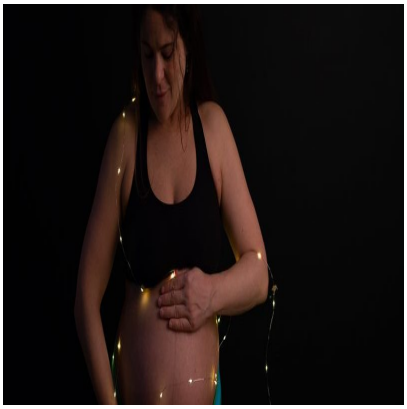

Description

Letter to a very special mother

Pamela Evans – First year student midwife

Dear Laura (pseudonym),

You won't know this, but being present at your home birth was the very first time I witnessed childbirth. You asked me when I came into your home if I had seen many births, to which I responded 'a few'. I lied.

You won't know this, but I felt like a spare part. You had the support of your partner and an experienced midwife. What could I bring to your experience? How could I help? I'd had a hospital birth, epidural, episiotomy and an eventual instrumental delivery. I felt like an imposter.

You won't know this, but as you transitioned and got low down to the ground, my heart was in my mouth. I was full of dread at what I was seeing; the bulging of your son's head as he descended, the show which presented before you crowned, the poo which my mentor wiped away. Would you tear? I didn't think I could bare to see that.

You won't know this, but in that moment, I wondered if I could be a midwife. Did I have what it takes? Maybe I'd got this all wrong.

You won't know this, but as you moaned and groaned and said, '*I can't do this anymore'*, I was thinking '*neither can I'*. Could I leave the room? The door was a way away and I would have to go around you. Of course, I couldn't leave. I am a student. I had to learn and here it was; learning in its rawest form.

You won't know this, but as you breathed through contractions, I was breathing with you. I was on my own journey in that room. But it wasn't about me or how I felt. This moment was about you and your family. So, I watched. I shone a light so my mentor could see what was happening. I held a bag for waste disposal.

You won't know this, but as you held your breath and pushed, I was holding my breath too. Your son's head was delivered. How were you doing this? How does any woman do this? How did ***I*** do this? Then came restitution. '*The next contraction and he'll be out*' my mentor reassured you. And then there he was.

You won't know this, but I was bowled over at how this entire baby had just come out of you. I watched you take off your wet top so you could hold him skin-to-skin and had a sudden urge to run home and hold my baby. *'Congratulations both of you'* I said hoping you knew that I wanted to say so much more. I wanted to say all of what I've written in this letter.

You won't know this, but I haven't stopped thinking about you since we left, and I'll never forget the experience you gave me.

Lots of love

Pamela (first-year student midwife)

Category

1. All4Maternity Blog
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Tags

1. home birth
2. physiological birth
3. student midwife

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