

## “Hope’s Story”

Hope anxiously walked through the familiar doorways and took her seat in the last pew. She was ready for the sermon, ready for someone to speak into her life so she would know what to do. Only two months ago, she found out she was pregnant. She had been so scared to tell her parents, but she didn’t know who else to trust. Week after week, they invited her to church, and today Hope had finally worked up the courage to walk through these doors. Stress started to settle. Desperately, she came to this church hoping for a clear message. Should she keep this baby or not?

Two hours passed, with no advice from the pastor. Before she knew it, the sermon ended.

“Amen!” said the pastor.

And that was it—no help. Nothing. Another disappointment, just like her.

On the way out, Hope eyed two girls holding a baby and playing with him in the grassy courtyard, filled with purple flowers and blueberry bushes. “Aren’t you so cute!” said one of the girls.

“Yes he is, Abby,” said the other.

“Jenny, how old is Carter now?” asked Abby.

“10 months old,” said Jenny. Hope could clearly hear them now. She saw Carter and thought, *His hair flows like a river.* He was beautiful.

“He’s the handsomest boy I know, have ever known, and ever will know!” Abby said,

“I love Carter with all my heart,” Jenny said. “I would sacrifice my life and more so that my brother could live his life.”

When the young girl said that, Hope got a tingly feeling in her mind and body. That baby was of the same value as Jenny’s life and more. In two places she felt that little spark of hope flare into a flaming fire. Once in her heart, and another in the baby’s heart in her belly. Confidence set in like deep roots from a tree, and a determined look came over her face.

Five months later, baby Sapphire was born, and in the first ten minutes of Sapphire's life outside the womb, Hope knew she had made the right choice.

Five years later, Hope graduated from college, top of her class, with a smiling girl in her arms. As she put Sapphire to sleep that night, Hope remembered those sweet girls from the church courtyard all those years ago, and she thanked God that He loved hers and her daughter's heartbeats enough to speak through big sisters and tingly feelings in bellies.