

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