

# The Doctor's Burden

Category: Connections

written by Claire Unis | December 29, 2022

For nine months there have been stones in my mouth, worn smooth from worrying. A lick for each of the sorrows I keep to myself. Perfect marbles kept out of sight, my gift to you.

These months you banished all thought of danger, weaving around yourself a skein of silken confidence too beautiful to rend. Your body ripened and filled with the dreams of every mother, a child imagined into existence long before today. Celebrating the joy you expected like a birthright, you broadcast your carelessness while my tongue grew heavy with words I refused to say.

I was a young woman when I made my choice, opening my chest to receive the pain of others, tucking the burdens here and there around my heart, my breath. Weighted, flayed, I cannot fly at will, cannot dance while others weep, nor sing to drown out crying.

You do not see joy in the life I chose. You whose desires carry you floating at will over the blood that cloy my nostrils, you who imagine your life so different from the truths I know.

I see the wings you unfurl gloriously, proudly. How others look to you for inspiration. You are impossibly invulnerable, beautiful to behold, lifted by adoration.

I am below, beneath, grounded. Nourished by the soil in which I am planted, supported by roots, dumb with worry.

Ready to cushion your fall.

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