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100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

And This Unto You

By Abigail Dotson

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My mom says I was born tense. Tense and intense. When she tells the story of how I was born, amidst the drama and gesticulation, I feel a little sad to know that I am this child she speaks of. I was taken from the womb dead asleep, a planned caesarean woken up by the foreign hands of the outside world when all I knew was the comfort of my prenatal solitude. My body froze with fright, carrying the weight, it seems, of an entire lifetime of stress at the infantile age of birth. When she speaks of the way she could hear me screaming day and night in the nursery just a few doors down, and of her helplessness in coming to my rescue, I feel the aftermath both of her helplessness and of my own. It's a feeling I can't seem to shake. When my incessant wailing finally subsided and my parents were able to hold me, as my mom goes on to tell the story, I still could not calm my nervous body, so small and fragile, a mere seven pounds carrying at least that weight in stress. She speaks of the way I would never relax, how even in sleep she would watch me and my curled toes and clenched fists. And I have this vision, this vision of my young mother's eyes, peering in on her sleeping infant the way I imagine every parent does. The way I have watched my own daughter sleepily after midnight feedings when my eyes won't close again. And I think of the way my mother must have viewed me, no more than a week of life in a tiny body but with a soul already tainted by the frightening beginnings of such a difficult world. And I think that as she watched me sleep, she must have cried for so much love...

I think she must have seen that life is hard.

I was born nearly thirty years ago to a mother younger than I am now. The child my mother birthed before me had been a c-section and thus my path was set long before I ever materialized. I was a planned c-section, as was the custom in the early seventies among women who had previous caesarean deliveries. My parents picked my birthday and planned accordingly. Their elder child was well taken care of; bags were packed and ready for the weeklong hospital stay; the house locked and pet sitters arranged. My mother was prepped for surgery and wheeled into an operating room. Conscious but sluggish, she held my father's hand as the men in green scrubs set about their work. My mother's body was sliced open to reveal a sleeping infant, jarred awake to the bright lights and cold hands of the ob ward. Their baby was whisked away to be cut and cleaned and wrapped in a blanket, then stored in the nursery with all the other luggage. This was in direct contrast to their plan of holding a wriggling and greasy newborn before the cord was even severed, but beyond their control. Despite

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protestations, I was transferred immediately to the nursery where I commenced to demonstrate my clearly healthy lungs with screams that began the moment I was born and lasted for days, until I was finally reunited with my mother.

There is a silver lining to the story of my birth, and that is the story of Ruby Jane's birth. My mother gave birth four times before I felt my first contraction, and each time was a lesson to me. So this becomes the story of two births, a story to say how one birth grows out of another. For a quarter century I had heard my mother tell the story of my birth, cold and surgical. I had listened to her recount my days in the nursery, her heroic attempts to drag her broken body across the maternity ward and lift me from my screams. I ache to think of a mother so far from her baby. I do not remember, but I feel it in my gut. And in the collective consciousness that is me and my mother, I learned to help my baby into this world with kindness and warmth.

Abigail Is 29 years old and lives in Southern California with her daughter Ruby Jane. Her writing has appeared in *Loving Mama: Essays on Natural Childbirth and Parenting*, on *Mothering* magazine's website and also in the periodical *Growing Up In Santa Cruz*.

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