

We decided we would end the pregnancy.

When the genetic counselor returned I told her we decided to terminate, and wanted it done at a hospital. She said that the hospital refers all abortion procedures to the Planned Parenthood's health center where abortions are still available. I did NOT want to go to a clinic and walk through protesters on one of the worst days of my life.

The genetic counselor confirmed no hospital would perform this abortion, and she would schedule an appointment for me at Planned Parenthood.

We went to Olin park and just sat in the car, crying. Calling our parents, calling my boss. All this time, I could feel the baby alive moving inside of me. My son. Alive and inside of me.

Our counselor called with more bad news. To comply with Wisconsin's 24 hour waiting period law, I would be too far along to have the procedure at Planned Parenthood. She said there is a clinic in Chicago who could see me in a few days. If they assessed that the baby was too big, then I would have to go to Kansas.

She said the abortion in Chicago is a 3 day process, so I would need to get a hotel. Over this time they would slowly dilate my cervix with bamboo reeds and would do the procedure Friday morning and it would cost \$1500 cash.

Now I am calling my Dad to ask for money. Word of this spread fast at work and someone took up a collection that raised \$200. My Dad gave us \$1000 and we came up with the rest. Our moms bought the hotel room and came with us, along with our 2 year old daughter Maia.

The clinic was in an unfamiliar neighborhood and there were tons of protesters with signs about killing babies. I expected this, but I didn't expect them to SHOUT at me. JESUS!! They have NO CLUE why I am having an abortion. They don't know what I am going through. I wanted to scream SHUT UP!!

The clinic staff were friendly but the 70's decor waiting room had no privacy. I was crying, my mom was holding me, and people were staring at me. I wanted to explain to everyone that my baby was going to die.

My name was called and the nurse did an ultrasound, I finally went to a room that looked like an operating room, put my feet up in the stirrups and had reeds inserted into my cervix. OUCH!! It felt like the worst period cramps ever!

Friday morning, lying on my hotel bed, my partner and our moms all laid their hands on my belly. We said prayers. We said goodbye. Goodbye baby boy. Goodbye Evan.

On Friday there were even more protesters. They must know that this is "abortion day". They yelled that a girl just died here last week.

Inside, the staff was friendly and warm, but I felt like we were cattle, being moved from one room to the next, just wearing a thin gown. No privacy, no loved ones.

Finally, I went into the surgery room, was put under anesthesia and I woke up to a nurse calling my name. "Holly . . . wake up. Holly." I opened my eyes. I was in a room with maybe 20 other women all lined up in beds. I felt like I was dreaming. I remember looking at the floor and it seemed far, far away. I felt so dizzy. I knew something was wrong the minute I threw up the ginger ale that I just drank.

The nurses wanted to bring me back to the recovery room. On the way there, I felt so dizzy, I fell on the floor with one of them. I peed all over!! The anesthesiologist came and asked me some questions, gave me a shot to help me wake up. I started having horrible rib pain and I couldn't stay awake. I could hear the nurse ask me questions, but I felt like I was dreaming.

The doctor said there was nothing unusual about my procedure and would check back with me. I felt so alone. My ribs were killing me. The nurse told me they would allow me to either bring back my mom or my partner. I chose my mom.

My mom stared into my face. She held my hand. She told the nurse that something was very wrong. Then the clinic director came and sat with us. And while they talked, I kept passing out.

My mom suggested to the doctor and anesthesiologist it might be pulmonary embolism. The doctor said when he was done he would call an ambulance and go with us to Northwestern Hospital. If they called an emergency ambulance, they would take us to the nearest hospital, which was Catholic and he wanted me to go to Northwestern.

All the women were recovered and going home. Except me. Around 5 pm, the ambulance came. The EMT lifted me onto the bed. I screamed in pain. WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO ME?

The ride to Northwestern seemed to take forever.

The emergency room doctor said he needed to wait for an emergency OB/GYN, who then did a trans-vaginal ultrasound and told me I would need a cat scan right away. They put a catheter in me and my urine was brown. My Mom panicked and thought my organs were shutting down. (my Mom watched WAY too many ER shows at the time. . .)

