

Birth

By Courtney Whittington

Screams of agony echoed
Words of encouragement to mellow
Push and breathe
So hard in deed
Soon a cry, a baby's cry
Another cry, a mama's cry
The sensation of elation
Unprecedented joy
For this baby boy

It was my first day of my very first clinical rotation of third year. I was sure that OB/GYN would be amazing. I had never witnessed a live birth and was more than thrilled to be assisting in the process. My first day was also my day of being on call and spending the night at the hospital. Of course a whole new world of unknown adventure lay in front of me. I was excited, frightened and curious. We hit the ground running with a 7:00am scheduled caesarean section. I couldn't believe that I was assisting in this incredible procedure. The parents were elated and baby was perfect! I couldn't believe how fast the procedure went.

They day continued to be very busy as we checked on all of the women currently in labor. I was learning so much about fetal monitoring and labor progression. At around 11:00pm I was exhausted.

I had barely eaten and felt completely drained. My attending told me that one of our patients would probably be delivering in the next 2 hours and to go back to my call room and get some rest.

There was no way I could rest. The excitement of day had been too immense and the thought of witnessing a vaginal birth shortly kept my adrenaline pumping. I decided that I would be brave and go visit this woman early on my own to see how she was doing. She appeared different than just hours before when she was calm and somewhat relaxed. Now she was sweating, grunting inaudible sounds and gasping to catch her breath. Her husband by her side, cheering her on as the nurse coached her to push. In contrast to the earlier C-section, when the baby was so quickly and painlessly brought into this world, my heart went out to this courageous mother to be pushing her heart out. Clearly in agony she pushed even harder as the room filled with screams at the first sign of crowning. Her strength was regenerated by the thought of seeing her baby soon. I joined in the cheers. Anything to keep this poor woman going would be necessary. Then my attending came flying through the door. He gowned up and was ready to go in under a minute flat. In a world wind of chaotic chants and maternal screams a new voice was heard. An 8 lb 3 oz baby boy made his appearance crying his lungs out. It was the most beautiful sound. A feeling of relief filled the air. Goose bumps bombarded my skin. I didn't even realize that I had been crying before my attending came over to me and asked if I was okay. I replied, I am more than okay! That was amazing!