

dear baby,

ginger

#2



SKULDT CORY  
MOUNT AUBURN HOSPITAL  
IM#45

345095

MAY-06-03 10:16:25 AM  
GA(EDD)=26W4D 12cm 348c  
KMS OB-2/3  
FROZEN  
46G  
72DR  
E2 MC\* A2

65



TIS<0.4 MI<0.4 AO=69%

dear baby,

you've been so many places and you haven't even been out of the womb yet. we're in portland oregon, in some swank italian restaurant getting some swank chocolate desert. sorry if the sugar and caffeine damage your brain. i hope i've given you enough salad and whole grains today to balance it out. we walked along the beach today with your uncle and grandpa and took pictures in front of the worlds largest sitka spruce. you kick a lot on car rides and make me pee every five minutes.

your mummy's at home painting your room. well, the room we'll store your diapers and clothes in anyway, you'll sleep in ours. at least until you're done nursing at night. I love you so much sweetheart. I held an adorable 9 month old baby at dinner tonight. I can't wait to hold your soft self, my own love. love mama

2

i am so impatient. i know i should be appreciating having so much time to myself right now, being able to just shut out the entire world, which i won't ever be able to do again really -even when i am away from my child his absence will be somewhere in my subconscious. but i already feel him here, and no desire for what came before him. This is what we do it for after all, i think. to tie ourselves down permanently to another person. i think we're often under the illusion that the other person will be tied back/ and they will, but not in the same way. i hope it saves me some heartbreak and helps me experience this fully and well -that i'm already seeing the joy of this connectedness in terms of my own tie; what i'll get to give, not what i'll get.

i wish people weren't so impressed that i'm

planning natural childbirth at home. i wish i knew a way to respond that would make it seem possible to them, rather than reinforcing their crazy idea that i am special in some way, good or bad. the knowing looks and words from already-mamas say either that i am braver/tougher/stronger than they are or that i don't know what i'm doing and i'm dumber and more naive than them. i wish there was a way to communicate the only thing different about me: what i've been allowed to see since i was a child, what i've been taught about birth, my body, patriarchy/capitalism/western medicine and the way things could be.

4  
holy shit what if there's two of them in there? i'm probably unnecessarily freaking out after my conversation with a mother of twins today, who looked at my size and said you better



get an ultrasound to make sure. but holy shit. there is a lot of movement in there. like on all different sides of my uterus at once. I've probably just got a big, healthy baby in there who's taken up break dancing. i can picture him in there, big bald alien looking fetus doing head spins on the floor of my back, his feet kicking me in a circle.

and probably that's not even what i'm freaking out about. secretly my anxiety is all about my midwife being a super flake and forgetting we had an appointment today, which in my head means i'm being totally abandoned and uncared for and no one is going to care for me through my labor. but i don't know what to do about that at three am. i can pretend to resolve my twin paranoia by window shopping for cars on the internet. ok, we are never ever getting a car, even if we could afford it. but how the hell am i gonna

carry two little babies on a bike? or two big kids? how am i gonna fit a double wide stroller through the door on the bus? and once two babies latch on, will i ever see my breasts again? these are the things i feel more comfortable freaking out about right now.

(p.s. i had an ultrasound a few days later and got to take home the cutest picture of my ONE big baby. phew.)

pouring rain and cold all week. i'm so so tired. it's good to get out of the house though, and good to have a little time to myself after an intense week of smash's mother visiting. i'm wanting to be alone and at the same time lonely for the baby. what is your name baby? the top of our list at this moment: riveter. svein. cedar. felix. i'm writing in a noisy cafe right now and i'm so distracted by the annoying cell phone

talker on my left and the adorable shrieking baby on my right. i'm so in love the the two month old baby i get paid to take care of that i don't even mind the huge white spit up stain across my black shirt. i'm so in love the three months-to-go baby inside that i almost don't mind the painful tickling foot in my ribcage. almost.

i used to be able to ~~ri~~ write. now i can't even remember what letter write starts with. what's happened to my brain? my body is inspired though, by all the birth stories i've been reading in "ina may's guide to childbirth" feeling ready and right. strong and flexible, made to give birth. i do have fears, of course, of pain, tearing, exhaustion, of something wrong with the baby. but the fears don't get in the way of the joy joy joy in anticipation of it. and of the faith i have in my body. i'm



practicing lots, visualizing relaxing opening, learning to picture my cervix softening and thinning, bones shifting, cunt stretching. yeah.

i don't know if it's too much sugar, or melancholy music, or just the crazy hormonal swings going on. i feel sad and so heavy today. worn down and scattered. i feel so taken over, possessed by this sweet energetic baby. i don't understand how we're both supposed to fit in this one body for the next seven weeks or so. it seems impossible. feels like all the space between my legs and head is taken up by him and i don't understand how i'm supposed to do all the things that normally go on in that part of my body -digest, breath, pump blood, whatever else goes on in there. complaining doesn't help but i do it anyway. and then i feel ungrateful and unworthy of all the help i get, and of this

perfect baby.

