

# Talk About the Baby

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"So do you want a boy or a girl?" Cory asked.

"I'm not even sure we should be ordering the baby from [www.thestorkcentral.com](http://www.thestorkcentral.com) and you're asking me if I want a girl or a boy!" Sara replied as she pulled the blanket over her head.

Cory tugged at the mauve strands of her hair spilling out from underneath the blanket, "We talked about this. Gaya got her baby from [thestorkcentral.com](http://thestorkcentral.com). Mum's seen the baby, it's absolutely adorable."

Pushing herself further into the blanket, Sara groaned. "Gaya, right. Your mother's neighbour's son's colleague. We should definitely trust Gaya when making major life-altering decisions. And your mother. Who's stopped taking her Immojections. Who *wants* to get old and die!"

"She's tired. Also I don't think her desire to die affects her ability to judge a baby's health," Cory muttered letting go of Sara's hair.

Silence fell between them, like a bandage slapped onto their bleeding relationship. Sara curled up into a ball and Cory continued to browse [thestorkcentral.com](http://thestorkcentral.com). As his eyes darted from one add-on to next, he became infected by a wild kind of want. Beside him, Sara shut her eyes and tried to understand why she was feeling so agitated.

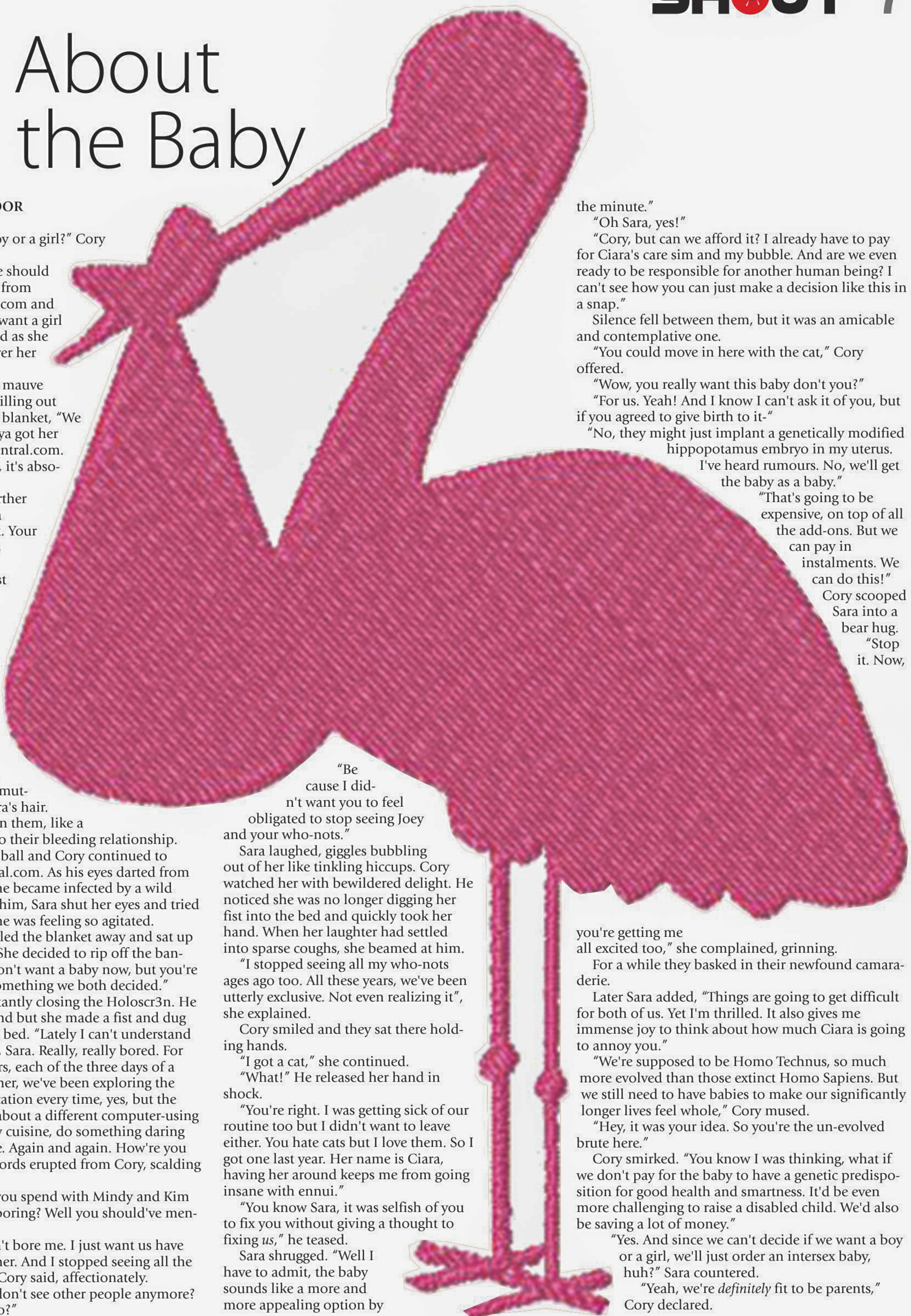
Eventually she peeled the blanket away and sat up straight facing Cory. She decided to rip off the bandage. "You know I don't want a baby now, but you're pretending like it's something we both decided."

