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No.  
2

ZUZU

\$2<sup>00</sup>

- and -

the BABY CATCHER

---

• midwife • meets • motherhood •

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- a call to midwifery
- birth in the boondocks
- things you think you'll never buy
- books & zines you should read



- coffee shop tales
- geek daddy
- hypothyroid hell
- anatomy 101 brought to you by the letter Z

december  
2002

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②

## ☆ CORRECTION ☆

It was brought to my attention that the hospital practices in my hometown are not, in fact, the same antiquated and barbaric rituals that they were in 1984. IN FACT laboring women can have present any persons they so choose, they may ambulate during labor, and can even eat and drink while laboring. ZBC regrets the error and says also: **HOORAY!!**

...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...

*Zuzu and the Baby Catcher is based on my true life experiences as a birth attendant/birth assistant, wife, mother, illustrator, friend, coffee-drinker & woman. Names and faces may or may not have been changed to protect the privacy of those involved, it depends on if they were into being in my zine or not!*

...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...

ANY IDEAS, TECHNIQUES, RECOMMENDATIONS OR SUGGESTIONS ARE NOT INTENDED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR COMPETENT MIDWIFERY CARE... BUT IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN COMPETENT MIDWIFERY CARE, FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME!

...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...☆...

*The illustrations of a sperm & human ovum from the back of issue #1, as well as the depictions of cell mitosis on the back of this issue, are from Anne Frye's Holistic Midwifery, Vol. I and were drawn by me back when I was Rhonda Wheeler.*

# BECOMING A MIDWIFE IN 10 EASY YEARS

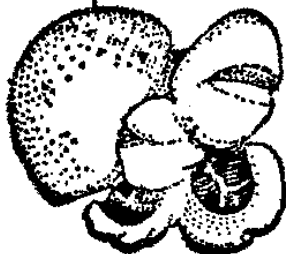
PART 2: Rubber Stamps The year is 1993, March. Since 1984, when I placed my beloved son for adoption, I had:  
• lived, loved, and left Jupiter, Florida • lived, hated, and left Chicago, where I had aspired to become an artist and ended up a lesbian • moved to Portland, Oregon, where all the dykes live who don't live in Provincetown • been working at an art supply store, a job I loved • moved approximately once a year or more, usually in with a lover, then in with a friend, then out with a lover, etc • worked through the grief about my birth • hadn't thought much more about birth. So... it's 1993, March. I'm in a stable relationship with a great gal, I've got a stable job, my daddy had died the previous year unexpectedly and I was thinking a lot about mortality and what I really wanted to be doing with my life. So, happy but questioning, You know?

The newest art fad at the time was rubber stamp art. **EVERYONE** was doing it. Catalogs filled with random and wacky rubber stamps were circulating amongst the employees, and I ordered a few from Rubber Stamps of America. (they're still around! [www.stampsusa.com](http://www.stampsusa.com))

Two weeks after I ordered them, I asked the catalog's owner, Karen, "so how long does it take to get stamps from them?" "Two weeks or so," she said, "Which

ones did you order?" "Oh, the popcorn, and the bumblebee, and the newborn."

"The newborn?" she said, "Why did you order the newborn?"



I explained briefly my fascination with childbirth & pregnancy, and she asked why I didn't go to med school. "I hate hospitals" I said, "I hate what doctors do to women." "Well then," she said, innocently, "why don't you become a midwife?"

At that moment, the world grew silent, and then I was surrounded by blinding light. Angels singing. Triumphant music. The works. My soul expanded, and all around me and through me a single word:



It was the purest moment of truth that I ever experienced. At once I knew what was so casually obvious to a mere acquaintance.... I was born, put on this earth, to become a midwife. I knew it, purely, completely. It was so... amazing.

I have since learned that many midwives had this same kind of experience. A 'calling'.

A midwife! Of course! But... aren't 'midwives' synonymous with 'medieval'? How does one become a midwife? I had a million questions... and no one to ask. Karen had turned back to her work, unaware that she had completely dumped my world upside-down, like a child's toybox... and an old favorite forgotten toy had been unearthed. So, what to do?

I immediately took a break and went to the yellow pages. There they were... "midwives." Sheesh, who'da thunk? I called the first one, left a message... "uh... my name is Rhonda Wheeler... and I just realized I'm supposed to be a midwife... and I have some questions, if I could get together with you..." Undaunted, I called the next one on the page... and she answered. Even though she was on sabbatical after losing a baby - which I didn't find out until much later - she talked with me for a long time... explaining kindly and patiently the basics of midwifery: A **NURSE MIDWIFE** works in the hospital or a birth center, a **LAY MIDWIFE** or **CERTIFIED MIDWIFE** or **TRADITIONAL MIDWIFE** does home births. You can learn by going to a **MIDWIFERY SCHOOL** or via **CORRESPONDENCE COURSE** and/or **APPRENTICESHIP**. There are some great books, like **SPIRITUAL MIDWIFERY** and **HEART AND HANDS** and **BECOMING A MIDWIFE**.

"And if you really think you're interested," she said, "there's a big **MIDWIFERY TODAY** conference in Eugene this weekend." **This weekend...** the first of many doors was flung wide open for me. ⑤

I went home that day just quivering with excitement. My partner at the time, Tara, had actually been to a friend's homebirth-with midwives- and was in complete support. She said "Rhon, I think that's perfect for you. I'll do anything you need me to do to help you do this, if you want." I said, "Well... there's a conference this weekend... in Eugene... it's \$200 for one day... and I'll need you to drive me..." She said "Make the arrangements."

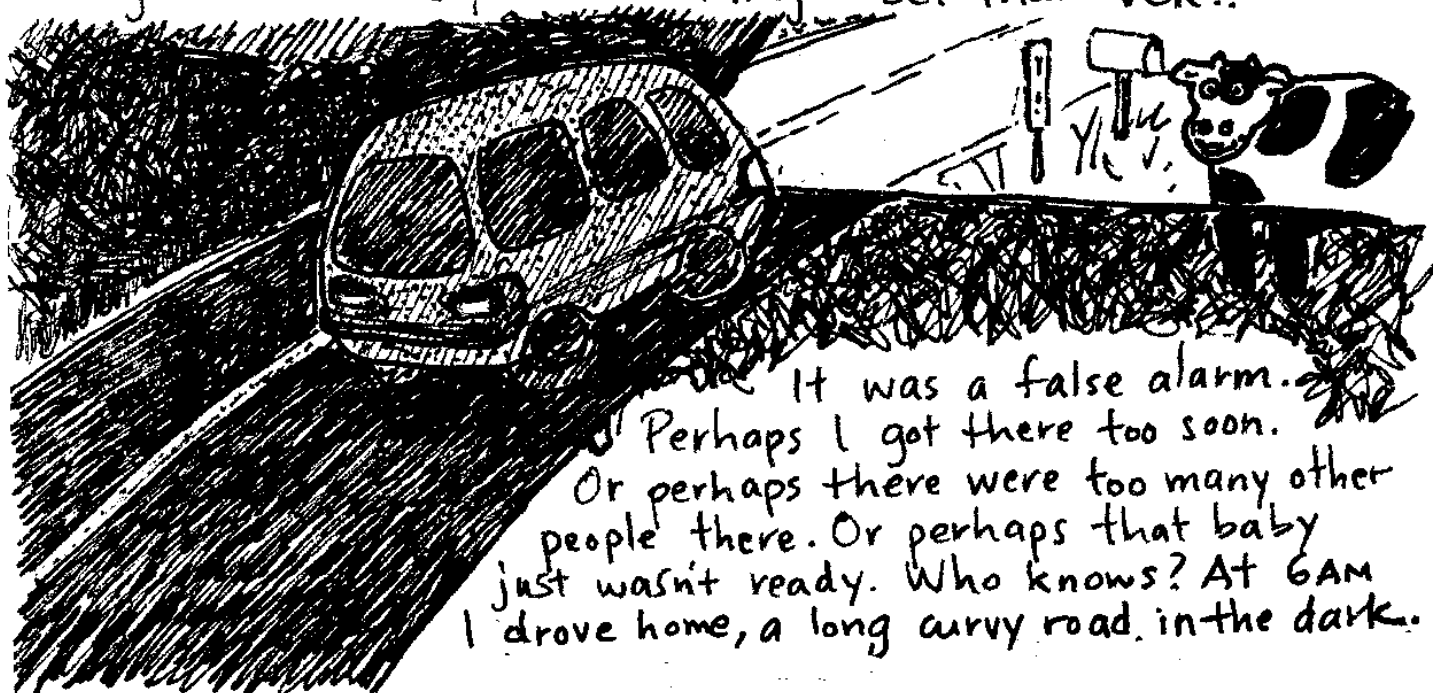


Oh, and that rubber stamp I ordered?  
It arrived that very day.

