

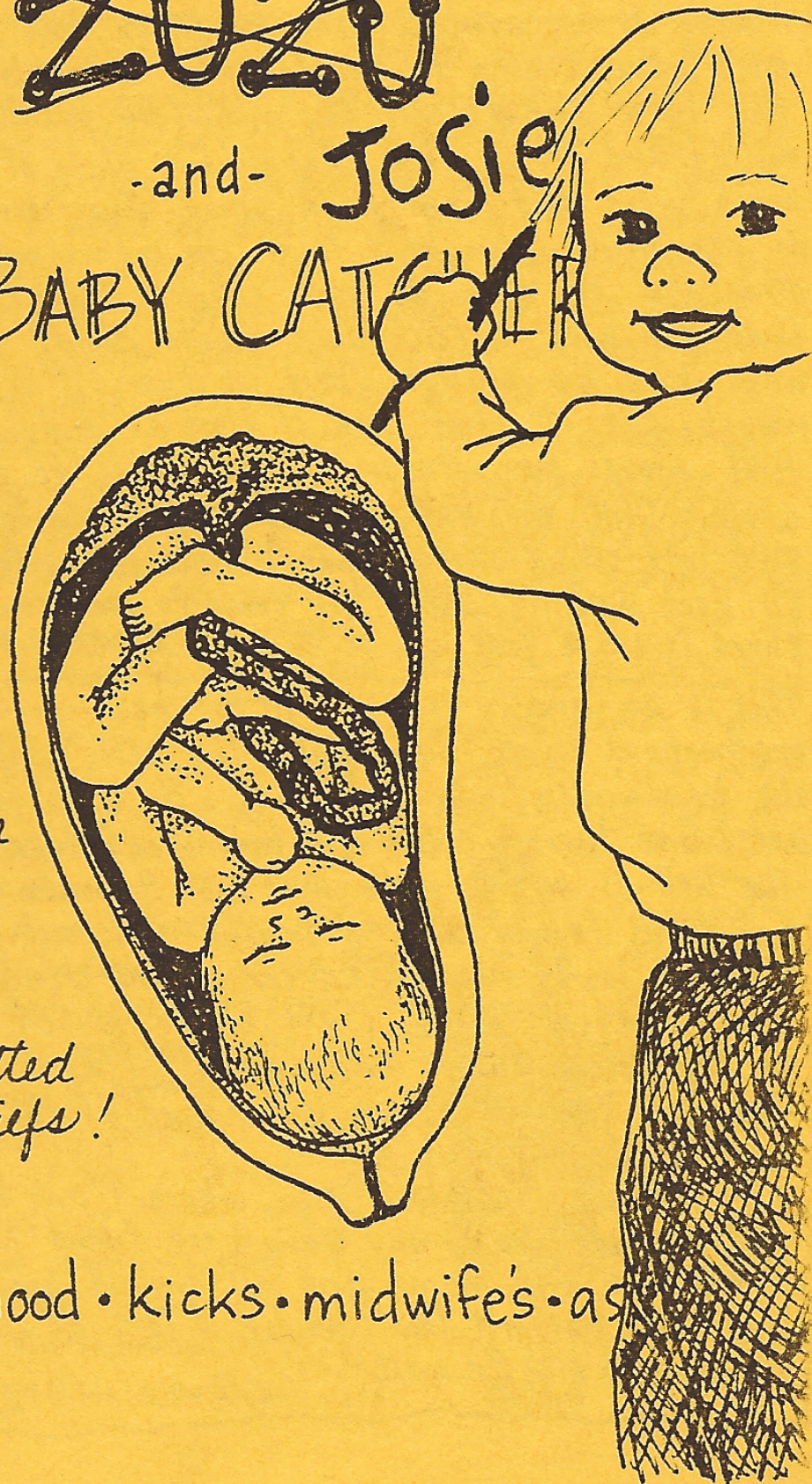
perfect
10

\$2⁰⁰

~~ZUZU~~
-and- Josie
the BABY CATCHER

now with
angst!
escape!
and
polka-dotted
kerchiefs!

• motherhood • kicks • midwife's • as



Maybe it's an every 5 issue tradition, but I find myself once again trying to decide if I want to keep doing this little zine at all. My midwifery practice is finally rolling and I'm in that delightful place of trying to mesh work and family. In what other line of work do you bring your kids to a job interview? In what other line of work do your clients REALLY understand that you need to reschedule due to child's fever? In many ways it is the absolute best job ever. It is time-consuming though, and it's that lack of time to study midwifery that makes me wonder if ZBC needs to end for a while. Still, my kids are so cute & hilarious and my life interesting enough that I want to write it down...so I'll keep writing. But... I've come to the conclusion that three issues a year will be enough...so mote it be. 😊

This is an angsty issue. This has been a hard gig, this motherhood thing. So I guess I'm just jumping on the ole bandwagon with this one.... do I go on anti-depressants? Get therapy? Get on hormone balancers? What the hell is wrong with me that I have this amazing, beautiful family with a beyond-generous perfect spouse & lovely home & career of my choice & live-in nanny and yet STILL I am beside myself with feelings of depression, anger, frustration?? I don't get it. And in this issue you get to see the naked truth- whoo-hoo! As I try to figure it out.

This is also a Montana issue, where I am happy to get to introduce you to my very best friend Nell, who is a midwife and mama and all-around great person. And last but not least, there is lots of Josie. 😊
I love you all. Be well. *R. W.*

April 2005

2

BECOMING A MIDWIFE IN 10 EASY YEARS

By June of 1995 I had attended 7 births and was in heaven. This is what I wanted, for sure. I was working with Gail Hart & Pat Edmonds, two of the best & most knowledgeable midwives in the area. I was learning a ton. But the births were sporadic, and Gail thought I would do well to go work with another midwife with a busier practice. The internet was becoming a fantastic place for folks to meet, and Gail had been online with a midwife in another state for some time... a busy midwife with a birth center, who yearly put out a call for a live-in volunteer apprentice. Gail had talked me up, and so began my

ADVENTURES in MONTANA

THE FOLLOWING STORIES ARE BASED ON REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES HOWEVER, NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED AND CIRCUMSTANCES PRETTIED-UP SO AS NOT TO INVOKE THE WRATH OF THE GUILTY.

I got off the train in Upland, Montana, nervous as a kitten & with no idea what to expect. That included the weather... I had packed clothes for every contingency & as a result had about 6 boxes with me for a 6-week stay! But I was fresh-faced and hopeful, and probably looked a bit like Pollyanna in a way... I met Agnes & Rosemary and we all chatted all the way to Outback, where Agnes had her birth center. Agnes was contracted by the Hutterites, (See next story) who paid for her home & vehicle & birth center in exchange for midwifery services for whoever wanted to use her. It was a sweet deal, both for Agnes and the Hutterites, who were often mistreated at local hospitals. Folks in Montana held 3 opinions of the Hutterites, it seemed: ① Love 'em ② Hate 'em ③ Don't care.



Unfortunately hospital staff seemed to be in category B or C, and never bothered to learn about the German-speaking Hutterites (actually Tyrolean) such as: they understand and speak English! So... they were happy to be understood & respected and have their babies with little intervention and kind help. Not that they needed much help, according to Agnes, they often arrived at the birth center 10 cm dilated and their babies just fell out. Well, that sounded great to me!

On the way to Outback, Agnes told me a bit more than was really necessary about Nell, her apprentice. Lots of personal info (that I shan't repeat here as it is Nell's story and not my own) and she also told me that Nell was basically not very self-confident. I wasn't sure what to expect, but from Agnes' description, Nell was... a wimp

I was to stay in birth room #2, which was only needed for births occasionally. The birth center was a 2-bedroom house, with the downstairs converted to a prenatal office. It was decorated in early 70's bright colors which I was told the Hutterites loved. Agnes was very friendly, showing me where everything was, letting me know how to reach her if anyone showed up in labor.

And then she went home and there I was, far from home (and Tara), excited, scared, lonely. I had been reluctant to come because I was such a homebody, and I did not want to be away from Tara, but she had urged me to go. I cried.

The next day, or maybe the next ... or maybe it was the very first day, I really don't remember -

I met Nell. She had been eagerly awaiting my arrival - she knew I was working on Anne's much-anticipated book and was hoping I would be open and friendly and cool. Well, I wasn't. I was awful. I had let what Agnes told me become my own truth; I am ashamed to this day. I was rude to her and wouldn't even share my ice cream with her three-year-old son! Or so she says.