it's gray and gloomy and nothing's in bloom now that the lilacs and forsythia and cherry blossoms are gone. the cherries and raspberries are little, hard and green, they'll never ripen through all these clouds. jeez i'm gray and gloomy too. is it possible to get postpartum depression ahead of time? i've hit every other stage of this pregnancy ahead of schedule.

the baby is sitting so low that when he squirms and punches while i'm sitting down i can feel the movement in my thighs. like there's a baby sitting in my lap. or rather, doing a headstand in my lap, since he's in a nice head down position.

smash this morning talking about feeling in emotional limbo. like it's all about

anticipation now. that she thinks the birth of our baby is going to be a super emotional breaking through type of event for her, and she feels kind of 'on hold', emotionally, just waiting for it. she asked me how i was feeling. i looked around inside my head for a minute and then said 'i don't know'. i have now idea how i'm feeling. better check into that. she pointed out that for me probably the in the moment being uncomfortable takes up a lot of my awareness; i don't have the physical distance to ponder the big event cause i'm feeling so much the gradual uncomfortable process of the baby's and my bodies getting closer to it. it feels like something that's happening all the time, rather than a one time event that going to suddenly pop a new family member into my life -which it's more like for smash. for me, he's here already, we've been developing our relationship for 9

months already, his birth will be a new level of that relationship but also a new distance, not a first meeting like it is for smash. and while i'm sure it'll be a big deal when labor actually starts, the physical changes that result in him moving from inside me to out feel like a gradual process too, that's been happening for a while - his head moving deeper and deeper into my pelvis, my cunt turning strange colors and feeling like a whole different shape than it used to be, my cervix very very slightly beginning to dilate...

i'm having lots of little braxton hicks contractions now, which are not as painless as everyone says. not super painful, but a little twinge that definitely does hurt.

i wish i could know what i'm gonna feel like during labor. i have 2, maybe 3 wonderful

friends that are planning on being there, in addition to smash and my midwives. i am super grateful for that, and feel like i don't have to worry about not having enough support. but as the time gets closer i start to wonder if i might actually feel really private -throughout labor or maybe just during the actual birth. and maybe not want anyone besides amanda there, and the midwives when necessary. but i really don't know, and i definitely don't want ot reject help and support that's offered and then wish i had it. and while i think they'll be completely understanding of my changing feelings during labor, i worry that i won't feel articulate enough to express what i want, or that i won't express it because i'm worried about them feeling hurt of rejected. this is pretty silly on my part, and i really need to get over it, but i worry that if i have them around and

helping me during what will probably be a long and tiring labor and then kick them out before the actual birth that i'll be sort of ripping them off. like i can't take their help if i'm not gonna give the the big reward of actually seeing the baby be born. i should just talk to them about this stuff so i can let all this unnecessary anxiety go. and while i know that every pregnant mama must have *some* anxiety about giving birth, i really don't need to. i've got great friends, a super competent calm midwife, a safe and comfy home to give birth in, and a love/co-parent that i have total confidence in. and i was lucky enough to be exposed to real, natural happy births as a young kid, rather than the scary fake crap in movies and tv. i do have my little fears and anxieties, but i am also mostly just so totally fucking excited to finally have this life altering experience of



giving birth and so so so already in love with the baby i have forever and ever afterwards.

ok, there must be other things going on in my life besides waiting impatiently for this baby to be born. i just don't know what to do with myself without him here, don't know how to got through my mornings the way i have been my whole life when i feel so strongly that my day should begin by waking up too early to change his wet diaper, sitting up groggy in bed to nurse him. putting on whatever bra and dress i find on the floor, tucking him into his baby sling so we can go to the kitchen and make breakfast. i am too far ahead in my head; up at an inch of snow on the ground outside, his 4 month old self cozy in a cute hat, wrapped against my chest or cradled in smash's lap while i stir apples and raisens into our oatmeal on

the stove.

but what about now? now is my warm decaf latte with my journal this morning, baby still inside me, a too low chair at the table on the porch, so that i can't rest my elbows comfortably while i write and i feel like a little kid at a grown-up table. pink lush roses blooming from across the fence of my favorite neighbor, the one who doesn't make me feel spied on or keep me talking over the fence for hours, but does always say hello, comes over to rescue me from the bee swarm that's moved in when i ask him for his expert beekeeping advice, wants to make sure i know about organic gardening when he sees me planting for the first time.

the neighbors in the back though, are another story. i wish they would go away. i know their intentions are good, but i think that they're slowly killing my dog with gifts of super low

quality pork chops and hamburgers, despite my repeated warnings that "the vet says SHE WILL DIE" if she eats anything besides her healthy food". not true, of course, at least not immediately, but i hoped it would scare them. no luck. it's also a little creepy how they know absolutely everything that ever happens in our backyard. also a little creepy when amanda came home one time to find one of them snooping around your backyard. "i saw some footprints going through our backyard and into yours [turned out to be our upstairs neighbor searching for her cat] and i thought i'd better check it out. we were worried about your privacy". worried about our privacy? seriously? then what are you doing snooping around my back yard?!!

