



Little Tati, Healthy and Strong

October 12th, 2013

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A Bear Tale by Ali Lawrence

Each sturdy foot landed,
echoing the sounds of an
ancient drum, beating against
the air. Like the thin line of
light behind clouds, the
sweetness of breeze in the
heaviness of heat; the tribal
heart of Ganesh was busy
clearing the path between us.
Being sure to soften the land
under our feet - so that if ever
we may fall, we would get
right back up again.







The seasons had carried us on their backs like waves out at sea. Papa and I were planets orbiting for the sun and by winter we welcomed you into our sky.

My body invited you in before my mind knew you had arrived, creating a safe place for you to rest. I rubbed my belly searching for you, day and night.

Before we knew anything about you, we knew you were due on October 10th, 2013. Papa proposed to me on 10/10/10, making your expected date of arrival, also full of tens, the most special day our calendars could have ever dreamt up.

The light in the sky was getting a little paler, the days a little longer and the green on the ground and on the trees were giving way to tiny flowers. Each breath wove in newness and growth, reminding us that this was going to be the year you would be born.

A few night before our 21-week ultrasound I found you in my dreams. I was changing your diaper and looked down - you were a girl.

Several days later we got ready for our appointment. Full of excitement, Papa and I moved through each moment leading up to our ultrasound, giddy to see you swimming on the screen and ready to find out your gender from the doctor. We practically levitated while waiting, the room containing us, holding all our hopes for you.

The sonographer moved her wand slowly, crossing the landscape of your body over and over. She was quiet and thorough. When she was done she left the room and returned with the doctor.

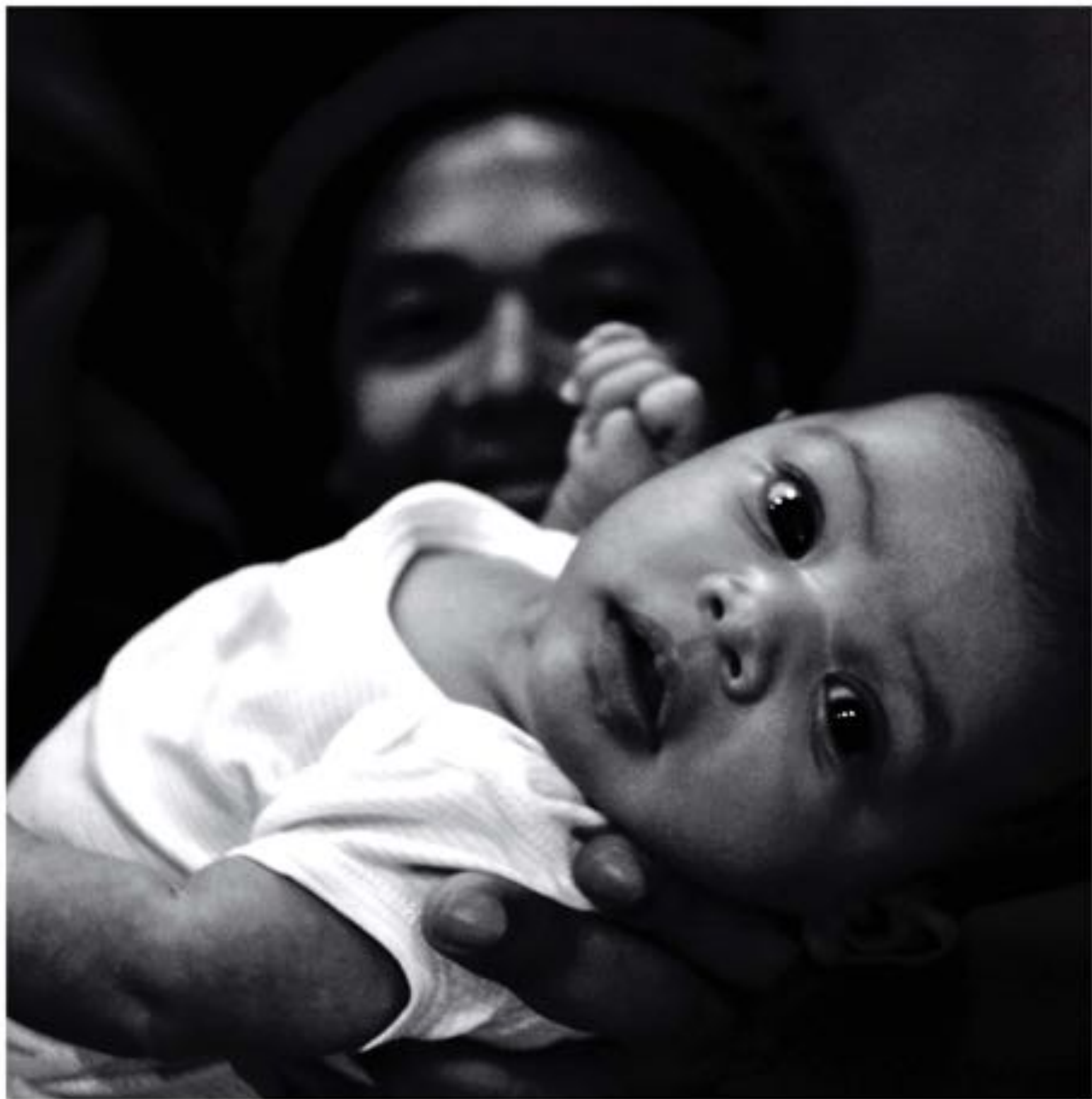
Our hearts pounded, feeling the weight of wind swirl inside us.

