

INHERITANCE
A three-minute monologue
By JANE CAFARELLA

Drama

LORRAINE, 70 + tells her a family secret

When I was your age, we had a family friend called Ben – a man in his 30s.
A real charmer.
He was especially charming to me.
I was only 15, a real ugly duckling...lonely.
In those days, sex wasn't spoken about.
When my period didn't come. I didn't know what to do.
One day we were undressing at school for physical education, and my friend saw.
I burst into tears.
She said she'd help me. Her mother was a nurse. She knew a doctor.
I could stay over at their place afterwards – just say I was paying a visit.
I needed money – around \$300, a fortune!
Your grandpa had a shop, a general store. I stole the money from the till.
They blamed the shop girl and sacked her. I felt so bad but I couldn't help it.
The clinic was in New York. All I had was an address and my train ticket.
They said to take a bunch of flowers, like I was visiting a sick friend.
I was terrified.
I knocked and a man said, "Come in."
There was a long table, with some surgical instruments. The place stank of cigarettes and disinfectant.
He told me to take my panties off and get on the table. Then he started unbuttoning his trousers.
I said "What are you doing?"
He said "This is the price you pay for being a slut!"
I got up and I ran and ran and ran!
I cried all the way home on the train.
My mother said it was God's punishment and I'd have to go through with it.
They sent me away to a convent until the baby was born – a boy.
So they said. I never saw him.
They told me to forget it. But I never did. How could I?

I never told your grandpa. I never told your mother.

I never told anyone.

Till now.

I haven't got much longer.

Maybe I'll see him – my boy? I hope he'll forgive me. I can't ever forgive myself.

But there's one thing I can do.

I can tell you, and you can tell your children, and they can tell their children...
about the terrible price we all paid.

364 words

jane.cafarella@gmail.com

+61 408 880 185

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