





Balaenelly

IN this excerpt from The Citadel, Andrew Manson, newly out of medical school, has just begun his medical practice as an assistant to Dr. Edward Page in the small Welsh mining town of Balaenelly. As he is returning from a disappointing evening with Christine, the girl he loves, he is met by Joe Morgan, Joe and his wife, who have been married nearly twenty years, are expecting their first child.

Mining

THOUGH it was nearly midnight when Andrew reached Bryngower, he found Joe Morgan waiting for him, walking up and down with short steps between the closed surgery and the entrance to the house. At the sight of him the burly driller's face expressed relief.

Burly: large and strong

"Eh, Doctor, I'm glad to see you. I been back and forward here this last hour. The missus wants ye—before time, too." Andrew, abruptly recalled from the contemplation of his own affairs, told Morgan to wait. He went into the house for his bag, then together they set out for Number 12 Blaina Terrace.

Abruptly: Sudden and unexpected

Contemplation: time spending thinking future assumption

The night air was cool and deep with quiet mystery. Usually so perceptive, Andrew now felt dull and listless. He had no premonition that this night call would prove unusual, still less that it would influence his whole future in Blaenelly.

Perceptive: trying to understand

Listless: with no energy

Premonition: Fear of something bad would befall in near future

The two men walked in silence until they reached the door of Number 12, then Joe drew up short. "I'll not come in," he said, and his voice showed signs of strain. "But, man, I know ye'll do well for us."

Inside, a narrow stair led up to a small bedroom, clean but poorly furnished, and lit only by an oil lamp. Here Mrs Morgan's mother, a tall, grey-haired woman of nearly seventy, and the stout, elderly midwife waited beside the patient, watching Andrew's expression as he moved about the room.

Stout: strong

"Let me make you a cup of tea, Doctor, bach," said the former quickly, after a few moments. Andrew smiled faintly. He saw that the old woman, wise in experience, realised there must be a period of waiting that, she was afraid he would leave the case, saying he would return later. "Don't fret, mother, I'll not run away."

Fret: Nervous and worried

Down in the kitchen he drank the tea which she gave him. Overwrought as he was, he knew he could not snatch even an hour's sleep if he went home. He knew, too, that the case here would demand all his attention. A queer lethargy of spirit came upon him. He decided to remain until everything was over.

Overwrought: Upset and nervous

Lethargy: with little energy and spirit

An hour later he went upstairs again, noted the progress made, came down once more, sat by the kitchen fire. It was still, except for the rustle of a cinder in the grate and the slow tick-tock of the wall clock. No, there was another sound— the beat of Morgan's footsteps as he paced in the street outside.

Rustle: a sound

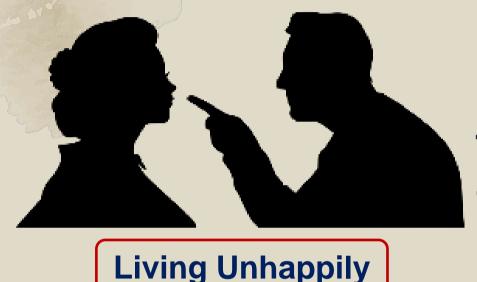
Cinder: partially burned charcoal

Grate: To rub against the surface

The old woman opposite him sat in her black dress, quite motionless, her eyes strangely alive and wise, probing, never leaving his face. His thoughts were heavy, muddled.

Probe: investigate

Muddle: Confused



The episode he had witnessed at Cardiff station still obsessed him morbidly. He thought of Bramwell, foolishly devoted to a woman who deceived him sordidly, of Edward Page, bound to the shrewish Blodwen, of Denny, living unhappily, apart from his wife.

Sordidly: unpleasant way

His reason told him that all these marriages were dismal failures. It was a conclusion which, in his present state, made him wince. He wished to consider marriage as an idyllic state; yes, he could not otherwise consider it with the image of Christine before him.

Dismay: Sad, Hopeless

Idyllic: Pleasant

Her eyes, shining towards him, admitted no other conclusion. It was the conflict between his level, doubting mind and his overflowing heart which left him resentful and confused.

Resentful displeasure to do sth

He let his chin sink upon his chest, stretched out his legs, stared broodingly into the fire. He remained like this so long, and his thoughts were so filled with Christine, that he started when the old woman opposite suddenly addressed him. Her meditation had pursued a different course.

