

201c. her!" but I could not hide the feeling of sadness in my voice because I knew it really was going to be a very great struggle to fight our way through everything that would happen to us.

At that moment I did not actually know if my baby was dead or alive because she was completely black from lack of oxygen and although the Paediatricians were working fast to try to resuscitate the baby they had not yet got any response. It was well after twenty to twelve and one of the male Doctors shook his head about it and said "no" to the women Doctors that they should not try any longer. He refused to try to resuscitate the baby any longer and turned right round and away from the baby as if he had just lost a few pence on a fairground machine and had just shrugged his shoulders and walked away quite happily to look for something else that would take his interest. An Indian lady Paediatrician who obviously had enough right to make her own decisions about whether or not to stop resuscitating the baby carried on trying and would not give up but it was obvious that she was going against the general opinion of everybody else. Suddenly she must have got some kind of response because the loud sound of heartbeats started up again and there was a general gasp of surprise and pleasure as everyone heard it and started to help the Paediatricians including the Doctor who had given up moments before. Once the Doctors could hear and see a sign of life they acted to save it but I thought that it was wrong that when they could not hear or see anything they would give up searching for the spark of life which was still present even if the baby had no way of showing it and

202c for ages afterwards I used to feel an awful feeling about what might have happened if the decision to stop resuscitating had been left in the hands of the doctor who turned his back on my baby. My Daughter would have been killed and there could be no forgiveness for such a terrible crime on the part of the Doctors.

As I was watching what was happening to the baby, the pupil midwife who had refused me a hot water bottle saw that I had a clear view of what the Doctors were doing to resuscitate the baby even though they had moved the trolley that the baby was on over to the left of the delivery table. The pupil midwife saw that I was watching everything that the Doctors were doing to the baby and while the Doctors attention was taken she moved to block my view by standing right in front of me so that I could not see her. I craned my neck to see round the pupil midwife to see my baby but when she saw that I could still see from a different angle she moved again to block my view with her body and she smiled down at me with a sly sneering smile as if she was getting some intense satisfaction out of keeping me from seeing my baby. I suddenly panicked that the baby was dead or something and I summoned all the strength that I had left in order to speak. The Registrar was just standing watching the other Doctors resuscitating the baby and as he was not doing anything else that I would be distracting him from, I spoke to him directly in a panic and I asked "Is she alive?" As soon as the Registrar turned

203c. round to answer me the pupil midwife moved away from blocking my view very quickly before the Registrar or anyone else saw her being spiteful to me and she looked surprised that I could speak at all. As she moved and I caught sight of her hands I knew that she was also the person who had been behind me when I had fallen off the theatre trolley. The way she moved was unmistakable because even when she moved quickly there was a kind of sullen slowness about her and I just knew that she had not bothered to get hold of me properly to have stopped me falling. She had tried to stop me by trying to hold onto the nightdress with her fingers instead of catching my limbs and the nightdress had just pulled through her fingers as I had fallen so heavily.

As the Registrar turned around he answered "yes" to my question of whether the baby was alive and he was horrified that I had even had to ask because no one had thought to tell me. The Houseman said to me that the other Doctors were just giving the baby a whiff of oxygen. I struggled as hard as I could to speak and I said to them "resuscitating her" to correct the Houseman and show him what my level of understanding was because I fully understood everything that was going on and I wanted them to talk to me properly even though I was having such a struggle to speak properly. When the Doctors heard me correct what the Houseman said they became most concerned about my voice because it was plainly obvious that I could understand everything but that I just could not speak. The Registrar asked the

204C. Houseman if there was any possibility that I might be dumb and unable to speak but the Houseman said that he could remember me from the Ante Natal Clinic and that I had been fully able to talk then and the Registrar agreed with the Houseman that he had thought that I had been able to talk properly as well. The Registrar told the Houseman that he was most concerned that I was so alert even after all the drugs that I had been given and the Houseman agreed with him. The Registrar told the Houseman that he would not have thought that I would have had enough sense or knowledge to know what 'resuscitated' meant, and since he spoke so openly in front of me about what he had thought of me the Houseman looked at me listening and he looked awkward about it and did not reply to the Registrar. I knew far more about medicine than just what the word resuscitation meant but there seemed to have been a very big misunderstanding about how much I knew. The two Doctors were having a worried discussion about it and I realised that they had seemed to think that I would ask whether the baby had all her fingers and toes and say what I was going to call her. When they realized that I was more concerned with more important issues such as whether or not the baby was getting enough oxygen in those vital moments the Registrar became really apologetic about it towards me and he told the Houseman "This is not who we thought it was" as if he was quite concerned about it. The

205c. Registrar tried to be really kind to me and he would have answered any questions that I might have had but I could only look at him because I was too tired to say anymore and so he just went over to look at my notes again and I felt certain that the staff would only answer what questions that I could actually ask and that apart from that they would not say anything. So if I could not talk to them they would not say anything to me.