⑥ STAY TUNED FOR PART 3: WHAT DO MIDWIVES LOOK LIKE?

# BIRTH IN THE BOONDOCKS <sup>⑦</sup>

Tricia & Michael were expecting #5, out on their farm in the country an hour away... I had attended number one as an apprentice, was their midwife for numbers two and three, and they chose to have number four in hospital due to Tricia's hemorrhage with number three. When number five got conceived, Tricia wanted to be at home again and so we agreed with much joy and preparation to do it! We had all kinds of precautions set up and ready in the unlikely event that she would hemorrhage again - pitocin, yonan pao, local EMTs notified and LifeFlight signed up & given coordinates for to land in their pasture. We were all ready to go! Baby was great, mama was great... and we were none too concerned when due date of Sept. 23 came & went. Then came Thursday, the Season Premiere of ER night! Would they survive the smallpox?! Were Carter & Abby really getting together - finally!? Of course I KNEW Tricia would go into labor and sure enough I got called to go at about 6pm. Good thing I set that VCR!!



It was a false alarm. Perhaps I got there too soon. Or perhaps there were too many other people there. Or perhaps that baby just wasn't ready. Who knows? At 6AM I drove home, a long curvy road in the dark.

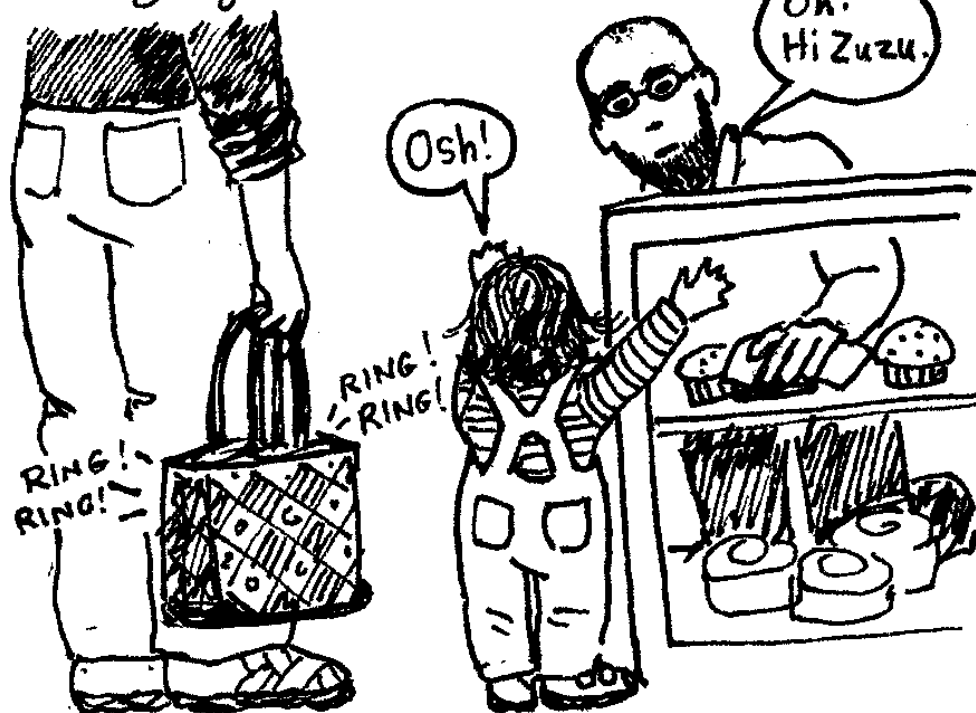
So... as it turns out, everyone survived but they CUT OFF ROMANO'S ARM! How weird & unexpected was THAT? I mean, now of course Elizabeth "the Shrew" Corday is going to develop a tender spot for him, even though he's totally abusive. Then again, she was boinking Benson, and he wasn't exactly Mr. Nice Guy either. I don't know. Where was I?

Oh yeah... driving home from Tricia's night of almost-labor. You know, I really believe that babies come when everything & everyone is just how they want it. Sometimes that means a cesarean, or that the midwife doesn't make it in time, or whatever. This baby wanted to wait a while more & that was fine by me. So... the days went by. Tricia of course had bouts of despair "I'm not ever having this baby" which I could really really sympathize with, having gone two weeks "overdue" myself. So... I reassured her that no matter what I said it wouldn't help, and that she was right, this baby was never going to come out.!!

OF COURSE we were at the coffee shop when she really went into labor.

OF COURSE it was THURSDAY.

OF COURSE it was the day Randy was busy at work & my childcare was unavailable.



I called my assisting midwife, who was 40 minutes from their house, and sent her on her way while I waited for Randy to get home. About 20 minutes later I, too, was on the road... saying my 'on the way to a birth prayer' to the divine mother; which goes something like this: "Thank you for this birth happening in exactly the way it is supposed to and **thank you** for guiding my hands and my heart and allowing me to help them and **thank you** for giving the mother the strength she needs for the work she has to do and..." you get the idea. So I'm listening to Norah Jones and Hootie and the Blowfish and I get out to the farm and as I get out of my van Tricia's friend and labor support person, Cara, steps out of the front door. "Hi!" I say, "how's it going?" "Um, fine," she says. "Tricia's feeling pushy" she says. "oh, good!" I say. "Is Pat here yet?"



She shook her head very slowly...

NO.

"That's okay.." I say, loving her for her excitement, her genuine fear, and her relief.

"It'll be okay..." I say, and I carry my bags into the house.

Just as I was opening my bag to get my doppler, Pat walks in. "She's feeling pushy," I tell her, "and I just got here." "Me, too!" she says, and we laugh.

Tricia, meanwhile, is laboring away, walking back and forth between her bedroom & the bathroom Michael not leaving her side & Cara close by.

A friend was on the way to pick up the kids ⑨

The first thing I do when I get to a labor, almost without exception, is to check the mama's mental state and the baby's heart tones. I'm not big on listening to the baby as often as most licensing boards would like - I feel like it is intrusive to a hard-working mom. Sometimes that first long listen is the only one I'll have for a while. So, I got my basic bag and followed Tricia to her room. Greeting her gently between contractions, I asked her how she was doing. "Fine," she said. "How's baby?" I asked, and she tuned into her baby for a moment, then nodded. I pulled out my old but wonderful Imex Pocket Dop and told her I wanted to listen to baby for a moment. She nodded again; lifted her gown. I squooshed out some gel onto the probe end, and planted it on her belly, slightly to the left and not too far above her pubic hair.

Nothing.

I aimed the doppler differently; just crackling static. I moved it more to center, then left, arcing the angle around again.

Nothing.

