

Birth

By

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Rising Action:

When they reached Joe's house, Joe, told him that he would not go inside but he was confident of Andrew's capabilities. A stout, elderly midwife was waiting beside the patient. Mrs. Morgan's mother offered Andrew a cup of tea as she knew it was going to take quite some time.

Climax:

At half-past three the nurse called Andrew up, and after a long struggle, at dawn, a child was born, lifeless. The doctor was torn between his two obligations, whether to resuscitate the child or to save the failing mother.

Falling Action:

With blind instinct, he first gave the child into the nurse's custody and went on to tend to Susan whose health was deteriorating fast. The anesthetic was clouding over the woman's strength and after the doctor's frantic efforts, he was able to somewhat stabilize the woman's condition.

Beginning:

Andrew Mason reaching Bryngower at nearly midnight, found Joe Morgan waiting for him. On seeing Andrew, he expressed a sense of relief and informs Andrew that his wife has started the process of labor and is before time too.

Anticlimax:

Andrew turned to the pale stiff child and concluded that it must be the result of asphyxia or pallida, a condition caused by the lack of oxygen supply to the body. He submerged the child alternatively in hot and cold-water bowl for over 15 mins without any positive response from the child. As a last desperate effort, Andrew began rubbing the limp chest of the child with a rough towel, almost crushing it. Then almost like a miracle a miracle, the child's chest heaved and let out a tuft

Background/ Setting:

The story is an excerpt from Cronin's widely read novel 'The Citadel' which narrates the experiences of a newly just-out-of-school doctor, who goes to a Welsh mining town of Blaenelly to assist a Dr. Edward Page. The novel traces his evolution from a doctor in the mines to a medical practitioner in London. The book talks about various unconventional and controversial new ideas about medical ethics. This story is one such experience.

Characters:

There are six major characters:

- **Dr. Andrew Manson:** Newly qualified, takes the job as an assistant to Dr. Page
- **The Midwife:** An experienced nurse to help in the child birth
- **Joe Morgan:** well built person in his forties
- **Mrs. Morgan:** Joe's wife; expecting their first child
- **Christine:** A school teacher, Andrew falls in love with
- **Morgan's Mother**

Themes:

- Ordeal of life vs Ordeal of giving life
- Sacrificing love
- Strength of character
- Focusing on finding a solution rather than the problem
- Selfless action
- Satisfaction at doing something worthwhile
- Difference between textbook medicine and the world of practicing medicine