

Tender

Suddenly the pain stopped,
The only throbbing left being my pulse in my ears;
All concepts of reality left me and were replaced quickly by my new life—
A baby placed in my arms.
My baby,
A slimy creature that produced a scream so high in pitch that it crackled.
I looked down into her aqua eyes that were glossed with tears,
Then to her stomach that was slick from her journey into this world,
And I too began to cry.
I never was aware at how happy a sob I could produce;
I was never aware how something so small could make the whole world melt away.

The nurse's words,
Gentle yet firm,
Pulled me out of my trance, yet not enough where I could speak.
She told me the next step was easy;
I pulled down my hospital gown to allow the baby in my arms the nutrients she needed;
Her hand quickly found my breast—
I sobbed once more.

Such small hands rested upon my skin;
Could I reciprocate the gentleness she showed?
Would I be able to sustain her?
Keep her safe?
The way her fingers curled on my breast;
Their beds that kneaded at the skin,
Their nails that were still so young and fragile,
Even her warm lips that suckled;
It all told me that indeed
She needed me.
But most of all—
 I needed her.