

The Unborn
By Serita Stevens

Based on the Edgar nominated short story of the same name

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1 INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- NIGHT 1

LUB DUB of a heart beat as the blood WHOOSHES by.

2 INT. DARKNESS OF A BARELY LIT ROOM -- NIGHT 2

CREAKING OF THE ROCKING CHAIR, back and forth, back and forth as a JANE, 23, sweet and fresh faced contented young woman HUMS a lullaby. Music from Mozart plays in the background. *

Light from a passing car illuminates JANE, long dark hair, slender, pretty and very much pregnant. Jane rubs her stomach gently.

She continues to hum and rock. Puts her hands on her 8 month swollen belly.

JANE

I'm going to make such a good mother for you. You are so special. I --

3 FOOTSTEPS POUND UP STAIRS. 3

Jane pauses her chair mid stroke.

4 DOORKNOB TURNS. 4

Jane stops rocking. Holds her breath. She turns toward the door not knowing what to expect.

DOOR SLAMS open, vibrating against the wall. *

She turns in fear.

5 INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- DAY 5

Jane lays in bed. GROANS. Turns on her side. A shiner on her left eye.

On the bedside stand are flowers.

Jane looks at the flowers and the crude card.

CARD: Forgive me Sweet Pie.

Jane smiles.

6 PHONE RINGS

6

MARTIN

You okay, Janey?

*

JANE

He didn't know what he was doing.

*

MARTIN

He's hurting you. He's...he's
hurting...

*

JANE

He..He's..I'll talk to you later.

*

7 DOOR KNOB TURNS.

7

She hangs up quickly as Eddie comes in bearing a breakfast tray.

EDDIE:

Hey. You okay, babe?

(sets the tray down)

Here. Let me do that.

(puts ice pack on her eye)

*

She shrinks back as if afraid of being hit.

EDDIE

If you hadn't...

JANE

I shouldn't have talked back to
you.

EDDIE

And you know, you don't do that.

His fingers carass under her chin.

JANE:

(nods)

The baby kicked today. You want to
feel?

*

EDDIE

(touches her belly)

Won't be much longer now. Maybe
he'll come out with a wrench in his
hand.

*

8 INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- CONTINUOUS 8

Baby is curled in her placenta.

9 INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- DAY 9

Eddie leans over Jane, touching her face with love, feeling a father's pride. He touches her stomach.

EDDIE:

Why the hell isn't he kicking for me?

JANE:

It's a girl.

(on his reaction)

At least that's what the doctor said.

The flowers and vase he brought crash to the floor. Jane breaks out in sobs.

Eddie storms out of the room as Jane looked glazed at the broken vase and the food over the bed.

10 INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- CONTINUOUS 10

Baby curled in her placenta, her eyes open.

11 INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- MOMENTS LATER 11

Jane rubs her stomach.

JANE

It's okay, baby.

Jane crawls from the bed and tries to clean up the mess. Stripping the dirty bed, and still sobbing, she goes over to the CD player and puts on her Mozart.

12 INT. BEDROOM AREA - A FEW HOURS LATER 12

Jane emerges from the shower, sans make up. She goes to the make up counter where everything has been put neatly in alphabetical order by Eddie. She accidentally knocks a jar from its aligned space. Hastily, she looks around, fearful that Eddie might notice. She nudges it back into place.

She wipes the fog off the mirror. Her bruises from the day before are clearly visible. She frowns and begins applying make up. It's not covering it up. She puts on more and more. The thick make up is now more obvious than the bruise. She speaks in a mantra to herself.

JANE
I love my husband. I do love him.

13 EXT. DARKNESS OF A BARELY LIT ROOM -- LATER 13

Across the street the night lights of the liquor store go on and off as the hours pass. Jane sits in the rocking chair, going back and forth as she repeats her mantra. She's lost in thought.

The dinner table is perfectly set. The candles have burned low. She anxiously watches the street.

14 INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- DAYBREAK 14

Jane has fallen asleep in the rocker. Her face is starting to show black and blue. She wakes and stares across the street.

