

©Mark and Jenny's DURHAM CONFIDENTIAL Comic No. 7

This story has a beginning....

On an afternoon a few days before an icestorm....

"Reflections of a new life"

.... or really before then. The winter of wanting something not yet existing.

The sense in spring that something...

... has changed.



Summer and Fall, the feeling of this thing inside me...

...it's compact and rounded outline.



My image of her was mostly imaginings and hopefulness, her nudges and fluttering kicks at night, and a black and white photo of a sonogram, her body ghostly and transparent.



My water broke at midnight. Mark drove me to the hospital. Storm clouds moving above, Mark looked up to remember the moment.



And the baby was born... a full living breathing thing overwhelming gladness.

She is ok.

She is beautiful. Mark and I had a celebratory dinner of hospital food.

There were visits, and visitors.

I got to hold her.

-one-



The second day she developed jaundice.
So began a routine....

...of her under the bili lights...



...and me, after being released,



stationed in the parents' sleep-over room, every 2 1/2 hours, reporting for duty. The phone would ring... get up, walk down hallway, right past pregnant lady statue, left through the double doors, to the nursery.

The nursery was a pleasant place, with a changing roster of just born babies, cheerful but no-nonsense nurses, and upbeat music. R and B and holiday tunes dominated.



musical accompaniment: "Baby Love" by the Supremes.



I was set up in the "circ" room. I was looking forward to going home.

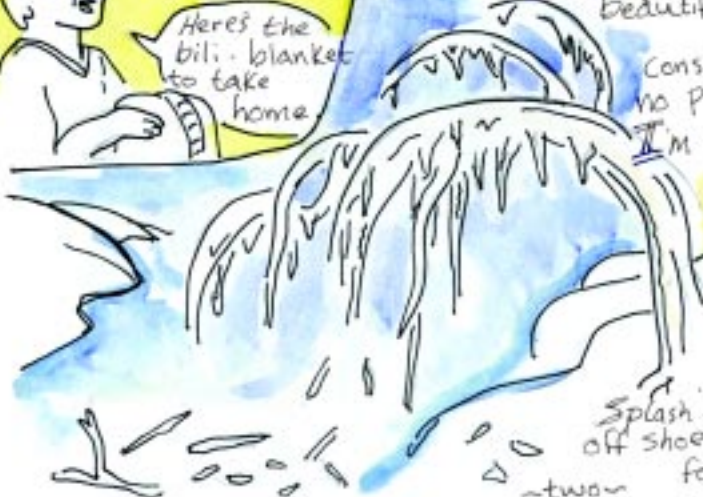
There was some talk of bad weather...



-but you know how they exaggerate.

Here's the bili-blanket to take home

...The icestorm hit! Devastating but beautiful.



More days in boot camp. Pain and constipation pills ran out, but no pharmacy open to fill them. I'm still wearing clothes when pregnant,...



...now baby and milkstained. Splash some water on my face... Kick off shoes... lay down on a bed just for a minute... just to rest, ... and the phone rings!

The outside situation mirrored my personal one. One of physical discomfort and dislocation and impatient for "normal" life mixed with gratefulness for basic comforts.



The Kindness of strangers



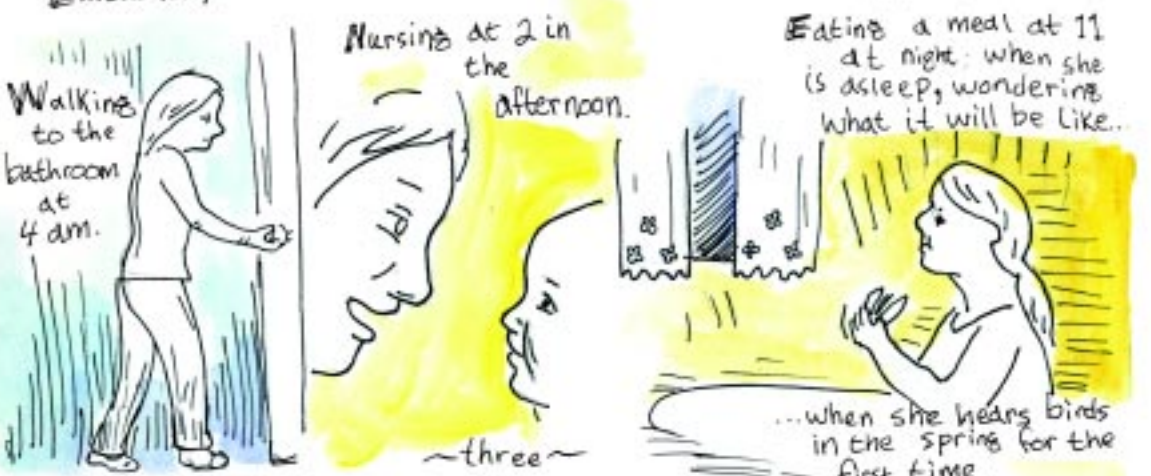
Back at home life consists of 3 hour chunks... One to the other...



The remainder of the time is quickly spent...



The concept of time as days or calendars seems an arbitrary concept. Existence is a river made of moments each impinging on the next. Linearity, divisions an illusion made of the repetition of themes.



...when she hears birds in the spring for the first time.

I watch the news and am glad she does not know the meaning of these words...
...time-table for war...



I wish I could be like Shiva, break the world down to rebuild it.
Start over with a more Peaceful, uncorrupt, version.



I whisper to her songs...



...of Rainforests...



...rainstorms...



...and Red horses ...

...running very fast



I want to show her so many things,

This story does not yet have an ending...



but I've learned more from her than she'll ever learn from me.



But I know it will take exactly one lifetime.

~ four ~

Written and drawn by Jonny Zervakis .03.