

[This story was anonymously submitted to WheatBread.]

No one ever really talks about this, but we all know it happens. This is my story. It was one of the nicest days in July, the sun was shining brightly and the day seemed full of possibilities. That's a lot to say for a Monday. I remember getting up at 7:00, not really caring what I wore that day even though I had spent an hour the night before going through every tee-shirt in my dresser. Comfort was the preferred option, but I carelessly chose one that I had worn only two days before. No matter. I must have brushed my teeth five times and washed my hair twice as many times, who knows. But I was ready to go in ten minutes—hair up in a neat pony-tail, shoelaces neatly tied, shirt decidedly untucked.

I stood in the dining area of the house—there's a large picture window facing the street—and waited. The dog, surprised to see anyone up, stood at my feet waiting to play. As the coffee maker turned itself on, I noticed that it was 7:30. Okay, so he was a few minutes late, nothing new. Eight o'clock, still no sign of him. I was told to be there at half-past to get the paperwork out of the way. The time had come to wake up my friend. She agreed, half-asleep, to go with me even though I have to drive. Whatever.

We hit rush-hour traffic ten minutes later. Who was the wiseass who called it "rush" when it was a crawl? Cursing fate, I wove through and ended up on the shoulder. I'd never been late to an appointment before and I wasn't about to start then.

When we got to where we're going, I found the last parking space. He wasn't there, big shocker. My friend left to find a pay phone to make sure he had woken up. I didn't wait around to find out. Going inside, I held my breath as the cool air from the rickety old air conditioner in the corner of the waiting room hits me as the doors close behind me. This was it, the moment of truth. There was no turning back now. But of course, this wasn't an option.

As soon as I filled out some forms, in triplicate no less, I was whisked into a room no bigger than a broom closet. Taking off my shoes, I was glad that my dad had bought me new sneakers the week before. Those eight-hour shifts waiting tables were becoming unbearable. I stepped on the scale. Wow, 129, a new record. After answering some more questions, I met my friend in the waiting area. She said something that seemed too foreign to me at the time, so I just nodded my head and stared blankly at the television blaring in the corner.

A couple of people soon joined us in the room. My friend pointed out to me that one of them was in our fifth period class. Small world. My name was called out again by a woman with a thick, nasal voice. I was told to go in the rest room and pee in the infamous cup, then meet her in the next room. Urinating on command has got to be a valued talent somewhere on this planet.

Moving into the next room, my blood was taken and I signed the last consent form. Then, as casually as she had called my name out a few minutes before, she said, "It's a reconfirmed positive. We'll have to take a sonogram before the procedure." Even then, the feelings I had nearly drowned in the night before remained deep inside.

Until the week preceding these events, I had never given much thought to abortion. Sure, I'm pro-choice and would support and respect anyone's decision, I just never thought it was a decision I would ever have to make.

Let me just say that I wasn't supposed to have gotten pregnant in the first place. You know that small percentage mentioned on the little brochures in clinics and on the back of birth control pill instructions where the protection fails? That was me. All my life, I knew that fate would test me, but this was a bit out of hand. Being that I was always prone to illness, I had a bad history with regards to regular menstrual cycles. So, by

the time I realized that mayonnaise hadn't always made me gag and that cheeseburgers for breakfast was a bit too odd, I was two months pregnant.

How I found out was a bit bizarre in itself. After work one day, I decided to do some grocery shopping. And for some reason, I walked down the "health care" aisle and grabbed one of those home test kits. Taking it home, I had completely forgotten about it until the kitchen timer went off thirty-minutes after the pee-over-a-stick trick I so finely executed.

↑ should be italics! Tom!

Women



## The 24-Hour TIMELINE continued...

- 6:00 am — Emily gets testy with Seth. No signs of sunrise. Vibrating massage of radiator allows Emily to momentarily relax.
- 6:17 am — Mac and Taybin have been discussing Comp Sci for a half hour. "Mac, we really have to stop. I'm too tired." —Taybin.
- 6:20 am — The sun is rising.
- 7:00 am — Mac puts down what he's doing. Zack and Emily quit at #23, Taybin and Seth are still aroused.