16  
but kenneth i like. my family used to live in this house when i was little. kenneth mostly

leaves us alone but can't wait to meet the new baby cuz he remembers me when i was "the size of a big zucchini".

17  
the baby the baby but what about the right here and now with the rain finally cooling things off and the days and hours surrounding this are full with things going on besides waiting for labor to start. like running into someone who reminded me of a particularly embarrassing self a few years ago and now playing the movie in my head of every dumb thing i've ever said or done. like missing some good friends but not doing anything about it cause i so miss my solitude when that's gone. like a million things to do; phone calls and weeding and cleaning, sell my enlarger to buy a printer, make some art, some clothes, a new zine, take a shower, eat some real food, bake a birthday cake for the baby to be born.

so remember how in the last issue i was trying to figure out **how to make ginger syrup** so my homemade ginger ale would be truly homemade? turns out it's pretty obvious and simple. chop up a bunch of ginger root pretty small and put it in a saucepan. add some water. not too much. you want a ratio of 3, maybe 4 parts water to one part ginger. simmer it for a while. let it steep a while longer. you're basically making a very strong ginger tea. then add honey till it's kinda sweet. to make ginger ale, just mix about a tablespoon of the syrup with some plain selzer. it's also super yummy mixed into smoothies. thanks to dorine for showing me how to make this stuff!

**anarchist parenting** is very important to me, but i'm still figuring out what that means to me, and the things i've read haven't helped

me out a whole lot, so i'm looking for more...  
i think that parenting in a truly anti-  
authoritarian manner requires a lot more than  
just not telling your kid what to do, and that's  
basically all the advice i've found on anarchist  
parenting web sites and listserves, especially  
from the "Taking Children Seriously" folks, many  
of whom claim that their way is the \*only\* way  
to do it right. What TCS and similar  
philosophies amount to is really just that you  
should avoid excersising authority over your  
kids. That seems like kind of a cop out to me.  
like maybe it allows parents to rid themselves  
of authoritarian guilt, but it doesn't actually  
accomplish the things that are important to me.  
which are: challenge all of the forces and  
institutions that keep kids powerless -not just  
their own parents. empower kids -emotionally and



with practical skills- to resist authority wherever they encounter it. provide developmentally appropriate oppurtunities for kids to practice making decisions, both individually and collectively. integrate kids as full members of adult communities while also respecting distinct kid culture. and more i'm not thinking of right now. i'm gonna talk more about this in future issues, and about the ways that thinking and reading about child development, attachment parenting, and children's liberation, as well as the years i've spent caring for kids, have influenced the ways i think about this stuff, but i'd also really like to hear from other people -kids and adults. what does anarchist/anti-authoritarian/radical parenting mean to you? how does the way you relate to your own kids or parents support or undermine your anarachist ideals? what role does

parenting play in revolution? what role does  
revolution play in parenting. write or email me  
please, i'd love to talk to you.

21

### next issue

once upon a time my uterus contracted a lot and  
i sat in a big inflatable swimming pool in my  
livingroom for 25 hours and a midwife came over  
to hang out and then i pushed a baby out through  
my vagina and it was really fuckin cool. all the  
gushy details coming your way soon.

should i even bother to say what's next issue  
since i obviously didn't write about what i said  
i was going to last time? don't know. if you  
wanna find out, send me a buck and 2 stamps. or  
just 2 bucks if you prefer. or a trade if it's  
about parenting or bicycles or queerfemmeness.

CHUCK E CHEESE'S CHUCK E CHEESE'S CHUCK E CHEESE'S



just a few hours  
before i went into  
labor - smooching  
on the kids rides at  
chuck e cheese's

CHUCK E CHEESE'S CHUCK E CHEESE'S CHUCK E CHEESE'S

## DIY INSEMINATION

or, how to get pregnant without a guy.

when my wife and i first decided to have a baby, i started reading up on lesbo pregnancy and got discouraged fast. All of the literature out there seemed to be written by older, mainstream lesbian couples whose methods of getting pregnant involved immersing themselves in the medical industry and spending a fortune. Smash and I didn't have a fortune to spend, and while our biologically female bodies meant that we'd have to go outside our relationship for some of the ingredients, I felt strongly that we could still create a homemade baby. We eventually found a mix of mainstream and diy methods that were right for us and got me pregnant. I find that people are usually pretty curious about exactly how we did it, so we led a workshop at

the first boston skillshare to tell the story of how we chose to inseminate and share info on all the the various options we learned about. the outline we wrote up for that workshop ended up as a basic guide to getting pregnant. here is the beginning, which is all that will fit in this issue now that i've filled it up with so much crap. stay tuned for the step two in my next issue.