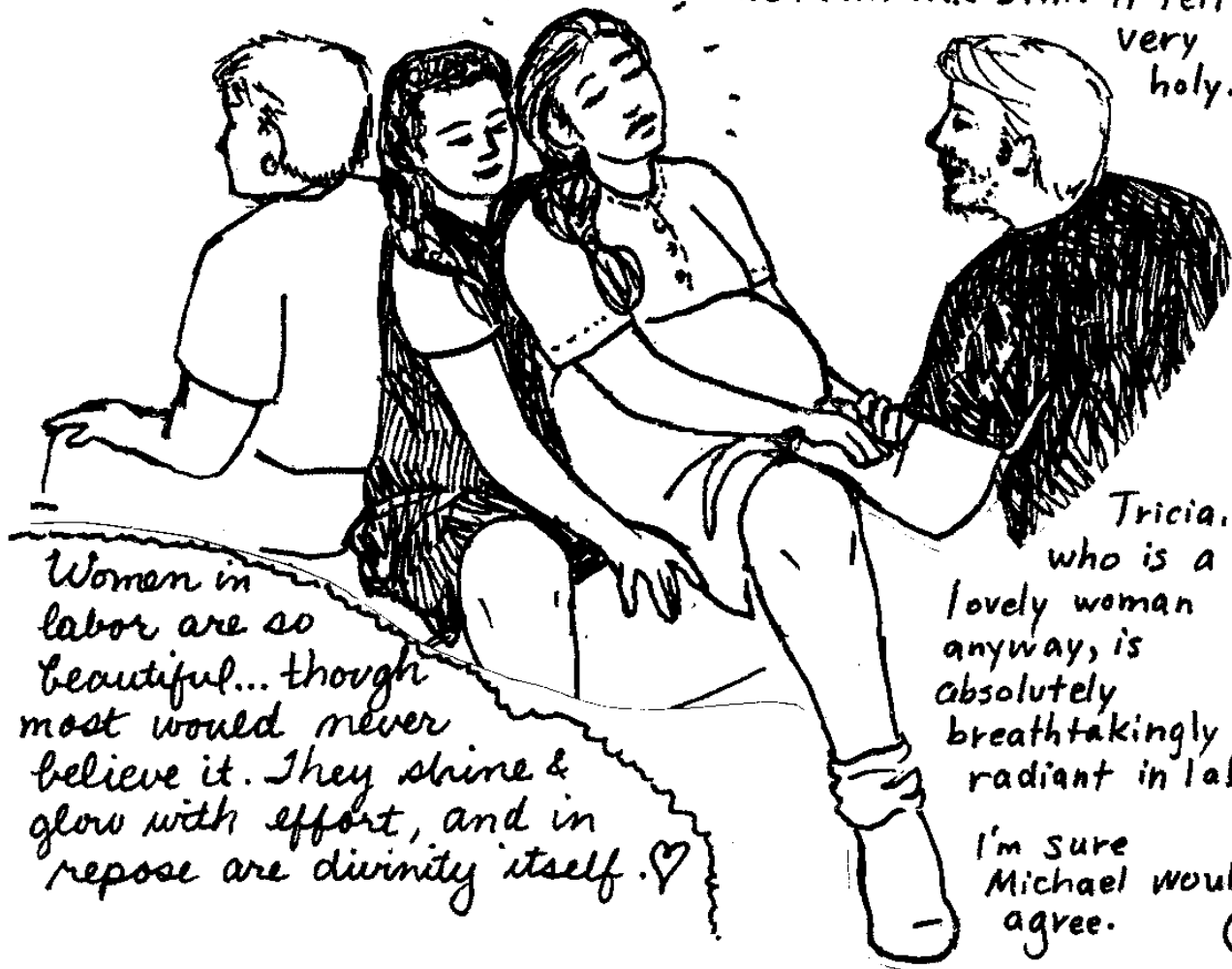
Again, searching. Just a hiss - no whoosh-whoosh of cord or placenta, no clip-clop of baby heart. My own heart started to race and I took a breath, praying and talking in my mind. Please, no... DONT LOOK AT PAT, WHATEVER YOU DO, DONT LOOK AT PAT... "Pat, can I try your doppler? Mine's not so great during contractions" Pat handed me her pre-gelled doppler, not daring to meet my eyes. If Michael saw us look at each other, he would know we were worried. I wasn't willing to go there just yet... Please, divine mother, please...

Ka-thunk ka-thunk ka-thunk ka-thunk ... there it was!!

Baby's heart, strong and steady! Prayers... thank you thank you!

Beginning to breathe normally again. Pat & I got set up... pit drawn up, yunnanpao (an oriental herb for hemorrhage) out, chart open, hands washed, crock pot on, blankets warming... and we settled in to wait. When I had arrived, Tricia had just announced to Michael that it 'felt good to push' - sending he and Cara into a panic! He had strictly ordered her not to push until we were there. She very kindly decided to have mercy on her nervous hubby, and was not actively pushing when we arrived. But close! I arrived at 1:40pm, Pat got there at 1:45 (she had car trouble, which is why I beat her there), at at 2:20 it was clear that baby was almost here! Tricia sat on the edge of the bed, Michael on a chair in front of her, holding her hands and murmuring lovingly to his wife, while behind her sat Cara, acting as a backrest. Behind Cara was Tricia's mom - it was a virtual wall 'o' women! Tricia labored quietly, as she has always done, full of peace and strength. Her contractions would barely seem to rouse her, tiny grunts punctuating her slow, rhythmic breathing. Then she would fall silent again.

The room was still. It felt very holy.



Women in labor are so beautiful... though most would never believe it. They shine & glow with effort, and in repose are divinity itself. ♥

Tricia, who is a lovely woman anyway, is absolutely breathtakingly radiant in labor.

I'm sure Michael would agree. (11)

I know Tricia & how she gives birth pretty well, and I suggested that she stand for her next contraction. The moment she stood, that baby started coming for real.'

"Ooohoooh...oh..." she said, as baby head began pressing on her perineum. Pat handed me hot compresses and I guarded her perineum, pushing a bit on baby's head to counteract her body's strong pushes. The head oozed out easily, slowly, just perfect. The grimaced, and me just as ready? Are I couldn't + high, so I

smoonched-up lips pouted and baby's head turned to face it should. "Michael, are you your hands down here?"

See much but Tricia's trusted that he had a grasp on the slippery infant as the body poured out.

THE CORD BROKE!

Tricia gasped in relief and I told her to go ahead and sit back so Michael could hand her the baby. As she sat, Michael lifted, and that cord

SNAPPED IN TWO!

Cara, thank merciful heaven, saw it the moment it broke, and grabbed the baby's end like lightning. Blood poured everywhere in the moment before I grabbed the end still connected to the placenta. We clamped the ends and got baby, who had been squalling even as his legs were still coming out, nestled onto Tricia's chest.

Placenta came easily, bleeding stopped immediately.

13

Since Tricia had hemorrhaged badly with number 3, we were taking care not to let that happen again! It was hard to estimate her blood loss, due to that freaky cord break which spilled all over the place, but we still happily determined that her blood loss was normal. She felt GREAT... it was wonderful. Michael & Tricia greeted little Jason tenderly, and Michael shooed us all out of the room the moment we knew all was well. Jason nursed, and Tricia beamed, and we went out to chart the happy event... and to get a better look at her placenta. The cord seemed weak only where it had broken, but was sturdy elsewhere. The membranes were totally friable, splitting apart like wet tissue. A lack of vitamin C is apparently what causes this type of membrane & cord weakness - another lesson learned!!

An hour and a half later, Tricia was desperately wanting a shower. We took her blood pressure, then again at the edge of the bed. Slowly she eased into the bathroom, Michael at her side and Cara just outside the door as she showered. A little while later the shower stopped, then Michael called out "SOMEBODY GET IN HERE!"

I ran in to see Tricia collapsed; white and convulsing slightly, in Michael's arms, while Cara helped hold her up.

Tricia's eyes rolled back, then closed. I was scared, but sure. "Get her down on the floor!"

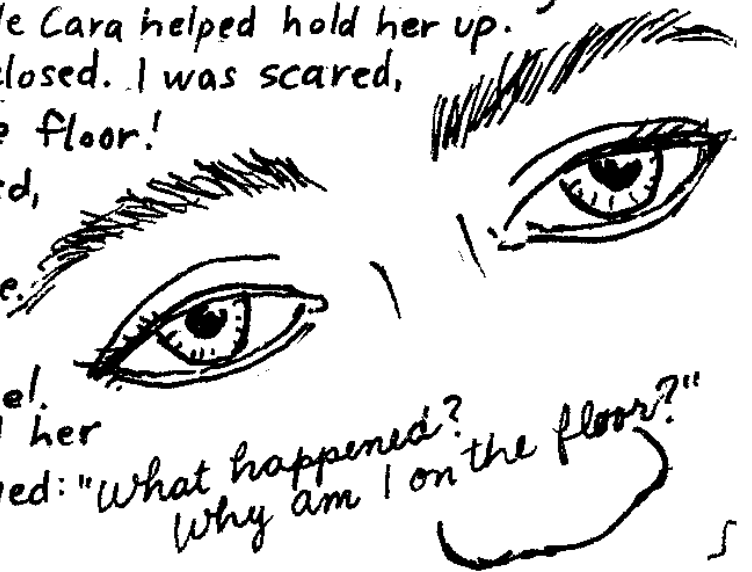
Lay her down flat!" I ordered, as the three of us tried to maneuver in the narrow space.