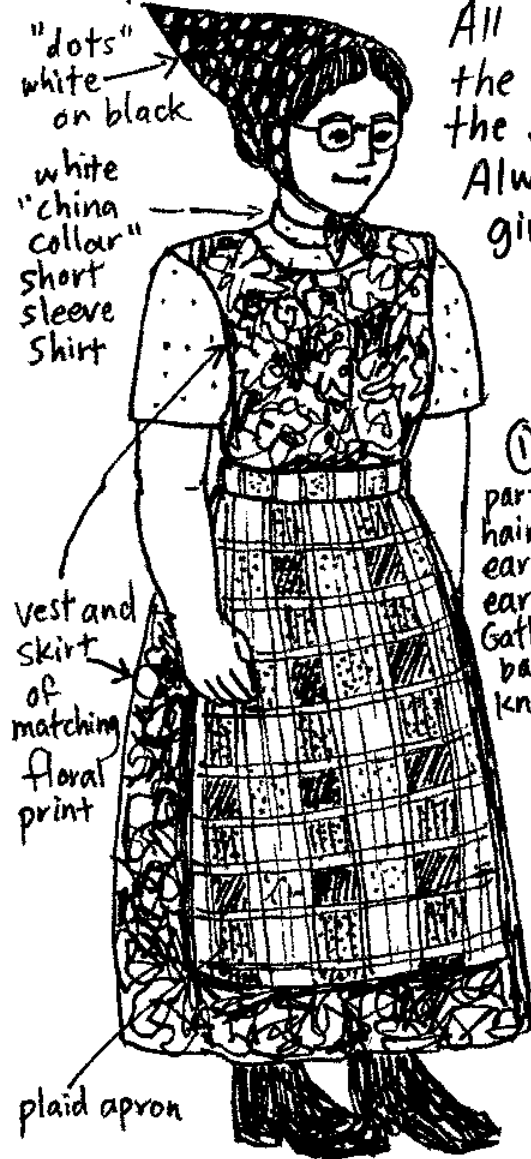
It was not an auspicious start.

Well despite being told that the births would be pouring in, the first week I spent doing not a whole lot. I sewed. I finished Anne's drawings. I learned the computer version of Mah Jong on the office computer and spent hours playing it. I had dinner with Agnes a few times and we watched movies... one called "Holy Matrimony" with Patricia Arquette that was a story about Huttenites. Agnes, placid and patient, told me what was accurate and what was not. It was as boring as it sounds. (The first week, not the movie!)

Then we went to do prenatals out at the Huttenite colonies, and the fun began! The Hs were warm & welcoming, even if their homogenized, utilitarian dwellings reminded me of Camazotz - where IT held Meg Wallace's father in A Wrinkle In Time. And their outfits! Oh my word, their outfits. God love 'em. Outlandish. Beautiful.

All Huttenite women - and little girls - dress the same way, their entire lives. Always the same combo of florals & plaids.

Always the same hairstyle. Only the littlest girls get a different kind of bonnet, until they get their "dots."



① part hair ear to ear. Gather back into knot.



③ the white "bonnet" covers the knot



② coil front parts under, loop under ears & pin to knot.



④ the highly-starched "dots" cover it all

The men were much more boring in their dress, although they get to choose from several hat styles and, until they marry, can play around with different facial hair configurations. After they marry, they keep the same style. They have to choose a beard and stay with it. *ahem*

Montana was peppered with mishaps for me. Two days after I arrived I smashed a contact lens and had to order a new one. A few days later I walked smack into a clothesline pole (probably because I was wearing my ineffective glasses!) and about gave myself a concussion. My favorite mishap, though, was my very first visit to a Hutterite colony. From an e-mail to Gail:

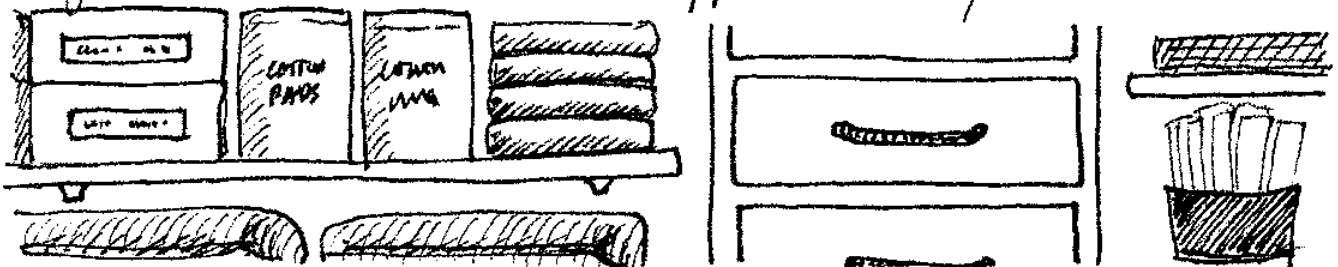
"We joined the Hutterites for lunch today (sauerkraut, whitebread, boiled duck, plain noodle soup) which was quite good but could easily get boring. Then, as I finished using the salt, I was pushing down the snap-top lid and it skidded away, knocking my cup of water - not just OVER, mind you, NO - that cup sailed across the room and clattered LOUDLY. Instant silence, about 100 pairs of Hutterite eyes were upon me. Thankfully, most of them were kindly after the initial shock. Even better, we were sitting with the older teenage girls who were all stifling giggles. I sheepishly got a rag from one of the ladies we had just visited, assuring her quietly that I may drop dishes, but I haven't dropped a baby yet..."



Okay, I'm done talking about my screw-ups for awhile. Let's talk of births!! Those stoic, show-up-at-8cm-Hutterites.

The first Hutterite to go into labor was Darla. A big woman, tall and large, she arrived at midnight and got into the tub in great spirits. 3rd baby. Agnes checked her and she was at 5cm. A lovely way to start labor. Not that you could tell she was in labor... she didn't make a peep during her contractions... until she hit transition at about 5am. By then she had been checked 3 more times which I confess surprised me a bit. But then again I apprenticed with one of the more hands-off midwives so this was just...different. At 6am Darla was having back-to-back contractions and NOT being the stoic I was expecting! (I was actually relieved when she started moaning and calling out "Help me, Aggie! Help me!"... this was more what I was used to!) She was feeling pushy but according to a 4th vaginal exam she had a bit of a swelling anterior lip. We gave her some homeopathic Gelsemium and then Agnes had her climb onto the birth stool. Agnes then put her fingers inside Darla and told her to push while she held the lip back. I had never seen this set of circumstances so I was fascinated. Darla pushed... and pushed... and pushed. Nearly an hour later, a big floppy baby boy was born, with no grimace or respirations. Kinda scary! Took the baby four minutes to start breathing!... and his poor mama had a 2nd-degree tear requiring 5 stitches. Was it because he weighed 10lbs? Or was it because she gave birth on a birth stool? Or was it because he had his hand up near his face? Questions to ponder as I helped straighten up the place. Lots to think about.

One thing was sure, I liked working at a birth center! Everything was neat and organized, there were plenty of supplies, and you didn't have to hunt around an unfamiliar kitchen or linen closet. My dream of having a birth center began with that birth... it so appealed to my sense of order.



Darla's baby, once he started breathing, was a SCREAMER. He cried pretty much until they left four or five hours later. Another nice perk for these Hutterite ladies: they can leave when there are ready, whether that be four hours postpartum or twenty-four hours.

A short while after they left we got a call from Ruby. Her waters broke at around 2am, and now at 3pm she was in labor. In Montana they have a common-sense rule about ruptured membranes.... the clock doesn't start ticking until the first vaginal exam. In many other states and in hospital, once your water breaks you are on the clock, and that baby better be born in 24 hours or else! Waiting until the first exam makes more sense because there is little risk for infection if you stay out of there!

So, Ruby did not get checked until 9pm, after a day of very VERY quiet laboring. Another new thing for me: using a breast pump to augment labor. I'd seen mamas do nipple stim but I'd never seen a breast pump before... and unless Ruby was using it, her contractions would slow down or stop. But her water was broken so we needed to keep her labor going. At 9pm she was 8cm dilated, with a bulging bag of water (must have resealed itself... it happens), and at 9:45 Ruby was completely dilated except for... you guessed it!

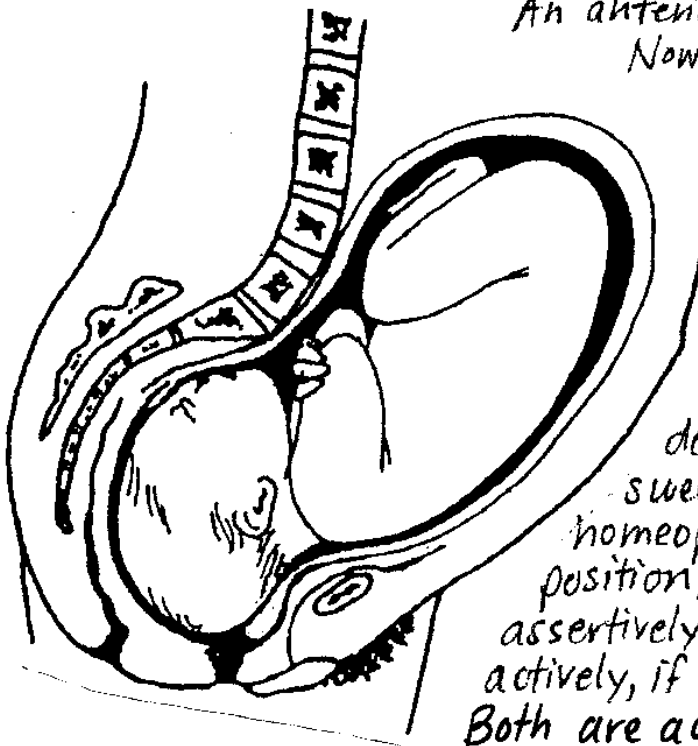
An anterior cervical lip.

