



On Being Born and Other Difficulties

F Gonzalez-Crussi

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There is no theme more central to human life on earth than birth (unless it is its natural counterpart, death). With a pathologist's trained eye for observation of detail and a style unrivaled in elegance and wit, F. Gonzalez-Crussi, author of *The Five Senses*, reflects on the largest of topics, those in which science, religion, and philosophy brush most closely together, such as the origin of life in the universe, the complex evolution of human sexuality, and the debate over when the soul is acquired. Drawing on a variety of sources spanning the fields of biology, literature, history, myth, medicine, and philosophy, *On Being Born and Other Difficulties* surveys a vast field of opinions and theories, contrasting the supremely rational processes by which we evolved on this planet with our irrational and often bizarre attempts to understand them. Gonzalez-Crussi traces millennia of misunderstandings to their sources - Aristotle, Hippocrates, Descartes, Sir Thomas Browne, Cervantes, Rabelais, Maupassant, and Nietzsche, among others - engaging them with precision, humour, and humanity. With its unparalleled depth and insight, *On Being Born and Other Difficulties* is a profoundly entertaining work of the highest literary calibre.

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