

The Unborn
based on Edgar nominated short story
by Serita Stevens

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INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- NIGHT

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

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.)

In the beginning everything was fine.
I thought I'd like this new life.
I'd become bored on the other plane.
I knew that my mother truly wanted
me. I basked in the glow of her
love even as she stroked her belly
and talked to me.

INT. DARKNESS OF A BARELY LIT ROOM -- NIGHT

CREAKING OF THE ROCKING CHAIR, back and forth, back and forth
as a JANE, 23, sweet and fresh faced young woman HUMS a
lullaby. Neon lights from the liquor store across the way
flash on and off. Music from Mozart plays in the background.

Light from a passing car illuminates JANE, long dark hair,
slender, pretty and very much pregnant.

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

JANE

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

FOOTSTEPS POUND UP STAIRS.

Jane pauses her chair mid stroke.

DOORKNOB TURNS.

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

DOOR SLAMS open, vibrating against the wall. EDDIE, 25, ex-
soldier, drunker than an angry bear, his eyes red, frames in
doorway.

EDDIE:
 You whore! Why the hell didn't you
 tell me the baby wasn't mine?

JANE:
 (Shocked)
 But it is yours, Eddie. I swear it.
 You're the only one I've slept with.
 You're only one I love.

EDDIE:
 Liar!

He takes three long steps which covers the small room and pulls her up from the rocker. He SLAPS her hard across the face. She crumples onto the rug, crying and reaches up to him.

JANE:
 I love you Eddie. The baby is yours.

INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- CONTINUOUS

BABY NARRATOR:
 From the sound of things, I wasn't
 too pleased with him. But what could
 I do? She loved him. Or so she
 said. Sometimes, he could be okay.
 I guess.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- DAY

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

On the bedside are flowers. Jane looks at the flowers and the crude card.

CARD: Forgive me SweetPie. I love you. E

Jane smiles.

DOOR KNOB OPENS.

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)

JANE:
 (basking in his love)
 No. It's okay. I'm fine.
 (beat)
 The baby kicked today. You want to
 feel?

EDDIE
 Can I?
 (touches her belly)
 Won't be much longer now.

INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- CONTINUOUS

Baby is curled in her placenta.

BABY NARRATOR:
 Sometimes I'd oblige him -- but then
 again, sometimes not.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- DAY

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

EDDIE:
 Feel that kick. Gonna be a football
 player that kid. Maybe he'll come
 out with a wrench in his hand.

JANE:
 Eddie, please. It's a girl. At least
 that's what the doctor said. If
 anything, she'll come out with a
 book.

EDDIE
 (SNARLS)
 No kid of mine's a patsy.

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.)
 Sometimes he'd get even meaner. He
 could change like the wind.

EDDIE:
 Sounds like you're trying to prepare
 me -- so I won't be suspicious, huh.
 (beat)
 Well who the hell was you with before
 me?

He slaps her and the flowers he brought crash to the floor. He slaps her again and food he just brought her goes flying across the bed. Jane breaks out in sobs.

JANE:

Eddie, I swear. It's you I love.
The baby's yours. It can't be anyone
else's.

EDDIE:

Yeah, well, you better believe I'm
gonna make sure.

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

INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- CONTINUOUS

BABY NARRATOR:

Eddie became more and more irrational
in his behavior. I wanted her to
get away from him. I didn't like
him. But she loved him --or so she
told me. She told me lots of other
things, too. Things that she probably
wouldn't have said if she knew I
really listened.

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

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.

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.)

It was those times when I truly wanted
to be born, to let her cuddle me in
her arms.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- EVENING

Jane is dressed nicely as she unlocks the door. Eddie follows her in, SLAMS DOOR behind him. His tie is askew and he has been drinking.

EDDIE:

Did you have to look at that guy
like that?

JANE:

Eddie, that guy is my doctor.
(MORE)

JANE: (CONT'D)

(beat)
And I wasn't looking at him.
(sits in the rocker)

EDDIE:

Don't lie to me!
(SLAPS her hard.)
Bitch!

JANE:

Eddie, please...stop...
(she cowers)

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.)

He was beating us almost every day
now. And I was beginning to hate
him more and more.

EDDIE

I'm outa here.

Grabs his jacket and SLAMS the door as he goes out. Jane
SOBS.

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.)

Now when we were alone, she didn't
play her music. She just cried.

Across the street the night lights of the liquor store go on
and off as the hours pass.

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Mommy, Mommy, I love you. Don't be
sad. Mommy, don't you know it hurts
me when you're sad.

(beat)

I tried to speak with her to tell
her to leave him -- but she wouldn't
listen. This man wasn't worthy of
being my father. I knew I was going
to have to take matters into my own
hands.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- DAYBREAK

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

PHONE RINGS.

