

## THE RISK I TOOK

by: Gigi A. Dantes

It is 7 p.m. of March 10, 2005. Tears streamed down my cheeks as I cuddled my baby for the first time. Pastor Mark and I decided we'd name him Isaac Joseph, as both namesakes were children of once-barren women in the Bible.

My journey to being a mom now is rather long. Back in 1996 when I had difficulty conceiving, my gynecologist referred me to an endocrinologist who, upon my request, initially tried to balance my hormones for several years. He then suspected that the reason for my infertility was a brain tumor.



"Brain tumor?", I asked in disbelief. Now the fear of dying worsened my lingering agony over a sense of inadequacy, for still being childless after 5 years of marriage.

"A brain tumor is the layman's term for pituitary adenoma," the doctor replied. "You must have a growth at the top of your spine and that is what is preventing you from ovulating", he said further. "It's a tumor because it's a growth, and because it is atop your spine lodged just below the brain, we refer to it as brain tumor." As if reading my thoughts, the doctor added, "It's not the lethal kind."

A pituitary adenoma, according to him, is the number one cause of infertility among women today and it is only through the MRI technology that it can be detected.

True enough, in the year 2002, the MRI test would confirm the growth in my head, the size of a pea. Surgery was the only option – or I would have to be content with the idea of not having kids, and eventually losing peripheral vision as the tumor gets bigger.

The fear of going through the knife and raising a hefty amount for the operation made me ask the Lord to heal me supernaturally. But six months later, after undergoing another MRI test, a bigger growth would show, which prompted both me and Pastor Mark to make a crucial decision.

I was told that the surgery is rather easy, not the first of its kind. The tumor would be excised transphenoidally, or through the nose, and without stitches. But far worse than the anxiety of it classified as a major operation, I would risk getting

blind. The tumor sits where the optic nerves cross, and the instruments might puncture them in the process.

It was the Lord's will for me alright to go through surgery. I tried to muster enough strength as I was taken in at 6 am. Realizing how life-threatening any operation could be, Pastor Mark said "I love you" and kissed me. He then heard from the doctor only after 7 hours, and up to this day we do not know what it was that took them so long on what should have been a three-hour surgery.

I was wheeled back into my room at 7 p.m. Pastor Mark and I shed an ocean of tears upon seeing each other. Little did we realize that in nine months we would be crying tears of joy when my home pregnancy test would reveal a positive!

Harrowing as my previous operation was, I wouldn't trade the experience of being a mother for any other, even if I had undergone a caesarian section. The emotional ordeal I once went through was nothing compared to my joy now – overwhelming, as if my heart would burst, the first time I heard him cry, and now as I behold his face, sleeping so innocently in my arms.

Miracles do happen and because God is oh so good, they still will...

<p>The above is a recollection of the author's thoughts a few months after having given birth. IC, as Isaac is fondly called, is now 4 and a half years old. Gigi, and Pastor Mark say that IC is definitely well-worth the long wait of 13 years.</p>
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