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Episode Title: What We Leave Behind

Theme: Reconciliation

Logline: A revelation from Julienne's past forces Bernadette to confront her own; Jenny helps a patient trying to hold on to her future.

Storyline 1: Julienne

Beginning:

A pregnant woman collapses at the clinic with severe abdominal pain. Trixie and Cynthia examine her and find something unusual. They call Dr. Turner over. He confirms the midwives' diagnosis of an ectopic pregnancy. Turner recommends immediate surgery. Woman won't go without seeing Sister Julienne first.

Middle:

Julienne arrives at clinic. Pregnant woman reveals she is the daughter Julienne gave up for adoption 20 years ago. She tracked Julienne down once she realized she was pregnant. The prospect of becoming a parent made her want to know her parents. She wants to know about her father, how Julienne came to be a nun...everything. She goes to hospital, undergoes surgery, which is complicated but successful. Julienne sits down and writes a letter she never thought she'd write.

End:

Julienne's baby daddy comes to hospital, grudgingly. For a brief moment, the family is together. Julienne brings Christmas dinner to her daughter in her hospital bed.

Storyline 2: Bernadette

Beginning:

Bernadette ladles out soup to the homeless. One woman, better dressed than the others, turns out to be Bernadette's mother, bringing news that her father has passed. Bernadette excuses herself, leaving her mother behind.

Middle:

Bernadette's mother comes to see her at Nonnatus House to try to make peace. Her father disowned her after she got an abortion as a teenager, and mom went along. They haven't spoken in 20 years. Bernadette entered the Order because she had nowhere else to go. Old wounds opened. Bernadette blames her mother for abandoning her. Mother blames Bernadette for being loose, and then terminating pregnancy. Evangelina counsels Bernadette, "You only have each other left. She didn't come here to fight with you."

Bernadette and Julienne butt heads over whether removing J's daughter's fetus without also removing the fallopian tube in which the embryo implanted constitutes abortion. Removing the tube is a medically necessary procedure to save the mother's life with the unintended consequence of ending the baby's life, whereas leaving the tube intact indicates an intentional targeting of the fetus for destruction. The idea of Nonnatus being complicit in abortions profoundly disturbs Bernadette due to her own history. Julienne falls on the side of doing what is best for the mother, regardless of C of E doctrine, especially in this case (since the mother is her daughter).

End:

Bernadette softens and invites mother to Christmas dinner at Nonnatus. Bakes a pie that she sends along with Julienne to the hospital.

Storyline 3: Jenny

Beginning:

Jenny follows up with a patient who had four miscarriages. She's in intense abdominal pain, confined to bed. The house is a wreck. Husband rolls in, reeking of cigarettes and booze, lipstick on his collar. The woman screams at him to get out, goes back to writhing in pain.

Middle:

A consult with Dr. Turner leads to diagnosis of endometriosis. Hysterectomy recommended. Jenny must track down husband. He's mad at his wife for killing all his babies. Also mad at her for being in pain and nonfunctional all the time. Jenny tries to explain to him how much she'll need him to get through the post-op period. He flips out at news of the hysterectomy. Jenny tells him yes, it means no babies, but his wife's pain will stop.

End:

Dickhead wannabe dad grows up and goes back home to his wife to help her recuperate from surgery. Tells her he forgives her, says he's sorry. But she doesn't forgive him for not being there for her. Kicks him out. Recuperation will be tough, but she's been through worse.

SUMMARY:

The first two stories deal explicitly with the interconnection between the characters' backstories and the theme of reconciliation. Characters separated from their loved ones by circumstances long-past are reunited in time for a season of togetherness. The third story looks at a different outcome centered on the same theme, i.e., what happens when differences can't be reconciled. Not everything works out. Some offenses are too heinous to be forgiven, regardless of what season it happens to be.