

Direction: Esther Grau, Diana Marre & Beatriz San Román

Documentation: Anaïs Vidal

Layout: Sofía Gaggiotti

Diffusion: Maria Galizia

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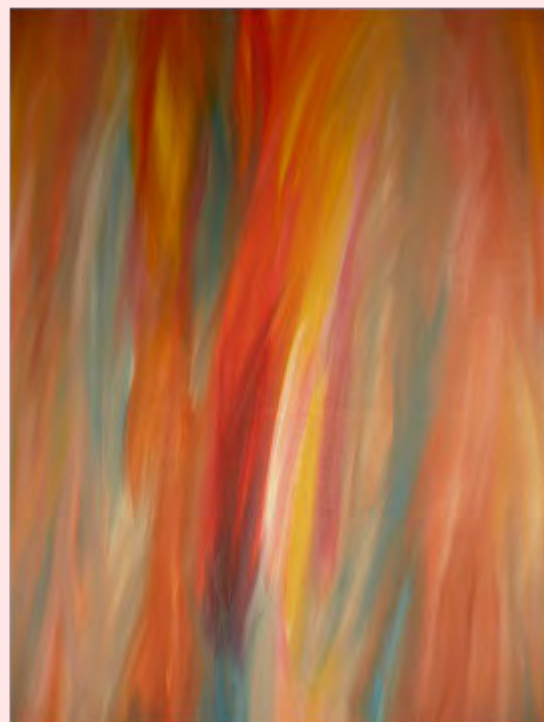
I was once the 2036

Some time ago, I became the number 2036. Everything started in 2006, when my husband and I, just married a year ago, decided to have a child. I remember we were by then on a trip to Croatia; after a year fooling around with the idea of having children, we decided to take it seriously and go for it. It was a trip full of discovering for both of us and, at the same time with some conflicts, because everyone of us started to think about how we wanted to raise this child and, the way we wanted him or her to be. Surprisingly, we discovered that we didn't agree at some points and, we even argued about something it didn't even exist. A few time later, we sorted out our differences, or maybe not, they just went away.

As the time went by, the excitement increased. I even imagined how this child would be, what clothes I would get him/her, the school he/she would go, his/her name... I even wished to get pregnant just to celebrate it in a very especial way. My husband was doing similar things, although I used to talk about it with my friends and he only shared it with me in our private life; maybe with some of his relatives, as well.

Elsa Gillari

Vibraciones angélicas



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All this time lasted about a year. After some time, I started to suspect that we could have problems. We had regular sexual relations and were young. However, I never had a hint of being pregnant. Although I thought more than once that I could be pregnant, all were false expectations. The only thing that changed is the way I was feeling my body and its changes, something I had never felt before. If I had a pain in my breast, now it would become the center of my attention during the days before my menstruation. You can't imagine the way I developed the ability of listening to myself, how and when I would ovulate, how to figure out the premenstrual pain, how to feel my changes of mood, something it had been this way since my puberty but never analyzed that way before.

The way I was feeling my body was incredible; I had everything under control. The issue got complicated and after that year, every time I had the menstruation I cried without really knowing why. The more time it passed by, the more I wanted to get pregnant. So, after a year I decided to visit my gynecologist, who I hadn't seen for a long time. It was really difficult to make this decision. When I told my husband, he thought I was exaggerating and, when I said it to my girlfriends or female relatives, they all told me to relax and gave me wise advices, which helped me morally but nothing more. I think I never told any male friend; I didn't know what I could tell them.



Elsa Gillari
Hetairajji

After November 2007, my visits to the gynecologist became more than a simple check-out, since I had never had any serious problem, to a routine inspection that drove me crazy. The first time I visited a doctor I told him all this. Then, the first thing he did was a fallopian tube permeability test. On the other hand, I decided to take homeopathy in order to get my nervous system relaxed. During some time I really thought that all this was only in my mind and started to feel guilty. After checking that my fallopian tubes were permeable and getting my husband checked, the doctor prescribed hormones in order to get pregnant; I had to take those pills during four months.

The hormonal treatment caused me more problems than gave me solutions. After four months I didn't get pregnant, I was in a very bad mood and, I worried about things that didn't even have importance. Those hormones affected my body and my mind. Plus, I had a very strong pain, almost unbearable. When I told my doctor, I got checked and the echography test made clear the presence of many cysts and a endometroma in one of my eggs. At this point, my gynecologist sent me to another specialist, since she couldn't keep treating me.



Elsa Gillari
Maternidad

The logo for AFIN is written in black, hand-painted letters on a piece of weathered, reddish-brown wood. The wood has a natural grain and some knots, giving it a rustic appearance.

