

The almost unassisted birth of Suriya Skye



Suriya Skye was born Friday, February 9th, 2007 at 4:10am. She weighed 8 pounds 4 ounces and was 21 inches long.

At about 10pm Thursday I went to bed with Jim and Winter. I'd been having contractions off and on for a couple of days, and I was that night as well, but I didn't think anything would happen that night. As previous nights, I was up and out of bed 3 times in the next 2 hours, unable to sleep through the contractions I was

having.

Around midnight something changed, and suddenly my contractions got much more intense and started coming closer together. I knew this was different from what I'd been experiencing the last couple of days, and was relieved to say I was finally in true labor. I called my midwife since she had an hour long drive to my house and then woke Jim at about 1am. I didn't even really have to say anything, he knows me well enough to know I wouldn't have woken him for anything else. He started to fill the pool.

About 1:45 I started to have trouble coping with the intensity of my contractions, and thinking that birth was still many hours away, I started to doubt that I had the strength to make it through such hard labor. I had a very intense feeling of pressure in my cervix and it was difficult to handle, to say the least.

My midwife and her apprentice arrived at about 2am and I was so relieved to see them. They listened to the baby's heartbeat and then sat quietly at my dining room table. Things intensified even more and I got pretty hysterical, sobbing to Jim that I wanted to stop, that I was tired and wanted to go back to bed. At some point, my midwife came over and comforted me, telling me it wouldn't be much longer. In my head I thought she was crazy because there was no way I was almost done already. She then returned to my dining room table and let Jim and I do what we needed to do.

I clung to Jim like he was a life raft. He continued to offer me support and rubbed my back constantly. At some point, they suggested I try the water, and after a little coaxing I got into the pool. I still didn't believe I was anywhere near being done. I asked Pam to check me but she said it wasn't necessary. The curiosity got the better of me and I checked for myself. I was surprised by running into my baby's soft, fuzzy head just barely inside. I started to push just to see what would happen. I was physically very tired and I think the baby was positioned strangely, so the pushing was slow going and I started to get frustrated.

At one point, I begged my midwife to just get her out. She just offered me calm reassurance that I was doing fine. I shrieked a little too loud and woke Winter and suddenly Jim was gone. I sobbed into the side of the pool that I could not do this without him. Lennon came and tried to offer me support but I just wanted Jim and no one else. I admired Lennon, in hindsight, for

realizing how much I needed support in those few moments.

After what seemed like days, he came back and I laid my face on his hands and his arms. His presence was like a soothing balm for me and with some renewed strength I started to push. I tried various positions and suddenly her head slipped past the pubic bone and I was holding the top of her head in my palm. "She's crowning," I whispered. Her head barely filled my palm and I was completely in awe of how tiny her head was. I stayed in that moment, just realizing my baby was moments from being born and this was my last chance to hold her with all of me. It is a moment I will carry with me for all my life. I whispered "She's coming." I pushed gently until her head came most of the way out. "Catch the baby, honey," I told Jim. I pushed her out into his hands in one push. He lifted her out of the water and handed her to me. We marveled at how tiny she was since our last baby was over 10 lbs. She was remarkably smaller.

After looking over every inch of her, we were elated to see our little baby was a girl. I tore my eyes away from her face for just one moment to give my wonderful partner a kiss. Unspoken words passed between us; My gratitude for his support, his pride in my strength. We had created this baby together, and now we had birthed her together. Our attention wandered back to the baby and I sat down and held my baby girl while Jim went to wake the older two boys. They came out of their bedrooms rubbing sleepy eyes and I invited them to see their baby sister. The looks on their faces was priceless and beautiful.

I started to get cold so I got out to sit on the birth stool to try to get the placenta out. I offered my breast to the baby to try and encourage my uterus to contract and push the placenta out, because it felt very boggy and heavy to me. Jim got up and cooked me some breakfast. He sat there feeding me while I tried to push the placenta out but the strength was completely gone from my body. I really wanted to lay down and I was suddenly feeling very weak and tired. I asked Pam to perform cord traction and the placenta finally emerged but there were some big clots behind it and I suddenly felt dizzy and very tired. I looked down at my arms and hands and they were sheet white. Jim said my face was just as white. I had no choice but to lay down.

They cleaned me up, checked for tears and I got dressed but even that small task wore me out to the point I was panting and feeling faint. They headed home after instructing me to rest and drink fluids. The next few hours were really difficult because I felt awful and getting up to go to the bathroom was like running a marathon. I crawled on the floor, stopping to lay down every few feet. I soaked through pads like crazy and had to change my clothes every time I got to the bathroom.

Thankfully, after a few hours the bleeding slowed. Everyone was pretty concerned about me at first, but I was able to take it easy for a couple of weeks with Jim home from work. It was a more difficult recovery than my previous births, but overall, it was a really awesome birth and I love and appreciate my midwife and her apprentice for being there when I needed them and not there when I didn't. They really respected my wishes, didn't interfere, and just allowed my birth to unfold naturally.