

## INTRA-PLACENTAL ADVENTURES OF ZIGGY & ZIGGI

### Week 28

“Are you sleeping?”

“Almost. You?”

“Nope.”

“Why not?”

“Well, I keep thinking...”

“Thinking about what?”

“Well, we should seriously think if it’s worth it, and if it is, we need to make a thorough plan. Watch out; you kicked me again with your pointy heel. Crouch down a bit.”

“I’ll try, but I go numb, and if I move the other way, I will kick her.”

“Oh, don’t you worry about that, she doesn’t feel anything anyway. She’s sleeping like a log.

“Ziggi, you believe all that?”

“Believe what?”

“You think we’re going to like it out there? Certainly, there’ll be more food, and hopefully a bit tastier. Ugh, I am starving, and I think she’ll keep sleeping for the next 10 hours. Unbelievable, the moment she finds a chair, she starts snoring like a tractor. Anyway, what she served us for dinner was pretty lame. It was a tasteless hodgepodge. I wish I inherited her lazy cat sleep, but it looks like my nervous system is always on duty.”

“Huh?”

“Did you fall asleep? Sleep tight and sweet dreams, any way you never have any worries. Keep floating in your blissful ignorance, just like her.”

“Did you say something, Ziggy?”

“No no, I didn’t...sleep tight. Watch out; you punched me again in the diaphragm! And please be careful, the doctor was telling her that it’s very likely that I will be born with a malformation on my tummy, something like a tiny bubble...”

“Ziggy?”

“Yo?”

“What do you think we could do there?”

“Ziggi darling, aren’t you tired anymore? What do you think we’d be doing? Just as everybody else. What are you imagining? Haven’t you been listening to the news lately?”

“I can not hear very well; why, what happened?”

“What do you mean what happened? Are you just floating there all day long, oblivious to everything around you, just sucking your thumb and kicking your feet? Dang Ziggi, I will be frank with you: I am not convinced at all to go out there. Ouch, tuck your knees in!”

“Sorry!”

“Do you realize that these folks have already signed us up for kindergarten? We are on the waiting list for Waldorf. Unbelievable, They signed us up for three foreign languages, piano, ballet, IT, gymnastics and knitting. And by the way, this evening they checked some more names off the baptism list; supposedly, the final voting is coming soon: the Godfather, Mother & Dad have to choose between Marianne, Elisabeth & Victoria. Do you want to be called Marianne? Or Victoria? You don’t get anything about what’s going on? They plan to dress us the same way because that’s how parents are showing off when they have twins. She says she wants to make us prima ballerinas! Ouch, my tummy hurts, stop kicking, Ziggi!”

“I don’t have anything against being a ballerina; it’s very romantic. What’s wrong with the fact that they’re thinking of us?” says Ziggi with a big happy smile.

“Well, you’re just saying that, but you have no idea what gravity is. Even more, they plan to send us to a boarding school for girls when we turn 14, somewhere near London, in Brighton. And, of course, we’ll both be given an identical bob haircut when we go to kindergarten. You can’t see at all how our lives are being set up??? You don’t understand anything, embryo!”

“Embryo, what’s that?” asks Ziggi puzzled.

“Nothing, stick your finger in your mouth and keep floating. And don’t forget to say your prayer.”

## **Week 29**

“Ziggy, wake up! What happened, can you feel that too?”

“Hey, calm down young lady! What’s up?”

“Ouch, Somebody is pulling my hair, ouch, my leg! Where are we, Ziggy?”

“Where do you think we are?! Visiting with that expensive doctor. He’s twirling us all over. Hold my hand, and you’ll be fine. Shush, stop whining and let’s hear what he’s saying! All right, that was it. It was quicker this time.”

“Did you see that picture, Ziggy?”

“Yup, and you are certainly prettier than me; your features are way more feminine. While my face is bloated and red, you already have that delicate features of a prima ballerina. Let’s do some gymnastics now, and I am getting numb. Did you hear that? We still have three months left in here, and then it’s possible to be pulled out with the forceps.”

