

# A Blessing in Disguise

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I remember hugging the toilet, non-stop shivering, drenched in sweat, all over my body. \*gags. I couldn't take it any longer, I wiped the stinky vomit from my mouth, threw on my jacket, and was out the door. As I got into the car my mom asks, "Where are you going?" "To the hospital, I think I'm dying," I've always been a little over dramatic. Mom: "Wait for me; I'll come with." "I'm not waiting for anyone, I need to be seen."

I finally arrived, "I have the worst fever of my life, body aches, and I can barely stand." Nurse: "Please take a seat and shortly you will be called back." The nurse finally calls me, "Rebecca Maldonado!" I lay on the emergency room bed and begin to repeat my symptoms for the fourth time. The nurses says, it might just be a bad fever, but I knew deep down I had never felt like this. Nurse: "Can we get a urine sample?" "For what?" I replied. Nurse: "Just precautions we take on women, we like to be sure they aren't pregnant before we do certain procedures." Me: "Yeah well I've been on birth control for 3.5 years, I use protection, and I don't even menstruate." Nurse: Ok then we will just continue with blood samples."

The hours dragged longer and longer as I waited, I just needed some medicine, saline, anything! I was so dehydrated. The nurse finally comes in. I'm annoyed, impatient, it's already midnight and I have to be to work at 6! Nurse: "You're Pregnant...." I felt my heart pounding as if it were about to jump out of my chest. "Pregnant? Are you sure, this cannot be right!" Nurse: "Yes we determined thorough blood work you are pregnant." Like raging water-falls, my eyes began to pour. This cannot be right, I'm not ready for a child, I have so much going for me, I just turned 20, I love my job, I'm about to graduate, I don't even own my first car! My mind was racing, so many thoughts, how could I have let this happen! What would I tell my mother, a baby!

As I continued to cry, the nurse came to comfort me, I couldn't even spit one word out, I was truly speechless. "You really had no idea, did you," said the nurse. "Of course not, I thought I had the flu," I murmured through my tears and coarse throat. Nurse: "Well, we are going to take you downstairs for an ultrasound to make sure the baby is doing well."

The tears would not, could not stop. A baby! Here I was at the top of my mountain, straddling life, going for the gold, and now a baby? You know when you see your parents' or friends' ultrasound picture, the little baby body, so small you can't make it out, it looks like a small peanut. They show you the arm, to this day I could never see the arm in those pictures. As they attached the necessary pieces of the machine I covered my eyes, I was scared to look. I was thinking to myself, well, I have a lot of time to prepare mentally to be a mother, I'll tell everyone once I start to show. Nurse: "There she is, wow looks like you're about five months pregnant!"

My thoughts went wild. She?! Five months!? That means I would be giving birth in just 4 months! I couldn't believe it, a baby girl. Mine! I was scared to open my eyes, I finally looked. And there she was, she was not a peanut, she was an almost fully developed baby. I instantly spotted her precious little hands groping her face; her legs gracefully danced to the constant beat of my heart. There she was, Lorene, the love of my life. As I watched my beautiful baby girl freely swim around, I was no longer sad or worried, the crying stopped and seeing her gave me a sudden comfort. At that point I realized God was with me, everything would be alright. I fell in love with her that day, it's wild, two hours before, she hadn't existed in my world, and, suddenly, there I was madly in love with her. Love quickly conquered the jumble of emotions and worries I had felt just an hour earlier, I was now a Mother.