Brood: to think deeply

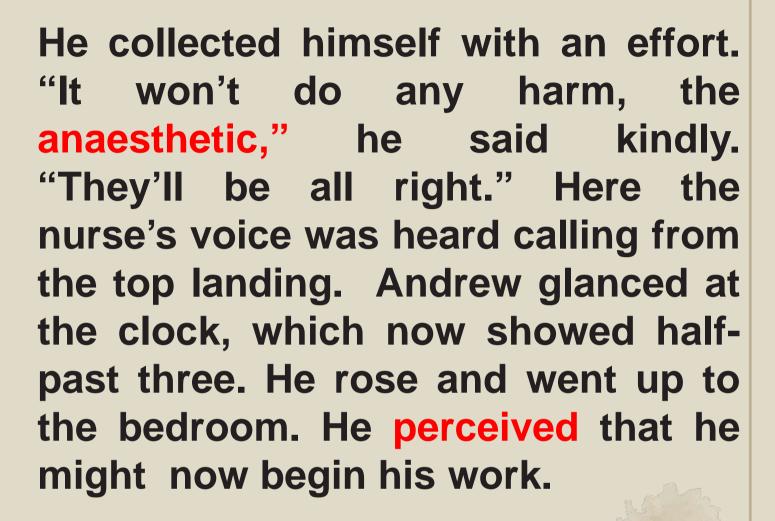
Pursue: to follow



chloroform

"Susan said not to give her the chloroform if it would harm the baby. She's awful set upon this child, Doctor, bach." Her old eyes warmed at a sudden thought. She added in a low tone: "Ay, we all are, I fancy."

Bach: term to show respect



Anesthetic: substance against pain

Perceive: belief



A lifeless newborn

An hour elapsed. It was a long, harsh struggle. Then, as the first streaks of dawn strayed past the broken edges of the blind, the child was born, lifeless. As he gazed at the still form a shiver of horror passed over Andrew. After all that he had promised! His face, heated with his own exertions, chilled suddenly.

Elapse: pass

Streak: Thin light

Exertion: tiredness



Baby Resurrection

He hesitated, torn between his desire to attempt to resuscitate the child, and his obligation towards the mother, who was herself in a desperate state. The dilemma was so urgent he did not solve it consciously. Blindly, instinctively, he gave the child to the nurse and turned his attention to Susan Morgan who now lay collapsed, almost pulseless, and not yet out of the ether, upon her side.

Resuscitate: to give life again

Dilemma: difficult situation b/w two things

Instinctively: naturally



Glass Ampule

His haste was desperate, a frantic race against her ebbing strength. It took him only an instant to smash a glass ampule and inject the medicine. Then he flung down the hypodermic syringe and worked unsparingly to restore the flaccid woman. After a few minutes of feverish effort, her heart strengthened; he saw that he might safely leave her. He swung round, in his shirt sleeves, his hair sticking to his damp brow.

Frantic: life mad

Flaccid: week and loosely

"Where's the child?" The midwife made a frightened gesture. She had placed it beneath the bed. In a flash Andrew knelt down. **Fishing** amongst the sodden newspapers below the bed, he pulled out the child. A boy, perfectly formed. The limp, warm body was white and soft as tallow¹. The cord, hastily slashed, lay like a broken stem. The skin was of a lovely texture, smooth and tender. The head lolled on the thin neck. The limbs seemed boneless.

Loll: to rest, sit, lie

Sodden: wet

Limp: To walk slowly with difficulty

Still kneeling, Andrew stared at the child with a haggard frown. The whiteness meant only one thing: asphyxia, pallida², and his mind, unnaturally tense, raced back to a case he once had seen in the Samaritan, to the treatment that had been used. Instantly he was on his feet.

Haggard: III and tired

Asphyxia pallida: Suffocation due to lack of oxygen in womb

Samaritan: one who helps other

"Get me hot water and cold water," he threw out to the nurse. "And basins too. Quick! Quick!" "But, Doctor—" she faltered, her eyes on the pallid body of the child. "Quick!" he shouted. Snatching a blanket, he laid the child upon it and began the special method of respiration.

Falter: Hopeless

Respiration: breathing



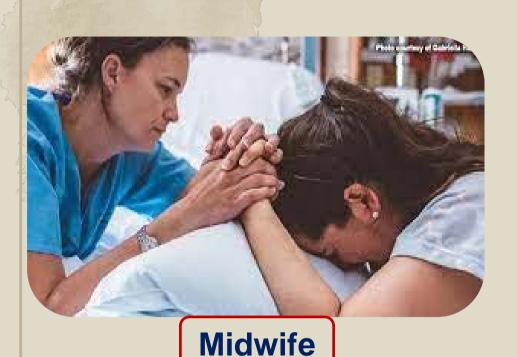
Plunging

The basins arrived, the ewer, the big iron kettle. Frantically he splashed cold water into one basin; into the other he mixed water as hot as his hand could bear. Then, like some crazy juggler, he hurried the child between the two, now plunging it into the icy, now into the steaming bath. Fifteen minutes passed. Sweat was now running into Andrew's eyes, blinding him.

