



BROOKLYN AIKIKAI JOURNAL VOL II.2

SPRINGFIELD

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AIKIKAI
VOL
II.2

7,608,343,534

by Andrés Cruciani

I remember a conversation I had with my sister over a decade ago. We were in a car. My cousin was driving, and I was in the back seat.

"I'm going to have two children," I said, "and maybe adopt a third. One day."

"But how do you know?" my sister asked over her shoulder. "How can you predict the future?"

"I just know," I said, as the low-rise buildings of Buenos Aires skirted past my window.

Years later, my father was having a birthday party, a big one: he was turning sixty.

I asked him how he felt, and he gave me an unmemorable response. But later that night, circled by friends and family, he gave a speech. It began like this:

"Some people have been asking me how it feels to turn sixty. To be honest," he said, his hair already going then from gray to white, "not good."

He nodded. His eyes were glassed. He continued.

"But after living this many years, I know this: having children is the best thing you can do."

It is over ten years since I had that conversation with my sister and four since my father made his speech. Yet as the window for *one day* closes—as tomorrow becomes now—my certainty has diminished. And as the years pass, and I see more and more what this world is made of, I become less and less sure of whether I want to bring a child into being.

Though I know having a child is one of the most profound experiences a person can have, I am deeply conflicted. Now, as more of my friends have children, I think, *Yes, they are the type of people who should be having kids. Them. The content ones.* And there was a time when I'd thought it best to just have a child by accident—that the accident would absolve me of the

responsibility of choice and that then I would simply have to love and nourish the baby I had helped to create. Though even of this shortcut I am no longer sure.

My certainty evaporates. My doubts blossom. But should I ever have a child—and should that child ever read this—just know: I love you.