

tender things

This past Valentine's day, I got stood up. I was planning on taking this guy who I had been seeing for quite some time out to dinner, but he stood me up eventually. Angry and confused, I messaged this guy from tinder (who I had been friends with for a while), Ben from San Diego, and I told him how I wanted to get away from LA. He invited me to get away from the city and told me he had friends over and would love to have me as well. I was vulnerable and was looking for comfort out of the situation. I took a 3-hour train ride to San Diego and he met me at the station. He's a very attractive guy, about 6'4. He was wearing sweatpants and slippers, which happened to be what I was wearing along with an oversized hoodie to cover up my tears and insecurities. The first thing Ben did was grab me and kiss me. I felt really lost and I don't think I was ready to be intimate with someone that fast, but I went with the flow not to cause any drama.

When we got back to his house from the station, we went straight to his room to put my bags down, which also included an intense make-out session as my guard started to come down and I started getting more comfortable. His friends were downstairs and were drinking and smoking cigarettes so we decided to go join them. We hung out with his friends for a bit and drank a little bit of alcohol. I started feeling a bit at ease, but still unsure as to why I had go all the way to San Diego that night. The TV got turned on, and we watched this episode of Cops where some guy gets arrested for having cocaine in his car. The cocaine guy put the drugs in his mouth in order to hide it from the police. That's all I can remember about the episode because I got super sleepy and started to doze off. I decided to forget about the TV show and Ben and his friends and went upstairs to tuck myself into bed, thinking to myself what a manic lonely life I am living.

After what seemed to be quite some time, I woke up to the sound of Ben coming up the steps. I saw that he was looking at me and to be honest, I felt like he wanted or expected something out of me. I was definitely not in the mood to have sex. I was exhausted both physically and mentally. I didn't want to say anything because I felt like I owed Ben something. I didn't want to disappoint him and I am the type of girl who will shut her mouth and won't say no in order to please someone else. Which is clearly a flaw of mine. Eventually, we had sex with a condom a bunch of times before I knocked out and woke up to Ben on top of me, fucking me without a condom. These memories are all hazy as I recall that night, but something wasn't right. I woke up the next morning and I was feeling really gross and just very off. I called my close friend who lives in San Diego and asked if she could drive me back to LA as soon as possible, knowing she was planning on driving there anyways later that day. She responded and said that she would pick me up from Ben's house. I made up a shitty excuse to tell him why I was leaving and bolted the fuck out of there.

During my drive back home with my close friend, I discover that Ben has a girlfriend that he isn't telling me about. I am an avid social media user and stalking Ben's life on Instagram wasn't that hard. This couldn't get any worse. I texted Ben, "WOW. You just cheated on your girlfriend with me and now I am in the middle of your fucking relationship, count me out." As to which he responds, "You are not in the middle of anything, she doesn't have to know about anything." What a fucking piece of shit.

After about a month of trying to recuperate from that night, and trying to block it out of memory, I realized that I had missed my period by a week, thinking to myself "this is really really strange!" I also didn't feel any onset of my period like cramps or backache or anything. I tried to forget the idea that I had missed my period and went out with friends that night. But I wasn't feeling myself. I Ubered home earlier than usual and started to panic as I realized I could possibly be pregnant. (Also not to mention, my boobs had grew at least ten times bigger than their regular cup size). I immediately called my best friend who happens to be my neighbor and asked her to go with me to the nearest drug store to get a pregnancy test. She ran inside of CVS and came out with two pregnancy tests. Just in case. I was freaking out harder than any other time in my life. I get home and take the first pregnancy test and it comes out as what appears to be a negative test. I am not convinced so I take the second pregnancy test. It's positive. I hysterically start bawling and think to call my mother who I explain my situation to. She tells me that there is no need to react in a hysteric way and that she will support me with whatever I decide. I attempt to sleep that night because I had work the next day.

In the Uber on the way to work the next day, my thoughts were intense and all I could think about was how I was holding a life in my belly that either I will have to keep or abort. I kept reminding myself that the embryo inside of me was not considered a life yet and that MY life has changed. It was conflicting to think that I was even considering keeping the baby because I always held my beliefs as a pro-choice woman. Abortions are okay, but maybe I was ready. This was the start of a very long decision-making process. How was I going to tell Ben? Do I even have to tell him? I didn't ever want to picture being a partner with him and raising a child together. I decided that if I chose to keep the baby, I would be a single mom and he would have nothing to do with us.

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I managed to get through the hardest day of work and decided to go to my mom's house in Encino, CA. The fifty-minute ride in traffic was intense but once I was finally at my mom's house, I sat in the living room with her and her fiancé and cried to them anxious about what the fuck I was going to do. We thought over every single option together and sat there for hours weighing out the pros and cons of aborting or keeping. Was I about to give up my entire adult life and have a baby? Was I ready to be a fucking parent? We didn't come up with a conclusion after a while and I stormed out of the living room and fell asleep. I slept for seventeen hours. My mom had left me alone and figured I needed the sleep in order to cope.

I awake the next morning feeling groggy and depressed. My mom comes to bring me breakfast in bed and she holds me and says, Whatever decision you make is going to be the right decision, you won't regret whatever you decide because it is going to be YOUR choice and no one is going to tell you otherwise. You have my support. Eventually, we decided that I needed to call Ben and explain my situation to him.

I call Ben a bunch of times but every time the phone rings it goes straight to Voicemail. He is ignoring me. He later texts and I can tell he knows what is going on just by the tone of his message. I call him and he answers nervously. I tell him that I am pregnant. His reaction was not supportive and he tried to convince me to listen to him and have an abortion. He was going ballistic and I had to hang up.

I decided it wouldn't hurt to call Planned Parenthood and see how much an abortion costs. SEVEN HUNDRED DOLLARS. Although it was quite expensive, I would try and save up the money in order to do this. Ben had also mentioned that he would help pay since he really did not want me taking any other route with my pregnancy.

In the events leading up to my abortion appointment, I had talked to every single person that I trust and admire in my life. I talk to my aunt who has five children, my aunt who is single, my therapist, and even some of my close friends who have gone through similar things. I developed crazy ideas like literally moving to Africa and just fucking raising a child, etc.

A couple of Saturdays before the abortion, I woke up to a lot of pain in my stomach. I couldn't move or stand up and I felt period cramps ten times heavier than ever before. I got up to pee and saw blood everywhere. Huge clots. I am crying on the floor with my knees to my chest, sobbing from the pain. I knew what was happening. I had had a miscarriage in my own bathroom. The pain was unbearable so I made my way to the Emergency Room.

My dad had found out what was going on from my sister and texted me some things that I recall being hurtful and emotionally painful. He obviously was disappointed in me and the physical pain I was going through was being masked with my emotional hurt from my dad's disappointment and anger. After many ultrasounds, I am told that I am no longer pregnant and I go home. I had made it through the hardest day of my twenty-year-old life. What a fucking experience. I am still processing my feelings all today, as I edit this article six months later. Ben and I have had no contact since.

Here is a poem I wrote after deciding that I would have the abortion:

Eviction Notice To My Embryo

dear ball of cells that decided to call my uterus a home,
you are being evicted.
i am sorry but now it not a good time, please come back soon.
With lots of love,
Goldie