“Why with the forceps? Because we’re fat?”

“Oh white swan, you’d rather listen to them talking, it has nothing to do with your fat or your pretty head. It’s because of the way we’re floating.”

“Did you hear that mummy & daddy closed the company?”

“Stop with this nonsense. We have other things to focus on and some big decisions to make! Listen to these folks talking: supposedly I am more developed than you!”

“And what does that mean?” implores Ziggi. “Will they pull us apart?”

“Nooo, that means you should stop asking all these stupid questions and sleep more, so you catch up with me. Now shush, quiet!”

## **Week 30**

“Ziggy, any idea what mommy looks like?”

“Hmm...dad keeps telling her she’s beautiful, but I am not sure about that. Supposedly she has long, reddish curly hair, a long neck like a giraffe and flushed cheeks. I think she’s fat and she whines all day long, eats all kind of gross stuff and then sleeps some more. I am not sure that she particularly inspires me. I don’t like the music she’s listening to, and I don’t like her gossipy friends and their cheesy dialogues, nor the movies she’s watching. But on the other hand,” Ziggy pauses and takes a deep breath, “our father is indeed fascinating! He’s always listening to good music and reading all kinds of interesting things. And you should listen to the way he talks...”

“I love Mom,” adds Ziggi impatiently, “I am delighted when she talks to us. Did you hear her yesterday? She said: ‘my girls, your room is ready for you; you will have a happy childhood, you’ll never miss anything.’”

“And what do you find so amazing about getting a room?” snaps Ziggy rolling her eyes condescendingly. “I don’t want any pink princess room, filled with silly stuffies, princesses and unicorns. I don’t want my name to be Marianne or Suzanne. I am Ziggy, and I have no idea if I want to go out there! I am good here as I am. All the neurotics will be hanging out with us, and they will pinch our cheeks and pull our legs to straighten them. We’ll be dressed in pink starched dresses, and told how to welcome and smile to the crowd of phoney guests who came from far and wide to meet the twin girls. This is when our therapy will need to start. Don’t you have any clue? I don’t want to be a ballerina, nor do I want to play the piano or go to boarding school!

“I can’t wait for all that to happen. It’s going to be a beautiful journey, our adventure!” says Ziggi excited.

“What adventure?” cries Ziggy distressed. “The adventure will be over by then. Ouch, stop digging your feet in my belly! I certainly hope I’m not going to fit in those pink tutus. By the way, did you see our same baptism dresses? Anyway, it looks like you’ll stay in a bit longer than me in here, so you’d better gather your patience.”

“But what about him, Ziggy?”

“Oh, he’s different than her. He’s gentle, witty, charming,” Ziggy whispers. “Supposedly he is a philosophy teacher. He does love her. Sometimes he gets a bit annoyed by her pathetic never-ending whining, but he gets over it fairly quickly. Have you listened to the sonata he played this morning? I almost fell in love with him. That was so romantic!”

“I haven’t heard anything...I guess I was sleeping.”

“Of course you were, embryo,” Ziggy rolls her eyes again. “He was slowly humming and murmuring all kind of beautiful things. I wish I could talk just like him. He’s supposedly working on his latest novel, and I hope I can read it one day. Certainly, all those ideas and plans for our future do not belong to him. I can’t understand how he, a superior human, got involved with her - just a simple clerk whose only ambition is to see us starched from head to toe. He never argues with her; on the contrary, he’s worshipping her. Every morning he brings her a white rose and dances with her. But you know, I’ve never heard him talking about us...”

“Ziggy, why is mother crying so much?”

“I would rather not tell you...”

“Please tell me, please!”

“You see, I’ve heard him saying a while ago, that this is not a place where one should bring children

“What do you mean?” asks Ziggi hesitantly. “He doesn’t want us? He doesn’t love us?”

