

A Woman's Son

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They talk about Him, about His contribution, but what they don't discuss is my great sacrifice, yes me, your mother. Oh, His role was great, of course, but I *made you flesh*. Did I not create you, just as He did? Do you realise what it meant, to give you form, from my own body? And when I looked at you, swaddled tight in your blanket, I saw the great knowledge shining forth from behind your eyes. They say a baby of three months can make out the face, but you could see all, and not just see: *know*.

It was by no means easy for me! There were the consequences, the necessary deception, for how could they understand? How could I ever convey this mystery? Who would comprehend that I was indeed chaste and faithful, to my husband whom I loved? This was simply beyond their understanding. It would have been so for me too, had it not been explained to me in my mind, the *knowing* placed there by the light, that day. I realised I must keep you safe, protect you from harm, as any mother would.

I recall the other mothers' piercing eyes, squinting and whispers behind their tunic sleeves at my over-protectiveness. Oh but this was not their burden, not theirs to keep cloaked and away from furtive glances, prying questions. Worse for you, perhaps, concealing your wisdom from your peers. I knew the amazing potential of my extraordinary boy: *one of a kind*.

After you were gone, in my darker hours, I would look at the sky and in the chill night air, I would scream despairingly to the heavens. I would cry out your name. Could you hear me? Often it was that I wished I could be up there with you, so lonely here. I had no hand in mine now, no reassurance. And lying awake until dawn, I would think of you still. I would arise and stare at the sun; not caring if it blinded me, for it reminded me of you. I remembered how I would stand in the doorway and watch you running barefoot in the sunshine with the other little boys, tumbling together, them or you falling hard on the scorched earth, but no grazed knees for my boy. Never once could I find a blemish on your skin. Your immaculate body – never a scratch or a sore and I wondered if you *could* bleed.

But when they hammered in the nail – into *my son's* perfect hand – there was blood, or was it part of your illusions? And the pieces that don't fit, the little mysteries – where was it you went for those three days they said you were dead? Three days with no signs for me who watched in endless trepidation. The four of them can document every aspect, write until their fingers are numb, but they will never know what I know. None of them will ever know *our secret*.