15 PHONE RINGS. 15

JANE:
(dulled)
No, he's not here.

MARTIN
You okay?

JANE
Yeah. Sure.
(forces a laugh)

*

MARTIN
I meant what I said. You're running out of time -

JANE
(alarmed)
Martin---

MARTIN
You need to leave him.
Listen...listen...

*

JANE
And who's going to take care of me.
You?

MARTIN
My mama, she'll... I don't know.
Jane, you have to leave --

JANE
And who's going to take care of me?
You?

MARTIN
I...you have to get out of there

JANE
I can't. He'd find me if I did. *

MARTIN
Jane, the baby --

16 FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE THE DOOR. 16

JANE:
He's ..He's...I have to go. *
(abruptly hangs up)

The door opens.

Jane turns expectantly and starts to rise as the door opens. She wears a long flowery skirt and long sleeved blouse. Her hair is tied back with a bow.

JANE
That was just...

EDDIE
I know who it was.

JANE
Martin just called to --

EDDIE
Sit down, Bitch. I'm through with
you and your lies.

He advances toward her.

JANE
Eddie, please. The baby. *

He wipes a clean surface and looks at his finger, looking for dust.

EDDIE
Clean this house. It's disgusting. *

JANE
I'm ...I'm going to bed. *

EDDIE
No, you're not.

Eddie grabs Jane's arm.

JANE
Stop it, please! You're hurt-
scaring me.

EDDIE
Sit down!

Eddie pulls her arm towards the ground, with it her body follows. Jane resists and eases her arm from his grasp.

EDDIE
Bitch!

He back-hands her against the jaw. The blow is severe. Jane buckles backwards, trips and SLAMS her head against the TABLE'S EDGE. She slumps to the floor, motionless.

The carpet swells with blood.

EDDIE
Get up!

Jane lies motionless.

EDDIE
Jane? Stop fooling. Jane, get up!

Jane remains unconscious.

EDDIE
I was just kidding.
(realizes she's gone)
Fucking shit!

SILENCE. Then,

Eddie frantically rolls the carpet near her so that it looks like she tripped and pulls his cellphone out and dials 9-1-1.

EDDIE
Send help! My wife's fallen.

FLASH WITH:

TWO PARAMEDICS rush to Jane, quickly assessing the scene. Eddie sits silent, motionless on the bed; white, blank, sick stare.

The Paramedics kneel to Jane's side. They quickly assess the situation and perform CPR with no hesitation. Their movement is sound, their skill precise.

Martin rushes in.

MARTIN
What happened?

EDDIE
I...she tripped.

MARTIN
You ---

EDDIE
Shut the fuck up, Doofus.

FIVE MINUTES PASS.

An exhausted, somber Paramedic 1 leans down and takes Jane's pulse. The cardiac monitor sounds a sharp pitched tone as it beams a flat-line.

PARAMEDIC #2
Let's jolt her.

The other nods as she applies the paddles to the chest.

PARAMEDIC #1
Stand back!

Jane's body's jerk but there is nothing happening.

Her eyes are wide open, the blood fills the carpet in small gushes. One paramedic shakes his head "no" to the other. Jane is dead.

MARTIN
Do it again...please.
Jane...she...

PARAMEDIC #2
I'm sorry, Sir.

Paramedic 1 removes her white, latex gloves. She applies hand sanitizer. The sound of the liquid glides out of the bottle. Eddie thinks he can hear it, for just a second.

Paramedic 1 notices small amounts of blood protruding from Jane's mouth.

SLOW MOTION: A drop hits the carpet.

Eddie stands there, just staring.

PARAMEDIC #1

Sir!

Eddie jolts from his trance.

PARAMEDIC #2

Did you do this?

EDDIE

No.

(chills)

I tell ya, she tripped.

He looks from the paramedics to Martin.

He listens with the stethoscope.

A sharp TONE blasts against the room. It's startling. Then,

PARAMEDIC #2

(whisper)

It's beating.

Eddie leans forward. Swallows hard.

PARAMEDIC #1

She's alive?