The Indian lady Paediatrician took the baby across to another machine where the Doctors worked on the baby for a few more moments. One of the Doctors was putting drops into my baby's eyes and the other Paediatrician who had brought the incubator up to the labour ward told the Doctor who was putting drops in the baby's eyes to "put plenty in" and I quote exactly what she said, "Several times the dose, because you don't know what the baby has caught from HER!" and she was distinctly referring to me. I felt awful about the way that they were talking about me and I did not agree with what they were doing to the baby. As far as I was concerned the Doctors should have used the drops more carefully on a premature baby because the drops were an antibiotic drug and as her eyes were less well developed than a full term baby they could have been more easily damaged. I was right about that and later on it was a terrible thing to know that my child's eyes had been damaged because the Doctors had thought that I was 'dirty' and had used an excessive dose of drugs. After that the Indian Paediatrician told her Doctors that there was nothing else that they could

206c do and that the best thing that they could do was to get the baby to the special care unit. She said that there was no treatment as the baby was in a very poor condition and that she would either live or die!. She seemed to be saying that only time would tell and she spoke quite openly in front of me as if she deliberately knew that I was listening to her and that I had no feelings that she would consider worth bothering about. I could not understand why they were being so nasty to me and I craned my head to see my baby because I treasured every second of contact with her even if it could only be from watching other people handle her. I felt so protective towards my baby and I loved her with all my heart. I kept looking towards where she was in order to catch a glimpse of her at any time that the crowd of Doctors parted away from her and I was able to see her for a few moments.

The Houseman and the sister who had seen me sweating blood and who had been kinder than the other people, were about to deliver the after birth. The Houseman said "Can you push?" to me and I looked at him just for a moment to register in my mind what he was talking about and then I looked straight back at the baby across the other side of the room so that I did not miss seeing her even for a second while I pushed hard and delivered the placenta without even looking at what I was doing. The Houseman and the sister thought it was sweet that I would not take my eyes off the

207c. baby even for a moment and the Houseman said "Thank you!" when I delivered it quickly all in one go so that I would stop pushing and the Houseman and the Sister both said that they had never seen anything like the way my abdominal muscles could move. I would have liked to have seen the placenta but when I looked back to see it they moved it quickly so that I could not see it and it made me feel awful that they would not let me see something that had come out of my own body but the feeling I had was nothing to do with seeing the actual placenta, it was more as if they were sowing more intense doubts about other things by not letting me see everything that was going on. As the Sister looked at the Placenta she found that there was something wrong with the cord as there were only two blood vessels in it and there should have been three. There was a general concern amongst the Doctors because it was a sign that the baby could have had internal abnormalities if nothing external was wrong and the Doctor who had said "no" to resuscitating the baby, shook his head and said that he would not have resuscitated the baby at all, but it was too late for them to change their minds because the Indian Paediatrician was looking after the baby and the baby was alive. Every time I remembered that moment for years afterwards I used to look at my little girl running around and playing happily I used to sit and tremble at the terrible thought that she was only alive by the sheer good fortune of the fact that the Registrar had made the mistake of searching the baby for handicaps before he cut her cord and gave her over to the Paediatricians to be resuscitated because if he had cut the cord first he might have noticed the missing blood vessel and have left her to die. The horror of the fact that my child was only alive because a doctor had missed what he had been searching for used to strike terror into my heart that my child had nearly been murdered

208c by the people who were supposed to be looking after us and that it was awful to be so small and so helpless in the hands of people who would even rob you of your own life if that was all you had of your own. I knew that if the Indian Doctor had not resuscitated my baby then she would have died and that it would not have been because no one could do anything to help her but because the people who were professionally qualified to save her had decided not to.

