

The Dance of Birth by Karina Cochran  
Ten-Page Sample

SCENE

(TERESA, CARRIE, FIONA, PRISCILLA, and QUINN stand in a semi-circle. They all wear jingly chiffon skirts in different bright colors over their exercise clothes.)

(Soft, slow music begins to play. The women move a bit awkwardly at first. TERESA starts doing large hip circles. The women follow her lead.)

TERESA

Birth circles!  
Feel the music, ladies!  
Respond to the music with your body.

(FIONA dances with a bit more enthusiasm. She is a good dancer. CARRIE is clearly uncomfortable.)

TERESA

Don't be afraid to make that skirt jingle.

(TERESA & QUINN add an extra shake to their hips to make the skirts jingle. PRISCILLA tries to make her skirt jingle. It doesn't.)

PRISCILLA

Mine's not jingeling.

TERESA

Like this, dear.

(She shows her. It jingles a bit more.)

TERESA

Remember this move when the contractions come.

What do you do when life gives you a painful situation?  
Do you sit through it? NO. You MOVE through it.

(The music changes to a faster beat.)

TERESA

Now improvise! Where does your body want to go?  
There's no wrong way to dance.

(The girls improvise. CARRIE stops dancing and stands in  
the corner awkwardly.)

TERESA

Or...if you need a break, take a break. Do what feels best for  
you. This is no place for ego. Rest should be taken and  
treasured!

(QUINN dances over to CARRIE.)

QUINN

(hushed)  
Are you OK?

(CARRIE nods, feeling shy and a little embarrassed. The  
improvisation throws her off. The rest of the women  
continue to dance, getting more into it. The music slows  
back down.)

TERESA

Return to the circle.

(CARRIE re-enters the circle.)

TERESA

One hand on your heart.  
One hand on your womb.

(The women follow this instruction.)

TERESA

Send love to yourself.  
Send love to your uterus.

(A moment.)

TERESA

Deep breath.

(An audible inhale & exhale.)

TERESA

Welcome to Day One of BBB: Bellydancing for Birth and Beyond. This six-week class is designed to help you prepare for labor, while connecting emotionally and spiritually to yourself, your baby, and the world around you.

I'm Teresa. I'm a Woman. I'm a Mother. I'm here.  
Repeat back to me, ladies, "I'm here."

ALL

I'm here.

TERESA

Claim your space, ladies. I'M HERE!

ALL

I'm HERE!

(TERESA beams.)

SCENE

(The women all sit in a semicircle on the floor.)

CARRIE

Hi, I'm Carrie. I'm 16 weeks pregnant. This is my first child. My husband's name is Daryl. We have a cat. His name is Hopscotch.  
I work at Cici's as a waitress.

FIONA

Ohhh. I think I've seen you there!

CARRIE

Yeah, probably. I've worked there a long time.

So, my Mother-in-law bought me this class as a gift. She is really excited about the baby. Like REALLY excited. Kind of annoying actually...but I'm glad she got me this class. I'm excited to...*dance*. Or whatever.

My Mom is excited too, but not as much. My brother already has like seven thousand kids, so she's gone through it all already.

FIONA

Seven thousand?

CARRIE

I was exaggerating.  
He has four.

I was named after Carrie from the show Sex in the City. I guess that's cool, but my favorite character in the show is Samantha because she works in PR. I think I'd be really good at PR. Have you guys seen that show?

(The women all nod.)

PRISCILLA

Yes.

FIONA

I have.

TERESA

Yes, dear, everyone has seen it.

CARRIE

Okay. Yeah. It's a really good show.

We find out the gender of the baby at the next appointment. I really hope Daryl will come with me. He said he would, so hopefully he will. That just seems like a really weird experience to have with an ultrasound technician. But I guess that's what a lot of women do. He said he would come to the last appointment and he didn't. But this one is more important, so maybe he will?

We got married right out of high school. Well not, right out, like two years later, but we were "high school sweethearts." I remember as a kid hearing that the divorce rate was 50% and I thought, "wow, that is so high." But now I'm like, "wow, that is so low."