Now, there are a couple of different beliefs about anterior lips.

One is simple: the cervix isn't done dilating. Change mom's position, give it a little more time, and tell her not to push.

Another school of thought is that anterior lips need to be dealt with before they start to swell - so you give some herbs or homeopathics and change the mom's position, etc. In other words, act assertively and pre-emptively (or pro-actively, if you want to call it that).

Both are acceptable ways to deal with it.



Agnes was clearly the assertive pre-emptor type. At 9:50 she gave Ruby gelsemium and attempted to hold back that lip. This was Ruby's fifth birth but again we had a one-hour pushing phase and I started getting suspicious of the more assertive route. I started to wonder if waiting would change the length of the pushing stage... just... waiting. Waiting until they had an irresistible pushing urge. Waiting until that cervix was gone. I filed that away in my to-do list. Meanwhile Ruby's baby was the most gorgeous baby I had ever seen! And he was quiet and alert... the polar opposite of his compadre born just hours before. Very interesting stuff, this midwifery.

So where was Nell during all this? She was there... and she was wondering the same things I was. And I was starting to get a clearer picture of everything. You see, Ruby was supposed to be Nell's primary client... yet Agnes had jumped in and managed the birth. I could see why Agnes thought Nell had no self-confidence - but I could also see that Agnes was a force to be reckoned with. It was an interesting combination, and it gave me a lot to think about. What do you do, when the midwife you are apprenticing with/assisting takes over your primary? Years later I was to encounter this myself, and I did exactly what Nell did: I deferred to the senior midwife, without a word, really. It's hard, it's really hard because when you have less experience you aren't as confident. And childbirth can be life-and-death, so if things are serious you don't want to monkey around. But... things weren't serious. The baby was doing fine, the mama was not having any pushing urge, and waiting would probably have been okay. As Nell and I compared notes I began to see that she was very smart, very intuitive, and very loving. A friendship was beginning. Next time: what ABOUT that anterior lip?

OBSERVATIONS MADE EARLY ON:

- * doing births isn't as tiring when they come to you
- * if a woman has no childbirth ed, it's okay - you can teach a woman all she needs while she's in labor

JUST WHAT IS A HUTTERITE?

"Like the two best-known Anabaptist denominations, the Amish and the Mennonites, the Hutterites had their beginnings in the Radical Reformation of the 16th century" (from Wikipedia)...

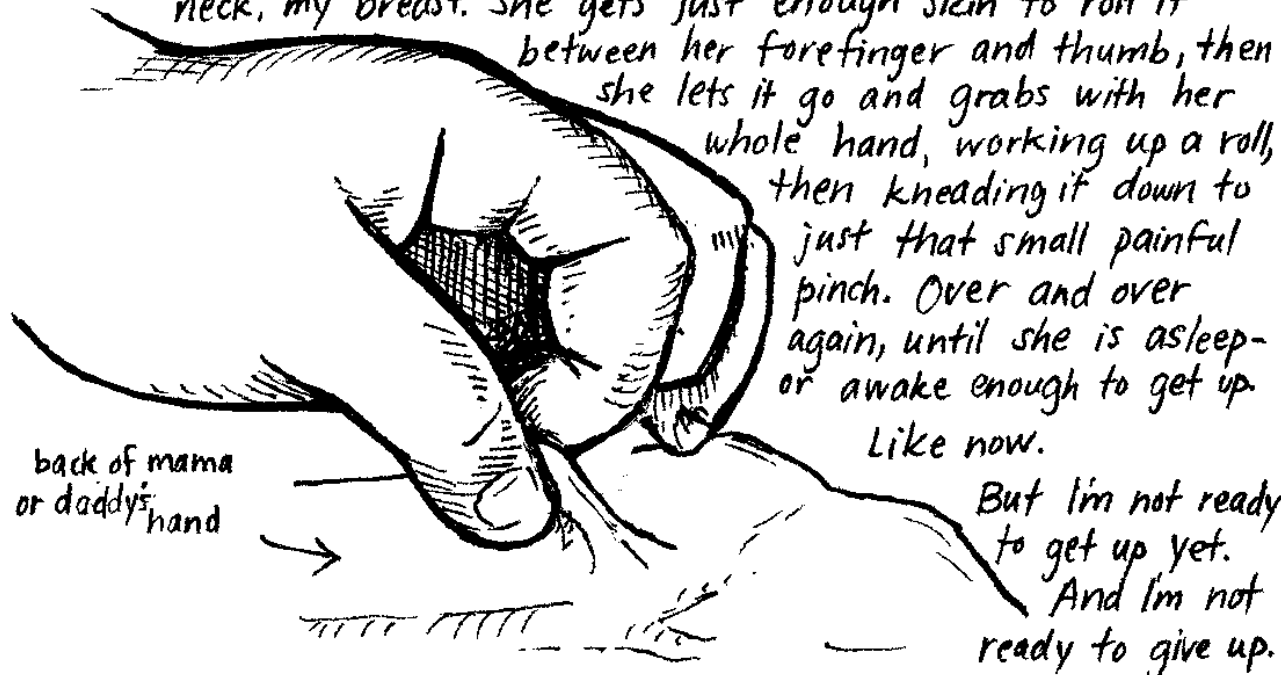
The Hutterites I met were of the Lehigh branch, founded in Montana & spread north to Canada. They live on colonies out in the rural areas, making their living farming & furniture-making. Unlike other religious separatists, the Hutterites use state-of-the-art farming & kitchen equipment, and drive modern pick-up trucks. Well, the men drive. The men run everything... at least they think so. Although the women don't vote in colony business, it seemed to me that they had a pretty strong hand in the day-to-day running of things. They are kind, welcoming, warm-hearted and have a very earthy sense of humor that reminded me of my own extended farming family. They love to laugh and sing, but they also work very hard - everyone. It is truly a communal community - everyone owns everything. No one has anything more or better than anyone else, unless their personal skills are more adept! Every garment - everything made with fabric - is made by the woman of the house. Bed linens, curtains, rugs, all clothing, everything. A Hutterite woman receives a top-of-the-line sewing machine as a wedding gift from the colony... and with any luck she can sew! Every once in a while a woman is not a great seamstress and her husband will get teased a bit for his ill-fitting shirts. They are proud of their work, though, and very skilled craftspeople. I still have my rug made of double-knit polyester (indestructible) as my welcome mat! ♡ The Hutterites are pacifists, and do not join the army or otherwise engage in politics. It is sad that when they do go into town they are whispered about and avoided. Every colony has 60-160 Hutterites, and when they need to, they build a new colony. Everyone then packs their things and stands in line in the center of the colony (probably near the kitchen/dining hall - man you should see their industrial-size bread mixer!) and they draw straws. Those who are moving go... those who are staying turn around, go back in and unpack. A lot of the women in the newer colonies are very proud of their new homes,

although I preferred the older colonies with their older structures and more homey feel. Since they all eat communally they do not have kitchens, perse, but rather sitting rooms with sinks and hot plates. Every home has the same set of furnishings and is very sparsely decorated, with whatever scarce clocks and paintings hung very high up on the walls.

