

A Special Day

Tara removed the kit from the drawer, her hand shaking slightly. How many times had she performed this test and it proved negative? Why should this day be any different?

She and her husband, Evan, had resigned themselves months ago that adoption was the right answer. Good thing Joan Keller, from the agency was so helpful because the paper work was a killer. Joan kept assuring them that with their qualifications, it would only be a matter of time—but that was a year ago. Tara prayed every night somewhere a young girl would change her mind about having an abortion and choose life for her unborn child. She and Evan would be thrilled to provide a wonderful home to a child.

She no longer told Evan when she was late. The disappointment on his face was too much to bear; so she suffered each month in silence, marking off the days on her small calendar. This was the first time she had been this late and certainly it wasn't her imagination that her breasts felt sore, was it?

There it was! The color was defined. Yes, it was positive! She had to be sure. She removed a second stick and dampened it. Tara could feel her heart beating rapidly. Her hands perspired as she lifted the stick to the bright overhead light. No question about it. She was pregnant.

“Yes! Thank you, God!” Tara spun around with her arms lifted up. She laughed aloud and felt her eyes stinging with tears of happiness. Of all days, Evan had left earlier than usual and his cell phone was on its last bar. She couldn't give that news on the phone, anyway. No, she'd wait until dinner—a special dinner. She took out lamb chops from the freezer and placed them in the meat compartment of the fridge. Grabbing the grocery list she had in progress; she added a bottle of bubbly fake wine and Tiramisu from the bakery. Calorie counting could wait. Tonight was going to be monumental.

Glancing at her watch, Tara realized she had only forty minutes left until she had to leave for work. The commuter train from Stamford was always crowded if she waited for the 8:00 train, so even though it meant she got to work half an hour early, she preferred going in ahead of the crowds. It also allowed her time to organize her work. Besides, it took a good five minutes to take the elevators to the top floor. She loved working in Manhattan and wished Evan would be willing to commute. He could make a lot more money doing the same job if he'd take the time to look. He loved his job in Stamford, though, and he especially liked working the early hours, which allowed him time to go to the YMCA and work out.

On the way in to New York City, Tara took a seat next to a young woman whom she had befriended. They were about the same age and both married. In fact, their anniversaries were two days apart. Evan and Tara would be celebrating their fifth this summer and her friend, Joy, her third.

“Hey. You look disturbingly happy for this time of day,” Joy remarked, putting her newspaper aside.

“I have reason.”

“Gonna share?”

“Maybe,” she smiled coyly. “Oh, why not? I'm pregnant!”

“No!”

“Yes! I took the test twice to be sure. It was so pink it blinded me!”

“That’s terrific! What did your husband say?”

“He doesn’t know yet. I’m telling him tonight at dinner. I have the whole thing planned. I’m doing the candle and music bit. He will freak out!”

“Don’t forget the champagne.”

“I can’t drink!”

“He can.”

“Not fair. He’ll just have to wait, that’s all.”

“Will you continue to work?”

“If everything is okay, sure. At least until the baby’s born. Then I want to stay home and do the mommy thing.”

“You’ll get bored. All my friends are glad to get back to work after a few weeks.”

“Not me. I had four younger sibs and I helped out a lot at home taking care of them and I loved it.”

“You’re kidding.”

“No, seriously. I was sixteen when the last one was born. Wait till I tell my family. They won’t believe it! We’ve been trying for so long.”

“We’re going to wait at least five more years, if we decide even then. I have to confess; I like being free to go anywhere we want. Did I tell you we’re going to Hawaii in October?”

“Cool,” Tara remarked, smiling at her friend.

They were silent for a few minutes as the train stopped at Old Greenwich to pick up more passengers. Tara felt a slight moment of nausea as the train picked up speed again. She remembered a friend telling her she always carried saltines with her during the first trimester. She made a mental note to pick some up on her way home.

“What a gorgeous day,” Tara remarked as she looked out at the deep blue sky. “It’s supposed to be a nice week-end, too. Do you and Joe have plans?”

“Yeah. Hike, sleep, and make love. Not necessarily in that order.”

Tara laughed. “I like the sleep part the best. I’ve been tired lately.”

“So how far along are you?”

“Not far. I’m ten days late. I’m not sure when I’m due – probably late May. I’ll let the doctor figure it out. I’m not going to cancel out on the adoption idea, though. We might do both. It depends on a lot of factors.”

“You’ll probably drop to the back of the line, if they learn about the pregnancy.”

Tara nodded. “It wouldn’t seem fair, either. There are too many childless families waiting. You’re right, we’d probably drop out. I have to wait a while though, you know.”

“In case?”

“Yeah. In case. But I’m not going to let that thought enter my mind again.”

Joy nodded. “Want a stick of gum?” She reached in her purse for a couple of sticks.

“Oh, heavens no. The thought makes me wanna puke!”

“Whoa! Forget I asked. Hey, our stop is coming up. Maybe I’ll see you on the way home. Anyway, have a great night. I’ll be thinking of you.”

“Thanks, Joy. Just think! You’re the first and only one so far to know.”

Joy laughed. “I guess that makes me special—like an aunt or Godmother-to-be or something.”

“Just a special friend. See you.”

Once Tara made her way to her desk, she sorted out the files she’d be working on. Several other employees had arrived early and they waved or nodded as they began their day. Already she was thinking about taking a long walk at lunchtime. These crisp days would soon end and the dreariness of winter would follow. Besides, walking was good for pregnant women. Made them stronger for delivery. She’d read up on things like that. She stopped for a moment and picked up the picture of Evan and her from Christmas. He had that silly Santa hat on and his wonderful grin brought a smile to her lips. Yes, he was the perfect husband for her. God had been good bringing them together.

She thought about the first time they saw each other. They’d met their senior year of college at the University of Connecticut. They were sitting next to each other at a basketball game and she had dropped her shoe between the bleachers and he had been willing to retrieve it even though it was the last five minutes of the game. Then he decided the only way she’d get it back was to have coffee with him. She was delighted, since she had been attracted to him instantly. It was his smile. It was still his smile—so open and genuine. He was never moody, like most people. She teased him about taking ‘happy’ pills, but he just had a positive attitude about everything. He was a strong believer in God, too, and had been an influence in her decision to become a Christian.

Her cell-phone rang and she saw that it was Evan. It would be hard, but she was not going to tell him her news. She had to wait.

“Hi, honey. Just wanted to make sure you made it to work okay.”

“Yup, I’m here. Sat with Joy on the way. They’re going to Hawaii in October.”

“I’ve always wanted to go there. Maybe we should plan a trip ourselves. What do you think?”

“Maybe. We can talk about it later.” She grinned when she thought about the impending dinner. “We’re having lamb chops tonight.”

“Great! Is it my birthday or something?”

“Ha! Ha! You’ll find out. I’d better go. My boss just came in.”

“Okay, sweetheart. Love you.”

“Me, too. See you tonight.”

Tara glanced at the clock. It was 8:45, September 11, 2001. Her office was on the top floor of the north twin tower. The sun shone brightly and there was barely a cloud in the sky. But then there was an airplane.