"TRICIA! TRICIA!" We yelled.

"No, Tricia! No!" Sobbed Michael.

She was out cold. Pat slapped her cheeks, and finally her eyes opened:

"What happened?  
Why am I on the floor?"



We had called 911 the moment she passed out, Cara again saving the day by staying utterly calm and telling them everything they needed to know. Although her blood loss had been very normal, I kicked myself for letting her get up too soon... especially to take a hot shower. Now my client was on the floor, with my hand massaging her uterus just in case, Pat taking her blood pressure, and her husband draped over her, in tears. "I'm okay, Mike... I'm okay... I'm so sorry I scared you," she kept saying over and over. Michael just held her close. I went out to talk to the EMTs who were totally great... they asked how it went and about the baby before I sent them away. Tricia stabilized quickly but we didn't let her crawl to her room for a good 45 minutes. "I'm FINE," she kept saying. "I thought I was on the toilet, and I was having this great dream... then I heard you guys calling me." We all laughed, and I reprimanded her teasingly about just wanting all the attention. "Yep," she said, "You all were so busy oohing and ahing over the baby; I had to do something." She laid there, smiling, nursing little Jason like nothing had happened.

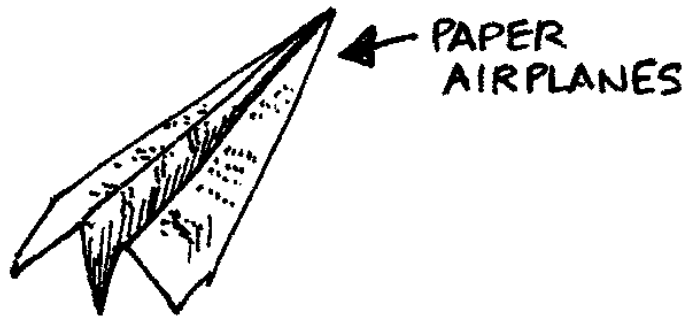
But something had happened. I've seen people pass out, I've seen seizures, I've seen hemorrhages. We took so many precautions with Tricia... yet she STILL passed out... and it scared me. I felt completely inept, and apologized to Pat, Cara, Tricia & Michael for not seeing it coming.

"Well," Michael answered, "Next time she's simply not allowed to get up for a LONG TIME."

Next time, Michael? I guess I'm forgiven. Thanks.

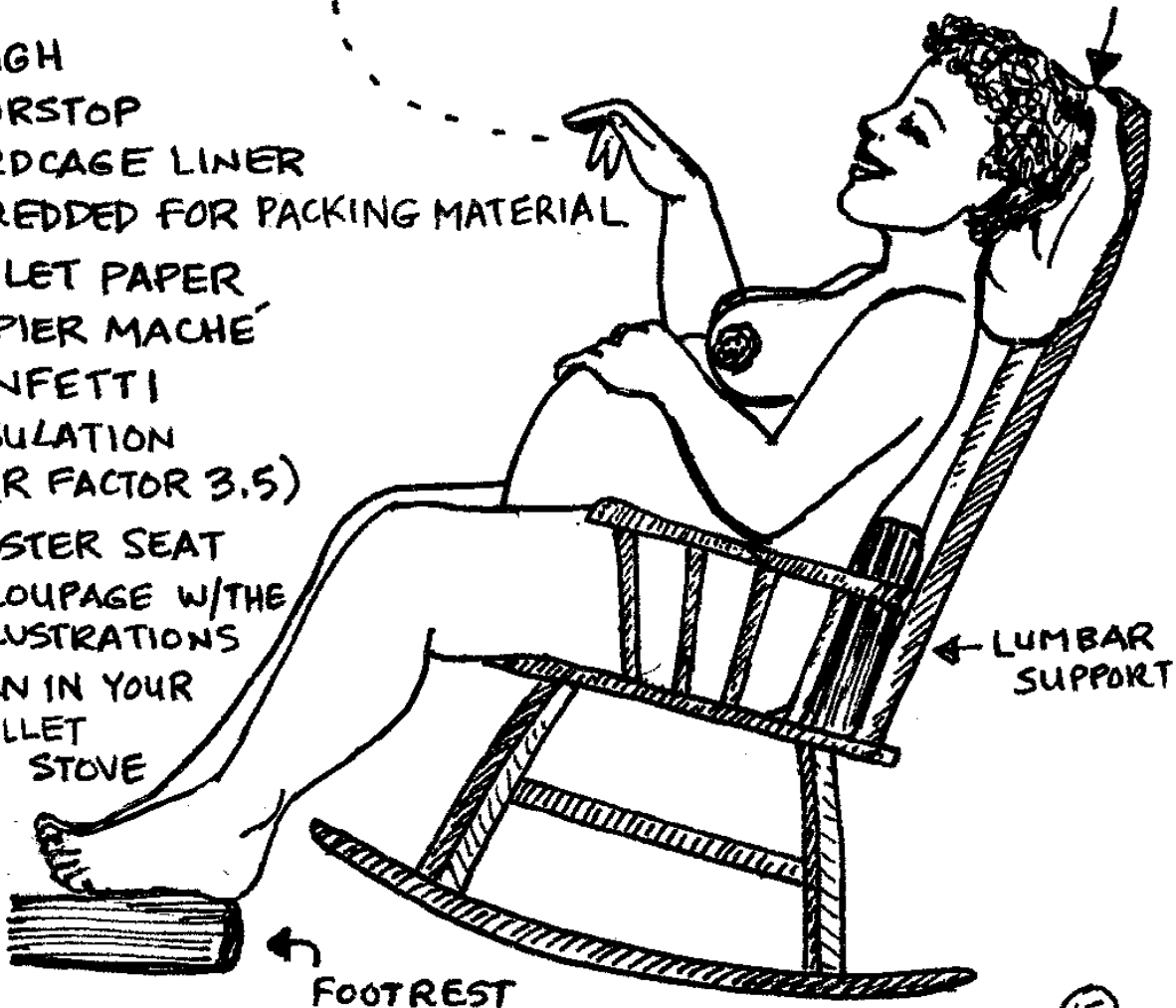
# WHAT TO DO WITH WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING

- LAUGH
- DOORSTOP
- BIRDCAGE LINER
- SHREDDED FOR PACKING MATERIAL
- TOILET PAPER
- PAPIER MACHE
- CONFETTI
- INSULATION  
(R FACTOR 3.5)
- BOOSTER SEAT
- DECOUPAGE W/THE  
ILLUSTRATIONS
- BURN IN YOUR  
PELLET  
STOVE



PAPER  
AIRPLANES

SHREDDED  
FOR PILLOW  
STUFFING



LUMBAR  
SUPPORT

FOOTREST

## SUGGESTION BOX

What to read when you're expecting ... & more!  
So, you're pregnant, and you go to your OB or possibly your CNM and they give you your complimentary copy of What To Expect.. please see my informational page for what to do with it. Then, get thee to a bookstore OR online and get these worthwhile, accurate, and informative REAL books:

GENTLE BIRTH CHOICES by Barbara Harper. This lovely book addresses & dispells many medical myths about childbirth - without making anyone feel stupid - as well as a great look at the 'Gentle Revolution' in childbirth. Also talks in depth about waterbirth (Barbara runs [Waterbirth.org](http://Waterbirth.org) a.k.a. Global Maternal/Child Health, an organization that provides resources for women desiring gentle births as well as birth pool rentals.) A wonderful book in a loving voice.

CHILDBIRTH WISDOM by Judith Goldsmith. A detailed but reader-friendly look at pregnancy, birth, and postpartum in tribal and traditional countries. Fascinating & affirming. Kate Haas of Miranda & her hubby loved this book, as do I.

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH by Sheila Kitzinger. Sheila's books are a fabulous read - like a chat with a sassy, hip granny. She totally lays it on the table about everything and this book is my #1 Recommendation to my clients. Truly, everything you need or want to know.

Other books I recommend (but don't have room to review)

THE MIDWIFE'S PREGNANCY & CHILDBIRTH BOOK by Marion McCartney, CNM & Antonia Vander Meer. Full of great info.

DR. MIRIAM STOPPARD'S PREGNANCY & BIRTH BOOK - great!