Year 2008, I was really confused in my life. It was like if the fact of having children was then the only important thing and, that took up all my energy. I lost my concentration, I was not excited for anything and, my world became a baby factory, because I was seeing children everywhere. All my friends, family and neighbors decided to have children at that time and, I fed up of congratulating them all, until one day I decided to stop doing it and disappeared of their social life. Out of sight, out of mind. It was easier to live away from that world, working on my issues, studying and occupying my free time in any other thing. It was a difficult time, where I had to give false answers to the question why I could not have children, until one day I also got tired of that and I began to tell the truth; nobody asked me about the subject anymore.

That didn't helped me to feel better. On the contrary, I realized that in a world with women with children, there was not place for those who couldn't have them. That was not the only thing. The reality is that I didn't want to share anything with those women who were mothers, because I felt uncomfortable and saw myself different. The difference was so big that for a long time I didn't find my place, neither in the group with women with children, nor outside of it, because I didn't recognize that I had a problem and, the only fact of going to the doctor for this reason, drove me crazy.

It was during this period of my life when I felt things I had never experienced. I discovered the hidden world of the intimate feelings that nobody tells; of which it is better not to talk, because the only fact of pronouncing its words incites to sin. This is how I got to know what envy, jealousy, anger, rage and negation are and, I even got to desire what others had. In this way, I understood that the worse enemy is oneself. I cried for that too, because I knew that I was thinking what I should not and, my mind was fighting against my culture; I felt guilty, vulnerable and powerless.

On June 7th 2008, I was visited by the gynecologist at the Hospital Clinic de Barcelona and, I became part of the waiting list for the infertility treatments. I got the number 596 for artificial insemination and, the number 2036 for the in vitro fertilization. Feeling like a number ended up causing me a huge identity problem. Fortunately, I was with my husband that day, someone who has what I don't: optimism in difficult times and patience. At that time I was shocked and my husband asked the doctor what all this meant. The answer was that we should wait at least two years and means to make an insemination and three years for us to do IVF.

I went out of that hospital being another person, with a number nailed on my head and, an imaginary sign saying that I was sterile. I went out of that hospital room knowing that the waiting line was three times the size of the building block where I lived and, I had to be patient and wait a long time, something I never knew how to do. I got so shocked that I even forgot the face of the health professional who talked to me that day. I went through those moments with great difficulty, but with the time I understood that living in Barcelona was a great luck, because I could take advantage of a public health system and, although it was slow, at least it existed. However, along the waiting time we had to go through, my husband and I started looking for private hospitals, comparing prices and deciding what to do. In this way, we started asking friends and people related to the medicine and nursing world; we decided to follow their advices. While I was waiting, I kept going to the gynecologist due to the pain I had from 2008 until 2010. In 2008, they decided to operate my endometrioma. However, fifteen days before the operation the cyst got absorbed by my body and the operation got cancelled. Unfortunately, it kept hurting, so my doctor decided to give me hormones, which caused me menopause during three months.

This is how I discovered what I am supposed to experience in a few years, when I won't have menstruation anymore. I had hot flashes, insomnia and also, I got two extra kilos, but after all I was going through, I didn't give it much importance to weight gain. It is curious, because along those three months, I realized of the complexity of the feminine body.



Elsa Gillari
Mente en blanco

After all my treatments, I kept having pain, so I decided to get operated in a private hospital. There, the doctor offered me the possibility of discovering the reality of the problem. I got operated in January 2010. The result was beginning of endometriosis on the external part of the womb, which made me sterile, because the endometriosis changes the egg reproduction capability.

From that moment, I stayed more relaxed. All the decisions I made were always respected by my husband and, I need to admit, I was always supported by my family and friends. I decided to tell some people, especially those who worked with me, because not saying anything was causing me a huge stress. Finally, I told those people I really cared about.

I haven't gone to the doctor due to my pain anymore, since 2010. It kept hurting, but not so strongly and frequent. Nowadays, this little pain is part of my life. We could say that we understand each other and, we try to live together. After the operation and the improvement of the situation, I decided to rest since I felt exhausted. So, I didn't start any in vitro fertilization process, also due to the economic cost of it. In this way, my husband and I didn't have other option rather than learning to be patient. Furthermore, as good Spaniards, we had to go through the crisis and the problem with the payment of our mortgage. However, it was always easier to put off our difficulties than face them. During this time, I realized that as long as I had the possibility of an IVF, the idea of being mother would always be in my mind. This believe helped me to go further with other projects in my life, but at the same time it made me realize that I should try the IVF, rather than thinking eternally about it. I spent some time thinking when it would be the best moment to do it, until I understood that this moment would never come if I didn't make a decision.



Elsa Gillari
Protector

In January 2011, I got a phone call from the hospital. They were updating the waiting list, as they always do. They informed me that they would call me soon for doing the artificial insemination. When the moment came I gave up after talking to my doctor. With this system I didn't have many options to become a mother and, I preferred not to waste my energy.

