

Anticipatory Innovation -
Capitalizing on Change in
Turbulent Times

 KYLEMORE
BOOK CLUB

A Sorrow

There is a quiet reverence
bordering fear; a fog of despair
in every corner clings to the room.
The ER nurse points out the stall,
pulls back the curtain and says,
“This is the chaplain,” then leaves us
in that silence.


I don’t know what to do, what to say.

Standing a few feet from the stretcher,
shoulders hunched over, arms crossed in front,
the mother is sobbing, the uniformed officer
opposite her. Each watching near disbelief
a perfect three-month-old infant
swaddled, a coral-white likeness
of death on display.

“They won’t let me hold my baby!”
she pleads. Her eyes pressing urgent upon me,
glancing to the table then back to me.
Then to where her beloved is motionless,
who she had held, cradled and nursed this morning.
Now nothing but comfortless innocence,
her first and only child.

Lost in loss, no words, senseless, absurd ...

When crib death steals a child,
the so-called civil requirements of law
are a simple and brutal certainty.
The officer’s explanation sticking
like bones in the throat, he wanted to
but couldn’t allow touch, not before
forensics came for their examination.



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Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us ...

She petitions for one favor.
Within her narrative of a sunny room
she painted, the lace curtains, the first toys,
the baptism delayed, she asks now
a simple grace, considered vital to her peace
of mind, she cannot rest unless her child can rest,
“Would you bless my baby girl?”

To Thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve ...

Nodding consent, the officer steps back,
enough room given me to come closer
to form in the midst of her terror a safer space,
our private chapel lit within a hidden baptistry,
a Cross hung on a nearby wall portraying the risen Christ
whose arms stretch to gesture “Welcome Home,”
in a hospital commissioned and named Bon Secours.

A resonance binds us, abandoning
all thought, penetrated by a luminous mystery
guiding us through the cleft, and into
synchronous, pneumatic life. Like rushing waters
we are confirmed in the transcendent Christ
beyond the gravity of all law, in whose arms
he gathers his lambs.

That we may be made worthy ...

My hands trembling, I raise a thumb
to collect the embrocation of her wet eyes.
I pass from her body to her child a condensation,
anointing her child’s forehead where
the sign of the cross now joins them.

“In Nomine Patris et Filli et Spiritus Sancti.”

Then a sorrow no flame can burn.