THE THINKING WOMAN'S GUIDE TO A BETTER BIRTH by Henci Goer & illustrated by yours truly. Smart and essential.

## SUGGESTION BOX

from me to you - ♥

zines...zines...zines. I made one, and found a lot...who knew? I've been having a blast reading other people's stuff...especially other mamas. Here are some - but not all - of my faves:

**WAITING FOR SLEEP:** Cathy has put out 3 issues and so far they have all made me laugh out loud or shake my head in empathy. She's a young mom (younger than me, anyway!) with a daughter the same age as Zuzu. The first two issues are a little rough & ramby, but still sing true... #3 is my favorite. Great ponderings on life with a toddler... "What naptime means to me" and of course the sleep-deprivation lament. I know it's cliché but hearing that even 20 year old moms feel like zombies makes this 36-year-old mama feel better! #1 stamps or trade to Born to Lose Press, 409 Water St., Jackson, CA 95642

**ESPERANZA:** I started reading this zine and didn't stop 'til the last page. Jackie has twin girls and writes beautifully about motherhood, twins, pizza, and guilt! Her partner is Puerto Rican, and there's a great section on Spanish words you may not know, some sweet poems to her girls, and what I can only call a prayer, part of which says: "Sometimes all that keeps me from drowning is knowing that thousands of women are staying afloat all around me, and that power and strength get me through another day. But then I think surely they are all handling it better than I am." Yes, yes, yes, sister, I know what you mean, exactly! Esperanza Zine, 441 W. 24th St., Baltimore, MD 21211. Send a couple bucks or a trade.

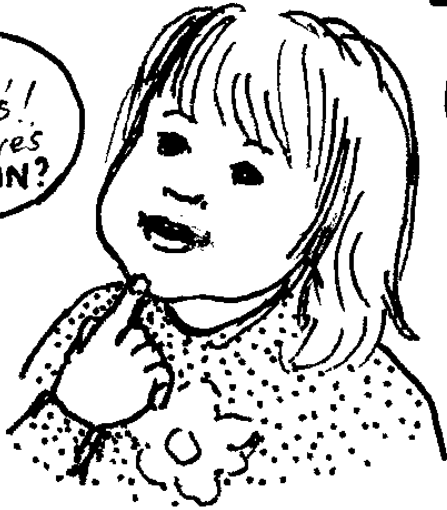
**HAUSFRAU:** This is a great compilation zine with poems & essays, recipes & pix of cute babies. My favorites are "To My Nursling" by Lee.. "Just because I am changing my shirt does not mean you automatically need to nurse" "Tabasco Baby" by Kate Haas (Miranda) & more. Lots of adverts, though - I wished there was more stuff! Hausfrau, \$2, P.O. Box 484, Hoboken, NJ 07030

There are more great mama-zines out there, I'll be reviewing more favorites next issue. Till then....

# Anatomy Lessons

*the essential guide  
as per Zuzu ...*

Hey Doug,  
watch this!  
Zuzu, where's  
your **CHIN**?



Where's  
Uncle Doug's  
**KNEE**?



Where's  
your  
**ELBOW**?  
(This is  
a new one)



? elbow,  
elbow....  
I know this  
one...



(Uncle Doug's Long  
beautiful hair depicted  
at his request)



# THINGS YOU THINK YOU'LL<sup>19</sup> NEVER BUY

- a guide for new parents -

So, Randy & I, like many of the starry-eyed pregnant couples we knew, had very definite ideas of what we would NEVER DO or NEVER BUY. We were going to be the kind of parents our poor ignorant parents were not - enlightened. Modern.

HA.

Here is a list of things we swore we would never use. It is also a list of things we went out & bought. Then we sheepishly admitted to our friends that we had indeed caved - and they would then say "US TOO!!" and we would all commiserate in relief!



BINKIES

WE WERE DETERMINED NOT TO HAVE A THREE-YEAR-OLD WITH A PACIFIER, SO FOR MONTHS RANDY WOULD PATIENTLY LET ZUZU SUCK HIS PINKY -

FOR HOURS!! IN DESPERATION, WE BOUGHT BINKIES. ZUZU THOUGHT THEY WERE VERY INTERESTING TOYS.



A BABY SWING  
UNTIL WE TRIED IT AT A FRIENDS' AND ZUZU WAS CONTENT FOR TWENTY MINUTES!

WE RACED OVER TO BABIES-R-US AT 8:30PM

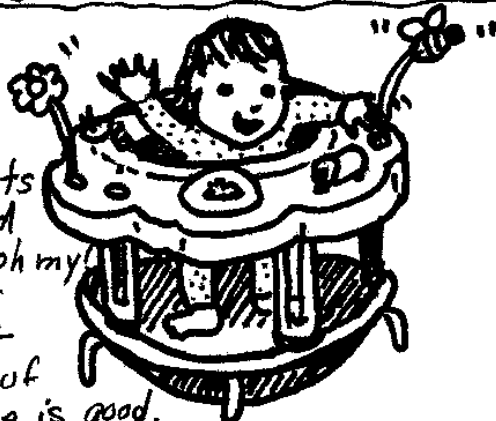
TO GET ONE AND THANK GOD WE DID!! MOMMY GOT A HALF-HOUR FREE EVERY DAY!! WHOO-HOO!



(20)

## THINGS YOU'LL NEVER BUY... HA HA HA.

THE EXERSAUCE... now if there was ever an item we VOWED never to buy, this was it. Plastic & lights and noise and doo-dads and a bouncy seat that spins... oh my! This pricey little item kept Zuzu happy for LONG LONG moments. Takes up a lot of space, but the resale value is good.



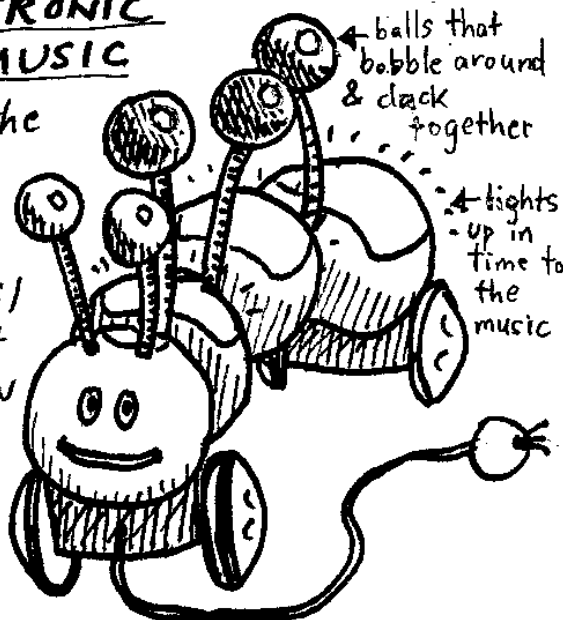
## THE EVIL CANNED BABY FOOD



OF COURSE I was going to just mush up all the good, healthy, yummy organic meals I was going to prepare so that my precious baby would only eat the very best. This idea lasted approximately two weeks into Zuzu's solid food explorations. IN FACT - Zuzu's very FIRST adult food was a wedge of pickle at the deli. 😊  
QUOTE FROM FRIEND: "YOU GAVE YOUR BABY A PICKLE? A PICKLE!?"

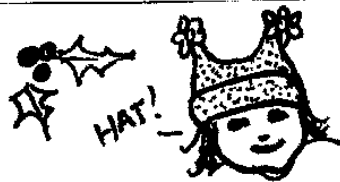
## ANYTHING THAT LIGHTS UP AND PLAYS OBNOXIOUS ELECTRONIC MUSIC

Although we knew we could not prevent the relatives from buying such items, we could certainly refrain from doing it ourselves... until I spotted this beauty at Value Village... and knew my pull-toy-obsessed child would love it. It plays three different-endurable-tunes, too!!



# It's the Holiday Season ...

I have a lot to be grateful for... starting with surviving this month!



Weekend away @ Shakti cove  
Rhon gets to try out her new early b-day present - a digital camera!

Thanksgiving!  
This year I'm so thankful to NOT be cooking the turkey and NOT having it at my house... only to get \$133.00 speeding ticket on the way there!  
The men clean up, and the TV is not turned on even once!! Geeks are so great

NOVEMBER						
					1	
3	4	5	6	7	8	
	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18			21		
	25					

Randy's 38th birthday - his big surprise was tickets to the Tom Petty concert for the next night! Cool, huh? Boy was he surprised!