Time went by and they called me back from the hospital in October 2011, this time for an in vitro fertilization; this is how I saw the person who gave me the number 2036 again. Now, I could observe her properly. I remember all the features of her face, her name and, I could even describe the smell that was the waiting room that day. I was happy because I didn't fear for the first time in three years and, I could listen all the information that the doctors were telling me. To me, that was a success, full of personal effort.

During those three years, all this story caused me a huge emotional problem. It was not the first time in my life I was going through a personal crisis, but this time was different: I wanted to find a solution, the potion against all my evils. So, I decided to try homeopathy, take medicinal herbs, practice all kind of rituals that women they told me...Nothing worked out, so I understood that I didn't believe in what I was doing, that I needed faith. Faith is important in order to give strength to your spirit, so I looked for faith in those things I liked, in what I thought I could trust. I started practicing sports, at least in order to eliminate my stress and, from then I play fencing. I also went back to writing and, one day, I decided to offer a parrot to my husband, because it was one of his dreams. Honestly, this parrot whose name is Indirim (discount in Turkish) became a part of our lives. His name has its story, too. Now, he is a very distinctive character who sings, flies, speaks, and he filled an emptiness, especially when it comes to sing.

Elsa Gillari
Aborto y nacimiento



In this period, I also discovered that I spent a long time neglecting myself, because I didn't accept a part of what I am. I understood that problems exist as long as we see them as problems and, sometimes, difficulties are only a challenge for our superation and acceptance. I realized that those fears and feelings went inside into my private life and, mixed up with all the rest of things I was doing. Not only was I afraid of going to the doctor, but also to fly on a plane, considering I love travelling; I got also nervous in my work and, I thought I became a jumpy woman!

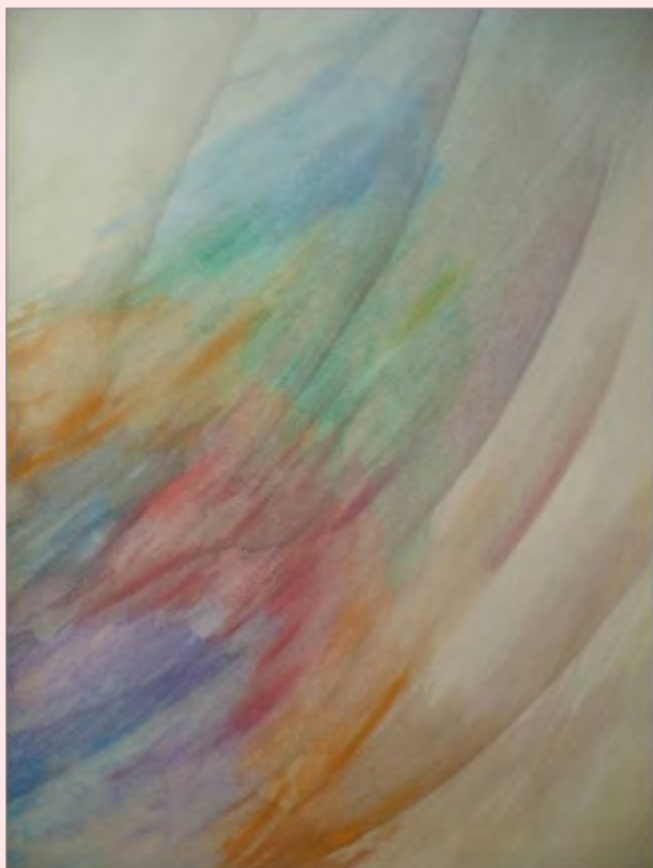
One day, a long time after 2006, I woke up and thought that I wouldn't go on this way for a long time, that I would change although I couldn't change my fate. I also realized that I never talked to a woman in my same situation, just because I didn't have the opportunity to meet her. I did talk to some women who had already gone through this process and, they knew what the results were. It is as if the rest of women didn't belong to this world, as if the loneliness of this case was only mine, although I know they exist because I see them at the doctor: we look at each other, we all think in our own problems and, we never talk. We suffer in silence, because it is easier not to say anything.



Elsa Gillari
Abstract

I don't know if I will have children or not, but I want to try it. At least, I am now able to imagine a world without children. This mental work was not exempt from learning with the help of many professionals. Not having children is sometimes an option in life, neither better or worse, simply a different cultural option and way of thinking we all had in our minds. That doesn't prevent us from being happy. Also, after lots of research, my husband and I discovered that there are other ways of being parents.