“Uh-oh, it’s not about that. Do you see? Things are not as pink and starched as our dresses in the cupboard. Anyway, let’s do some stretching. Grab my leg and pull it, I think I just got a cramp. Yippee, I can smell oven potatoes with Rosemary! Yahoo, dinner is almost here!

“Ziggy, who is Santa Claus?”

“Where did you hear about Santa?”

“I heard mom talking on the phone with her friend Violet. They were saying Santa’s coming and then they started giggling.”

“Holy Smokes!” shouts Ziggy annoyed, “you only listen to these kinds of conversations?!

Hurry,, get closer to that tube. I think there's something coming down; some remnants of those potatoes with Rosemary. Yuck, can you smell the garlic? You like that, Ziggi?

Where’s that nice Rosemary? I can’t smell it any longer. You know what, I think we should make her aware that we can’t eat whatever she gives us, and that we have some expectations, right?”

“And how do you suggest we do that?” asks Ziggi confused.

“Listen, every time something nasty comes down the tube, we should kick three times counter clockwise, and when we do like something, we should kick only twice, clockwise. Not sure she will understand, but at least we can try. Ready? One, two, kick Ziggi!”

”Whaaat, how could I hit mom? She’ll be in pain!”

“Listen, if you don’t want to help me, I might do something else, and you might starve afterwards. Make up your mind! Are you with me or are you not?”

“And what else were you thinking of, Ziggy?”

“I will squeeze and squeeze that damn tube, and she will throw up everything. This way she might understand better.”

“You are cruel!” mutters Ziggi almost crying.

“But isn’t it crueler what is happening to us? Isn’t it crueler that our lives are already planned, organized and aligned, without even being asked what we’d wish for ourselves? We even have the fates scheduled for the baptism day. That’s too much! As if we needed another booster to become prima ballerinas. Our Astrograms are already waiting in the

bookshelf. Really???

She wants us to be born on the 1st of February, at 16.00 maximum 16.30 as she wants us to have a Virgo Ascendant, to be disciplined and hardworking.

Cmon! That is too much! Damn, did you make up your mind? I'm going to start pulling that cord RIGHT NOW!"

"Well, I am not sure..."

"God Damn it, Ziggi, all right!!" One can hear rumbles and tumbles

"What happened to us?" Ziggi cries, hyperventilating. "What is that? Everything is spinning; where are you, Ziggy?"

"I am right here. Hold me tight, and everything will be just fine!"

"I am scared. What's happening?"

"Nothing major. I think Mother is probably crouching over the toilet seat, throwing up all that god-damn garlic paste. There you are, Momma! Hope you got it this time!" cheers Ziggy giggling.

## **Week 32**

"Stop crying, Ziggi! She's Just fine; somebody had to teach her a culinary lesson. We cannot digest all this crap; on top of that, the doctor says she has IBS, but still, she's eating all the crap in the world.

"You are just so cruel, Ziggy! that hurts me."

"Really? I think you should prepare a bit for what's happening, and you'll see soon what cruelty is."

"Why do you say that? You're frightening me!"

"Zigi, listen carefully. I don't want to scare you, but you do need to assess if you want to get out there. Why do you think she's crying all day? From too much lightness & joy? From too much happiness?"

"Please stop talking, you break my heart!"

"Oh my! I am getting hungry again, I shouldn't have emptied her. It will take a while until her engine starts working again. Let's go swim, whiny embryo!"

"I don't feel like swimming. I want to be alone."

"As you wish, but you know that you wouldn't be able to make it without me: not here, nor outside."

“Why do you say that all the time? Mommy loves me, and so does dad. And everything is ready to welcome us into the big world!”

“Hmmm, I have an idea,” adds Ziggy with a sassy voice. “Why don’t we try to see “how ready” they are for us?”

“And how should we do that?”

“Well, we should just pretend we’re going out; this way we can see how ready they are for us if we like them, and take a peek of that world- see how it feels, smells & sounds.