For farming people, I must say the Hutterites have very peculiar beliefs and practices regarding pregnancy! They joke and tease each other about sex, but if a woman becomes pregnant it is treated as almost an embarrassment. They do not discuss due dates with each other or talk about another woman's pregnancy - even if it is their own sister! (They never hesitated to pry Agnes for information) And speaking of due dates - they did not like to go overdue by even one day, and actually managed to have their babies ON their due date or before, even. They tried to hide their pregnancies, especially from the children, and even told the children that Agnes brought the babies! I thought she was kidding when she told me this but everytime we pulled up to a colony we were surrounded by wide-eyed children looking to see if we had a baby! None of it made any sense to me, especially since clearly the women went into town and came BACK with babies. I wondered how much these children really knew and one day I got the chance to find out. I was feeling very ill by the time we got to one colony (I was actually just carsick for the first time ever & didn't know it!) and so I waited outside during the prenatal visits. The children, ever curious and oh-so-mischievous, were asking me very slyly if we were there because Ruth was having a baby. "Oh NO!" I said. "Agnes BRINGS the babies." The younger children nodded, but the two older girls gave me sideways looks and shook their heads. "Oh, NO" they said, "We seen da animals. We know de troot! We know da troot!" I just shook my head and smiled, but I was very glad to know that these Hutterite kids were wiser than anyone - even their parents - gave them credit for. 😊

"J" is for JOSIE

It is 4:45am when I dig for my glasses and peer at the clock. Josie is making her wet diaper/binky ejection noises. I struggle out of the covers and scoot down past the guard rail and find her warm little body in the dark crib. "Nah-nursh?" she asks, "Nah-nursh? Na nursh?" until I whisper, "Yes, sweetie, you can nah-nurse. Now hush." I lie her down next to me and she latches on as I wince. Teeth. They hurt. But no worse than the pinching and pushing on my breast that she's done since she was born. Sometimes I am sure her intent is to pinch me to death, although she does it less and less these days. She needs it, the pinching, to get to sleep. To feel comforted. It is compulsive and precise, the way she seeks the back of my hand, the soft inner upper arm, my neck, my breast. She gets just enough skin to roll it



"Other side," I say. I lie still, breathing evenly; trying to relax completely, to give her the impression of sleep. After a while she pulls off and I pop the binky in her mouth, trying not to hold my breath. She lies there, Pinching & still. Pinch. Pinch. Grab knead pinch. Suddenly she sits up and mumbles through her binky. She's awake.

Randy murmurs "You want me to take her downstairs?" It's 5:53 and although I normally take him up on his offer so I can get a bit more sleep with Zuzu, this morning I'm feeling awake. "No, honey, I got her." "You sure?" he answers even as he falls back asleep, and I carry Josie out and downstairs. In the dim morning light her eyes are huge, perfectly round, and dark; her cheeks are rosy and warm and her dark blond hair is fluffed and mashed ornately around her face and ears. She is scrumptious.

I sniff her head and kiss her plump cheek about a million times as we make our way downstairs. She smells divine - always has - even when she was a just-breastmilk baby she smelled like oatmeal or some other warm sweet food. Zuzu smells like a kid. Josie smells like a treat. She smiles at me and hugs me tight. "Maamaa" she says lovingly.

In the kitchen she "mows" at the cat and points to the top of the fridge. "Bubgub?" She asks. "Bubgub?"

"No, we're not having bubblegum for breakfast, Jose." I open the fridge and she grabs a juice box and holds it up. "Box?" "No, sorry, not first thing, honey. Maybe later. How about some yogurt?" "Gurt?" she replies and I hoist her into her highchair. She insists on feeding herself these days and despite the mess I'm inclined to let her... anything to give me a hands-free moment. I open her 'gurt and hand her a spoon. Her pointy little chin gets covered in purple goo almost immediately; then her upper lip gets involved and she looks like she's sportin' a purple goatee. But she's happy, she's eating, so I grab myself a glass of water, pop my thyroid meds and stare at my baby. Who's not really a baby anymore. It's March, April now, and she is a year and three months - excuse me - nearly FIFTEEN months old now. It's kinda hard to believe sometimes. In fact I don't really remember much of her babyhood.



She says a new word or two every day now. Jacket. "Bubgub!" "There she is" "All gone" "Bye-bye daddah" Brush. Keys. Zuzu. Outside. When you hand her something she says "Dahnk Doo!" and if someone blows their nose or sneezes she says "Ah-CHOO!" And, of course, the perennial favorite: "No."

She is a grand mess now, but I know she is not done eating first breakfast. I scramble her some eggs, make myself some coffee, toast a bagel. So far this morning is going very sweetly, and I appreciate the calm before the storm. Next is the frenzy of getting Zuzu to school (after begging her to eat & wear weather-appropriate clothing) while Josie begins to get fussy and tired. Somehow we tear ourselves away from circle time songs at Zuzu's school and soon enough we are back home and Josie is ready for a nap. We nurse, she goes down, and I can breathe a moment. It is 9:30 am.

Just as I settle in for the fun part of my little morning compromise (clean the kitchen first, then read), Josie of course senses me trying to relax, and awakens.

It's nice outside, so we decide to go for a walk. After a diaper change, that is. Up until oh, two weeks ago, Josie peed every ten minutes. For real. For some reason lately she's been holding her bladder longer and it's been great... so far. Shoes on, jacket on, she happily scrambles backwards down the porch steps and away we go. Not that we go very far. After she wears out the thrill of running down the two gently sloping driveways we pass, we reach the corner. Then she holds out her hand, reaching for mine, and we cross the street. She walks a few more steps, turns back, holds out her hand and we cross again. And again. After a while she gets angry and frustrated. I'm not sure why. But she cries, shakes her head and stomps her feet. It's as if she's saying "Is this it? Is this all there is? Back and forth?" All I can do is try and get her to walk further, to try another direction. Sometimes she's too mad, and all I can do is scoop her up in my arms and head for home.

We'll do more tomorrow. Until then, yes, this is all there is.

Part of me wants to end my little tale of Josie right there... but it seems too melancholy, too hopeless. It's true that she gets frustrated and sometimes that's all there is - but mostly there is more than that.

Josie loves to laugh. She has a deep belly laugh that is surprising to hear. And a fake wicked laugh when she's playing monster or chase. She loves to tease, she loves to chase and be chased. She climbs like crazy; loves to drape herself with necklaces and scarves; loves to torment Zuzu. She eats twice the amount of food Zuzu does, wants to do and have everything her big sister does... including mama. She gets very jealous when Zuzu & I cuddle or do something together; pushing Zuzu away - or trying to - to claim her rightful place on my lap. She is curious, she is methodical, she is charming. And - dare I say it? - I think she's even smarter than Zuzu. The day is coming, soon, when the two of them will conspire against me... I know it. I look forward to it!

I am really so in love with both of my girls. Yeah, I yell sometimes. I cuss and slam doors. I feed them Taco Bell and too much sugar. They suffer. I'm sure, from benign neglect.. I have days when I am miserable because of them, feel like they have stolen my soul. I am going to die from the pinching. I am going to die from the cuteness. Something.

I look at them, so ready to love, so open to life, and I see myself in them. We're all okay.



It's Okay to be Typical

It was a sweet little stone, innocent and pure. Dark grey, with tiny flecks of orange. A typical pebble-pea gravel. One wonders where it came from - was it once rough, a chip knocked off an old block by a raging swollen river & tumbled smooth with millions of others until it found a peaceful home at the bottom of a river? Did it sit there, enjoying its life, thinking nothing would ever change, until the day it was scooped up, processed, and put in a Montessori school sandbox? Did it ever dream it would end up where it did?

Teacher Chris had been kind and sympathetic, and I was grateful. I looked at the tearstained, worried little face of my beloved Zuzu in the rear view mirror and asked questions as gently as I could:

"Honey, how do you KNOW it's a rock?"

"Because it FEELS like a rock, mama!"

"Well, sweetie, how did it get in there?"

"I don't know..." she was clearly miserable, if a bit confused.

"Okay..." I was bit confused myself, and decided to try a different tack.

"How big is it?" I finally asked. Maybe the truth was in the details.

"Oh... medium." she finally said, showing me, seeming to cheer up at the 'mystery to solve' element.

"Medium, huh? Let's see... when did you notice it was 'medium'? when you were putting it in there?"

"Yes. When I putted it in there it was too big."

"Well, honey, apparently it wasn't too big, if it went right on up there!"

I tried to laugh it off a bit. My cell phone rang.

"The doctor's office said to keep her as calm as possible, and take her to that 2 o'clock appointment you got," Randy told me.

"It's a good thing I'm a longstanding patient of an ENT," I joked,

"So, I'll see you at home... Katherine can watch Josie while you and I take Zuzu in."

"Yep," he said, "I'm on my way! How's she doing?"

"Oh, you know," I sighed, "considering there's a rock up her nose."



Just last week Zuzu had quietly, 'when Mama wasn't watching,' cut a huge chunk of her hair off. Her bangs which had finally grown out past her chin had been secured in a clippie off to the side, and instead of taking the clippie OUT she'd decided to free the hair with her handy-dandy scissors. I was astounded that my child-my brilliant, contemplative, ingenious child would do something so... typical. I couldn't really be angry-I mean, it's her hair. (And I really prefer bangs on her anyway.) Still, it was just not the kind of thing my Zuzu would do. Other kids, typical kids, did that stuff. My child is not a typical child.

And yet, here I was, on my way to my beloved ENT's office (that's EarNoseThroat) with my brilliant, contemplative, ingenious three-and-a-half year old to have a stone removed from her nose.

As before, I couldn't be angry. I was worried... a bit amused... and a lot baffled.

Why on earth did my child shove a pebble up her nose? Why? Because

she's three-and-a-half, my mind reasoned, and that's what three-and-a-half-year-olds DO.

But not MY three-and-a-half year old, I argued back.

