

Everyone celebrates a pregnant woman
Her glowing skin like bait that attracts fish
from even the darkest ocean floor
She is the happy Buddha,
her round belly to be kept around like a good luck charm
Even the leeriest of strangers smile in her direction...

But something happens during the birth:
it is like the extraction of the pearl
and the discarding of the oyster that produced it.

Nobody looks at a mother,
especially one holding a small infant,
hands buzz around her tired body like a swarm of bees.
compound eyes see a kaleidoscope of edible baby parts
rosy cheeks with skin smooth as flower petals
they go in for the nectar
leaving mother's face out of focus.

After the departure,
I admit to be left feeling a little stung...
Then a heavy little head rests in the crook of my elbow
And sinks into a deep slumber that makes it all melt away.