



# Noices

## OF WOMEN WHO MOURN

I was a sophomore in college when I became pregnant. I was devastated, afraid, confused. I couldn't have a baby "now." This would mean the end of my college stay, as well as the embarrassment of being pregnant and not married. How could I possibly do this to my parents who were paying most of my college expenses? I wasn't emotionally, physically, or financially prepared for marriage. My only alternative was abortion. This way not only would I secretly rid myself of the crisis in my life, but also be able to continue my education and defer marriage until I was ready. I would spare my parents the hurt, embarrassment and disappointment of my unplanned pregnancy.

A friend took me to the clinic, left, and later returned to pick me up. I was alone and so afraid. After taking care of the monetary part of the procedure, I sat in the waiting area until I was called to a brief counseling session. The session consisted of an explanation of the surgical procedure and one question. "What is your reason for wanting an abortion?" I was given no other information or options.

I then found myself lying on a table, feet in stirrups, a physician on one end and a nurse on the other. She talked with me throughout the procedure in order to divert my attention from what was taking place on the other end. It was painful both physically and emotionally. The only words I remember the physician saying were, "OK, it's over." When I heard those words it was apparent to me that I was no longer pregnant. I cried hysterically. I knew that I would never be the same again. I was not "OK." I was not the woman that walked into the clinic.

What had I done?

My life took a downhill spiral. How was I to cope? There was only one way, bury it. Tell no one, and that was exactly what I did. The only question that remained was when, where or how will it come back to the surface. No one told me that I would hurt so badly. No one told me that I would feel so empty. No one told me that I would never be able to forgive myself for what I had done. Would I have listened if they had? Maybe, maybe not. However, I wasn't given that option.

— *Anne (a pseudonym)*

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Rachel's Vineyard, P.O. Box 195, Bridgeport, PA 19405, 1-877-HOPE-4-ME