

From Mommy-to-Be to One-in-Three: Coping with a Miscarriage

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I'll never forget what the doctor said in the emergency room that day.

"One in three pregnancies will end like this. Better luck next time."

He shrugged half-heartedly, his white coat rising and falling with a faux sympathy, and he backed out of my hospital room slowly, leaving my husband and I both numb and stinging at the same time.

Better luck next time? Really? That's what you say to a mom who, just a few days ago, was pregnant and planning a life for a baby but is now doubled over in pain, miscarrying, and bleeding into her new reality?

My miscarriage took place in October of 2013, and that's actually how I found out that October is National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month.

I spent the remainder of that month (and that year, honestly) *quite* "aware" of my pregnancy loss, grappling with the fact that I became a statistic so quickly. I went from "Mommy-to-Be" to "One-In-Three" in just a matter of days, and my emotions switched even more swiftly. One day I'd just lie in bed and cry. The next day I'd lash out at everyone in my house. The next day I'd feel nothing, just a heavy numbness in all of my limbs and organs. Then, I'd cry again, and wonder if I'd ever know what "normalcy" is.

The worst part about my miscarriage was that it happened before we'd even told anyone we were pregnant, so when I had to break the bad news it felt like a double punch.

"Hey, so, we were pregnant, but I lost the baby and I'm really sick and sad."

I found that saying this kind of thing really lurches people, like a novice driver trying to manipulate a manual transmission for the first time. Their poor brains switch gears so clumsily between, "PREGNANT, HAPPY!" to "MISCARRIAGE, SAD!" that you can practically see them jostle and stall out. Those conversations are exhausting, but I found that they were also so necessary, because (and I guess this shouldn't have surprised me, what with the "One-In-Three" thing, but it still did) *so many people could empathize*.

I didn't know it could be so comforting to hear the words, "Me, too," until I lost this baby. I also didn't know how many women (and men) grieve their miscarriages in silence, carrying around a burden that can be so incredibly overwhelming.

So I guess I'm here today, this Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month, to reach out and say it to whomever needs to hear it.

To the mom who has only ever held babies in her womb,

To the mom with one baby who silently cringes each time someone asks her when she's having another one,

To the mom who is pregnant now, but has miscarried before and is scared out of her mind each and every day that it will be the last day of her pregnancy,

To the mom currently cramping up, fighting back tears while she's hooked up to an eerily silent ultrasound machine,

Me, too, Mama. *Me, too.*

To the mom who's seen the darkest of the dark, the tiniest of caskets, I grieve with you. I ache with you. I curse the sky and pray for hope with you. I remember you.

Please know that none of you are alone in this. Not just during October, but every single day. The sisterhood of motherhood is strong, and *you* are stronger than most.