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

*
 *

MARTIN (O.S.)
 You okay?

JANE:
 Yeah. Sure.
 (forces a laugh)
 Just waiting my time.

MARTIN (O.S.)
 He hasn't hurt you, has he?

JANE:
 (alarmed)
 Why would you ask that?

MARTIN (O.S.)
 Cause I've known him longer than
 you, Jane.

JANE:
 You're sweet. Everything's fine.
 Really.

MARTIN (O.S.)
 Promise you'll call if you need any
 help?

JANE:
 I promise. Oh ...I think I hear
 him. I'll tell him to call you.

FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE THE DOOR.

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: (CONT'D)
 That was just...

EDDIE
 Sit down, Bitch. I'm through with
 you and your lies. I'm getting a
 divorce, you ho.

JANE:
 Eddie, please. I love you. The
 baby loves you.

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.)
No, I don't. She knew I didn't.

INT. DARKNESS OF THE WOMB -- CONTINUOUS

BABY NARRATOR:
I tried to cover my head and fend
off the blows. I wanted to protect
my mother, but I couldn't. I was
still too helpless.

(beat)
The punches continued until suddenly
there was silence. Not even a heart
beat from above --and I found myself
gasping for air.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND JANE -- CONTINUOUS

Jane is on the ground, unconscious. Eddie grabs her hand.

EDDIE:
Stop fooling with me, you bitch.
(beat)
Oh, m'God! Janey. Janey -- Shit,
what have I done.

AMBULANCE SCREAMS as it approaches

INT. HOSPITAL ER -- LATER AFTERNOON

Eddie paces back and forth in the waiting room. Takes his
hands out of his pocket as he sees the doctor approaching.

DOCTOR:
Mr. Hutchins, I'm sorry but your
wife -- we tried...

EDDIE:
(Sobs)
Oh, my God. I loved her. I swear I
did. I loved her.

DOCTOR:
Of course you did.
(hand on Ed's shoulder)
We did save your baby. You have a
beautiful, healthy little girl. Do
you want to see her?

EDDIE:
Her?

(MORE)

EDDIE: (CONT'D)
 You mean you saved the baby and you
 didn't save Janey!
 (grabs the doctor by the
 collar)
 You bastard!

DOCTOR:
 (gasping for air)
 Take it easy, Mr. Hutchins. The
 baby was barely alive. We had to
 perform an emergency c-section. I
 thought you'd be pleased.

Eddie releases the doctor who straightens his tie. Eddie
 begins pacing again.

EDDIE:
 Pleased? How the hell am I supposed
 to raise a brat by myself?

DOCTOR:
 Hey, man. I understand your pain.
 (sighs)
 Do you want to see the baby?

EDDIE:
 Yeah, sure.

INT. HOSPITAL ICU NURSERY -- MOMENTS LATER

Rows upon rows of babies, some in incubators, some in cribs,
 most with IV's dripping into their legs.

BABY NARRATOR (O.S.)
 They brought him into the nursery.
 I knew I must look a sight with all
 those tubes and everything, but he
 didn't have to glare at me like that.
 I hated him even more than I had
 before.

EDDIE:
 My God. She looks--like Jane.

Little Janey kicks her feet against the end of the crib.

BABY NARRATOR: (O.S.)
 All the more reason to want my
 revenge. He came slowly toward the
 crib and looked at me. His ugly face
 leaned over.

LITTLE JANEY
 (whispers)
 You killed her. I hate you.

Eddie recoils in horror.

LITTLE JANEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 If I hadn't had these stupid mittens
 on my hands I'd have scratched his
 face. I glared

Eddie shakes his head, stares at the baby. She gurgles and coos, pretending to be perfect baby.

EDDIE:
 (backs away)
 This kid ain't normal! This ain't
 my kid.

NURSE:
 Of course she's normal, Mr. Hutchins.

EDDIE:
 The kid just talked to me.

NURSE:
 (LAUGHING)
 Oh, Mr. Hutchins. All new parents
 think their children are special.
 But I can assure you, your baby won't
 be talking for quite a few months
 yet.

Baby Janey gurgles and smiles for the nurse and for Eddie.

LITTLE JANEY
 (whispers)
 I'm going to kill you, Eddie, just
 like you murdered my mother.

EDDIE:
 (eyes widen)
 Jeez! I need a drink.

She smiles and kicks her blanket off.

INT. HOSPITAL NURSERY -- EVENING

Baby Janey is dressed in going home clothes and charming the nurses. Eddie arrives and nervously looks around.

EDDIE

You sure she's okay to go home?

NURSE:

Of course Mr. Hutchins. And I'm sure you'll be fine.

EDDIE

Yeah right.

LITTLE JANEY (O.S.)

