
NATIVITY

(The exiled Shekhinah will come again to redeem the feminine.
The Shekhinah mediates between God and humankind).

The Chinese staff nurse
And the Jamaican ward orderly
And the Irish theatre porter
All had a dream on Christmas Eve:
A divine baby girl would be born next day in Maternity Ward E.

Sharon Levy was rushed in after midnight
From her Euston bed-sit.
Blood everywhere.
'We must have got the date wrong' said the midwife ruefully,
Holding the groaning girl's hand.
Her Arab boyfriend had left her five months back.
In St John's Wood Mr and Mrs Levy were still arguing.
'No daughter of mine, Rosalie . . .'
'What can you do? It's a love-child, Monty. Have a heart'.

Sharon's baby arrived very quickly, howled,
And fell silent on her mother's breast.
'She's determined to live' remarked the house doctor.

'I had this strange dream -' said Sharon, sitting up in bed.
'Yes', said the staff nurse, and the ward orderly,
And the Irish porter who came in specially to see her.

The Jewish Christmas Day volunteers
Kissed the child on the forehead.
'A little Maccabee!' joked Simon the rabbinical student.
'Then maybe the North Sea oil won't run out' said Ruth from LSE.

Camden Single Mothers' Group sent in grapes, nuts and raisins.
The baby slept peacefully.
Sharon dozed, dreamed; stared out of the window;
Tried to foresee the next thirty years.

Mrs Levy arrived late that evening, frowning.
'Your father doesn't know I'm here'.
Held the baby's tiny strong fingers.
'She's a beauty, Sharon. Looks just like you.
Poor little thing. But I daresay you'll be as headstrong as your mother'.
'And grandmother' said Sharon.

Visiting time was soon over. Lights out.

'Is she coming again?' murmured Sharon drowsily
On the borders of a dream.

Alix Pirani

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Jean Houston is a world-renowned philosopher, teacher and psychologist who has pioneered work on latent human capacities. Her book "The Possible Human" has become a standard work for the human potential movement. Among her many other works, 'Mind Games' broke entirely new ground concerning applications of altered states of consciousness in education. She is Director of the Foundation for Mind Research in New York.

NOW A WEEKEND INTENSIVE

Saturday 14th February 9.00 am - 10.30 pm

Sunday 15th February 9.00 am - 6.00 pm

Cost: £60

Location: Windsor Suite, Columbia Hotel, Lancaster Gate W1. Bookings: £25 non-returnable deposit to Open Gate Trust, 6 Goldney Road, Clifton, Bristol. Tel: 0272 742822
