

Poetry Porch: Poetry

“the book’s been delayed at the printer”

By Richard Fein

I had to go to the hospital to give birth.
My wife drove me there, and we waited.
But no water broke, and only mild contractions.
A few days later we had to come back.
I was assigned a room, with nurses,
who came to check. I waited for delivery.
My wife came to visit me. Only, it wasn't my wife.
It was someone I knew but never saw before.
Standing there in the doorway, pale,
exhausted, leaning against the jamb for support,
she looked like Jennifer Jones in *The Song of Bernadette*,
the young girl with wan luminescent skin,
the young girl who'd had a vision of the Virgin,
in the movie made from Franz Werfel's novel.
She could barely stand up in the doorway,
exhausted from bringing me and further exhausted,
just waiting for me, waiting for me to deliver,
and tired she tiredly uttered, "Oh, I do love you,"
and collapsed at my feet. I slipped over, helped her up,
and led her into the room and she lay down in bed
beside me, her breath breathing along with me.