

THE RIGHT TIME

June's monologue

from

d-baby

A play by JANE CAFARELLA

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TIME: The present, MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS, USA, JUNE, 63, is finally telling her donor-conceived daughter, Diedre, 18, the truth. Or her version of it.

You want the truth? LISTEN!

12 rounds of IVF! I used to imagine what that baby would be like. Like someone put the best of us and everyone who'd come before us, into some lotto machine and spat out a more perfect version.

But every month the picture faded, until there was just a ghost child.

Matt wanted to stop. I...couldn't.

Then...one day, I woke up and decided I didn't want that child in my life anymore.

I went to the florist and bought a bunch of balloons – pink and blue.

“Baby shower?” the florist asked. “Yes,” I replied.

That afternoon, I drove down the Cape, grabbed those balloons and ran down to the shore. I opened my hand and watched the wind carry them away.

We signed the adoption papers the next day – for three healthy embryos. You were the only one that survived the thaw.

She raises her glass and drinks.

Everyone just assumed the IVF finally worked. We told no one - except Nan.

She prayed for me...prayed I'd miscarry rather than go to hell for carrying the child of man who was not my husband!

Every night I worried...perhaps she was right? Perhaps you'd hate me? Perhaps I'd hate myself?

Every night Matt and I argued...about money...about what we'd tell you.

Then he got offered a tour. He promised he'd be back in time. *(Her voice wavers).*

One night he called to say...*(softly)* he'd met someone.

I was four months pregnant.

June draws a breath.

He's married now. With two kids. They live in Jersey. We never spoke again.

Don't look at me like that! No father is better than a father who never WANTED you!

I TRIED to tell you. I did! When you were little...you asked where babies came from. But you were so young...how could you understand? When you started high school, I WANTED to tell you, but you were struggling with friends...I COULDN'T! I was trying to protect you! I was trying to be merciful! Not like all those other parents – trotting out their DC kids for genetic show and tell. I wanted you to be able to decide for yourself - to give you a choice WHO to tell and WHEN!

Oh, Nan was right. She was right! There's a price for everything. I thought I could pay it, but I didn't know! I didn't know how I'd FEEL!

She looks up at Dee.

Ashamed? Never! I was AFRAID! Afraid that you'd hate me!

Every year, I told myself, "It's wrong to open a wound that won't heal."

Beat.

I didn't realise...it was already open.

ENDS

465 words

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