Eddie rubs his hands together, impatiently looks to the door; eyeing an escape. The tone sounds again. Then again. The HEART BEAT of the baby can be heard through the dopler.

PARAMEDIC #2

No. Its the baby. The baby's heart is beating.

Paramedic 1 takes the dopler and places it again on the stomach.

PARAMEDIC #1

We have fetal movement. Strong.

(then)

This baby is kicking. Let's get her moving. Now.

Eddie backs away from his exit, towards the scene. He peers over the medics at Janey's eyes wide open.

JANE (V.O.)

Eddie.

Eddie jolts.

PARAMEDIC #2

(to Eddie)

Step back. Give us some room.

EDDIE

What??

PARAMEDIC #1

Step back!!

JANE abruptly sits up, blood seeping from her wound. Eddie JOLTS with a SCREAM.

JANE

Tell me you love me, Eddie.

Eddie cringes at her sight, trembling in a pulse of fear. He opens his eyes.

Empty.

The room is empty. Paramedics GONE. Only the pool of blood remains on the carpet where Jane once laid.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM- DAY.

Eddie sits in his chair waiting form something, anything. He has not slept and it shows.

Martin paces the room.

From the strong white GAZE of the hospital BRIGHT LIGHTS emerges a DOCTOR, male, 60s.

DOCTOR

Mr. Hutchins?

Eddie nods. The doctor sits. Martin sits down next to Eddie and tries to comfort him but Eddie shrugs him off. Then,

DOCTOR

Sir. We saved your baby.

EDDIE

What's that supposed to mean? Jane is dead!

(MORE)

EDDIE (cont'd)

(Sobs)

Oh, my God. I loved her! I swear
I did. I loved her.

DOCTOR

Of course you did.

EDDIE

Fuck you! You didn't even try to
save her.

MARTIN

Eddie ...

EDDIE

You shut up, Doofus. When I want
your opinion, I'll ask.

The doctor reluctantly shakes his head.

DOCTOR

It was no...We performed an
emergency c-section.

EDDIE

A little girl?

DOCTOR

A healthy little girl.

EDDIE

What the hell am I supposed to
do...

19 INT. EDDIE'S APARTMENT - DAY.

19

SUPERIMPOSE: 4 YEARS LATER.

Eddie drunk on the sofa.

Little Janey, age 4, pounds with her pretend hammer into toy
blocks and then picking up Jane and Eddie's wedding picture
and pounding it until the glass shatters. She looks at Eddie
directly.

INTERCUT BETWEEN DOORWAY and LIVING ROOM AS NECESSARY.

The door opens and Martin lets himself inside.

Eddie catches the stare of his 4 year old daughter. Chilling.

JANE (V.O.)
 (whisper)
 Eddie.

Eddie JOLTS quickly. Standing above him is Jane, BLOODIED, holding a shard of glass.

EDDIE
 No!

Jane HAMMERS down the glass into Eddie's GUT. He buckles towards the wound.

MARTIN (O.S.)
 Eddie?

Eddie pulls the glass from his stomach. Blood pulls around his waist.

EDDIE
 No.

Jane is gone. In her place stands Janey, the 4 year old, holding the glass, SMILING.

Eddie bolts upright.

EDDIE
 Jane!

His eyes wide open. NORMAL. Janey plays in the corner with her hammer. She looks to her father and SMILES.

Martin enters the room and bends down so that he's eye level with JANEY.

MARTIN
 What are doing, Sweetheart?

Janey playfully holds her hands up to Martin.

MARTIN
 What's the matter with, Eddie?
 Nightmare?

EDDIE
 Yeah. Kind of.

He reaches for his bottle of Scotch and starts to pour. Martin takes the bottle from him. There's a slight struggle.

Eddie nods. He glances again at JANEY, watching warily as she plays with her toy hammer and blocks.

Eddie releases his grasp on the BOTTLE.

EDDIE
Yeah, you're right. I don't need a
drink.

20 INT. LIVING ROOM OF APARTMENT. DAY.

20

SUPER IMPOSE: TEN YEARS LATER

Eddie is on the phone with a crisis HOTLINE.

