

Introduction

This novel was written over 5 years as I was dealing with infertility. During the last year of that period, 2012, I was in a vulnerable state of mind, getting ready to give up any hope of becoming a mom and preparing myself to accept a child-free existence as gracefully as possible.

Accepting doesn't come easy to me, but I remember waking up one morning, entering my home office, and staring at Dr. Einstein. I have a picture of him hanging on the wall; he looks happy riding his big old black bike, his hair flowing in all directions as if the laws of gravity don't apply to him, or to his hair for that matter.

That morning, I stared at Dr. Einstein for a long time thinking, "So what? If I am not to have biological or adopted kids, (my husband and I had applied for international adoption 3 years earlier and were faced with many unfortunate bureaucratic complications) then so be it. I wasn't angry, only emotionally worn out. And then I recalled that Dr. Einstein hadn't been a great father. I had read that somewhere, I still don't know where or whether it's true. But regardless, there I was, staring at the genius and imagining him leading a happy afterlife existence while his schizophrenic son, Tete, was in great agony locked far away in some psychiatric institution.

Then and there it hit me; perhaps the Universe, or nature, or whatever you call it, knew better and that's why it spared me the burden of parenthood, because I, like Dr. Einstein, wasn't fit to be a good parent. Surprisingly enough that thought made me feel light. The unbearable heaviness of motherhood had been lifted off my shoulders, so to speak, and accepting felt easier. So as light as ever, I stopped staring at Dr. Einstein's picture, walked to my desk, and continued working on this novel.

By the following year, 2013, I had completed LIFE IS BIG and had also become a mother of three: identical twin girls and an adopted son from South Korea. Apparently, Universe had changed her mind, big time. Now, life was overwhelming and keeping my sanity became priority no. 2. Priority no. 1 was taking care of the kids as well as I could.

During that first year of parenthood, I imagined LIFE IS BIG would be published as a "smart/super" book. This "smart/super"-novel in its advanced electronic version, had two types of text hyperlinks: the interactive and the informative type. The first type would connect the reader, you, with the author, me. There you would be able to ask me questions day and night (I wasn't getting much sleep anyway), and perhaps we would end up becoming friends, or not. The second type, the informative one, once clicked, would take you to another page where you'd learn, for instance, that Helene Grimaud (one of the people mentioned in the book) is a famous French classical pianist and a synesthete. Or that Liya Kebede, who wrote the foreword for this novel, didn't get offended when she found herself in Hades leading an illicit life with Pablo Neruda. Or that Pablo Neruda isn't a poet anymore but a bridge builder who likes to fly kites while he chats with his best friend OM, Death's brother, and on and on and on...

Also, in this "super/smart" form of the book, you would have the freedom to change some words to suit your taste. At the end of the book, where the ellipsis is, you would be able to upload your favorite song,

which would remain there to be heard or changed by the next reader. Thus, over time, the book would become a living thing, and its story would become your story; and Life would be greater than Death as I still often imagine it is.

Today, in this dark period of the corona epidemic, it might seem that Death, the destroyer of Life, has lost all his chances of taking some time off. But, what if, for a second, you and I meld as one and the same person? Would that make us greater than Death? Then, anything or anyone that threatens our existence or the existence of this planet loses its power; Life (of all living organisms) gets a greater chance, while Death takes a rest for a minute or so as He has been wishing all these years.

Be safe and healthy, and feel free to contact me anytime (kikidenisus@yahoo.com). Nowadays, my kids don't keep me awake quite as often, so please be patient, it might take me a bit longer to reply.