“But don’t we need to stay here for eight more weeks as they say?” asks Ziggi puzzled

“Darn, we’ll go when we want, if we want, and where we want. No idea who invented this nine months affair! If I wish so, I can go out one year from now! You have to understand once and for all that everything is up to YOU.”

“I don’t want to upset my mommy.”

“Ziggi darling, I think you should stop being so naive when it comes to your mommy, and see how mighty she is before we commit to 60 years beside her. As I said, let’s go and take a peek! I’m telling you, I don’t like what I see and what I hear sometimes. We’ll certainly come to a proper conclusion and make an accurate decision.”

“And what do you suggest now? To kick seven times counterclockwise until she faints?”

“I was thinking clockwise this time,” answers Ziggy amused. “You know, we need to find out if we can trust her, and how she’s going to treat us. We can’t simply jump out there: it’s warm here, we can do whatever we feel, eat as much as we want, play all day, swim whenever we want and do gymnastics. We always have food ( bad, but it exists), nobody’s telling us what to do, nobody makes us cry and so on. Who’s guaranteeing you that we’ll have the same privileges out there? Who? Your mighty Mommy who’s crying all day long?”

“You’re right in a way, I never thought about all these,” whispers Ziggi confused.

“No, you didn’t, because you have me here to think and act upon everything. This is how we’ll do it: Tomorrow morning after we wake up and have breakfast (which hopefully will be tastier), and after we finish stretching and swimming, you’ll push against my legs with your whole strength; on my end, I will swim towards the destination without stopping. Keep pushing me no matter what, promise?” Ziggy shrugs. “Yeah, Atta Girl! As you know, our position here is a fetal one, and this bending allows her to keep us here. But if we both stretch, that will trigger the false labour, enough for us to get to the door and take a peek. After approximately 5 minutes, when I will be waving at you, drop my legs and start swimming towards me, then climb on my shoulders so you can take a look too. And I will

hold your legs, so we don't get pulled outside. Capisci? We'll recap again tomorrow before breakfast. Good night for now!"

**7 am**

**MEMORIAL Hospital**

Doctor yelling at nurses, nurses yelling at midwives, midwives yelling at everybody  
"Move over, get the surgery room ready!"

"Ziggi, don't give up, you are pushing with your whole stamina, right?"

"I am, I am, but I am getting tired!"

"Just a bit more. Ok, get ready to jump up soon. Holy Bucket! Look at this crazy chaos out there. Why the heck is everybody screaming? Listen, sweetie: there's a big gathering of neurotics out there. They're going to burst my eardrums soon if they don't stop yelling at each other. Calm down, you freaks! I guess dad was right: they're all a bunch of psychos. How do we know they're not going to yell at us the same way???"

"Hope they won't, Ziggy!"

"Darn, the women will for sure! They say women scream all the time: when they're in pain, but also when they're not. But most times they're always in some pain. Good Grief, Sis! I think they dilated your mommy, I can see straight through. There you are: one piece of a human being with a moustache, wearing a blue gown, telling your mommy to keep pushing, three wrinkly phoney ladies who run around randomly, two other elves, and then, I guess that might be our father. Oh, but he's way more delicate and distinguished than all these hysterical people. Hmm, there's something not right in this neurotic atmosphere."

"I think it's normal, Ziggy. It's a big event; they're all waiting for us!"

"Yeah, I know that I mean, there's something about this human stratosphere. They all seem to be alienated somehow."

"What does it mean? Aliens?"

"Nothing, maybe it's just me, maybe you'll see something completely different. Come over, let's switch! 1, 2, 3 C'mon, swim, don't float! I will push you, but you have to help yourself too, embryo!"

"Wow, look at all these people getting ready to welcome us, sis!" Ziggi shouts excitedly.

"Silly, they're just waiting for their cheque, not for you or me!"

"All these people seem to be nice and warm.."



“They might be all warm and feverish from all the germs and bugs going on in the hospital!” adds Ziggy exasperatedly.

“Ziggy, I don’t mean that. I mean that it looks like a good place, full of nice people who will take care of us, and a place where I am going to RIGHT NOW!”

