

And there was light!



They met on the first Saturday of Autumn in 2015. In the bus. She had just arrived in the city. You could tell from the map in her hand. He came in the bus with his food stock from the Turkish market. When his friend got off, he went to sit next to her. Her eyes went from the map to the screen with the stops and again to the map. The next stop he told her: *'Roseggerhaus'*. She was supposed to get off but stayed. She was white as snow, he was black as ebony. Love blossomed when the trees lost their leaves.

Late winter he asked her: *'Do you want to marry me?'* and before she could give an answer, the engagement ring was on her finger. Not one with a diamond, she didn't like diamonds.

In Spring her breasts got bigger, her period changed. The test showed no but one month later a child was growing in her.

Summer was warm and her belly started showing.

They were both born at home. That felt safer, more in control. The hospital was not far from their house. They could go there if needed. They started looking for someone that could help them at home. They phoned Josy. Yes, she could help. And it was fine to meet her next month. The mother left to Belgium.

And came back. They met Josy. And she was even nicer than expected. The couple got married. And the mother left again and came back at the beginning of Winter. They were going to have a baby girl!! She could come any moment from now. It was getting colder and snow was falling.

They met Josy again to talk about all the details and ask and answer questions. The mother was reassured, Josy knew how she wanted to have her perfect birth even better than herself. The midwife gave the information she needed to know and didn't even think about asking about.

Due date was coming closer. Josy brought the magic birth bath. Would the baby come a bit earlier, like the parents did?

Due date. Would the baby come now?

Could this be the beginning? Was this the water breaking?

A few days later. The grandmother-to-be arrived in Austria. Maybe the baby was waiting for her. Maybe the baby wanted to be an Aquarius, like the mother. Time past and her Zodiac sign changed. Hopefully she was not waiting for the month to change too, because we didn't have time to wait for that. The baby could come whenever she felt like coming. But not too late. The mother was worried that they would have to be induced in the hospital. Josy said that a hospital birth can be very nice too. She took away the worries. There was still enough time. She gave some exercises to welcome the baby.

They were sure now, the baby was not conceived early, but late.

Sunday, one week after due date. Church was celebrating the family.

'When is the baby coming?'

'Any moment from now. Maybe even today.'

'No, not today, you wouldn't be here if it would be today.'



Back home. The grandmother-to-be noticed it first.

'Are you fine?'

Yes, the mother was. Just a bit uncomfortable. Hmm, would this be the start? Six o'clock in the evening. They started timing. Start ... stop. Start ... stop. Yes, this were contractions. Quite regular, 8 minutes apart. Though she could still talk during contractions. They called Josy at seven.

'Since six o'clock in the morning?'

No, if that would be the case, she would have called! Is she exaggerating?

'Wait and see how it develops. Call again when you would like to have me there.'

They started to heat water to add to the water in the bath. The mother was not interested, they bothered to much about the bath. They called again at eight. Josy had to drive for an hour. Better a bit too early than too late. The mother could not find a good position. She vomited.

Josy came in around nine. It felt different than before. All politeness and façade was gone. This was the real thing. The mother thought that things would change when Josy was there, but it was just the same. Josy was just sitting and waiting, watching. Now and then she listened to the heartbeat of the baby. Between contractions the mother asked: *'So, what's next.'*

Josy could feel the centimeters if the mother would like it. She didn't. A massage could help. Josy tried, but the mother didn't want to be touched. The father could hold her. Just hold! No caressing, the mother didn't like that. She could breathe out with 'ah' instead of 'ff' to open up more. Maybe the water of the bath would help. The mother kept repeating *'It's okay. It's okay.'* during contractions. We could try different positions. But it never came to that. She felt like the contractions were not going away, even in between contractions there was a soft contraction, it was never fully relaxed. (Josy later told her these are called camelcontractions.) How long would this go on? What's the next step? She vomited again. Maybe she could go in the water to relax. Since they insisted. She went to the toilet. Clothes out, she went in the water. Still no good position. Laying back, no. Leaning forward, no. But a bit better. She felt like she was holding back. She was stretching and the baby was moving down.

Pouf, the water broke. This was not something that could pass by unknowingly like she thought when she was waiting for the start. Josy felt for the first time to know if the umbilical cord was not in the opening. It was all fine. She could lay on her left side.

Around eleven already. Would this baby be born today, like her 2 cousins, or tomorrow?