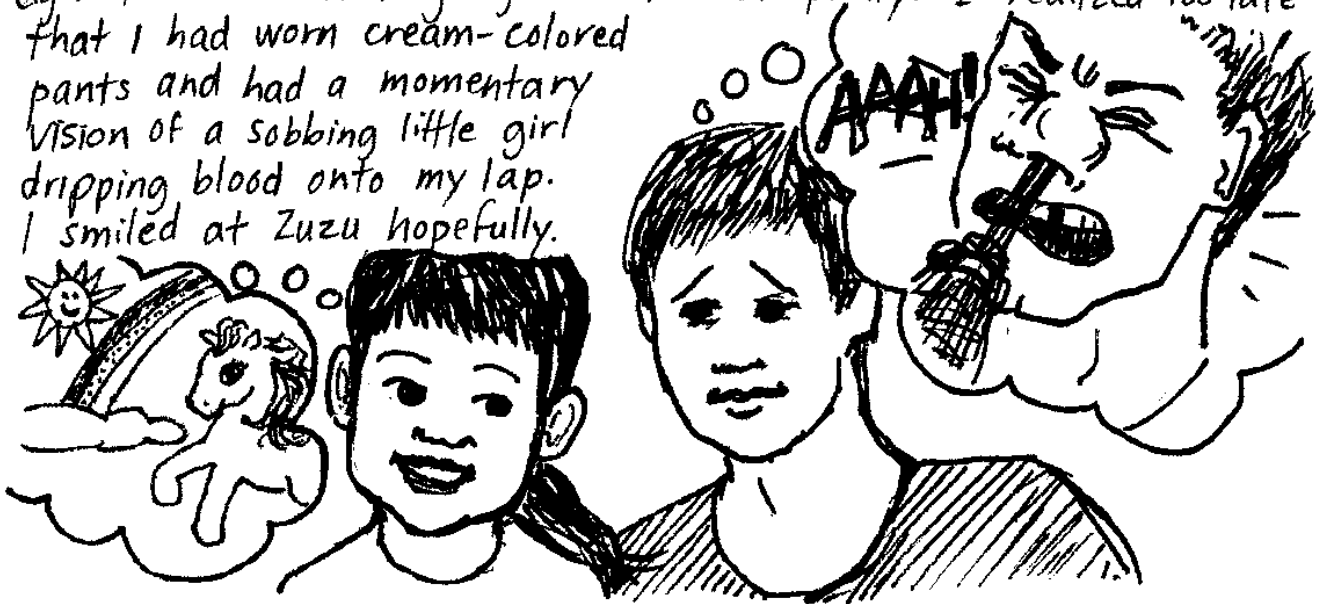
She doesn't DO this typical kid stuff. Oh, but she DOES, my mind whispered kindly, and it's OKAY. Hmmp! I said back.



(Reminded me
of her dad's
MULLET!)

"Maybe they will get a little mouse with a shovel, and it will go in there and DIG it out!" she suggested. "Maybe," I said, "Or maybe they will just put some bait outside your nose and say 'Here, little stone. Come out!' and it will crawl right out!" "NAWW," she said in a dismissive drawl. That wouldn't work. Frankly, I was afraid of what would. Teacher Chris had said she could not see the stone so I had not bothered to look. Even if I had seen it, I would not have attempted to get it out. I'm the typical mom who sheepishly admits to the doctor that yes, I pushed the wax further into her ear with a Qtip. Needless to say I was not about to try to dislodge a stone from her sinuses. No way.

At the ENT's office she was amazingly perky and entertaining, telling the nurse that the rock was "garbage" and her nose "made a good garbage can" (!!!) Katherine & I waited a bit nervously. (Zuzu had wanted Katherine along instead of her daddy, and her daddy had kindly honored her request) I knew what was involved when the doc looked in my post-surgery sinuses, so I tried to prepare Zuzu, pointing out the atomizer containing topical anesthetic to numb the sinuses, the scope, a wormy-looking device "like a camera" I told her. "A CAMERA?!" she squawked, "You mean he's going to take a PICTURE of the ROCK in my nose?" "No silly, it's just so he can see it and get it OUT!" So simple, yet I was wincing inwardly, remembering that scene in Total Recall where Arnold Schwarzenegger has to dig an enormous homing device from his brain through his nostril with a wicked-looking hand-mixer-meets-carnival-claw. Ugh. This was NOT going to be fun. Or pretty. I realized too late that I had worn cream-colored pants and had a momentary vision of a sobbing little girl dripping blood onto my lap. I smiled at Zuzu hopefully.



There is a reason why Dr. Craig Hertler was selected by his peers as the top ENT in the area. He is. Charming, handsome, terrific bedside manner and a genuine love for his job - he was gentle and patient and perfect with Zuzu. She pulled out all the shy, silly stops - flirting and giggling with him as he explained what he was doing and peeked into her nose. He could see the pebble without any assistance other than a light and his quaint but practical round-mirror-on-a-headband (à la Doctor Baker). "I see it!" he announced happily, and then he reached into a drawer full of shiny instruments, and pulled out...

Ooh... is the suspense killing you?

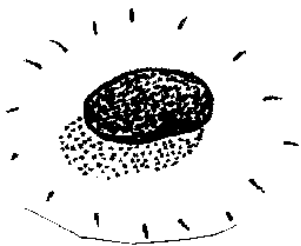
He pulled out a long-handled spoon. A teeny, tiny scoop. A melon-baller of miniscule proportions. "Can you imagine eating cereal with this?" he asked Zuzu, who shook her head.

"It would take forever!" he continued. But it will only take a minute to scoop out this rock, ready? SSCCccooooOPP!" and out it came without so much as a peep! Seriously!

Dr. Hero laid the pebble carefully on the napkin-draped metal tray and I picked it up, still wet from her nose. It was the size and shape of a compressed pea, a smooth oval. It was the perfect rock to choose if one was inclined to choose a rock to shove into one's nose.

"At least it was smooth," I laughed, relieved. We thanked Dr. Hertler profusely. Zuzu skipped out gaily, choosing a sticker from the prize basket. We stepped out into the lobby as chuckles and smiles from the office staff followed us. Zuzu grinned and said, "NEXT TIME I get something in my nose, let's come back here and I can get ANOTHER sticker!" That's how she saw it.. as a means to a sticker. Typical kid.

And, you know what?
It's really okay.



The stone now
rests in the lap
of a cast-resin
goddess
on our mantel...

Telling the pebble-in-the-nose story to friends & loved ones brought out many such stories... here are two.

- our hairdresser (who fixed Zuzu's recent chop job) has a sister who put a snack-box of raisins in her nose... one at a time
- my friend Jean's husband's somebody put a bean in his nose... and it sprouted! No, she says it's true, really.
It sprouted.

PLANET ZUZU



Angst and Escape

Zuzu stands at the foot of the stairs, right in the path of the other kids and parents trying to leave the school.

"NO MAMA!" she screams, at the top of her lungs, "YOU WERE NOT SUPPOSED TO GO IN FRONT OF ME!!!!"

"Zuzu, I will get behind you and follow you in a moment. You are blocking the way. Please move out of the way and THEN I will follow you."

"NOOOooooooOOOOoooooo!!!" She is shrieking. Teacher Carrie's eyebrows go up – of course Zuzu never throws this kind of fit during school.

"Zuzu, I am going up and out the door. Come. With. Me. Now."

"NoooOOOOoooo!"

I carry Josie up and set her down on the sidewalk, which is still scattered with mamas and other kids and little brothers. This behavior of Zuzu's, which I can only figure is three-and-a-half-year-old stuff, has been going on for weeks. Weeks on end.

Fighting. Screaming. Over every little thing. I am so bone tired; I have no more patience for this crap. None.

The other mamas look puzzled and I look around for my dear friend and sympathizer Kate. She is already gone. Zuzu meanwhile has been reluctantly led up the stairs to the main door where she stands, screaming. Teacher Carrie is saying firmly and patiently, "Zuzu, I need you to move so I can close the school door. It's time to go now." She refuses to budge. I pick up Josie and say, not loudly enough, "Zuzu, come NOW."

She folds her arms, tears streaming, face a mask of defiance. I look at the other mothers, standing there with sympathetic smiles on their faces. I smile back, sort of. "I hate being a mother," I say. "I really really wanted to like it, but I don't. I hate it." And I feel my face crumple up before I can even help it. As the tears come rushing out, I am instantly surrounded by these mamas, only two of whom I know by name. They touch my shoulders, rub my back. "We've been there, we know just how you feel," they say.

"Every DAY it's like this," I say quietly, "Every day. I just don't know what to do any more."