Zuzu gets a tummy virus and can't keep anything down all week, Randy is in jury duty

Randy continues to make up for Rhon's barty birthday by planning a little surprise gathering... only the restaurant is closed! oops! Quickly relocated.  
Much fun... AND... Zuzu is finally well!!

Rhon's miserable 36th birthday, at home w/a sick baby all day - attempt to go out for dinner & barfed on 3x ☹️

New bed AND newly reupholstered couch delivered... bed too big to go upstairs so Randy cuts a bigger door!

Randy saves the birthday by taking Rhon to pick out a new bed! No more aching back!

Client K's baby girl born - great waterbirth. Home in time for bedtime!

And now we move on into December...

Happy Holidays Everyone!!

## "Down to the Coffee Shop..."

Since Zuzu was a wee pinch, a teeny smünch, we have been going down to Wholesome Blends, at the NE corner of NE 46 and Sandy. While she was in utero mama had decaf or smoothies or a big hot chocolate w/daddy... then once she was out she got to hang out with the coffee-shop regulars.



Things are different now, though.

Now, little miss Smoochie-Bottom has an agenda of her own: "OSH!" Yes, that's right. The first person that Zuzu identifies by name is our lovable-in-a-curmudgeon-sort-of-way barista, Josh. For whatever reason, Josh inspires our little Zuzu to go eagerly, and often pants-less, to our front door EVERY morning, pointing out the door, "osh!osh!" Of course when we actually get there, she plays the shy and coy vixen, turning her face away when he says hello. What a flirt! I applaud her choice, heartily, as Osh is a very hip, very smart & well-read man, with a heart of gold-and NOBODY makes a better or more beautifully-topped white chocolate mocha than our friend Osh. BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE-

"We're never gonna stop..."

Not only is Osh one of Zuzu's favorite people, he is also a very talented photographer - and his speciality is naked pregnant ladies! How awesome is that!? (Although I'm sure Osh would rather call them "nudes") At any rate his photographs are beautiful and can be checked out at [www.quixoticimages.com](http://www.quixoticimages.com).. Plus he is a wealth of information on all kinds of stuff.

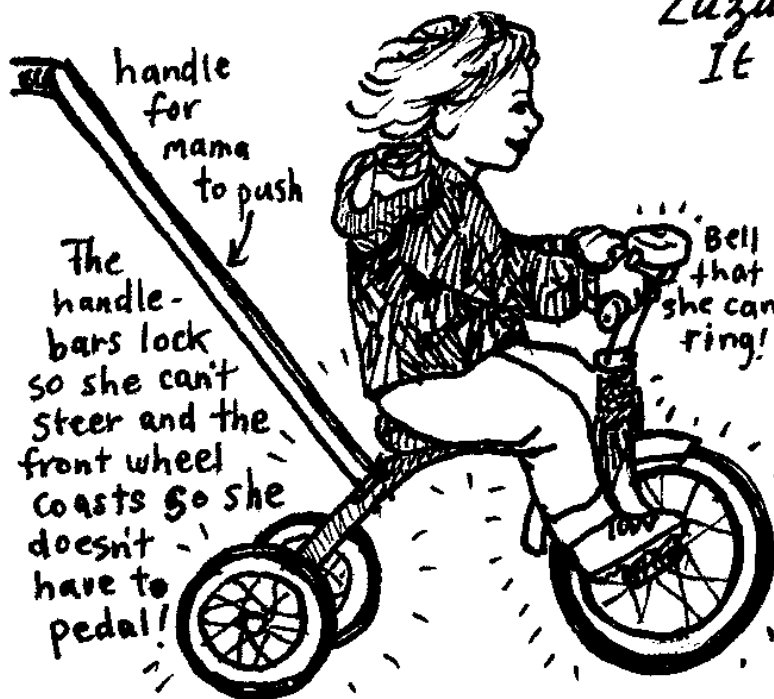
But I digress. My actual point of the story is that my teeny smünch has a NEW way to get to the coffee shop. She has a brand new shiny red Radio Flyer tri-cycle! She doesn't know how to steer or pedal - but - she doesn't have to! My bike-obsessed child finally has a bike of her own. So, every day we go for a "bah-rah" and mama pushes her and sings this song (to the tune of 'lets go fly a kite')

; Ahem :

"Zuzu's got a bike  
It is a brand-new trike

Zuzu's got a bike  
and it is shiny  
Down to the  
coffee shop  
we're never  
gonna stop  
Zuzu's riding  
her bike!!"

(Repeat..repeat)



handle  
for  
mama  
to push

The  
handle-  
bars lock  
so she can't  
steer and the  
front wheel  
coasts so she  
doesn't  
have to  
pedal!

Bell  
that  
she can  
ring!

# SHAKTI COVE - and the - OBJECT of MYSTERY

As a join birthday present, Randy & I (and Zuzu) took off to the breathtaking coast for a 3-Night getaway... Yippee! We stayed at Shakti Cove, a great little set of cabins set around a big circle of grass and trees and just a few dune-blocks from the Pacific Ocean. It was sublime. First of all, Long Beach, Washington is this great little touristy play-town, with go-carts and rides and arcades and kite shops and the world famous Marsh's Free Museum, home of Jake the Alligator man! Randy has been going there since his boyhood, so we are very happy and sappy about revisiting places of his youth. ANYWAY despite it being Nov. 5, it was clear and sunny and warm the entire trip. Zuzu had not been to the ocean since our summer camping trip, and she was very impressed with the giant 'bath!'



Shakti Cove Cottages  
Ocean Park, WA  
360-665-4000

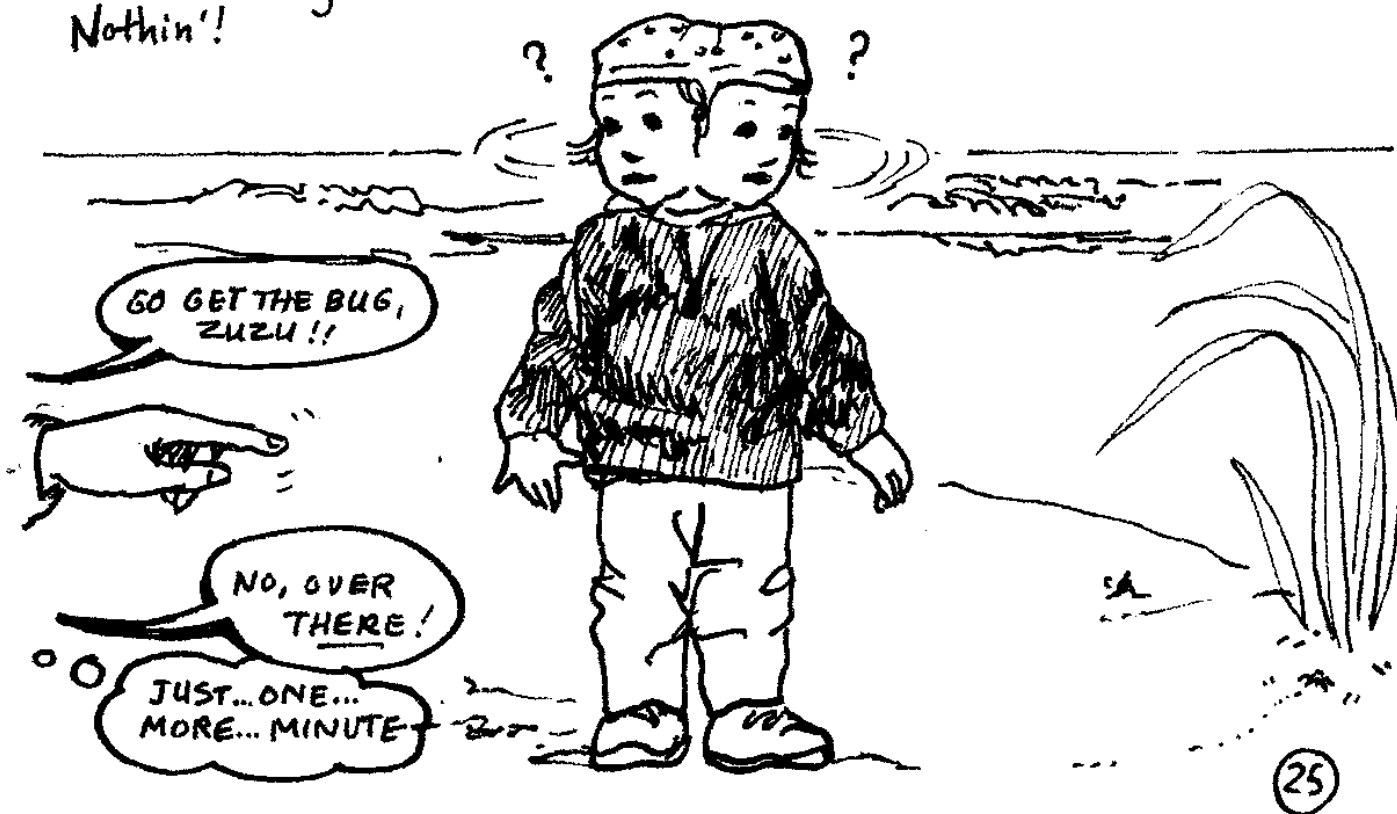
So, we romped & played on the beach... Zuzu ran right toward the water and would have run right on in if we hadn't made the ages-old game of running away from the encroaching tide! Born in the water, she seems to feel very comfortable with the element. Mommy taught her how to crunch crab shells underfoot, and Daddy taught Sandcastle 101.

