

Press release

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‘How I Came to Hold You’ – new anthology provides personal reflections of those who have suffered the death of a baby and taken the step of becoming pregnant again

***"Heart-breaking and heart-warming...these stories embody tragedy, hope and love."
Kym Lomas***

With 17 babies stillborn or dying shortly after birth every day in the UK, newly published anthology *‘How I Came To Hold You’* provides heartfelt insights from seventeen bereaved parents, all of who tell their personal story of subsequent pregnancies following the tragic death of a baby.

Author, Ben Wakeling, says: "Tentative' is how I would describe my reaction when we realised my wife was expecting again, and I can't help think this the reaction of most parents who have previously suffered the loss of a child; whether it be through miscarriage (as ours was, at eight weeks), stillbirth or neonatal death.

‘Our experience was the impetus for this project, which brings together the powerful real-life stories of seventeen bereaved families all of whom have then taken the step of becoming pregnant again. Their inspirational stories provide an insight into their darkest days, as well as the decision to try for another baby and the challenges and emotions experienced when expecting once again.

‘All seventeen contributors to this book are a testament to the resilience and strength of the human spirit. The bravery they have displayed by going public with their stories will, I hope, provide solace and comfort to other bereaved parents and help them to believe they are not alone.’

On reading *‘How I Came To Hold You’*, Coronation Street actress and bereaved mum, Kym Lomas, said: "Heart-breaking and heart-warming...these stories embody tragedy, hope and love."

Contributor Dawn Pickett from Staffordshire, tells how at 14 weeks her first twin died and then at 26 weeks, second twin Lydia was tragically stillborn following a placental infection. After lots of soul searching and numerous courses of IVF Dawn and Stuart are now very proud parents to twins Emelia and Jenson.

Dawn, aged 42, says: ‘We talk about Lydia in front of the twins, but at the moment they are too young to grasp what happened. I want them to know that they had a big sister, but I don't want it to overshadow them.’

Proceeds from the sale of *‘How I Came To Hold You’* will be donated to Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity.

Visitors to Ben's website www.sandsbook.co.uk can find out more about the book but also release a virtual balloon in memory of their baby who has died.

As Ben says: ‘With miscarriage affecting a quarter of all pregnancies, and seventeen babies stillborn or dying shortly after birth every day, many of us have someone to remember. Parents, family and

friends can simply submit their details and virtual balloon will be released in memory of their loved one along with the special message provided.

‘My wife and I were unaware of Sands when we suffered our loss, which is a huge shame. My hope is that proceeds from sales will enable Sands to continue the amazing work they do in supporting parents, improving care and funding vital research into why so many babies die every day in the UK.’

‘How I Came to Hold You’ is available in printed form and as an e-book and retails for £6.99 (£2.99 as an e-book).

It can be purchased via the Sands online shop at www.shop-sands.org or downloaded from Amazon.

For further information about Sands, please visit www.uk-sands.org

ENDS

About Ben Wakeling:

Ben Wakeling is an award-winning parenting blogger and author who has written a number of books on modern-day fatherhood. He is a columnist for the UK's fastest-growing parenting website Parentdish, and has previously written for the Guardian and Mother & Baby magazine. Ben lives with his wife and three children in Kenilworth, Warwickshire.

About Sands:

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Key Information about Sands:

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, was established by bereaved parents in 1978 and obtained charity status in 1981.

Sands core aims are to:

- Support anyone affected by the death of a baby;
- To work in partnership with health professionals to improve the quality of care and services offered to bereaved families; and
- To promote research and changes in practice that could help to reduce the loss of babies' lives

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