They are also quiet for a moment, perhaps thinking of the days and moments they felt exactly the same. Then someone, I think it is Melanie, says, "Go take Josie to the van. One of us will bring Zuzu. It's okay. It will get better." They are so kind, all of them. I cannot imagine any of them yelling at their children like I do. I cannot imagine any of them breaking down into sobs right there in front of the school. I feel very vulnerable, very pathetic. I nod and head to the van. Josie is crying, too, now. In a moment another mama, Taunia, leads a quiet, stubborn-faced Zuzu to my side. She reassures me again, lets me know I am not alone. I appreciate it. Somehow I get both girls strapped in and then I just sit in the driver's seat and sob. I am so angry, and so powerless. I really, really wanted to like being a mother. But I don't. And that is extremely painful to me.

I tell other mothers, even ones I have just met, that I have never worked so hard and been as frustrated as I have since I became a mother. That I can't wait until I have two kids in school all day. That I think being a SAHM to two under 4 is the most tedious, thankless work there is. There is no sense of completion or accomplishment. And for someone like me, whose whole identity and sense of self-worth are tied up in how productive I am it is very very difficult to feel like a worthwhile human being. And no, getting the laundry done doesn't count. I don't consider 'playing' a good use of my time. I get depressed, irritable, angry. I feel like I am on the verge of screaming or crying all day – not every day, but often. I don't know if it's my thyroid, my hormonal cycles, or just motherhood that makes me feel this way. But this is the hardest time of my life. I want it to be over.

I tell other mothers this, all of it, sometimes. As yet I have not had another mother seem shocked, surprised, or disagree with me. Most start telling their own stories of frustration, and what they do to find time for themselves. I believe they are sincere and not just placating me.

Anyway, it's fashionable to be a frustrated mom these days. It's being covered in national periodicals. There are so many books and zines about it that I long ago stopped reading them. It's a miracle anybody has kids anymore, really, because nobody is painting a rosy picture of motherhood. Rosy mother-hood isn't 'real' motherhood. Not that it's ever REALLY been rosy – I think every generation has had its mamas who tell it like it is – Erma Bombeck comes to mind – but it seems bigger now than ever. It's hip. It's happenin'. Motherhood – the New Martyrdom.

Recently my local paper had an article that sort of bashed this recent outbreak of 'whiny moms'. It said that moms in this part of the country do not subscribe to the go-go-go theory of mothering. It insisted that moms here in the Great Northwest don't fret so much, don't stress so much. We know how to take it easy here. In fact, the author herself can't recall ever REALLY complaining about being a mom. In a sense, the implication was that if we COULD identify with those 'whiny moms' who were so desperate for a little peace then we must just be doing it wrong. Well, thanks.

Let me ask you something. Are you less frenzied if your errands are more lofty; if you are delivering meals on wheels and marching for peace and cooking for the homeless as opposed to running kids to music and gymnastics and scout meetings? Are homeschooling mamas less frazzled just because they aren't having parent-teacher meetings and school fundraisers? And how can you generalize about one area/one town/one neighborhood? Right on my own block there is a mama whose girls are in every possible activity, a full-time nursing student with a child in all-day school, a work-at-home mama, a does-day-care-in-her-home mama. Which of us is the least stressed? Which of us is doing it right?

It seems as if all of us mamas are desperately seeking something that can best be described as peace of mind. For some, peace of mind equals peace and quiet; alone time. For others peace of mind is knowing that their children are getting the best of everything. There is every variation in between. And all are having trouble finding it. Well, most of us, at least.

I got a mama zine a while back that I made the time to read, since I remembered liking her first issue. She had made a list of things about herself and the kind of parent she is. No surprises, really; extended breastfeeding, home birth, home school, no immunizations, vegetarians, no TV, no sugar, no plastic...

Then I came to:

"I have absolutely no time for people still trying to 'get it'."

Huh. I thought. Trying to get what? Trying to get how YOU see things? But how will those poor unenlightened people ever 'get it' if someone doesn't reach out a hand, show them the way? And if they are at least TRYING to 'get it', don't they at least get an A for effort? Apparently not. I don't do or believe in quite a few of the things she had listed so far. So I guess she would have no time for me, either. But, okay. I've encountered this before – intolerance is a sad byproduct of trying to live gently on the earth. I understand that, I've got other friends like this. I read on.

A few more lines down she says, "I don't really believe that healers should charge money for healing." Now I'm REALLY confused. I consider myself a healer of sorts. I think every midwife is. And I love what I do, and I have and will again do it for free. However – does this mean that my gifts, my knowledge, my time is worth nothing? And why does this apply only to healers and not to any given talent? Why is it okay for musicians, artists, writers to earn a living, but not me?

Now that I clearly don't 'get it', I put down the zine and do not finish reading it. I am annoyed. I feel judged. Right now I need to step away from the mama whose pronouncements make me feel unwelcome. I'm sure it's a great zine. And maybe she put

down my zine the moment I talked about letting Zuzu play with Barbies. Maybe she said, I don't get this mama, and I need to walk away from her and her excessive plastic life. Maybe she felt unwelcome. I hope not.

How can mamas who seem so hip be so intolerant and snobby? Am I less hip because I forgo lipstick, tats and piercings; because I would never wear a shirt that says "Fuck all ya'll"? Am I a bad mama because I don't have regular playdates for my kids; don't spend hours everyday hanging in the park? Am I worthy of contempt because I have a live-in mother's helper? Am I not allowed in your club because I am not an AP parent; because I feed my kids Taco Bell? What is UP with us all judging each other, anyway? Whose side are we on?

After my meltdown at Zuzu's school, I realized that something drastic needed to happen. I had reached my cliff. I was Thelma and Louise, in trouble, with helicopters of responsibility thudding in the sky and my self-doubts and guilts lined up with guns pointed at me, as a good-hearted man – in this case my husband – tried desperately to talk me in.

I decided to listen to him, rather than drive off the edge. And he said to me, "Have you felt this way at other times in your life?" "Yes, I have. It was always about some stupid relationship gone wrong, before, though. Job stress, like at 911."

"And what did you do?"

"I left. I went to Seattle. I went home to be with my mom. I went to Montana to see Nell. I went away, to clear my head, to get some perspective."

Then it occurred to me that there was no reason I couldn't do that now. A week or so later I checked the weather through the mountain passes, loaded up the car, kissed my family goodbye. This time mama duck is going over the hills and far away. I hit the road for a blissful, solitary, grown-up music 12-hour road trip.

I stayed for three nights, and Nell somehow made time for me in her very hectic life, for which I will be eternally grateful. She has three kids; two are involved in more activities than I could count. In the one weekend I was there she baked two batches of brownies, one for a fundraiser, got one kid out the door for the weekend, schlepped the other off to gymnastics, organized the schlepping of same child to other activities, and entertained the third. I watched in awe and a bit of fear; she IS the mama those books are talking about. And one day soon my kids will be old enough to do this kind of stuff! I am not looking forward to it, and I am determined to keep the extracurricular activities to a minimum. That much I learned in the first few hours.

BUT...I also watched in envy as her daughters played WITH EACH OTHER for hours on end, needing her attention only occasionally – and I thought, wow – is there really light at the end of the tunnel of ‘Play With Me’? Will I someday get a bath, a cup of coffee, a chapter or two without being bothered? I will!

And Nell and I talked, like we haven’t had a chance to do in years. We sat in the hot tub at her amazingly swanky health club and she opened her heart to me about her past. We got tipsy at a local tiki bar and joked about the last time we’d been there, when my relationship with Randy was brand new. We’d left the boys at home with her kids and we’d gotten all worked up talking about sex and how good it was with our men. Then we called them. They were discussing the fall of the Roman Empire, and that sent our drunken selves over the edge with laughter. When we got back to her house it was a good thing the kids were sleeping, because we were all OVER those boys.

This time we joked, a bit sadly, about how now everything was so very different – how motherhood has taken over so much – how our libidos seem to correlate inversely with how much time we spend with our kids. How somehow it is okay, it’s just where we are. It was great to be with her.

And I missed my family. Terribly.

On the third night I told her I'd probably be leaving before she got up in the morning – so we said our goodbyes and goodnights then. I drifted off in that pleasant way just enough alcohol provides. I couldn't wait to hit the road. At 1am I woke up. Could not get back to sleep. At 2:30am I was gassing up the car and heading out of Outback. I felt rejuvenated. I felt happy. I didn't know how long it would last. But I knew this: knowing that I really could leave, any time, would carry me through some of my darkest hours.

I got home several hours early, surprising my family, at around dinnertime. Zuzu said, "Hi, mama! I knew you would be back sometime. Where's Katherine?" Randy was happy to see me but annoyed that I had upset his plan of having the whole house clean when I got back. Josie had two words: "Maaammmaa! Nurch?" They had of course been just fine without me. And I was better for having left them.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh wrote about this very thing in 1955, in her wonderful book Gift from the Sea:

"...unless I keep the island-quality intact somewhere within me, I will have little to give my husband, my children, my friends or the world at large...woman must be as still as the axis of a wheel in the midst of her activities...she must be a pioneer in achieving this stillness, not only for her own salvation, but for the salvation of family life, of society, perhaps even of our civilization."