There was all KINDS of interesting stuff on the beach...

Zuzu became adept at spotting crab shells, which she would flip over, back side up, and crunch like an expert... and then there were the bubbles that came up when a wave went back to the ocean, those are great places to stick your fingers!

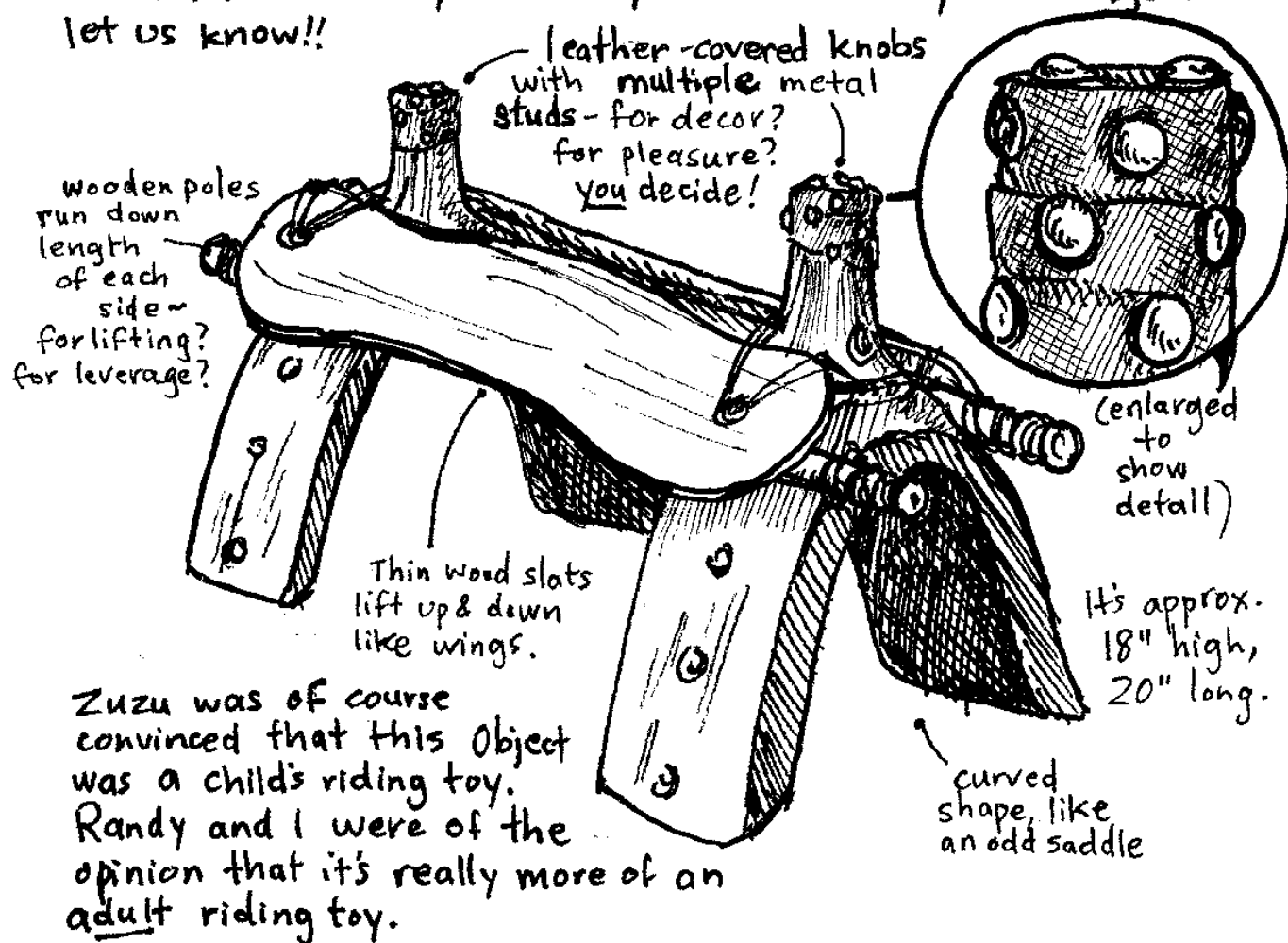
Of course there were flocks of fast-flying birds and the big slow seagulls, a few herons, and then the giant dead thing on the shore being pecked at by the scavengers - was it once a large fish, or a small seal? Couldn't tell. Pretty gory.

I actually got to do something I'd never ever done before: boink on the beach!! Quite a trick; under a blanket, trying to keep Zuzu entertained by sending her off to get the bugs crawling "over there!", while at the same time trying not to make too much commotion lest she decide she needed to come and sit on us. It was a very worthwhile endeavor... what can compare to making love on a deserted beach, under the sun, under a blankie, with your 18-month-old running around? Nothin'!



We ate, we walked, we shopped - oh did we shop! We found a toy store selling imitation Brio train track pieces for about a buck apiece! If you've ever bought any Brio, you know you can spend twenty bucks on three pieces of track... well, we spent \$50 and came away with forty pieces of track, trains, and a cool swing bridge to boot! Whoo-hoo! (Woodentracks.com has the same great stuff, great prices!)

The strangest part of our trip, though, was the discovery of the Object of Mystery... mentioned laughingly in the 'cabin journals' as the 'play toy under the TV table' Hmm... we immediately located the item and were absolutely stumped. What IS it? Is it a footstool? Is it a sex toy? Is it a small saddle? Please... anyone... if you can identify this object... let us know!!



It's probably just a footstool from Tanzania... but still...

# HYPOTHYROID

E  
L  
L

So, it's three months after Zuzu's birth - a time of bliss, of the newborn unfolding to extrauterine life, of really beginning to enjoy your baby. The air was crisp, the leaves were turning, and I had a gorgeous baby and a loving wonderful husband... and I was miserable. I was out of my mind with exhaustion - I could barely function enough to get through the day. I couldn't concentrate, daily life was overwhelming. I had no appetite, yet I was gaining weight despite breastfeeding every few hours and exercising. To top it all off I started having massive coughing attacks - like I was choking on egg white - all the time. I couldn't stand up, lie down, go outside, go inside, laugh or cry without coughing. I coughed until I wet my pants; until I vomited. I became frighteningly depressed. Randy and I were fighting all the time. It was bad. We tried everything we knew: elimination diet, air purifiers, supplements. I finally went to an allergist who discovered I wasn't allergic to anything, nor did I respond to their breathing treatment. In tears, I described my symptoms to her, telling her everything from my dry, coarse hair to my brittle fingernails to the fact that I had no libido anymore and it seemed my immune system had gone haywire. A coughing attack started as I wept, and she observed me for a moment, then looked at me closer and said "Did you know you have a goiter?"

A goiter? I got up and looked in the mirror... oh my god. My neck was grotesquely swollen... how had we not noticed? She immediately ordered thyroid tests.

