



Imogene's Birth

How can I welcome you child?
In this atmosphere where I feel unwelcome
In a strange bed
Surrounded by unfamiliar, hostile faces
The face I know and love shoved aside
The other family faces sit and wait outside
Not allowed to witness your arrival
I feel cut off — dismembered.

Harsh white walls and overhead lights, glaring, blazing at us.
Am I the enemy — the dirt — the problem to be solved — dissolved?
Cold hard stainless steel robs me of my warmth.
Little wonder I want the pain to cease, my labour to stop,
you to remain safe within.

Bound to this table we can't escape the brutal prodding;
The fierce gaze of those who would deliver you from me.
They bear down on me hoping to force me to expel you.

I become tense when threatened with the knife,
Ensuring it will be wielded upon me;
Why can't they help me relax instead of paralysing me with fear?
Massage and soothe tense muscles
Instead of cutting through my resistance
At last you show yourself — wanting the ordeal to be over,
Hoping they will then leave us alone.
But the masked bandits wait to take you from me,
Deserted, humiliated, wounded to the heart,
How can I welcome you child?

Caroline Denigan