

I Too Can Weep.

Somewhere, high above, a skylark sings, the beauty of its song lifted into a thousand notes as the wind claims it and transports it over the valley. From this vantage point one can get a panoramic view and here on the mountain side, fierce winds buffet the only creatures hardy enough to spend their days cropping the sparse vegetation, their fleeces turned from white to ochre to shit stained rumps. The scree and tufted grassy clumps descend to where the palette softens and becomes one of bright green pastures, criss crossed with dry stone walls . Pylons rear their ugly heads as man demands his modern twists and down in the valley, sprawled alongside the fast flowing river, fed from many waterfalls on this mountain side, is a little Welsh town with its church, St Davids.

Why do I sit up here with only the sheep to share my grief, exposed and stiff with cold when I could seek shelter amongst the houses of the small town below me? It is not my place to be there and so I console myself with observing from this eyrie. If I train my eyes and focus on that church I can see movement, tiny specks of humanity moving in procession from the church to the tiny churchyard, the graves invisible to me but I think I see the fresh dug plot where the coffin is heading. Tears blur my vision, so hard to contain them.

Down there a burial is taking place of a young child and that child, a dear baby girl, is mine. I heaved and pushed this tiny scrap out into this hostile world. I bore the birth pain and deep joy as the first whimpers were replaced with a lusty cry and it was my friend Anna who cut the cord and waited whilst the after birth came away. Bloody and weak I hugged this tiny scrap to my swollen breasts, this moment, to be forever etched on my mind.

Anna helped me, hurrying back to the big house and returning with a sheet and a wad of this hostile world. I bore the birth pain and deep joy as the first whimpers were replaced with a lusty cry and it was my friend Anna who cut the cord and waited whilst the after birth came away. Bloody and weak I hugged this tiny scrap to my swollen breasts, this moment, to be forever etched on my mind.

A blanket stolen from the laundry and so I wrapped my new born snugly for the short walk to the church. Sadly I couldn't care for this tiny scrap, being in service as I was. With a note pinned to her blanket asking that someone would take in my baby, I laid her gently on the church steps and fled. The word soon got around of this abandoned child and I learnt that a young couple with a brood of their own had taken her in.

When measles struck the small town it was my baby girl, along with several others, who perished. Just ten months old and now the young couple

who had kindly taken her in, were laying her to rest and my heart screamed out as I grieved, a solitary soul, up here on this cold, cold mountain.

'Rest in peace my sweet angel. I'm so close to you up here. Not quite heaven but oh so near.'