



The Wittmers—Heinz (with pipe), oldest son Harry, little Rolf, and Margret—dine in the house they built with their own hands. Rolf's birth on Floreana is told in this episode.

Heinz and Harry must be in the bush. Perhaps they were following the tracks of a bull. Yes, I'd go into the bush, too, just to find them, not to be alone.

There was a straw pallet on the ground. I nearly tripped over it. Straw! But I had a bed, a real bed. With white linen on it.

For a moment everything went blank. My legs wouldn't hold me any more. Then all at once I felt as light as a feather. The straw—I let myself drop down on it. I lay there, unable to move. "Heinz! Heinz!" This time I screamed so loud that I started in terror at my own voice.

I lay quite still. There was a rustling at the entrance to the cave, an eerie rustling. It was still dark outside. An owl hooted. Then I heard a bull bellow! The bellowing came nearer and nearer! He must be here



Heinz and son Harry admire newborn Rolf.

by now, somewhere very near me.

He gave another bellow, a bellow of rage and pain, as if he were mortally wounded. Heinz had shot him less than three yards from me! I broke into a cold sweat, tried to call out, but no sound came.

Then I heard a cry. It didn't come from me. A short, shrill, squeaky, penetrating cry. It didn't come from me, nor from Heinz—it was the first cry of our newborn child! The child was there. I couldn't take it all in. I was too weak, too helpless. I didn't

hear the steps of people hurrying to me. I didn't see my husband standing by me. I was past seeing and hearing.

Heinz and Harry brought me carefully over to the house, me and the child. "It's a boy." Was that Heinz' voice? I was so weak I couldn't hear even those words.

Heinz laid me gently on my bed, bathed the child, and wrapped it in a big towel that was lying ready. Then the child and I fell into a deep sleep. Heinz and Harry also slept those last two hours of the night.

When daylight came, I woke, and then the pains returned. I knew I was far from out of the wood yet. But the child was there, thank God. That much had gone off well. He lay near me, pink fists pressed against his face, and slept with eyes shut tight. I saw the little face and tried to raise my arm to stroke it, at least to feel it for the first time; but the pains were so fearful I felt incapable of the slightest movement.

NO, THE BIRTH was not yet over. It was over for the little creature that lay near me, but not for me. Though almost drugged with pain, I could sense one thing quite clearly: my life was in danger. The danger was growing every minute, something must be done about it, and at once. I couldn't do anything myself, nor could Heinz. Only a doctor could help in this. "Get Dr. Ritter," I muttered. Dr. Ritter, the strange dentist who had refused to attend me!

"Harry!"

"Yes, Papa!" Harry dashed out.

All at once I was quite lucid again. Harry's eyesight was still very bad—he would miss the way to Dr. Ritter's; he would get lost! It might take him a day to reach Dr. Ritter, if he got there at all. I beckoned to Heinz, who bent down to listen. I whispered my fears.

"Harry!" I heard Heinz calling after him. Harry was already some way off. "Come back!" Heinz called, and a minute later: "I'll go myself. I know the way better, so I can go faster than you." Then he raced off, down to Dr. Ritter.

Three long hours passed before Heinz re-

(Continued)

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