Bearing Sweet Phantom

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Synopsis and Character Description

A mother copes with having to share the blessing of motherhood with another, more worldly blessed. She grieves for her loss, but her daughter’s gain will be infinite.

Woman: A young mother who loves her daughter
Woman: I hear the nurse say, “She’s coming.” No, no, no, she’s not coming. She’s leaving me. Dear mother across the vast ocean, you are blessed. She will always be mine, but now she is yours. Can you imagine your life without her? Do you remember that there was something missing? It’s almost as if a tiny head that was flattened in the institute just fit in the crook of your arm. I know that feeling, but instead, she was wrenched from me, never to be returned.

Baby girl, why did you have to come out? Don’t you know it’s better to stay inside? The place inside is where you are the ruler of the one child rule, where the food keeps flowing into one mouth but two stomachs, where the house holds two bodies with room for one, where the clothes can cover both of us. It is where you are close to me.

I still see your little nose peeking out of the blanket as I ran away. The bile that splattered the ground around the corner burned twice as hot as it did when you first made your presence known. My baby, I set you free, but I am in bondage by your absence. I am drowning from your bath time, smothered by your blanket, choking on my own milk. When I look in the mirror, I see your black eyes staring back at me. Like the ocean, they spill over and crash on the tile, not wanting to see nothing.

Dear mother, love her. As I sob for her cries in the night, you dry her tears and rock her to sleep. I walk past the stoop every day and am haunted by her rosy cheeks illuminated by the moon. You pass by her room, and whisper, “sweet dreams, baby girl.” I clutch my middle, wishing to feel a kick. You draw her to your stomach, and she whispers, “I love you, mom.”