I could smell the alcohol on his breath. I'm surprised the nurses let me go home with him. As the nurse's back was turned, I kicked him hard in the stomach.

EDDIE

Ow! The brat kicked me.

NURSE:

(laughs)

Oh Mr. Hutchins. I'm sure she didn't mean it.

LITTLE JANEY (O.S.)

Of course I did.

(whispers to dad)

I'm going to kill you, Eddie.

He jumps back and nearly drops the baby. The nurse catches Little Janey.

NURSE:

Careful, Mr. Hutchins.

(beat)

Are you *sure* you can manage all right?

EDDIE

Yeah. Yeah. She's just a kid. Right?

(takes the baby)

LITTLE JANEY (O.S.)

No matter how long it would take.

Mother would be avenged.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS -

Little Janey banging her spoon as she sits in her high chair. Eddie slamming food on the table; wandering around in her diapers, sitting in front of the TV watching Barney. A series of baby nurses coming and going.

INT. APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND LITTLE JANEY - A FEW YEARS LATER

HOUSEKEEPER

Mr. Hutchins?

Eddie drunk on the sofa.

EDDIE

What?

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.

LITTLE JANEY

(whispers)

I'm going to kill you Eddie just like you killed my mother.

EDDIE

Shut up. Go way!
(hands over his ears)

HOUSEKEEPER

(notes Janey)

What are doing Sweetheart?

Takes the broken picture from Little Janey's hands. The baby reaches up for it.

LITTLE JANEY

Park?

HOUSEKEEPER

Sure. Let's go to the park. Daddy are you going to the park?

EDDIE

No. Get her out of my life. I can't deal with this.

The housekeeper is horrified.

LITTLE JANEY

(whispers)

I'm going to murder you, Eddie.
Just like you murdered my mother.
(imitating Jane)
Eddie, I swear this baby's yours.
Oh, Eddie, I love you. Don't you know that?

Eddie pales. Drops the drink in his hand.

EDDIE
Shit! Get that kid away.

He runs from the room.

INT. APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND LITTLE JANEY - A FEW YEARS LATER
10 year old Janey uses her key to come in.

LITTLE JANEY
Daddy? I'm home.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF APARTMENT. -- MOMENTS LATER

His friend MARTIN sits on the sofa with Eddie. Janey stands in the doorway for a moment listing.

EDDIE
I swear the kid is possessed.

MARTIN
Please, Eddie. You can't be serious.

EDDIE
No, I swear Marty, if you could only...
(sees her; stiffens)
You're home.

LITTLE JANEY
Yeah. Hi Uncle Martin.
(climbs into the other man's lap)
I miss you.

MARTIN
I miss you too Janey.
(strokes her hair fondly)
You're looking more and more like your mother.

LITTLE JANEY
(smiles at Eddie)
Am I?

INT. HER BEDROOM -- LATER

Janey is doing her homework. Above her desk is a picture of her mother.

LITTLE JANEY (O.S.)

As I got older and began to talk, it seemed wisest to just bide my time. Probably Eddie thought it was the alcohol talking. But I didn't forget. I waited and waited. One day, my chance would come.

INT. APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND LITTLE JANEY - YEARS LATER

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 (O.S.)

It unnerved him when I smiled. He would leave and head off to the bar. But I wasn't strong enough. Not yet. I knew the time was coming soon when I would get my revenge, but I didn't yet know how.

EDDIE:

I gotta go out. There's spaghetti in the fridge.

LITTLE JANEY

Sure, Daddy.

(Jane's voice)

I love you, Eddie.

EDDIE:

(spins around)

Whatja say?

INT. APARTMENT OF EDDIE AND LITTLE JANEY - DARK

Wearing a long flowery skirt and blouse, similar to what her mother wore before her death, Little Janey, 16, puts on Mozart and sits in the rocker, rhythmically going back and forth. Her hair is tied back with a bow.

The rocker CREAKS BACK AND FORTH.

LITTLE JANEY (O.S.)

I was ready. I was waiting for him.

FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE.

DOOR KNOB TURNS

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 sixteenth 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. I'm going
to get revenge for my mother.
(as Jane reaches out)
Eddie, I loved you. Eddie, I --

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

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 window and that it is open. Her skirt
whispers as she continues.

He backs up...and falls through the screen.

He SCREAMS as he falls.

She goes to the window and looks down the four flights into
the street where his body lies broken.

INT. HOSPITAL ER -- LATER

Martin is with her.

DOCTOR:

I'm sorry about your father, Miss
Hutchins. I'll report the death as
an accident.

LITTLE JANEY

Thank you, doctor.

MARTIN

It's going to be okay. Janey. I'll
take care of you.

LITTLE JANEY

I know you will Uncle Martin. You
know he was never really the same
after my mother died.

Martin looks strangely at her.

Little Janey smiles.

THE END