



## *Thursday Memo – December 3, 2015*

### **Plan: Pray – by Lisa Gussak**

I was so struck by her flawless skin, beautiful smile and colorful headscarf; I barely heard the words escape her mouth.

“I can’t refuse him,” she said. “It’s not allowed.”

It didn’t register at first.

“What?” I asked.

“My husband, I can’t say no if he wants sex.” She looked towards the floor.

Again I wanted to say “what”, but didn’t.

She was there for birth control, but had had two episodes of unprotected sex in the last three days.

Her last pregnancy was unplanned. She wanted to buy a house, was working, had three kids and did not want a fourth.

I offered emergency contraception. Suggested a copper IUD, kill two birds with one stone.

“I can’t use that, he’ll feel it and said I can’t.”

She is black, early 30s, foreign. He is white, older, from the States, and strictly religious.

She says refusing is not allowed in his/their religion.

She is thin and can use Ella for emergency contraception.

I offer her this and a long-acting method that I can place in her arm.

She takes the Ella. Says she needs to wait on the other until she is sure she is not pregnant.

“What will you do for protection over the next two weeks while we wait to see if you are pregnant?” I ask.

“Pray”, she says.

“Sounds like a good plan”, I say. “I will see you in two weeks.”

She smiles her perfect smile.

I want to cry.