

Gertrude of Helfta on Maternal-Fetal Microchimerism

by [Mia Schilling Grogan](#) in the [August 2024](#) issue
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Gertrude saw quite clearly how it was:
There were sisters, yes, who had known the same
womb, but it didn't end there. Somehow cells
were circulating: those sisters also
shared some whit of their mother and perhaps
an older sibling—sister or brother—
deep in their livers, kidneys, hearts, and bones,
the microchimeristic presence of
these distant others enlarging every
hour's choir. And far away, in some
cold castle, the sisters sat at table
in other bodies, imperceptible
emissaries from Helfta cloistered in
their mother's blood, a brother's marrow.
What would be so marvelous in this truth
yet to be discovered? *It tells no more
than what we all live daily: sweet honey
overflows the cells that form the comb.
Every body's integral to Body.*