But just as quickly as the doctor wrapped us up into the luminous magic of announcing that you were a girl, he tangled us up in the fluorescence of something else. In the ultrasound they detected a serious and rare health condition that could become very harmful to your lungs called CCAM.

We did our best to teeter between joy and fear, honoring both for exactly what they were to us - filling up that moment like a million balloons ascending to the clouds.

You were our girl, we already knew you and we felt your fight.





We gave you the name Tatiana Rose. Weaving together my Eastern European roots and honoring your Auntie Tanya with your first name. And from my maiden name, Rosen, and your Auntie Roza, we got Rose. We started calling you Tati right away which drifted seamlessly into our mantra that we repeated day and night, "Little Tati, healthy and strong."

Because of that, we were sure.

Our lives were immediately full of new information and support. The universe had already fallen in love with you, which meant all we had to do was keep climbing.

And climbing we did.

Between bouts of nausea and cravings for rocky road ice cream and mac and cheese, we met you on the ultrasound screen each week to monitor any growth of the cysts on your lungs. We held tightly to our belief in you. With every gorgeous cell you grew - we matched with oceans of prayers, offering all of our hope, strength, love and healing to you. Calming our anxieties with meditation, positive thinking and visualization.





By summer you had created a perfectly round belly.
Celebrating your growth every moment, we spent time in
nature with our friends and family.



With steadfast prayers, our little Tati was already enlightening us with her lessons. We learned that her lungs were healing themselves.

Several weeks before your due date I had my belly adorned in traditional henna. Stretched across my skin, facing out into the world, the perfect universe you had cultivated within.



The heart symbolized our love, the spiral the strength of your breath and the phoenix rising represented the power you possessed to renew.



Gathering hands all around our backyard, our loved ones came together to bless you, bathing me in their light and love, lending their gentle touch, profound strength and deep love for you, from the outside in.



As we got closer to October, our support team was ready for action. Lexi, our dear friend and labor and delivery nurse, Aisha our doula, Lindy our midwife and, of course, Papa, were all prepared for their unique roles during delivery.

I started walking regularly on October 1st. Braxton Hicks and cramping off and on had become the norm. I ate my last meal on the night of your due date, surrendering to your plan.

At 2:20am on Friday, October 11th, I felt my first contraction.

Sweeping my body with an electric force, each one came on the same way every 15 minutes until 6am when they accelerated to every five minutes. They were so powerful my body's only recourse was to shudder and vomit each time. We left for the hospital when they were three minutes apart at 10:30am.

We found out quickly in triage that I wasn't dilated yet and barely effaced and I was sent home. I was crushed.

Back at home my contractions were now one minute apart, still causing me to throw up every time.

With no appetite or ability to hold anything down, I got into the bath searching for comfort, but instead I was pulled into feelings of despair. Fearful that I could become dehydrated, Aisha and Lexi called Lindy and told her that I needed IV fluids. Lindy asked to speak to me, but all I could do was yell and cry through the pain. She gave us the go ahead, and off to the hospital we went.

Thankfully bypassing triage this time, I signed what felt like a million documents on our way in with one long line across each page. I was rushed into labor and delivery and after some difficulty, I was hooked up to an IV with fluids and a dose of fentanyl. The relief washed over me, allowing my cervix to begin dilating from 4 cm to 9.5 cm in a quick 45 minutes, while my mucus plug came out immediately.

Then all of a sudden, I felt overcome with the urge to push. Lexi checked me and Lindy came rushing in to confirm - I was close to complete and could start.



Just as I began my water broke, and it was glorious. Each push brought us closer and closer, and after an hour and a half, out into the bright and beautiful light of the world, surrounded by love, you were caught right into the arms of Papa.

Taking full deep breaths and
crying with all your might -
our miracle, our healer, our
hope, our strength, our
teacher, little Tati, healthy
and strong was born
completely healthy, defying all
odds, with no need for surgery.

Tremendous love and
gratitude held us all in that
moment as I brought you to
my chest for the first time.



Tatiana Rose Tabasa
Born: October 12th, 2013 at 12:14am
8lbs. 11 oz. 19.5 inches



You softened the path, flowering, full of wisdom and promises -
our remover of obstacles - the undoing of fear.
Giving breath to lifetimes of healing.





BEAR TALES

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