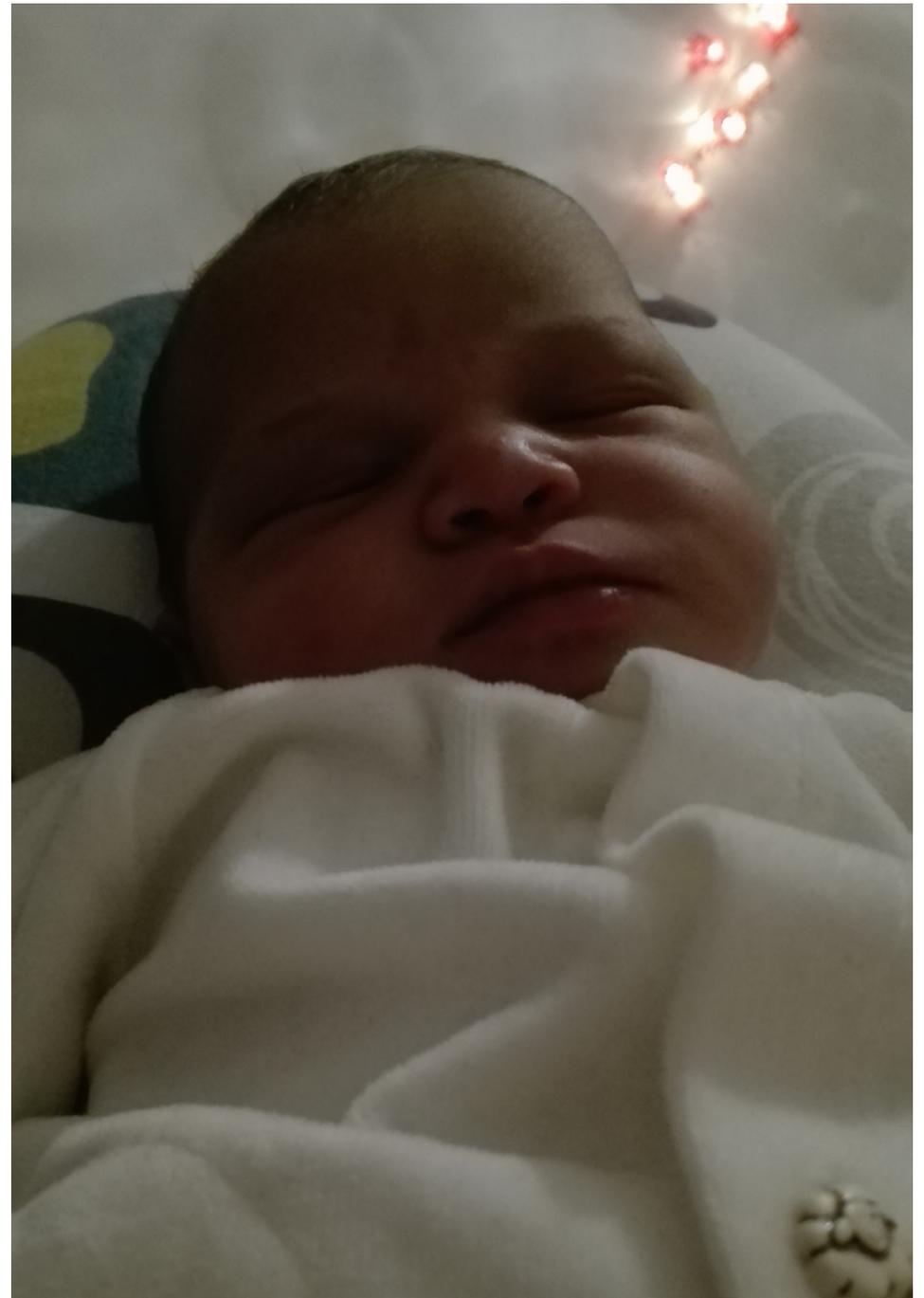
The father and grandmother were warming water and filling the bath more. And then it became silent and dark. The electricity went off! She couldn't bother less. He tried to fix it. She told him to stay. This baby would come soon. They bothered too much, first the hot water and the bath, now the light and the heater. She couldn't bother less. The grandmother used a smartphone to give light. The water and the blue pool looked like a dolphinarium.

She was pushing with the contractions. The baby was having hair! She could feel it. Every contraction brought the baby a little bit further. She was coming. The mother told the father to stay. He didn't need to fix the light now, they didn't need light for now. This baby was about to come and he should be there when his baby was born.

Pouf, there was the head. And pouf, the shoulders and the rest of the body. The baby turned and swam to the mother's chest. The umbilical cord was still holding the baby and the mother together. The mother made sure she wasn't too deep in the water so the baby wouldn't go under water.

The insecurity of what would come and how long it would take was the most difficult part.

Josy interfered as less as possible. It all went very natural and organic. But the work was not finished when the baby arrived. That's when it all just started.



The father cut the umbilical cord and held the baby. The mother came out of the bath and went to the bed. The baby was put on her chest again. Now the placenta was to be born. At least she had this beautiful baby to look at already. Puff, two times pushing and a little help from Josy and it was out. It looked good. Meanwhile the father tried to fix the electricity to have light and warmth. His uncle came but couldn't help much. They called someone from the electricity company.

The baby was drinking from the breast for the first time. It seemed a perfect latch, though it was hurting a bit after the baby drank.

Still with the light of the phone, Josy looked if there were tears and if stitches were needed. It was torn a little bit. The mother could choose if she wanted stitches or let it heal without. Josy used an anesthetic spray and stitched it.

The electricity man came. There was light! And warmth, maybe even more important with a newborn in the house.

Finally, examination of the baby: 3.900 kg and 51 cm. Named Ebuwa Eleanor, meaning midst of wealth and foreign light.

The next days another midwife came to look at the mother and baby. The mother underestimated the recovering. The first days she was lying in bed, feeding the baby or holding the baby while sleeping. The new life was the middle point of their lives for now. The breastfeeding didn't go as easy as she thought and the stitches were a bit swollen while healing. Giving birth was easy compared to this, that's when it all just started.

After one week Josy came again and they talked about the birth and the first days of the new life.

Thank you for the helping hand in this life changing experience!

