

Babies Are All The Same

by [Armando Simón](#) (February 2024)



Maternity, Chaim Soutine, 1942

Every once in a while, Dr. Truehart would stroll down the passages of the hospital where he worked, just to see how everything was, greeting staff and patients alike in a dry, brief salutation. This was usually before his shift started or after it ended. When he did so on his way home, unlike in the morning, he would walk with his hands clasped behind him. Since he no longer had anyone waiting for him at home, he was in no hurry to leave the hospital, his wife having died a few years back.

Some people considered him to be a cold, expressionless man, although a few others thought him, paradoxically, to be a warm individual. Perhaps this latter subjective impression of being warm was because of his undisputed competence. Or because of his leonine head of salt and pepper hair. Who knows. On the other hand, some of the staff or patients thought him forbidding, unsympathetic, no doubt because of his stiff patrician bearing which came naturally to him. Some individuals felt that he looked down at them, which was true of several persons, usually the dullards, and these days it seemed like they were crawling out of the woodwork.

Today, he found himself in the obstetrics wing.

"Must be a full moon tonight," a middle-aged nurse remarked, which was a bit absurd since it was still daylight outside, two hours before it would get dark. "We've already had several births." Trueheart said nothing. Obstetrics was not his specialty. He seemed to recall that births tended to occur at night, but he was not certain. He would look it up later.

As he was about to exit the wing prior to going home, he heard a commotion coming from one of the rooms. There was angry shouting. Trueheart was curious and he casually walked over, just as more angry shouting came from another room.

"That's not my baby! I want my baby!" a woman screamed while her husband was making threats. An almost identical scene was

taking place in the next room. There were repetitive demands being shouted, escalating in volume.

The nurse in each room was trying to calm down the respective parents by explaining things.

“But this is governmental policy! The Department of Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Equity has mandated random parenting of newborns!”

This explanation only served to infuriate both sets of parents even more, so that the nurses withdrew in fear, carrying their respective babies. A physical altercation seemed to be imminent in both places.

Trueheart immediately saw the source of outrage, but, being meticulous to a fault, he asked the two nurses what the problem was. One was skinny while the other was round, giving the impression of an ambulatory 10 when they were together.

“Dr. Trueheart, we’re just carrying out orders. DIE has made it a nationwide policy to randomly assign parents of newborns in order to ensure an egalitarian society and avoid genetic chauvinism.”

The physician had heard of this policy, but he had dismissed the idea, thinking it too stupid, too bizarre, to be enforceable even in this day and age.

And yet, here it was.

He was even more surprised that these nurses were carrying out this absurdity.

“So, who gave the order to comply?”

“Dr. Roth—”

“Of course,” he muttered.

“—and the hospital’s DIE section.” Every institution now had a

branch of DIE.

"Of course," he repeated, sarcasm dripping from his lips. For a brief second, his usual expressionless face sneered.

"Give me that baby." He held out his arms and took the black baby and went to its infuriated parents and gave the child to the mother.

"I suggest that you don't let your baby out of your sight for one second and that you leave the hospital as soon as you're up to it."

Dr. Trueheart went back to the nurses and took the white baby to its distraught parents and gave the same advice, whereupon he went back out and faced the nurses.

"Am I going to have trouble from either one of you?" he asked, which actually sounded like a veiled threat.

"No, sir," each nurse responded.

"Good. The paperwork should reflect that DIE policy was carried out. And in the future, I suggest to both of you that you do the same. There's no telling when some irate parent may decide that a bullet is a good counterargument to this obsession for equality. By the way, notice that neither Roth nor the people at DIE came down in person to enforce this rule. They're too busy hiding in their offices, leaving it up to you nurses to do the dirty work for them."

"But, doctor, what if they, I mean Dr. Roth or DIE, what if they should find out? What do we do?"

He looked at them in that cold expression of his, eyes riveting the nurses.

"Refer them to me. I take full responsibility!"

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