

HVAC is so sexy. What?

by Amye Archer

More of the new book...does this work for you?



The basal body temperature is the lowest temperature measured in the body and almost always occurs during sleep. During ovulation, when high levels of estrogen are present, this temperature can spike. After charting your basal body temperature on what looks like a seismograph, for a few months, you should be able to notice a pattern, which may help you plan your sexual encounters to maximum efficiency.

On no particular morning whatsoever, I wake and am careful not to disturb my body's HVAC system as I carefully reach for my nightstand. In the instructional pamphlet that came with the baby pink thermometer it clearly warned against any physical activity prior to temperature measuring. I am frozen with hope, paralyzed with desperation. I slide the smooth pink stick under my tongue and wait. Outside a slight wind whistles through the poorly insulated windows of our apartment. I am alone. You are not near me. You are nowhere near me. You sleep on the couch most nights, and I miss you in our bed. I miss the nights in State College, when you and I shared a twin bed and wrapped ourselves together like a pretzel. I'm convinced we will get there again, that we will pretzel once more, that this baby will help. I pluck the plastic tube from my mouth, write down the numbers, plot and connect the dots and study the graph before me. Within seconds I fling off the covers and bolt into the living room.

"It's time!" I yell. You rise slowly from the couch, with less enthusiasm than I'd ever care to admit. You rub your eyes and drag your feet over the plush plum carpet on your way to our bedroom.

"Where do you want me?" you ask still groggy.

"On the bed is fine."

Our sex life is like this now. What came so naturally to us as teenagers in your mother's house with your bedroom door locked and orgasms only whispered, has become measured and plotted. It's fucking-tempered with science and biology.

As we rock together, I cannot help but pray. I have never prayed so hard for anything or anyone. Dying grandparents, ailing friends, starving children in Ethiopia, abandoned pets on the Sarah McLachlan commercial, they all received half-hearted "not sure if I believe" prayers. But this, this baby that has yet to exist, this person I have yet to create, she receives all of me, every stitch of something deep and real inside of me. She has the prayer of a thousand suns beaming from my belly. I named her Emily, this baby we are destined to create, and the concept of her has crept into me like a virus-multiplying rapidly until every other thought is pushed out and away from my imagination, and all that's left is her, standing there-the two halves of us as a whole.

After ten minutes or so you collapse on top of me with sweat. In my memories it is hot, but in reality it was November, and I have found no evidence of a freak heat wave in Northeast Pennsylvania that year. This happens sometimes. The memory of you becomes entangled in my web of romanticism. It would suit this scene if you were dripping in sweat at the end of it, so now you are. The sweat between us seals our bodies together and as I lie there, praying, with the heat of an unusual November hovering around us, I smile as you heave on top of me. I am convinced I am pregnant.

