

DAYS OF TURBULENCE

A couple of days before the scheduled delivery date, Soraya's mother came to Petrolina to give us a hand. On January 18, 2002, at about noon, at the Memorial Hospital of Petrolina, Drs. Erika and Elivania delivered our baby boy, Artur, by Caesarean section. His size and weight were normal; his reflexes other basic functions were tested...our second son was healthy. Soraya and I were delighted. Because of the Caesarean, Soraya spent another night in the hospital, but her condition was really very good. While still in the hospital, Artur ate for the first time, and, unlike his brother, Vinicius, who at first didn't take well to breastfeeding, he seemed to be a good eater.

Two days later, I took, Vinicius to the hospital to bring Artur and his mom home. When we got back to our house, we were really delighted to find that Edileuza, our housekeeper and Maria our babysitter, had done a great job organizing everything for our homecoming.

Artur's first night in his room did not go well. Even though he had eaten well that day, he was fussy all night long. By the third day, he had become even worse, so, Soraya and her mother took him to the doctor. Two doctors examined the baby and both thought he was just colic, saying. "Take your baby home. He will be fine very soon."

Soraya didn't agree, so she took Artur to a pediatrician, Fatima da Luz, who, after examining him, prescribed an antibiotic called Rocephin, just because she thought that he had an infection. She also wanted to see Artur again on the following day. So, Soraya got the prescription and immediately called our pharmacist friend, Ferraz, who had been following up with us regularly on Artur since he was born.. The day after, Soraya and her mom returned with Artur to see Dr. Luz. During his second appointment, Artur seemed relaxed, directing Dr. Luz to tell Soraya to take him home; she added that he was getting well and if the baby was suffering from an infection, the prescribed medicine would take care of it.

Back home, Artur was crying continuously, despite our constant efforts to comfort him. In fact, the more we touched him, the louder he cried. Since he had been eating regularly, Gardenia, my mother-in-law, had a thought. "Artur is a good eater, not like Vinicius, he must just be hungry".

Gardenia thought that Soraya didn't have enough breast milk to satisfy Artur's hunger. So, we supplemented it with a full bottle of an infant formula. Proving that Gardenia was right, our **King** Artur drank the whole bottle and almost immediately fell into a deep sleep. Unfortunately, only a couple hours later, he suddenly awoke, crying so loud and forcefully that it was almost as if he was being shocked. We were frantic; everyone was up, not knowing where to turn. I woke up, totally spent. I had barely slept for days. My job was suffering because my exhaustion was killing my productivity. In our distress, we decided to take Artur to yet another clinic. That morning, I had not spoken to Soraya, so after a half-day of work, I went home for lunch, finding Gardenia there she told me. "Look, I'm very worried about this baby. Two doctors checked on him today and nothing was resolved. What should we do? I don't think we should take him to another doctor now. Besides, he is exhausted, and he needs a good rest".

Relying on her experience, I took her advice. Later that day, she used a phrase that would have a great impact on Artur's life.