I mean can you believe HALF of all married people make it? Half. That's kind of amazing.

In this one Sex in the City episode Charlotte said that everyone has two great loves in their life. But I guess I just got one! Haha.

Anyway, that's just a show. That's fiction. This is real life.

#### SCENE

(The women all hold colorful scarves and dance. A moment of fun and playfulness. They follow TERESA for a bit. Then they follow QUINN. They each take turns being the leader. Even CARRIE gets into the dance a little more. Their skirts jingle. Their bellies wiggle. They dance for a whole song together. At the end of the song they clap and laugh. TERESA turns off the music.)

TERESA

Alright ladies, bathroom break!

SCENE

(All the women stand in a circle. QUINN is facing PRISCILLA.)

QUINN

So...Priscilla, you have a really beautiful smile.

PRISCILLA

Thank you.

(PRISCILLA stares at the floor.)

TERESA

RECEIVE the compliment, Priscilla. Receive it!

PRISCILLA

Okay.

TERESA

As Mothers we are going to have to get comfortable with receiving help.

PRISCILLA

Okay. I'm receiving.

TERESA

Go on, Quinn.

QUINN

I appreciate your openness and honesty. You're really...uncensored. Very confident in yourself. I like that.

I think your sense of self is really inspiring. Like, your boldness makes me want to be bold too!

...

Also, your hair is nice.

...

Ok, that's all.

PRISCILLA

Wow, thank you. Can I respond?

TERESA

We must only accept the compliment and move on.

PRISCILLA

Oh okay, well thank you, Quinn.

TERESA

Now Priscilla, you compliment Fiona.

PRISCILLA

(casually, without malice)

Okay, great. This is easy. I'm so glad I got you!

(CARRIE frowns.)

PRISCILLA

OK, Fiona. You are a very strong, independent woman. You have a clear love of the world, people, animals. It's so cool that you foster all those dogs. I don't think I could do that. It's just amazing.

TERESA

Make eye contact, please.

PRISCILLA

Oh, okay.

(They make eye contact.)

TERESA

Don't be shy.

PRISCILLA

Okay, uhm...

I think you're going to be a really amazing Mother, and I hope we can be friends, like *real* friends.

(FIONA smiles.)

FIONA

Me too.

TERESA

Thank you, Priscilla. See how when they made eye contact her body-language shifted? They became more open and aware of each other. Just perfect.

...

Now, Fiona, you compliment me.

FIONA

Okay. Now?

TERESA

Yes, now.

FIONA

So, I've really enjoyed taking this class.

TERESA

Look at me.

FIONA

Right.

(They make eye contact.)

I like your necklace.

All your clothes, really.

You have a great sense of style.

(TERESA nods without breaking eye contact.)

Uhm, you are clearly very passionate. You've found your calling in life and you do it so well. I'm sure you're a great Mom. You're so good to all of us.

(The other women nod.)

FIONA

And I'm really glad I took this class. I like it a lot and it's helped me.

TERESA

Thank you, Fiona.

(TERESA receives the compliment.)

See how I accepted that compliment? See how I recieved? Receiving is almost its own art form.

(TERESA turns to CARRIE.)

Now I will compliment Carrie.

(CARRIE fidgets.)

TERESA

Carrie, look at me.

(CARRIE looks up at TERESA.)

TERESA

Carrie, I am so happy you are here. You have a very pleasant aura. It's just wonderful to be around.

(CARRIE kind of rolls her eyes.)

I mean it, Carrie. You do.

(CARRIE smiles.)

CARRIE

Thanks.

TERESA

You are beautiful. Stunningly beautiful. Inside and out. And you are strong. Stronger than you know. Perhaps stronger than any one of us can even comprehend. You are lovable. In fact, I believe there is a plethora of love in your future. Yes, I see you now, surrounded in light, and just overflowing with glowing, luminous, and radiant love.

(CARRIE is tearing up a little, but trying to hide it.)

TERESA

I want you to know that you are *enough*, Carrie. You are enough just the way you are.

CARRIE

Thank you, Teresa.