“You what? Are you crazy?”

“Yup, I am ready!”

“No, you are not! And your lungs are not developed yet. According to what the doctor said, you should be floating here for two more weeks.”

“But Ziggy, didn’t you say that we should all be choosing our moment?”

“I did say so, indeed... Well, if you feel ready, I guess I will help you.”

“Yes, please help me. I am sick of living in a balloon where my only company is a cynical and negative sister who doesn’t love anything and anybody. I want to be with Mommy, who already loves me, and who won’t cut my wings as you do all the time. And yes, I can’t wait to wear those pretty dresses and to become a ballerina and to go to boarding school in England. Will you help me or not?”

“Sure, If that’s what you want...On the count to three, push your ballerina toes as much as can!”

“Can you be a bit nicer, at least now that we are separating?”

“I do, I am, come on, keep swimming, keep pushing! Gee, I think your head is out. But why are you screaming, Ziggi? Stop yelling, and tell your mother to stop screaming too! You two are killing me. I’m not coming, you all are too hysterical. Wishing you a pleasant journey! Let’s see what they’ll do with the cord; I am not budging!”

### **24 hours later**

OB is talking to the twins’ Mother:

“Your daughter Marianne is healthy, but unfortunately we couldn’t get her twin sister. We did explore all the medical options, but it seems we cannot bring her out. No, no, calm down, she’s alive, her vitals are perfect, but how should I say this? Every time we try to get her she's unreachable. It is inexplicable, beyond our power of understanding. I wish I could tell you more; I guess we need to have patience.”

### **Week 45**

I have to admit, I do enjoy this newly found freedom, and just being on my own. Now that my whiny sis is not here anymore, I get all this space just for myself, and I get to stretch and do aqua gym when I want, I can still even swim a bit. And needless to say, I finally have some time to think and contemplate.

Oops, there we go ladies and gentlemen, here she starts again: Scream, Boob, Poop, Repeat! Hey Sis, shush, what did we talk about before I helped you get out there? I never knew you had such a horn! My, oh, my, look at two of them: jumpin' and runnin' around in a big panic to calm down the princess. Oh wow, and here comes Grandma too! That is hilarious! Mother, get your boobie out and soothe my sister, she's struggling, can't you see??!

Hey guys, maybe this time you'll try the vacuum cleaner instead since you haven't purchased the white noise machine yet. Just look at them: two grownups who haven't slept in 2 weeks losing it over a spoiled baby. Why are you guys so scared of? She'll survive, don't worry! She doesn't need three bodyguards to keep her alive. Are you guys even aware of how silly you are?

## **Week 49**

Things are changing in here. All I can hear lately is Mother crying. Food is getting worse, out there is a bunch of PhDs exposing their hypotheses and elevated egos over my birth, I mean my non-birth. This crowd of pathetic doctors is amusing & surprising me at the same time: How many doctoral degrees does one need to understand?!

They feed me camel milk as well as other oily yucky stuff all day. My holy sister is yelling all day long as if she doesn't know that I am a light sleeper. Dad is sad and melancholic. Tomorrow is Father's Day, and the day I decide to begin my extra-placental adventure.

## ***Epilogue***

My name is Ziggy, and I was supposed to be born nine weeks ago, but I didn't want to. A big army of scientists opinionated over my destiny and pumped some more oxytocin to bring me out there. My Mother was to call me Cecilia Elisabeth and turn me into a prima ballerina, so then she'd reach out to their friends and relatives, and brag about her gifted twins who joined the Moscow Ballet School. But one of these days, I heard dad telling her a poem that made me understand life & changed my journey. Here's the poem:

“Our children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you, And though they are with you yet, they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts, For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls, For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,

which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.”

These words made the journey possible for me, and I eventually decided to be born on Father's Day. I am a Pisces with Pisces Rising, that's because I love water and I want to be a diver. When I turn 18, I will change my name back to Ziggy, and write my extra-placental memoirs.

*The End*