

BABY'S FAREWELL

She was sobbing on the pillow, as the night about her crept.
“It’s not fair that God should take you,” was the whisper that she wept.
Futile now, the preparations, baby showers, hopeful dreams . . .
Wasted, all the pains of labor, muffled moans and stifled screams.
Senseless seemed the fervent pushing, ending with a mournful cry:
Forty weeks of expectation for the baby that would die.
In the midst of grieving passion, as she languished on the bed,
Tears had trickled down to dampen where the pillow met her head.
Bearing him had left her weary, now remorse had made her worn,
Worn and weak with restless hours, since her little boy was born,
So she tried to close her eyelids on the shadows in the room,
Finding needed sleep to drown the empty cramping in her womb.
And she dreamed that he had lingered, staying with her, at her breast,
Not to nurse, but just to nestle, to be cuddled and caressed.
Such a joyful little spirit, swaddled in an angel’s cloud . . .
It amazed her when he stared and spoke these gentle words aloud:
“Darling Mother, you are precious! You have carried me so well!
You can’t see the way you’ve blessed me, but eternity will tell.”
As he snuggled in her bosom, she could feel his body grow,
First a toddler, then a child, with his angel face aglow.
“Mother,” said his shining spirit, “you bestowed a gracious gift.
I received the greatest send-off . . . it was like a special lift.
Holding me with hope and longing, you encircled me with love.
See how fast your welcome nurture helps my growing up above?”
Then he soared past adolescence on into a manly state,
Standing by the bed she lay in, saying, “I can hardly wait!
Heaven is so vast and lovely, every part is rich and true.
When at last you get to come here, I will show it all to you!
You must also meet the Master who prepared it from the start,
He has known the loss you’re feeling, and He waits to heal your heart.”
When she tried to cling to him, as he began to fade away,
She was only clutching blankets at the dawning of the day.
She arose to face the morning, prayed a prayer and read a psalm,
And reflecting on the vision, sensed God’s peace and felt His calm.
Though her arms were still as empty as they were the night before,
Hope was mingled with her sorrow, and she feared her grief no more.

—David L. Hatton, 7/1/1993