminds me of the pastor. Maybe all of that glass will come down and it will shatter and the broken glass will cut me not. It will cut me less than it ever did whole. And the broken glass will be not glass but a rainbow. A Broken Promise. Church glass will be more of a window for me shattered.