Listen:

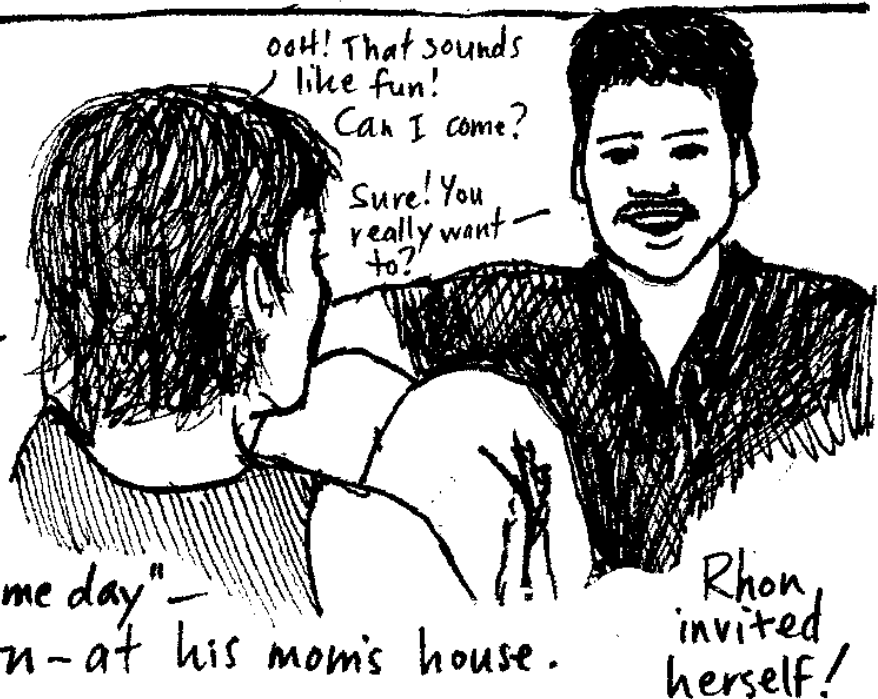
We are all doing the best we can. Every mama needs a break now and then. Every mama gets a little slack. All of us. Welfare mama. Celebrity mama with twins. Peace activist widow mama. Full-time corporate mama. Slap your kid for spilling his water mama. Stay-at-home entrepreneur mama. Part-time worker mama. Full-time student mama. Bipolar mama. Soccer mama. Midwife mama. You get it? ALL OF US. So let's be good to each other, and good to ourselves. Every one.

the CARTOON HISTORY of RANDY and RHON

PART TWO: Let the Games Begin!

After the bland dinner and enlightening conversation, Randy went to Rhon's apartment where they talked until 4am.

He told her the next day was "game day" - a weekly tradition - at his mom's house.



It was a hot night... especially for Randy & Rhon!

The sexual tension was palpable - (at least to them)

The games lasted long into the night. Yet, in another way,



THE GAMES WERE JUST BEGINNING...

~ Grieving ~

It is painful to walk past it. The muddy gaping hole, random bits of debris poking up here and there. Even the trees are gone; the evergreen, the plum. It is chaos – one thinks of what Sumatra must have been like after the tsunami. The ground is unrecognizable. There is nothing to indicate what once stood there.

It was a glorious old house. Well-loved, you could tell. The paint was colorful, if a bit patchy. You could see where the house had been added to; to make room for children, undoubtedly. The garden was lush and fruitful, the yard shady and peaceful. There were a lot of rooms branching off of the big main room, each inviting. An attic full of memories. A lot of laughter here. A lot of tears. A lot of history. Just echoes now.

If you can track down the owner, you might ask – why? Was it falling apart at the seams? Were there well-concealed cracks? Maybe something small and destructive had been eating away at the heart of the house for a couple of years. Or maybe they just grew tired of it, it was too big, too hard to keep clean. Or maybe, rather than see the house filled with someone else's family, the owners decided to take it down. Who knows? They just tore it down and disappeared. I woke up one day, took my usual walk around the corner and was met with the devastating sight of it, that raw gash, the piles of remains. Gone, just like that.

A place like that – you can never build it again. Even if you track down the original materials, the same shades of paint, the same types of trees, you can never duplicate what it once was. When something has been so utterly destroyed, you wander among the ruins and wonder if it is even worth it to rebuild. The very ground feels tainted, defiled somehow. Too many ghosts. Better to find a new piece of earth, to build something entirely new. Better to give up a dwelling and just lie down under the open sky.

SUGGESTION BOX "A FEW THINGS WE THINK ARE JUST..."

Laurie Berkner: children's singer/songwriter that we are so happy we found (thanks Katherine!!)

She hails from NYC but we like her anyway... (kidding!) and her songs are goofy and fun and very singalongable. The first one we heard was "BUZZ BUZZ" and we were hooked. "VICTOR VITO" is another favorite and who can help but love "Hey Victor! Hey Freddy! Let's eat some spaghetti!" Check her out online... unbeknownst to us she is apparently VERY famous, with videos on the NOGGIN network and everything! Which explains why when we went to see her in concert everyone but us was prepared with special hats and stuffed animals to participate. Oh well, we'll know next time! Her show was very energetic and fun, but way too short... she only played an hour and Zuzu was VERY sad, as she was just starting to get into it! Go see her! Give her a listen!

M*A*S*H: This is Randy and my adult entertainment.. as witty and relevant as ever. We've been working our way through the seasons... perfect-length episodes for tired parents.

The Week: Honestly I don't know what I would do without this magazine. I don't get much chance to listen to the radio, and certainly mainstream TV news is worthless... but the Week gives me everything that has gone on in the world... and a map to show me where on earth it's happening. They present both sides but tend to lean to the left... and the editor, William Falk, is great.

Plainsong: A book grabbed at random from Value Village by Kent Haruf. Of course everyone I know already has read this book but hey, maybe you haven't. Told in a style that took me a while to get used to; he doesn't put quote marks in conversations, so it's sorta like watching a foreign film with subtitles; once you get into it you don't notice anymore. Good story: a young teenager, a pregnancy, a depressed mother, two young boys, an odd dad, two old guys, and more information about cattle-keeping than maybe you want to know. And a happy ending - always a nice surprise.

SUGGESTION BOX

Just in case you're
bored or sum'pin

Windfalls: by my lovely gracious friend Jean Hegland. An intensely personal & very painful (at times) book about two women with very different lives. They make different choices very early in the book, and just when you think the two stories will never merge, they do. Sweetly.

Shopgirl: by Steve Martin. Yes, the comedian! The man can WRITE. I was very impressed, and loved the way he captured the emotions of his characters.

State of Fear: by Michael Crichton. Environmentalists' nightmare, I'm sure, but so thoroughly researched that it blew my mind. And changed forever the way I think about Global warming.

Coffee Will Make You Black: by April Sinclair. I thought I would probably hate this book, but I started reading it anyway. Surprise, surprise, I loved it. Follows a young black girl during the civil rights movement and how it becomes personal to her in an unexpected way. I fell in love with the main character; strong & wise.

Mother Rising - The Blessingway Journey into Motherhood (not a novel) by Yana Cortlund, Barb Lucke, Donna M. Watelet

I was so happy to find this amazing book: rituals, ideas, chants, and a billion resources for conducting a blessingway a rite of passage celebration for pregnant mamas. It's a bit heavy on the goddess/wiccan end... but full of info you can't find anywhere but random online places. This book fills a much-needed gap in a midwife's library.

GEEK DADDY

ONLY A MOTHER COULD LOVE...

All I have to say this time around is that my offspring are the most beautiful, brilliant and perfect children that ever breathed. Yours too? What a coincidence.

I love our two girls completely, utterly and in all other ways totally. How is that possible? Ten years ago you might have heard me say, "Babies are ugly. How can anybody think babies are cute?" They drool, they're noisy, they're both messy and disorganized, and worst of all they sometimes sit around with vacuous expressions, their mouths hanging open. Yech. As Bill Murray once said of a baby (*Ghostbusters II* – remember you're reading *Geek Daddy*), "You're short, your head's too big, and you talk funny". Actually I don't know what he really said, but it something like that. It was 15 years ago and I only saw the awful thing once, so give a break on this one.

I always understood that becoming a parent changed how you saw babies and children, but how? Why? And is it a form of insanity? It used to be hard for me to accept that it was biological. It seems rather obvious now.

20-plus years ago a mentor and college prof of mine (let's call him M) told me that having kids was a "crap shoot". (Or is that "crap chute"? Hmmm.) Whatever you get, the kid will be yours with traits you can identify in yourself and the other parent, but the variations are infinite. And all the "nurture" in the world won't change the fundamentals of nature.

M went on to describe the birth of his first son, and how holding his newborn for the first time was the most profound experience of his life. I remember his description as being very moving and poetic -- and he is not usually a poetic man.