EDDIE
You don't understand. I'm not
crazy.

CRISIS WORKER (V.O.)
Have you had any alternative
substances today?

EDDIE
Don't give me that shit! I'm
hearing voices! They're real lady!

CRISIS WORKER (V.O.)
Are you a threat to yourself or
others?

EDDIE
No, I'm not.
(then)
The kid is.

He sees LITTLE JANEY (14) standing in the doorway, watching
him.

Slowly, he puts down the phone. CLICK.

EDDIE
You're home.

He's nervous.

EDDIE
Everything okay?

LITTLE JANEY
Just fine, Daddy.

She returns a slow, half-witting smile.

21 INT. APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND LITTLE JANEY - TWO DAYS LATER 21

Little Janey, 14, sits in the exact rocking chair where her mother sat. She reads Jane Eyre. On the desk is a picture of her mother. It's uncanny how much the child looks like her mother, even to her hair style. Her hair has grown long

Eddie stops in the doorway with groceries in his arms. He swallows hard as if seeing a ghost.

EDDIE:
D'ya always gotta have a book in
your hand, kid?

LITTLE JANEY
I like to read, Daddy. Didn't
Mommy like to read, too?

EDDIE:
(Stammers)
H...how would y...you know about
y...your m...mother, kid?

Little Janey shrugs.

LITTLE JANEY
Martin told me.

EDDIE
(in a rush)
I gota go out. There's spaghetti
in the fridge.

LITTLE JANEY
Sure, Daddy.

JANE (V.O.)
I loved you, Eddie. Why did you
hurt me?

EDDIE:
(spins around)
Whatja say?

LITTLE JANEY
Nothing, Daddy.

EDDIE
Stop playing games with my head,
kid.

LITTLE JANEY
I don't play games.

22 INT. APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND LITTLE JANEY - DARK 22

The room is bathed in moonlight. Wearing a long flowery skirt and blouse, similar to what her mother wore before her death, Little Janey Puts on Mozart and sits in the rocker, rhythmically going back and forth. Her is tied back with a bow.

The rocker CREAKS BACK AND FORTH.

23 FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE. 23

24 DOOR KNOB TURNS 24

Eddie enters and blinks, barely able to see in the darkened apartment.

EDDIE:

What the...turn on the fuckin' lights. Not like I can't afford them.

LITTLE JANEY

No, leave them off.

She stands and walks toward him, looking amazingly like her mother.

EDDIE

(drunk)

Whereja get those clothes? Huh, where?

He approaches her angrily, almost ready to rip them off. She avoids him laughing and returns to the rocker.

LITTLE JANEY

(laughing)

I found them. In a trunk. They were mother's, weren't they?

EDDIE:

Take'm off.

LITTLE JANEY

No. Other kids have parties for their birthdays. But what do I have? A father who murdered my mother.

EDDIE

Shut up! Turn that record off
before I slap you one.

LITTLE JANEY

Oh, don't you like the music,
Eddie? It was with mother's
things. I'm going to kill you
Eddie.

Janey stands out of the rocker looking every bit like her
mother. She walks forward. Eddie's face is white. *

EDDIE

Get away from me! Go back! Get
away!

JANE'S VOICE

Eddie, why did you have to be so
cruel? Why did you have to kill
me? I loved you, Eddie.

He turns and looks for an escape, but sees none. With each
step she takes forward, he takes one back. He doesn't
realize that he is nearing the carpet that Jane had fallen
on. He hits his head, just as Jane had.

The force of his fall is so great that he just lies there,
eyes open.

She kicks the rug over to look as if he has tripped, then
picks up the phone.

LITTLE JANEY

My father's fallen. Send help.

She smiles.

The End

Titles at the end have the phone number.

JANE

Three out of four people know a victim of partnership or
dating violence

One in four women; one in nine men are victims of domestic
violence at some point in their lives.

Every fifteen minutes a woman is abused. Teens are not
immune.

Violence against women happens in every culture and across the socioeconomic board. Don't be a victim.

If you or someone you know is in danger, please call the Hotline by phone at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233),