

Alone in a supportive sea.

It always seems to come back to water with us, but when riding the fertility wave no one can really point out the next buoy or the finishing line.

I have been wanting to put into words how I feel for a while now and as I sit here writing with a little black cat (she's good luck not bad luck) on my lap the tears keep rolling because "for a while now" seems like too long, but at the same time not enough.

Suffering a miscarriage at 11 weeks with our first over Christmas 2018 stopped us in our tracks.... No one can prepare you for the fact that the future you were planning is just gone like that! Was it the yoga? Was it the sip of wine? Was it the working too late at night? One minute we were sitting happy and excited in the waiting room, ready to see our baby for the first time. The next we were being ushered to a different room with just a box of tissues on the table.

I'd not had any indication there was anything wrong.

I'd never even heard of a missed miscarriage.

It did not feel real.

No heartbeat.

A 10 day wait, a painful Christmas, an operation, and then...

Nothing.

I cracked on, back to work, holidaying, thinking the next few months would roll into the next, hoping another positive test was just around the corner.

It never came.

Tests for us both, swimmers in pots, blood tests and a "little look around" a few too many times.

6 months later another miscarriage.

Early days, so we kept it to ourselves.

I could tell my husband was failing for words even at this point.

I found solace in wonderful online support groups and charities, reading stories on social media.

6 months on...

Another early miscarriage. Over Christmas, again!

As I sat upstairs on the toilet not being able to move, family members revolve in Christmas catch up downstairs.

My mum knew what was going on when I hadn't returned to the party over 30 minutes later.

Busy time at work, busy time moving house, and an overwhelming feeling of things slipping away all around me.

Again, the disappointment in myself just grew.

As my friends tell of their pregnancy news, updates and births I can honestly say that all I have ever felt is pure happiness for them!

Yet, at the same time, I can't lie... the feeling of loneliness and being left behind in a big sea becomes more prevalent.

In 2020 the pandemic takes hold of mental health and relationships and rings them dry.

Whether it's your business, or your family worries, or ill health, its felt.

A big birthday passes by like the party boat that you can't get on!

In August of that mental year I was offered a Laparoscopy.

The pandemic had made me put my fertility worries in the corner, shut them down, and at times even throw them away. So, to get this letter was somewhat of a shock but it felt like a positive step to finding out what was going wrong.

Endometriosis was found in a spot that was unremovable.

Consultants told me the best thing to do was keep trying and that having a baby was still very possible. As someone who thought they had a high pain threshold I was shocked at how weak the operation left me, but the support of family and friends in a difficult year was overwhelming.

The pandemic has given our business a multitude of challenges, and I can see and know that my husband focusing on these is his way of coping.

*It always happens when you least expect it.*

*It's funny how things turn out.*

*It must be the right time.*

A positive test at the beginning of December 2020 felt like the oddest feeling in the world.

Fourth time lucky, eh?

And, with a meaningful due date, I let the hope flame burn a little brighter.

As the days went by, and by the time we told our family on Christmas Day, I think I knew something didn't feel quite right.

A few days passed, the midwives kept in contact the whole time, an early scan was arranged on the 5th of January 2021.

The twelve week wait already didn't sit quite right with me, as I felt that either way we were going to need all the support we could get.

On the 30th the pain became unbearable. Low in the pit of my stomach.

The scan was brought forward to the 31st of December 2020.

I felt optimistic going to the appointment ALONE (bloody Covid).

But, as I sit in the waiting room watching the women coming in for test, scans, fertility appointments, all I could think was... why do we not learn about this shit?!

The dreaded silence from the sonographer.

Asked to sit back in the waiting room.

Blood test to confirm that their worries were correct....

Ectopic...

*An ectopic pregnancy occurs when a fertilized egg implants and grows outside the main cavity of the uterus. I am sorry.*

What...?

I was in disbelief

The idea that a baby in your care, inside you, was growing in the wrong place can be very difficult to face.

Again, something you never think would happen to you.

I was told to call my husband.

As he finally sat beside me after 5 hours of just nurses, doctors, and consultants I couldn't help but feel more alone than ever before.

The helplessness in both of our faces must have shone like warning lights for the journey ahead.

As I was talked through what was happening the words that I will not be able to forget felt like someone cutting off my arm...

*We will have to remove the tube.*

Surely not... can't you just take the pregnancy... please do not take one of my tubes, and lower our chances yet again....

Explanations of the seriousness of the situation and reassurances from family allowed me to carry on, and the next thing I knew I was tested for Covid (negative) and gowned up ready for theatre.

They were pleased to have got in when they did, as they found that I had started to bleed into my stomach. Ectopic pregnancy can very quickly become life-threatening.

As my husband returned to sit next to me, I felt we had come together again.

The pain is one thing, but I think the shock was sitting with me more at that point and the question of... Where does this leave us now?

Due to the pandemic my husband had to leave for a very un-Merry New Year's Eve on his own.

As the midnight chimes started and I watched the hospital TV I felt strangely content.

Or, maybe it was just emptiness.

A month has gone by and I cannot explain all the hormones and emotions that have raced through my body.

*Anger*

*Alone*

*Bitter*

*Depressed*

*Hurt*

*Jealousy*

*Numb*

*Pain*

*Exhaustion*

...To name a few

I can see that my husband is hurting, but he is of the ilk of positive thinking will prevail, buckle down and carry on.

Sometimes not always the most helpful when I am an Anxious wreck, but I also know that society isn't helping men to speak out. They feel they have to be strong for their partner and if they are not, we will fall apart.

People say things like...

*It won't happen again,*

*It obviously wasn't meant to be,*

*At least they found it when they did,*

*You're still young,*

*1 in 4....*

We know 1 in 4 people miscarry. But, people should know *about it* and learn *about it*.

I'm now in the 1% of people that have multiple miscarriages and we can feel pretty misunderstood.

I am the 1 in 80 to have suffered an ectopic.

Telling me "it will all be alright" does not eradicate the immense fear I have of the next wave we must ride, or the fact that my ship feels like it is sailing in a different direction to many.

I have followed amazing social media accounts for years reciting people's stories and each one makes you feel a little stronger.

I have also spoken to people who keep their losses to themselves. Sometimes not even telling their partners.

I have no idea where our story leaves us now in this Ocean of unknown.

But, what I do know is, that if by writing this, someone reads it and they feel less alone...  
Then, that's something.