Frantically: quickly in a confused manner

One of his sleeves hung down, dripping. His breath came pantingly. But no breath came from the lax body of the child. A desperate sense of defeat pressed on him, a raging hopelessness.

Rage:anger





Old Woman

He felt the midwife watching him in stark consternation, while there, pressed back against the wall where she had all the time remained— her hand pressed to her throat, uttering no sound, her eyes burning upon him— was the old woman He remembered her longing for a grandchild, as great as had been her daughter's longing for this child. All dashed away now; futile, beyond remedy...

Consternation: Worried, shock, confusion

Futile: useless

The floor was now a draggled mess. Stumbling over a sopping towel, Andrew almost dropped the child, which was now wet and slippery in his hands, like a strange, white fish. "For mercy's sake, Doctor," whimpered the midwife. "It's stillborn."

Sop: to make wet

Whimper: to say softly with fear

Andrew did not heed her. Beaten, despairing, having laboured in vain for half an hour, he still persisted in one last effort, rubbing the child with a rough towel, crushing and releasing the little chest with both his hands, trying to get breath into that limp body.

Persist: continue unpleasantly

Limp: lax, latent, not moving

suffocation or unconscious condition caused by lack of oxygen and excess of carbon dioxide in the blood, accompanied by paleness of the skin, weak pulse, and loss of reflexes

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And then, as by a miracle, the pigmy chest, which his hands enclosed, gave a short, convulsive heave, another... and another... Andrew turned giddy. The sense of life, springing beneath his fingers after all that unavailing striving, was so exquisite it almost made him faint. He redoubled his efforts feverishly.

Exquisite: delicate, beautiful

Pigmy: very small

Convulsive: a sudden movement

Heave: to move up and down

Strive: Work hard

The child was gasping now, deeper and deeper. A bubble of mucus came from one tiny nostril a joyful iridescent bubble. The limbs were no longer boneless. The head no longer lay back spinelessly. The blanched skin was slowly turning pink. Then, exquisitely, came the child's cry.

Iridescent: colourful



Baby handed to Midwife

"Dear Father in heaven," the nurse sobbed hysterically. "It's come it's come alive." Andrew handed her the child. He felt weak and dazed. About him the room lay in a shuddering litter: blankets, towels, basins, soiled instruments, the hypodermic syringe impaled by its point in the linoleum, the ewer knocked over, the kettle on its side in a puddle of water.

Hysterically: in an uncontrolled way

Litter: small piece of rubish

Linoleum: a flour covering



Upon the huddled bed the mother still dreamed her way quietly through the anesthetic. The old woman still stood against the wall. But her hands were together, her lips moved without sound. She was praying. Mechanically Andrew wrung out his sleeve, pulled on his jacket.

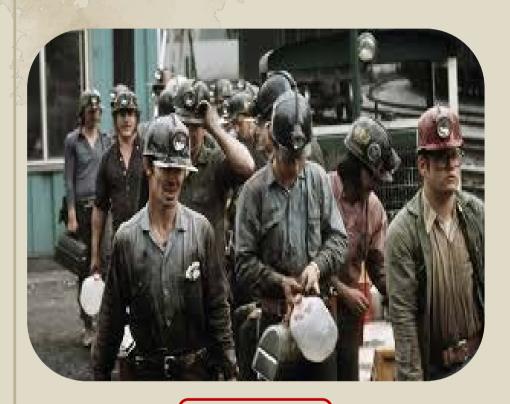
Huddle: a mess

Wring: to hold and twist

Old woman

"I'll fetch my bag later, nurse." He went downstairs, through the kitchen into the scullery³. His lips were dry. At the scullery he took a long drink of water. He reached for his hat and coat. Outside he found Joe standing on the pavement with a tense, expectant face. "All right, Joe," he said thickly. "Both all right." It was quite light. Nearly five o'clock.

Scullery: room next to kitchen



Miners

A few miners were already in the streets: the first of the night shift moving out. As Andrew walked with them, spent and slow, his footfalls echoing with the others under the morning sky, he kept thinking blindly, oblivious to all other work he had done in Blaenelly, "I've done something; oh, God! I've done something real at last."

Echo: repetition of sound

Oblivious: Not known or conscious about what going around