### **Step One: Preparing for Pregnancy**

DETOX. ok, you know you can't smoke or drink while you're pregnant, but do you know how long it takes toxins to get out of your system? a while. plus, you won't know for sure that you're pregnant until at least 2 weeks into it, so you really can't smoke (or whatever) just until you're pregnant. sorry. i had smoked since i was 13, so it was definitely a struggle for me to

quit, but obviously so so important. and once i was pregnant it became pretty easy cuz i got morning sickness so bad that even smelling smoke on somebody's clothes made me queasy. besides the 2 biggies, cigarettes and alchohol, coffee is another important thing to quit. while some people think it's not a big deal to drink some coffee later in pregnancy, it definetly increases your chance of miscarraige in the first trimester. Other things you may want to consider cutting out are artificial colors, flavors and sweeteners, non-organic meat and dairy (of course, pesticides are bad on any food, but the highest concentrations are found in animal fats), lipstick with artificial colors (quite a bit gets ingested) and some medications. it's also a good idea to stay away from paint and other chemical fumes -especially don't let anyone spray paint around you- and



chipping lead paint -found mostly in the trim and windowsills of old houses. burdock and dandelion root are two herbs that can help your body detoxify, but they should only be used \*before\* pregnancy. The most important substance your body needs to get rid of bad stuff is lots and lots and lots of water. The sooner you start this process, the better.

**NUTRITION** growing an entirely new human takes a whole lot out of you, so this is a good time to make sure you're eating as nutritious a diet as possible. Consider taking a prenatal multivitamin, and especially make sure you're getting enough folic acid.

**HEALTH CHECKUP** make sure you don't have any health problems that should be treated before you get pregnant. Look into getting free, anonymous STD testing. Some STD's are very treatable when you're not pregnant but can cause

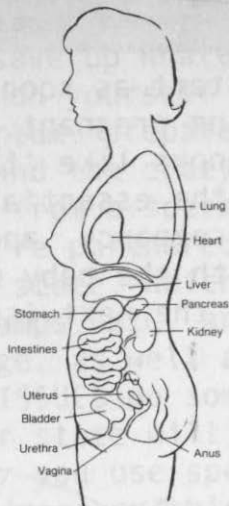
MONEY save up whatever you can to make things easier on yourself while pregnant and postpartum. prepare for increased healthcare needs and the crazy high cost of sperm if you get it from a sperm bank. Bonus for queers: even if you're partnered, you're "single" in the eyes of the state, which may help you qualify for foodstamps, WIC, and prenatal health care coverage, as well as benefits for your kid.

LEGAL ISSUES do some research about how the laws in your state will affect you depending on whether you use sperm for a known or unknown donor (more on this later on). if you're co-parenting, look into second-parent adoption. In massachusetts, this option allowed us to get full parental rights and protections for smash, even though she and i have no legal relationship to eachother.

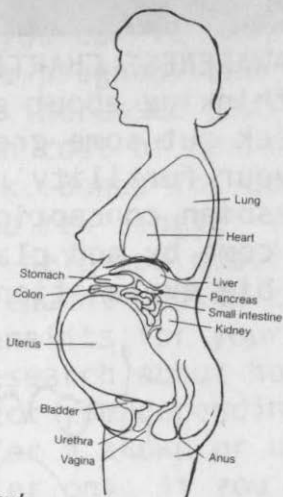
FERTILITY AWARENESS CHARTING start as soon as you start thinking about getting pregnant, or sooner! check out some great books like 'taking charge of your fertility' or 'the essential guide to lesbian conception, pregnancy, and birth'. or come by and play with the baby while i write my big explanation for the next issue.

28

Love  
Cory



*Normal position  
of woman's body organs*



*Displacement and compression of  
body organs during pregnancy*

no wonder i feel so crappy...

29

send your email address to [corys\\_kult@riseup.net](mailto:corys_kult@riseup.net)  
if you want me to let you know when new issues  
are out.

you can also get ginger through some fine  
distros.

in the us: learning to leave a paper trail  
[www. \*\*paper trail\*\* .zinetastic.com](http://www.papertrail.zinetastic.com)

in the uk: all that glitters  
<http://www.allthatglittersdistro.co.uk/>

if you wanna distro, send me \$7 for 10, postage  
paid.

30