The emergency doctor came back and said my uterus had been perforated during the abortion and I was bleeding internally. He said they may have to take my uterus.

I heard my Mom on the phone to my dad, crying about what was happening. The doctor told me that they had to wait for a special team of OB/GYN doctors and specialized nurses. I waited just staring into darkness. Hearing the fear in my Mom's voice, I just kept thinking about my daughter Maia. Then in walks in the anesthesiologist. . .

The next thing I remember, I was in a bed, looking at big Chicago buildings and it looked like dawn. There was a man looking at me. I asked him if I lost my uterus. He said "yes." I remember pleading: "Why didn't they just sew it back up??" I was stunned and crying.

My partner had to take the moms and Maia back to Madison. My mom came in to hug and kiss me, and then they left. I've never felt so alone.

The doctor who did the surgery came in. He held my hand. He told me that I am a very lucky person, that I lost 2 liters of blood and nearly died.

I was in the hospital for 4 days, including Mother's Day. My Mother's Day was spent looking out at a rainy, cold Chicago, again thinking about Maia, who was in Madison with her Grandma. I had no baby boy, no uterus, and I nearly lost my life. Maia almost lost her Mother.

Flash forward a month. The bills start rolling in . . . surgery room \$17,000 . . . Anesthesiologist \$11,000 . . . Facility charges \$75,000. AND . . . my insurance denied EVERYTHING because expenses were related to a non-covered service. My insurance company only covered abortions if the mother's life was in danger. Not if the baby's life was in danger.

It seemed like I was sobbing 20 hours a day. I didn't want to talk to anyone except my mom.

I started going through the appeals process which kept getting denied. I was supposed to appeal, in front of the appeals board, made up of people I work for! I was filled with anxiety and dread THEN, my insurance case worker called and said someone at my company went up the chain to the top to plead my case. The person at the top decided that

our insurance company would cover all my expenses at 100% AND that a new policy would be implemented for all members to cover abortion care for fatal fetal anomalies!!!! I call this the Evan Amendment!!! Hallelujah.

A great way to get through my grief was to bury myself into the world of adoption as I wanted a second child.

A year and a half later, my mom and I flew to Ethiopia to bring home our beautiful daughter Amara Selamawit.

No family should have to go through what I went through. Hospitals should be performing later-term abortions. I can't help but wonder how the outcome would have been different had I been able to have my abortion done at a safe, modern hospital.

No one should have to suffer while trying to do what's right for their children.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF JANICE JENNINGS

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 4, 2013

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for the House's attention today to recognize Jan Jennings who is celebrating her 60th birthday on Thursday, February 7th, 2013.

Mrs. Jennings was born on February 7th, 1953 in Anniston, Alabama to Johnny and Ruby Reaves. She is one of seven children. She graduated from Saks High School and went on to attend Gadsden State University, where she got her degree in Nursing. She later received her Business degree from Jacksonville State University in 1989.

In 1983, Jan married Jeff Jennings, also a native of Anniston, Alabama. Later, in 1987, they welcomed their only child, Jessica. In 2010, they adopted their beloved labradoodle, Tully.

For almost 20 years, Jan practiced as a nurse at Regional Medical Center in Anniston, Riverview Medical Center in Gadsden, and Montclair Baptist Hospital in Birmingham. Jan then left to pursue her dreams of traveling the world when she joined the medical sales industry. Jan is still in the industry today, working as a Trainer for EndoGastric Solutions.

After over 40 years of living in Anniston, Alabama, Jan and her family relocated to High Point, North Carolina, where they live today. Although she lives in North Carolina, Jan remains a dedicated fan of the University of Alabama Crimson Tide.

Mr. Speaker, we join her family and friends in celebrating Jan's birthday and wishing her many more.

RECOGNIZING MS. OLLIE LEE MCMILLAN MASON

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 4, 2013

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and achievements of Ms. Ollie Lee McMillan Mason. Ms. Mason lived her life with determination and with a commitment to serving others. As the first black nurse on the staff of