



SILENT NO MO



Standing in the bathroom stall holding a small strip of paper, waiting. Praying. Bargaining. Please, don't let this be true. It just can't be true. But the little pink line didn't listen

to my pleas. Pregnant. What was I going to do? My entire world seemed to end within the span of three minutes. For most women, a positive pregnancy test would be reason for celebration, for joyous tears shed with the love of your life as you plan for a little bundle of love, sent from heaven. Not for me. I was 16 years old, a junior in high school, and oh yeah, not married.

After many weeks of praying that this would just "disappear," I went to my best friend, Lucy. Lucy's mother was a social worker who knew all about teenage pregnancies, and more importantly, teenage mothers. She hugged me, told me she would give me the best advice she possibly could. Then she wrote a list of names and numbers. Doctors' names—more correctly, abortion providers.

"You need to think of your future, sweetie. You have such a bright college career ahead of you." For a scared young lady, being told to think of yourself and your future sounds like good advice. The father of the baby didn't think twice. "Take care of it," was all he said to me. He offered to give me money. Amazing how one minute you are so important to a guy, and the next minute you are a major problem.

I was certain I could never tell my parents. At best they would kick me out of the

By Terri Meckes



house—at worst they would kill me. So, I forged a note to skip school and go to the doctor's office. The principal called my mother to verify the note, and rather than leaving school to go to my abortion appointment, I left school with my mother, frantically trying to figure out how to avoid telling her the truth. How do you tell your mother that you're pregnant? I will never forget that moment. She screamed at me, "You're just a baby yourself, you can't HAVE a baby." I had a horrible fight with my parents that night. My mother was hurt beyond words, and my father was furious. The next morning I called to reschedule my appointment. My mother drove me to the clinic and sat in the waiting room.

I remember smiling at the nurses when it was all finished, feeling like a huge weight had been lifted from me. I thought it was finally over, and that I could go back to my normal life. How little I knew.

My life at school changed dramatically. The father told his friends, bragging about his manhood, I guess. By the time I went back to school, everyone knew. I never spoke of the abortion to anyone at school because I was too embarrassed. Life at home was horrible. My father rarely spoke to me, and my mother looked at me with such pain in her eyes. I became sexually promiscuous and started to drink as a way to escape the pain and embarrassment. By the time I went to college, casual sex seemed normal to me, and drinking every weekend was typical.

At the time I didn't realize what I was going through. I pretended I was just fine. I was wrong. I had nightmares. I became depressed around the same time every year. I couldn't see a newborn or a pregnant

woman without getting knots in my stomach. Infertility was another complication I would not fully understand until much later. For over ten years I silently suffered the effects of post-abortion syndrome (PAS).

Seven years ago, God forever changed my life. He brought me to a place where I could finally face my past, accept and confess my sin, and begin to grieve for my child. The burden of this horrible guilt has been washed clean by the blood of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I went through a wonderful Bible study for post-abortive women, and now fully rejoice not only in my forgiveness, but also in the hope that I will someday hold my child in heaven. I have had the honor of leading many other women through Bible studies as well, many who suffered in silence for more years than I.

In churches around America, one in every four women has experienced the pain of abortion. I am one of them. There are many people who will say that every woman has a right to her own body, and that the "fetus" doesn't have any rights because it's not a real human being. God says differently. Psalm 139 tells us that God "knit me together in my mother's womb." Every woman that I have talked with, counseled, or cried with over the last 17 years would tell you that abortion only doubles the pain of an unplanned pregnancy. Not one of them would make the same decision again. Isn't it odd that the only people who argue for abortion are the ones who haven't had one? Think about it.

*Terri Meckes lives with her husband in Woodbridge, VA, where she is currently an office manager. Terri and her husband are in the process of adopting two beautiful children from Guatemala.*




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While it affects each woman differently, the symptoms of PAS include guilt, depression, stress, low self-esteem, suicidal feelings, and substance abuse. If you or someone you know has suffered the pain of abortion, there is help. Please call 800-395-HELP or go to [www.pregnancycenters.org](http://www.pregnancycenters.org)

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