Cory sighed, reluctantly closing the *Holoscr3n*. He reached for Sara's hand but she made a fist and dug her knuckles into the bed. "Lately I can't understand you. I'm really bored, Sara. Really, really bored. For the past fourteen years, each of the three days of a week we spend together, we've been exploring the world. A different location every time, yes, but the same routine. Learn about a different computer-using civilization, try a new cuisine, do something daring and meet new people. Again and again. How're you not sick of it?" The words erupted from Cory, scolding Sara in their wake.

"So the four days you spend with Mindy and Kim and who not, aren't boring? Well you should've mentioned-"

"Sara, no. You don't bore me. I just want us have new adventure together. And I stopped seeing all the who-nots ages ago," Cory said, affectionately.

"Wait, what? You don't see other people anymore? Why didn't you say so?"



"Be cause I didn't want you to feel obligated to stop seeing Joey and your who-nots."

Sara laughed, giggles bubbling out of her like tinkling hiccups. Cory watched her with bewildered delight. He noticed she was no longer digging her fist into the bed and quickly took her hand. When her laughter had settled into sparse coughs, she beamed at him.

"I stopped seeing all my who-nots ages ago too. All these years, we've been utterly exclusive. Not even realizing it", she explained.

Cory smiled and they sat there holding hands.

"I got a cat," she continued.

"What!" He released her hand in shock.

"You're right. I was getting sick of our routine too but I didn't want to leave either. You hate cats but I love them. So I got one last year. Her name is Ciara, having her around keeps me from going insane with ennui."

"You know Sara, it was selfish of you to fix you without giving a thought to fixing *us*," he teased.

Sara shrugged. "Well I have to admit, the baby sounds like a more and more appealing option by

the minute."

"Oh Sara, yes!"

"Cory, but can we afford it? I already have to pay for Ciara's care sim and my bubble. And are we even ready to be responsible for another human being? I can't see how you can just make a decision like this in a snap."

Silence fell between them, but it was an amicable and contemplative one.

"You could move in here with the cat," Cory offered.

"Wow, you really want this baby don't you?"

"For us. Yeah! And I know I can't ask it of you, but if you agreed to give birth to it-"

"No, they might just implant a genetically modified hippopotamus embryo in my uterus.

I've heard rumours. No, we'll get the baby as a baby."

"That's going to be expensive, on top of all the add-ons. But we can pay in instalments. We can do this!"

Cory scooped Sara into a bear hug.

"Stop it. Now,

you're getting me all excited too," she complained, grinning.

For a while they basked in their newfound camaraderie.

Later Sara added, "Things are going to get difficult for both of us. Yet I'm thrilled. It also gives me immense joy to think about how much Ciara is going to annoy you."

"We're supposed to be *Homo Technus*, so much more evolved than those extinct *Homo Sapiens*. But we still need to have babies to make our significantly longer lives feel whole," Cory mused.

"Hey, it was your idea. So you're the un-evolved brute here."

Cory smirked. "You know I was thinking, what if we don't pay for the baby to have a genetic predisposition for good health and smartness. It'd be even more challenging to raise a disabled child. We'd also be saving a lot of money."

"Yes. And since we can't decide if we want a boy or a girl, we'll just order an intersex baby, huh?" Sara countered.

"Yeah, we're *definitely* fit to be parents," Cory declared.