

Where to start. I guess from the beginning. My name is Lynda, a 17 year old girl from a loving family, who found herself pregnant. I suppose it was the sign of the times that parents, mothers didn't speak of sex education, my mum never did. Pity, that conversation may have stopped the ongoing trauma I now suffer. It is always with me, relentless.

I remember having the meeting with the 4 parents, my boyfriends (Neville) and mine. It was humiliating. I remember wearing my lovely pale blue dress I made with the scalloped edges, trying to keep my precious baby bump as flat as I could.

It was decided that we would marry as soon as could be arranged, my father being a minister (another burden I carried) would marry us. Two weeks before we were to be married my mother-in-law to be withdrew her consent for our marriage (we were under 21). Something in me died that day never to be revived. How can one woman decide my and my baby's fate. I dearly loved and wanted my baby.

I knew from that day I wouldn't be able to keep my baby with me.

I stayed at home trying to be invisible keeping mostly to my room. My room was a sanctuary where I could lovingly talk to my baby and tenderly stroke my tummy. I would tell my baby how much I loved and wanted him.

Society saw me as a bag girl, not worthy, my child frowned upon. I had brought shame and embarrassment to my family. I felt isolated, adrift, alone.

My baby was overdue and the birth was induced. What a frightening ordeal for a young 18 year old girl. I had no idea what to expect from the birthing process, I was scared and alone.

My beautiful baby (I only found out later, after I asked, that I had a son) was born and taken from me so quickly. I was not prepared for the speed in which he was taken. It was brutal. I did not see my son as he was taken away (that was not an option given to me). I can still hear his cries as he was taken. I was left bereft, torn and bleeding.

The very first time I saw my son on his birthday he was 39. No wonder, I'm just broken.

My boyfriend, Neville and I stayed together and married 3 years later. We have three more amazing sons. My unrelenting grief is that I have kept brother from brother. How do you reconcile that, you cannot.

The ongoing trauma, guilt, grief and loss is with me every day and night. My family unit will never be complete. I am broken.

My eldest son lives in Hobart. For me, I would like a grant to be available so I could apply for assistance in helping pay for my travel expenses to visit him and my grandchildren. They call me Lynda, which is difficult for me to hear because I am their grandmother.

The past trauma is ongoing and will always be. This burden of grief I carry with me, defining me.

Lynda Klingberg

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