

*emphasis in regard to facts used to be on the accuracy with which they were gathered, and the fairness and balanced judgement with which they were interpreted. Now, he said, we are coming to know that we can make facts. It seems to me that there is much food for thought in that sentence. We need not wait on events, we can create events.*

## References

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## PREGNANT FATHERHOOD

A rush of fear ran through me, sitting on the floor  
 In my ante-natal class the other day.  
 My baby's imminent birth came real for me a moment  
 And I did what they are trying to teach us  
 (Me and Lucy)  
 Not to do.  
 I panicked.  
 I panicked at the thought  
 That I might not love  
 My baby enough.  
 As I am not feeling loved enough  
 Myself by my friends  
 At the moment.  
 And as I felt  
 My own father  
 Not there enough  
 When I needed him.

They gave us a list  
Of all the things the baby and Lucy would need  
When they came out of hospital  
From disposable nappies  
To something called Masse cream  
For chapped breasts.  
As the inescapable reality of this infant child  
Who would laugh and cry with me for fifteen years  
At least  
Came through to me and pierced my heart.  
Say he asks too much  
Of this life I have set up  
Around my own needs?  
I panicked at his endless demands  
On my time, my precious unpaid time,  
Which I am just beginning to claim as my own  
From my parents and the State.

It's so hard  
To be a good father  
When I and others have been so much educated  
Towards mothers being good mothers  
And fathers being  
Somewhere else.  
The tax laws  
And the SS regulations  
And the mores of survival under capitalism  
Tell me to go out to work  
And leave the being at home  
To her and the baby.  
There's no support for fathers to be mothers.

Though I do get a lot of support  
From being with the other people in the  
Ante-natal class.  
Everyone does the exercises,  
Mothers and fathers to be  
Look equally ridiculous together,  
Everyone seems very alive  
And caring.  
They know what they want  
From the hospital  
And won't take just any old guff  
From the senior midwife  
Who runs it,  
But want to know the answers.  
They want a natural birth  
If they can get it,  
Like we do.

All the same,  
I panicked.  
I panicked as I thought of the birth  
We were rehearsing for.  
Lucy's screams and my own  
Merging  
'Oh, God! I can't do it. It won't come.  
It's all going wrong.  
Help!'  
And I am not there to help,  
Paralysed by my own fear.

At the end, Mrs Liffens melted a bit,  
Exhausted by her third class of the day.  
As people wandered out,  
She told us, confidentially, how she liked us  
Because we are such an alive class,  
And allowed herself to show her tiredness.  
And I had thought she was a little afraid of our liveliness,  
Ungracious me.  
She was scared and liked us too.

I know that earlier in the class  
I was panicking too  
At my love for my child.  
At all the possibilities for love and play  
And sensual warmth and happiness  
That my child can bring.  
I panicked at the possibilities of my own joy.

After the class  
Lucy and I went out for a meal together,  
Spaghetti and a glass of wine,  
And held hands in the restaurant  
And talked about it all.

**Paul Morrison**