One day I was the number 2036, but I was also other numbers until I will get to the number one. Everything comes, we only need patience. By then, we need to be ready. That doesn't mean I don't feel uncertain about the future. Life itself is like a poker game, a chess game where sometimes to win, first you have to lose.



Elsa Gillari
Gestación



Elsa Gillari
Creación

...FURTHER VIEWING

- **Maybe baby** Dir. Ben Elton. 2001

Sam Bell (Laurie) and wife Lucy (Richardson) are a married couple struggling for a baby, having tried everything they can think of to improve their chances of conceiving. At the same time, Sam begins to find his job (as a commissioning editor of drama at the BBC) increasingly unfulfilling. While he resolves to write his own screenplay, he begins to suffer writer's block. The idea dawns upon him to write about his own predicament, something to which Lucy objects strongly. He uses her diary entries to help him achieve authenticity, and the film is a success. Lucy finds out about the film and, shocked, leaves Sam. Eventually they reconcile and at the end of the story are still trying for a baby.



- **The kid with a bike.** Dir. Jean-Pierre Dardenne. 2011

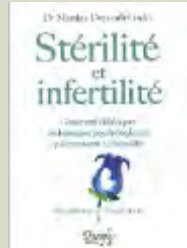
Abandoned by his father, a young boy is left in a state-run youth farm. In a random act of kindness, the town hairdresser agrees to foster him on weekends.



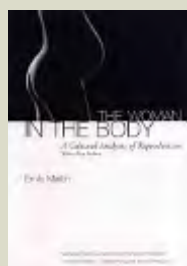
...FURTHER READING

About infertility/sterility

- Jéronymidès, Élisabeth (2004). Elles aussi deviendront mères. Des femmes qui se sentent stériles. Petite Bibliothèque Payot, Paris.
- Margolis, Cindy (2009). Having a baby. When the old-fashioned way isn't working. Hope and help for everyone facing infertility. Perigee book, New York.
- Pullman, Bertrano (2010). Mille et un façon de faire les enfants. La révolution des méthodes de procréations. Calmann-levy, Paris.
- Depondt-Gadet, Martine (2011). Stérilité et infertilité. Comment débloquent les barrages psychologiques qui entravent la fécondité. Psychologie et procréation. Edition Dangles, Paris.

**About the female body**

- Martin, Emily (2004). The woman in the body: a cultural analysis of reproduction. Beacon Press, USA.
- Reed, Lori; Saukko, Paula and eds. (2010) Governing the female body: Gender, health and networks of power. Albany State University of Nwe York Press.



LINKS

To know what is endometriosis, how it affects to fertility and other aspects of interest, contact the Spanish Association of Endometriosis. Web page:

<http://www.endoinfo.info/>

FUTURE EVENTS

- [29º Congreso Nacional de la Sociedad Española de Fertilidad.](#) Palacio de Congresos de Granada. Del 16 al 18 de Mayo de 2012.
- The European Society of contraception and reproductive health. [12th ESC Congress \(Athens, 20-23 June 2012\) - Myths and misconceptions versus evidence on contraception.](#) Más información disponible en <http://www.esrh.eu/>
- [4º Congress of the Asia Pacific Initiative on Reproduction.](#) The 30th annual meeting of Japan Society of Fertilization and Implatation 30 August-2 September 2012. Más información disponible en <http://www2.convention.co.jp/aspire-jsfi2012/>

RECENT EVENTS

- [5º Congreso AFIN: La tríada en la adopción, el acogimiento y la reproducción asistida: el lugar de la familia biológica.](#) 25 y 26 de noviembre de 2011, Barcelona.



Newsletter 33, November 2011

ADOPTIONS, FAMILIES, CHILDHOODS

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Elsa Gillari

is an artist living in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the author gives us the following insight on her creative process:

"Symbols are the language I use to express my inner world, are the sketches are before the work is the idea which is composed of several seconds. Then the symbol appears as the first mental image of the subject building. I do not understand the meaning and allow it to sail outward materializing in an item on to develop not only do not question content or color, Simply enable the symbol to express itself in all its dimensions, this usually manifests itself in a state of neutrality, being shafts which transmit the same message applied to a complete worldview. The work is never finished, because they feed each other and are like parts of an expressive totality. This search generates an infinite and constant creative type of indeterminacy. Thus the spirit perceives objects and concepts that plasma emits artistic expression. Simple is the way spontaneous artistry and reason do not participate, and would contaminate the concept. "

Her work can be accessed at: www.elsagillari.blogspot.com, <http://www.elsagillari.artelista.com>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Author of this Newsletter,

has a Bachelor in Nursing by the University Ramón Llull Bsc in Social and Cultural Anthropology by the University of Barcelona.

PhD candidate in Nursing Sciences and is about to read the PhD dissertation. Works currently at the Nursing Department of the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.

info.afin@afin.org.es