

'It feels very *unfair*. Not only did we not have a baby when we wanted to, but Chris has been taken away from me'

From the wife who has lost her new husband to the mother who will never again see her only son, women all over Britain are counting the huge personal cost of the war in Afghanistan. Interviews by ELENI KYRIACOU

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVA VERMANDEL

Rebecca Harrison, 27, was widowed last May when her husband, Corporal Christopher Harrison, was killed, aged 26, by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan. They'd been together for six years and married for two. She lives in Taunton

I was quite positive about Chris being in Afghanistan and never thought anything would happen. We had so many plans for when he came back. That's all I thought about. We desperately wanted to start a family; we'd been trying for a couple of years and had decided that if I didn't get pregnant soon we'd have tests and start IVF. He said, 'If anything happens to me, I need to know you'll be OK,' and I think he meant he'd want me to be able to cope and carry on. It's not something

either of us really wanted to think about. He'd joke and say he'd come back to haunt me.

I wish we'd spoken about it more. He often took the lead when making the decisions for us as a couple, and after he died I didn't know what to do. I had to think about the funeral, moving house. It was difficult. I was so used to us deciding all the important stuff together. I kept asking myself, what would he have wanted me to do?

He never really spoke about what the lads were doing out there, only telling me what I needed to know. I understood his job - he was a mortar-fire controller, telling the lads who operated the mortars where to fire - but that's all I knew. He kept it all to himself. He was a very masculine man.

I'm sure there were times he was scared about going out there but he never showed it. And the



Christopher and Rebecca Harrison in happier times. Right: Rebecca today