Thyroid hormone regulates body metabolism, and has its fingers in just about every pie of body function. Normally the pituitary puts out TSH - Thyroid Stimulating Hormone, telling the thyroid how much it needs to make. TSH levels in a normal woman are anywhere from 0.6 - 5.5. If the thyroid gland doesn't respond, the TSH level goes up. Mine was 169. My thyroid was kaput.

When you have Hashimoto's Autoimmune Hypothyroidism - which is what it turned out to be - your body attacks the thyroid gland. The only remedy is to take thyroid hormone for the rest of your life. The allergist called me immediately, and mailed me the labs to take to my doctor. At last, I was going to get some help.'

My doctor looked at the labs and said she needed to order more. She looked at my neck and rolled her eyes about it being a "goiter". She said it was normal to be tired and depressed after a baby, and that it would get better. She sent me home with no medicine, no advice, nothing.

Two days later, I noticed to my horror that my breastmilk was beginning to dry up! I was barely producing any milk, and was getting sicker by the day. I hounded my doctor's office - first she had not signed off on the labs, then she had but was too busy to call me. Finally, on a Friday at 4:00pm, I was told "doctor wants you to see an endocrinologist".

I had been trying all week to find an endocrinologist already. None could see me before three months out. I flipped out. "My TSH was 169 a week ago, my breastmilk is drying up, and I can't get an appointment until January! What am I supposed to do!" She said "I don't know what to tell you."

I have never felt so utterly, desperately upset in my life. I called my local women's clinic, who that day became my new primary caregivers, and they told me to get to the ER.

At the ER I sobbed, handed them my labs, and waited for Randy to arrive. The ER doc was baffled at my (former) doc's ineptitude, and prescribed meds immediately. Within days my breastmilk was back to normal, and I was on my long slow journey to health.

It's been a year now, and I've experienced some serious hairloss and bad episodes of depression, but mostly I'm well.  
(28) I take medication for "asthma", though I can't vouch for it!

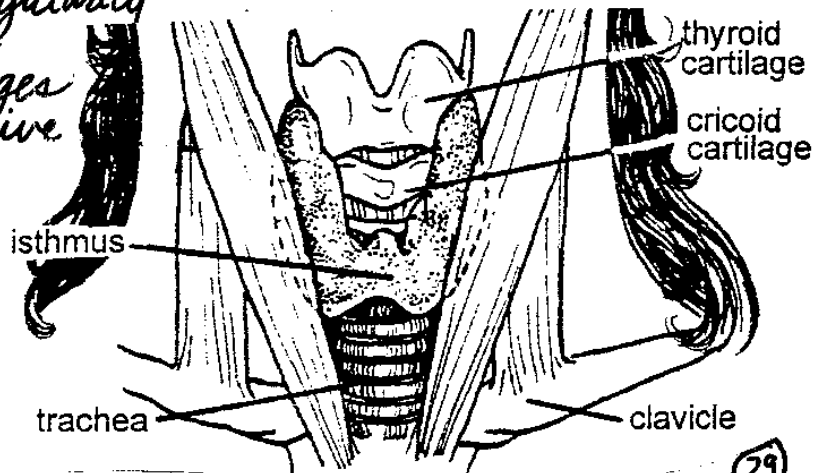
In my research about Hypothyroidism, I discovered some really alarming stuff... mainly that it is probably the most misdiagnosed ailment there is - and that it is frighteningly common. Women who are actually hypothyroid are diagnosed with depression, chronic fatigue syndrome, mineral deficiency, postpartum depression, you name it. They are put on costly anti-depressants when all they need is dirt-cheap thyroid.

**\* PLEASE-WOMEN-GET YOUR THYROID CHECKED!! \***  
Especially if you have had a baby in the past year!

Check out About.com and their "Thyroid Disease" section, for lots of great info. Be well.

**\* SYMPTOMS OF HYPOTHYROIDISM - a partial list: \***

- extreme fatigue, exhaustion
- weight gain with no cause
- loss of appetite
- unable to lose weight
- constipation
- feeling sluggish, lethargic
- hair dry, coarse, brittle
- hair breaking / falling out
- dry, scaly skin
- hoarse or gravelly voice
- puffy or swollen face
- joint pain in hands & feet
- menstrual cycle irregularity
- worsening allergies
- repeated miscarriages or unable to conceive
- moody, irritable
- brittle, splitting fingernails
- difficulty concentrating
- loss of interest in life
- depression, restlessness
- loss of libido
- forgetfulness
- longer, more frequent infections
- snoring / sleep apnea
- eyes light sensitive / dry
- swollen thyroid (neck)
- recurrent sinus infections
- vertigo or lightheadedness



THYROID GLAND  
from Holistic Midwifery Vol. I.  
by Anne Frye

# GEEK DADDY

## EPISODE IV: FOLKSY PHRASES



### IMPORTANT NOTES

- 1) The symbol "\*" denotes possible geek content.
- 2) The symbol "∴" is geek for "therefore"
- 3) The word "phrases" contains the same letters as the word "phasers". Coincidence?

### PHRASE I: "TAKING CANDY FROM A BABY"

- WHAT IT MEANS: without difficulty or effort; laughably simple.
- WHAT IT SHOULD MEAN: "You'll pull back a stump"
- Babies, like piranha, have the ability to skeletonize a cow in just two minutes\*. Babies have supernatural advantages that mimic those of other natural lifeforms as well. For example, you would expect a baby's grip to be weak, making the candy easy to take. However, candy is inherently sticky, and mixed with baby saliva results in a bonding agent like that of a giant sundew\*.

- SAFETY TIP: If you have any fear of being wet and sticky, never try to take candy from a baby... and certainly do not attempt to make a baby.

## PHRASE II: "SLEEPING LIKE A BABY"

- WHAT IT MEANS: sleeping soundly, blissfully, without a care in the world.
- WHAT IT SHOULD MEAN: Gripped by a fitful insomniac binge, punctuated by vomit, wet underpants, and toothache.
- Sometimes this phrase refers to a rare period of deep sleep, complete muscle relaxation, and literally not a care in the world. This is beautiful in a baby. For an adult, this type of sleep is usually considered un-beautiful. Here is a description:

- heavily drugged
- soul-weary
- slack jaw and facial muscles
- copious drool

These two together empty the brain.  
∴ not a care in the world.

- Rejected folksy phrase: "SLEEPING LIKE A PARENT"

Except for my wife, who is angelic with or without copious drool

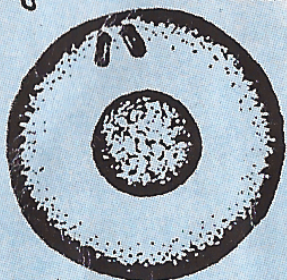
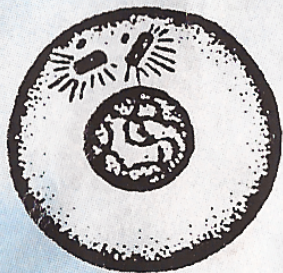
MEANING: Has no meaning; oxymoronic term; phrase would only be used in SF stories about an alien species.

NEXT TIME: GEEK DADDY SHINES THE ALDUS LAMP\* OF TRUTH ON... POWER TOOLS!

(well, maybe)

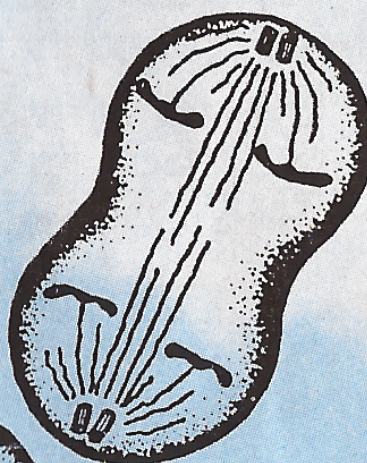
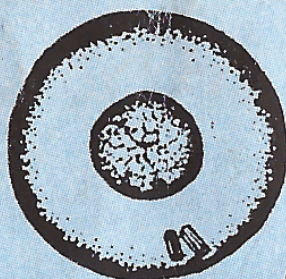
This issue is lovingly dedicated to Tricia  
and Michael. Thanks for being my  
clients and my friends!!!

did you spot  
Uncle Doug?



• midwife.  
• meets.  
• motherhood.

No.  
• 2 •



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illustration from A. Frye's Holistic Midwifery Vol. I.

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