

## Elga Logue

### She Never Cried

Joy, sheer exhilaration as the news is received  
In nine months she will hold to her breast  
A boy or a girl? Who will guess?  
Pink, blue, yellow or white  
This child will be her guiding light.

Appointment after appointment  
Eating perfectly for her prize  
Oh how she longs to see those angelic eyes  
Blue, green, grey or brown  
Sudden kicks accompany her to town.

Preparations well underway  
October to June. When will be the day?  
Nervously, she waits and waits and waits  
Healthy fruit and vegetables she has ate  
Nearly there – week thirty-eight.

She goes to bed  
Has a lovely sleep  
Dreaming about the pitter patter of tiny feet  
She wakes up  
Something feels wrong  
A lightness in her back  
No familiar kicks when the tap water runs  
No reassuring movements whatsoever  
Fear, nerves, maternal intuition  
She sits in the car, staring at the ignition.

Panic as she enters the hospital and waits  
Clenching her car keys  
She prays and prays and prays  
Her name is called  
Nurses with machines do their job without success  
A doctor is called  
The scan confirms:  
“You have a perfectly formed baby, but no heartbeat.”  
No heartbeat, no heartbeat, no heartbeat  
The words echo in the exhausting heat.

They called it “Stillbirth”  
Six days pass. A living wake  
Then sudden contractions take her to the delivery room  
A baby girl is born  
A deafening silence engulfed in gloom  
Pink is the colour  
The hand knitted shawl, now a shroud  
Birth and death on the same day  
A coffin instead of a cradle  
A headstone instead of a headboard  
Tears that burn. She gasps for air  
Then holds her daughter so closely  
Suddenly, she feels privileged and proud  
She is a mother  
She kept her promise  
Her love is maternal  
Everlasting  
Eternal