The Houseman told the Sister to save the Placenta and cord for Mr. Buckle, the consultant to see because he liked anything that was abnormal to be saved for him to see and as he said that to the Sister I wondered if I ought to mention what had happened to my Mother's Placenta when she had been born but I decided not to because I was too scared that if I mentioned one thing that the Doctors might consider to be unfavourable it might tip the balance against my babys chances of survival if another decision had to be made by the Doctors about her. As I thought about it and decided that it would be safer for the baby if I did not say anything I suddenly realized that the Houseman was staring at my face but he was not looking at me as a person because he was scrutinizing the features of my face as if he was looking at one side and then the other. From the look of horror and pity on his face I realized that what ever he had seen had horrified him and it seemed to be something to do with having found something wrong with the cord.

I looked back at my baby and watched the Paediatricians put her into the incubator. They had started to wheel it towards the doorway when the Houseman asked them "Can the Mother see the baby?"

209c. because although I had strained my head to catch every glimpse of her nobody had actually made any attempt to let me see her and they were just walking away with her with no intention whatsoever of letting me see her. When the Houseman asked the Paediatricians if they would show me the baby the Indian Paediatrician looked as if she was about to refuse but the Houseman pleaded with her on my behalf and said "She is keeping the baby" as if he could not understand how they could be so hard hearted about it. When the Houseman spoke to the Paediatricians and told her that I was keeping the baby she looked puzzled as if that was not what she had been told and she seemed to think that the state that the baby was in was entirely my fault. All the Paediatricians seemed to think that it was entirely my fault that the baby was in such a poor condition and they were all determined not to let me near the baby at any costs but I could not understand what I had done for them to think that. I desperately wanted to see my baby and when the Indian Doctor saw my eager face full of concern even to catch a glimpse of my baby, her attitude softened. She got the baby out of the incubator and gave her to her own lady Houseman to hold and they walked across the room with the baby to show her to me.

The lady Houseman held the baby on a green sterile theatre cloth that one of the Paediatricians had found for her but the baby was only laying on the green cloth in the Paediatrician's hands and they had not wrapped her up in it. The baby's colour had changed from blue/black to deathly white once they had resuscitated her but her eyes were only slightly open as if she was heavily drugged and her mouth also gaped wide open as if she had opened her mouth to breath like I had been doing but she could not draw any air in from lack of strength. Apart from the fact that the baby looked

210c dreadfully ill and I thought that she should have been receiving urgent medical treatment, she looked perfect from head to toe. I took in every detail of her with my eyes and because she had very blonde wispy hair I thought she reminded me of Normans Mother who was German and had blonde hair. The baby was certainly much bigger than I had expected for a premature baby and she had plenty of flesh on her but she looked so ill and I blamed myself for it because I knew that she would not have been like that if I had not let those nurses give me that one injection of Pethidine that had done so much damage but then again if I had argued against it I would have been considered un-co-operative and that might have made them give it to me anyway. I felt so sorry for the baby and my heart went out to her as I looked at her. At that moment someone in the room said spitefully "She will only live to be four" as if they were saying that even if she did survive she would not live long, and their attitude made me feel so afraid because they were so pessimistic. I wanted my baby to live at all costs and I knew that four years was better than no time at all and could be made to feel like four hundred years if I could only pack as many good things for my child into each day and not waste one moment of them. It seemed to me that the world was so full of so many beautiful things that I just wanted her to live as long as she possibly could so that I could show them all to her.

I wanted to hold the baby and I remembered an old wives tale that if a premature baby was put straight to

211c. the breast then it helped them to breathe but I knew that there were more modern methods and my common sense told me that she needed to be put into the incubator, to be given oxygen and to be kept warm so I did not ask to hold her because I did not want to hang the Doctors about or let the baby get cold while I acted out being a mother. My babys life was more important than my own pleasure and I knew that if the baby was properly looked after straight away then there would be plenty of time for the joys of motherhood later on but if she did not get the attention she needed straight away then I would loose her, probably within hours.

I wanted the baby to stay in the same room as me even though she was in her incubator but I knew that the Doctors were going to take her up to the special care unit and the name of the place gave the impression of expert medical care and so I knew it was more important that she should go there than stay with me. I wanted to reach out my hand to hold her hand but I was completely paralysed and I could not move my arms at all, so by using the same technique to move my body as I had done to save myself from crashing back onto my head, I managed to turn my head sideways towards her in such a way that I got my head and shoulders up off the delivery table and I could see her better. I wanted to ask someone how long it would be before I got the feeling back in my body but I did not dare to ask just then incase they thought I was ill and kept me away from my baby. The Paediatrician showed me the babys name band on her wrist on which was written "Baby Maple". and I read it and nodded to show that I had seen it. I felt terribly embarrassed that the Paediatricians were looking at my face because it must have

212c Looked such a mess but I had no way of washing it or wiping it myself because I could not move my arms and no one made any attempt to do anything at all towards looking after me.

