

The Miracle of Life and the Labor of Love

“You sure it’s not just that Braxton Hicks fellow knocking again?” I exclaimed. Sure, I was as excited as the next guy about the birth of his first child, but we’d already had one false alarm. I’d just gotten to sleep here!

“No, I think this is really it honey,” Angie replied.

I swung my feet to the floor, rubbing my eyes with both fist. By the time they’d adjusted my wife was waddling off to the car like she could do the whole thing without me. I wanted to get mad, but she was so cute, with that big watermelon belly.

We didn’t get checked into the hospital room until late. Even then I could scarcely get a wink of sleep, especially with all the poking and prodding they were doing on Angie. It was really annoying. I was trying to be supportive, but it was clearly unfair how she got the bed while I got stuck in the stiff old arm chair. Angie looked at me like I was crazy when I suggested we take turns.

The baby was not very cooperative either. Little Kailey, as we had dubbed her, was obviously in no hurry to leave the nest. The whole next day we played hurry up and wait, and every time I’d try to nod off that dumb machine would start beeping. I wanted to get mad, but Angie just looked so cute lying there having her little contractions.

By late evening the whole thing had begun to resemble some weird sort of hostage negotiation. Little Kailey girl had apparently barricaded herself in, and seemed willing to wait us out. I called to her, tried to reason, but she wouldn’t come out. In desperation the nurses set up a perimeter around Angie and the doc snuck in and broke the water. This covert operation was pulled off with such surgical precision I began to wonder why these doctors say their just practicing medicine.

However, their efforts yielded little effect, and the standoff continued throughout the night and into the next morning. Eventually the nurses announced that Kailey was threatening to make an appearance. They promised after a big push or two we should all be able to get some sleep. (Of course, later I was to find out different, since after the baby is born is when the real sleep deprivation begins.)

Angie started to push. Right off I was glad I’d gone to the Lamaze class. Her breathing was all over the place! Frankly I’m not sure she would’ve been able to get through the next two hours without my coaching. Yes, TWO HOURS!!! Poor thing; sweating, working so hard, trying to be brave. You’d have felt so sorry for me. Angie had it pretty rough too. In fact, she had nearly strained her eyeballs out of socket by the time the doctor finally came in.

“Oh,” the Doc said, “It looks like baby girl just needs to be straightened up a bit. You’ve been pulling her around a corner.” The doctor made a little push on Angie’s side and immediately the baby’s head began to come out.

“Hold on Mrs. Sheffield,” she said in all her early morning freshness, “Don’t get in a hurry. Let me get my scrubs on.” I growled. Angie did too.

However, all our anger ceased once little Kailey joined us. She was so beautiful. She instantly stole my heart. I turned to clutch Angie’s hand. Our lives had been forever changed. Such love for her welled up in my heart. Angie and I would ride together on a higher plain now. She had been truly amazing; heroic in my eyes.

But anyway- The whole process had been miraculous to me; the conception, the pregnancy, and now concluding with the birth. I couldn’t explain away what I’d just witnessed. God is real. Adding a few more million years to the evolutionary theories I clung to at the time could never satisfy or quench the questions arising from the wonderment of this birth. How could this bundle of love I now held in my arms have ever spun from a glob of pond scum? Ridiculous!

I’d just witnessed the miracle of life, the labor of love, and the inherent struggle a woman endures to bring them forth. It caused me to become deeply aware of my new role as dad. I must become a man. How could I possibly walk away the same little boy when I’d just been privileged enough to brush up against the hand of God at work?

It wasn’t long after our hospital stay that we began attending Church as a family. There I eventually gave my life to Jesus and was born again. Ironically, the Lord had used one birth to help facilitate another one! It’s cool, now little Kailey and I can grow up together. (*When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things.* **1 Corinthians 13:11** NLT)

-Guy Sheffield 7-21-06