I was trying hard to absorb the wisdom, and I asked him if he thought people were biologically driven to love and nurture their children. Answer: "Hell yes, and it's a damn good thing; otherwise we'd kill 'em."

Yeah, he's probably right. Here's a third-hand short story for you about his oldest boy when he was in his teens: Picture three teen-age boys in the cab of a pick-up truck driving down the I-5 corridor at night. The 4th of July is a few days away, so of course they decide it would be a good idea to light off a Piccolo Pete and toss it out the window as they're driving along. The Piccolo is lit, its fuse vanishing in a rapid hiss. The boy in the middle tosses it out the window. A problem immediately presents itself: the window is rolled up. Panic ensues. If you're familiar with this particular firework, it makes a shrill, nigh-deafening sound that drives most earthly creatures completely around the bend, even as a flame about an inch or two long rockets out the top. So the boys freak out, fly over the median into oncoming traffic, crash into another vehicle and roll off the highway.

One of the boys is knocked unconscious, with the Piccolo Pete still firing off under his butt. The car they hit was being driven by an intoxicated driver trying to sneak home with his headlights off (I am NOT exaggerating!) without getting pulled over.

So, this is M's oldest boy. This kid is also a genius, and I mean a bona fide A-number one giganto-brain. Which evidently does not translate into wisdom. If we didn't love them, we'd kill them.

When M retells this tale he likes to add on a description from the drunk driver's point of view: Here you are driving along slowly, hoping to take a short jaunt down the freeway and get home before anyone notices you. Suddenly a truck load of flaming kids flies over the median and smashes into you. Wow. If you can tell a true story like that, you know you've lived.

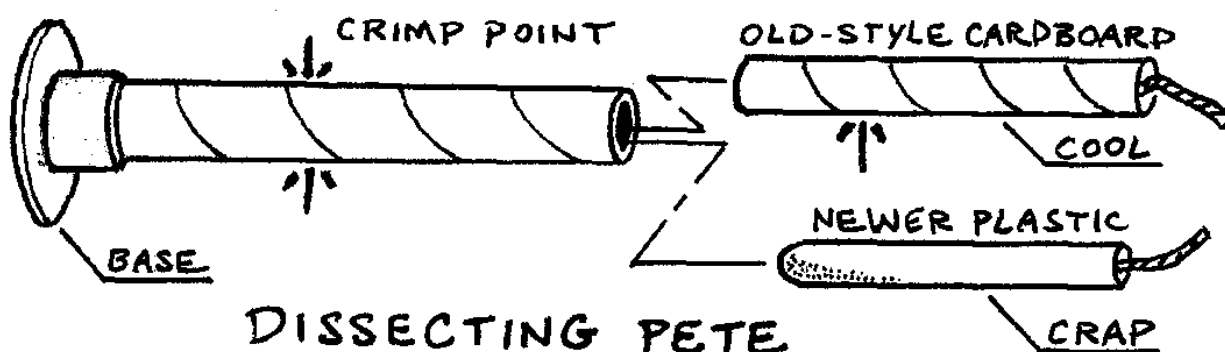
Fireworks Tip: Old-style Piccolo Petes use a cardboard insert to hold the powder. You can crimp the Piccolo Pete in the middle with a pair of pliers, causing it to explode when the powder burns down to the crimp. Crimping toward the bottom is better, so that it whistles longer before the powder explodes. Another fun trick: You can also peel away the outer casing so that the insert of the 'Pete is laid bare. It's about half the size of the Piccolo Pete, and the only reason I can see for the outer casing is to allow for the little plastic stand it sits on if lit normally. So what can you do with a naked Piccolo Pete insert? Anything!! Tape it to a stick and you've

got a bottle rocket. Tape it to a balsa-wood airplane and you've turned a prop job into a jet. Toss it lit out the window of a moving vehicle and you've got... well, just about the dumbest thing you could possibly do with one of these little demons. And don't get me started on Ground Bloom flowers (a.k.a. "Universal Igniters"). And that's just the old-style 'Petes. The new ones have a plastic insert which is slimmer and holds less powder. What can you do with one of those? Stick it up your nose for all I care, they're worthless! They don't stay crimped when you crimp 'em, and they're too heavy to fly. Garbage. Might as well stand them up on their little stands, light 'em, and watch as you go deaf. Sheesh.

Heredity vs. Environment. Nature vs. Nurture. Science has been chiming in on the subject forever. Strange that it's usually framed as *this* vs. *that*. What, they can't work together? Apparently one has to "win out" over the other. Thank goodness the debate is over. Now we *know* the answer. Open up your latest Discover magazine and you'll see that it's all about the genes. So much so that babies are supposed to look more like their fathers when they're born, so that daddy will know it's really his kid and hang around for a while instead of taking off to parts unknown.

I don't know about you, but my sense is that when a baby is born it looks like a slightly melted wax figure of a leprechaun that's been painted the wrong the color. Maybe the answer is that way back when the genes were being coded, dads looked more like melted leprechauns than they do today.

Today's Biology Tip: If you're a dad, and you want to believe your newborns look more like you, encourage water births. In fact, you might encourage jetted-tub water births. Your pre-washed little squiggler has a lot better chance to look like something you'd recognize.



Afterword...

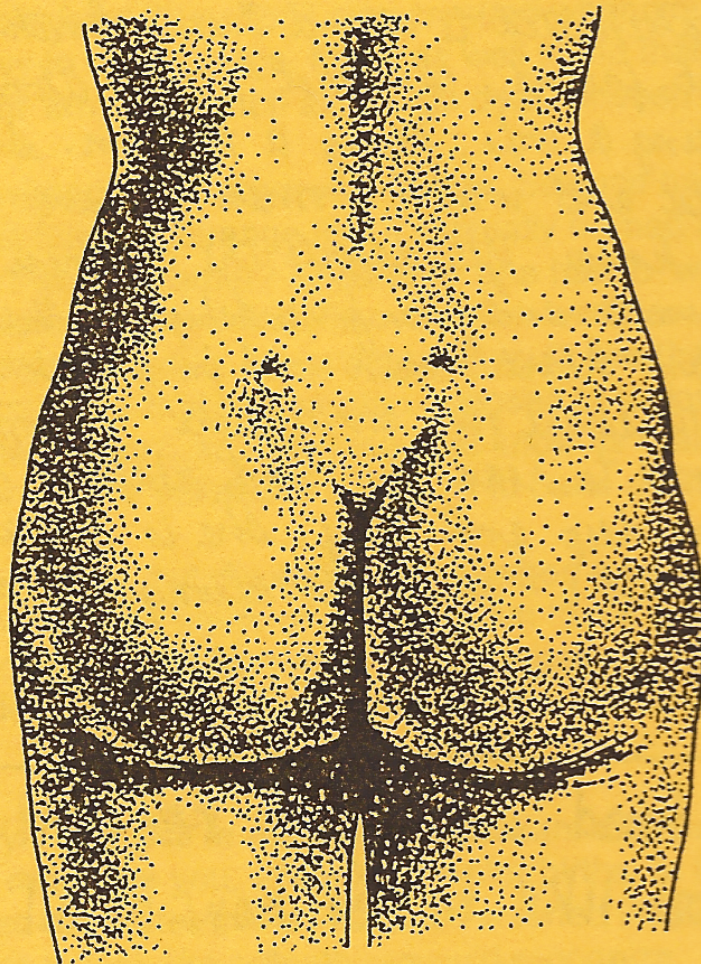
Eleven years have passed since the year I met Nell. We have spoken at least once a week it seems, since then. I attended the birth of her second child as a friend, she attempted to attend Zuzu's birth. She has been my best friend, the first I call about midwifery, parenting, being a wife, being a human. She is one of the smartest and wisest women I have ever been privileged to know. Yet despite the closeness I felt we had, she chose to end our friendship on the eve of this printing. I am heartbroken and in shock... but I still wanted to share our story here. I hope that she someday chooses to read this and realizes my love for her runs deep and long. She is an amazing woman & midwife - and was always a perfect friend. This issue is dedicated to you, Nell. With love.

Did you find ZBC just recently?
Would you like to see how it all began?

I have compiled the first four issues of Zuzu and the Baby Catcher into one large, lovely volume... and added special commentary about each issue. And it's all yours for \$8 - that's right - newsstand price! Order "The First Four" online at www.emeraldgiant.com/babycatcher or send \$8 to Rhonda Baker, 2000 NE 42 #183, Portland OR 97213

Is this the end of ZBC?
No, not quite.

But...



ZBC used to come out four times a year, but
life has gotten busy and something had to give.
ZBC will now be out 3 times a year... look for
#11 in August 2005. Have a great summer!

ZBC · 2000 NE 42 #183 · Portland, OR 97213 · Rhonda Baker
www.emeraldgiant.com/babycatcher rhonmama@msn.com