

One Teen's Story

“All I Wanted Was My Baby”

I was 16 and three months pregnant. One Sunday night, we told my parents.

Their reaction took me totally by surprise. They told my boyfriend, whom they never liked anyway, to get out. Their only words to me were, “You are having an abortion!”

ABORTION! That was something that had not even entered my head. I loved this baby growing in me; I didn't want to kill it. But I wasn't asked what I wanted.

The next step was an appointment with the family doctor. Yes, no worries—hadn't he arranged the same thing for his daughter when she got into trouble? Anything to help a friend.

Dad told me how one of his girlfriends had become pregnant and had an abortion and years later had thanked him that she had. I didn't want to know; all I knew was they were trying to kill my baby.

My boyfriend and I were going to run away. I saw him waiting outside in the car that night but Mum and Dad just wouldn't go to sleep so I could sneak out and in the end I fell asleep.

A couple of days later Dad and I flew to Sydney (Australia). We went to see another doctor and I was taken to a hospital with chandeliers. When the nurse came in, I begged her to let me see the doctor. “You will see him in the [operating room],” she told me.

A group of about 15 women were sitting in the waiting room. A nurse continually walked past the doorway with a stainless steel bucket with a lid on it. I had nightmares about that bucket for years.

When my turn came, I walked in and promptly told the doctor that I wanted my baby and didn't want it killed. “Fine,” he said. A nurse was called in and I was taken to a room on my own. When Dad rang later to see if I was all right he was told that I hadn't gone through with the abortion and he suffered a heart turn in the phone booth.

When I returned home I got hell from Mum, Dad, and Grandma. I was told how stupid I had been and what were they going to do with me now. They argued the baby was sure to be deformed because I'd recently had an appendix operation. By now my nerves were fragile and I was a constant wreck. Under continual pressure, I agreed to return to Sydney.

This time we drove down. Mum bought me a new outfit because you could see my bulging tummy in the one I was wearing. Dad had to do a lot of talking to the doctor to get him to agree after I had said no the first time. That week, however, there was no room in the hospital and we would have to come back yet again.

The next week Dad and I flew down to Sydney once again. We stayed at the ritzy Double Bay. Dad took me to the movies and restaurants and bought me new clothes trying to make up for what he was about to do. All I wanted was my baby.

The next day back to that hospital with chandeliers, back in that waiting room with a different group of women, into that room with my legs up in stirrups. I woke up with intravenous drips in both arms, an empty womb and a terrible pain in my heart. I was 16 weeks pregnant; the baby they threw in that horrible bucket that day was a fully formed baby with even its own fingerprints, a small beating heart and a body that had been moving around feeling protected inside his mother. I felt it was a little boy.

We flew back home that night. For the next few days I didn't eat, or bathe or even brush my hair. All I did was cry. The

nightmare had only just begun.

My baby was killed on my sister's 21st birthday. There was a party for her and I was expected to act normally, but my mind and body would not let me forget. I had milk in my breasts. I told my sisters what had happened and they were all so surprised at Mum and Dad, but now it was over and nobody was to mention it again. In those days there was no counseling, no discussing it. I had bought shame on the family; the sooner it was hushed up the better.

I was forbidden to see my boyfriend but with the help of a friend, I secretly met him. One day I got caught. What did it matter? Life wasn't worth living anyway. The doctor had put me on nerve tablets—I came home and took the lot. I can't remember the next three days. For the next few years I would hear babies crying, think something was chasing me, and have nervous blackouts.

I was terribly depressed. Later, I married the same man; we moved into a rented double-story house. He came home one day to find me trying to hang myself under the house.

I had another child, a boy, but I couldn't love him. If I loved him like I did the other one, someone would take him away too. Even though I was married this time I remember how angry my grandfather was at me being pregnant. Years later my grandmother said she had never seen anyone turn their back on a baby the way I did.

My marriage broke up. When I wasn't working I was partying. I'd leave my baby with Grandma all the time and I was drinking heavily. I became very bitter, never said anything nice to anybody. Later I remarried and had another son, but instead of enjoying the children I had, I continually lived in the past. My eldest son even asked me one day, "Mum, why are you always cranky?"

I went into a catatonic state twice. I really liked it in there where nothing could reach me or hurt me. I ended up in a psychiatric ward. I had turned away from God over the years, blaming Him as well as a lot of other people for everything that had happened to me, but I came back to Him after the breakdowns. Now most of the bitterness is gone. The barriers between myself and my sons have been broken down. For the first time, I could tell them I loved them. I have learned to forgive my parents. I learned that Mum had had an abortion too. Recently my nephew's girlfriend also had one. That means my parents' first child, grandchild and great-grandchild have all been victims of abortion.

Recently my son's girlfriend discovered she was pregnant just after they broke up. My son wanted her to have an abortion. Despite a lot of pressure and opposition, she is having the baby. I feel a curse has been broken. My grandchild will be born and his grandmother will love him dearly.