The Paediatricians opened the babys legs and told me to look and see that it was a baby girl but I did not want them to do that really because the baby had a right to her own privacy and it was enough for me that they had told me that she was a baby girl. I knew that even when I changed her nappy later on I would do it very discreetly and politely not notice that she had any sex at all because I had always been very discreet about things like that and that was the way that I wanted to be. I wanted the Doctors to cover the baby up nicely because apart from being more modest it would have kept her warm but I did not say anything because I did not want the Paediatricians to think that I might be a bad mother because I was so prudish. Apart from thinking that I wanted the baby to be covered up, a strange fearful instinct came over me that in that area of my childs body there was some small thing wrong that was going to cause really awful, but not medical, problems for my baby and I that was going to make our lives very difficult for us indeed. As soon as the Paediatricians had shown the baby to me they took her and put her back into the incubator. As they were doing it the Houseman got really upset about it and he said to them "couldn't you have let the mother hold the baby?" as if he was pleading with them on my behalf. The Paediatrician who had been holding

213c. the baby turned round to speak to the Houseman who was my Doctor and said to him "What with arms like she's got?" and she spoke with utter disgust as if she could not stand people like me and then she turned right away as if she was actually turning her back on me. The Houseman looked really appalled at what she said and he also looked guilty too. He looked at my arms that were lying paralysed on the delivery table with my hands locked rigidly and drawn up as if I was a puppet and someone had drawn all my strings up tightly and it seemed as if the full extent of what had happened to me was beginning to dawn on him. It seemed to me as if he knew exactly what had happened to me but that the Paediatricians had not been told and that at that moment the Houseman realized that he had not expected them to take things as far as they were doing in their distaste of me. The Houseman kept looking at my face as if he was looking at what had happened to me and more than anything he was looking at the hurt look in my eyes that I could not hide. He tried to reason with the Paediatricians to get them to let me hold the baby, saying "But you could have held the baby there just to have let the mother hold the baby!" but the Paediatricians just snorted when he said "the mother.. and it was too late anyway because they were already wheeling the baby out of the doorway.

I stared at them until the last glimpse of the incubator and then the white coat and sari of the Indian Paediatrician who was pushing the incubator disappeared out of the doorway as they went away towards the lift, and then I just stared and stared at the empty doorway because that was where I had

214c. Last seen my baby. I knew that they were taking the baby away to look after her but I knew that the baby was going to be examined and touched and I wondered if she would hate it the same as I had hated people touching me when I was born but there was nothing that I could do to help her and I just hoped and prayed that the Paediatricians would understand how she would feel. When the Paediatricians had gone away with the incubator the Houseman told me gently that they had taken my baby upstairs to the Special Care Unit and as he said it he gently emphasized the word "upstairs" so that I would know where it was but I had previously seen the sign downstairs saying where the wards were and so I knew already. As the Houseman spoke to me I heard every word he said but I did not seem to be able to show any recognition of hearing his words and I just seemed to keep staring towards the doorway and I could not help it. I vaguely struggled in my mind with a distant recollection that it was bad manners not to answer him but my mind was completely blank and I there were absolutely no words with which to provide an answer to say to him. I just stared into thin air at the doorway and then just into thin air and the Houseman and the Sister kept staring at me as if they were very concerned that I was like that but even though I was fully aware of the concern going on I seemed to be totally detached from it as if I was hiding in my mind from such painful thoughts that did not have any words to them because my sense of hope had been taken away

215c. from me. I felt as if I had fought a long, long battle and had lost everything in it including my confidence. I felt wrecked in mind and body, but even more, because the only thing I had ever really wanted had been taken away from me, I just lay there staring into the direction in which she had gone.

Some minutes after the paediatricians had gone, the two men Doctors and the woman who they had brought up to the labour ward with them from the party, came back from the kitchen. One of the two Doctors asked in surprise if the baby had already been born and when the Registrar said 'yes' the Doctor started to be very argumentative, and it was very obvious then that he was fairly drunk. He told the Registrar that he thought he had sent them away for a coffee while they waited for the baby to be born and he got very nasty when he told the Registrar that he had expected him to call them in time to see the birth. The Registrar said that he did not think that there was anything wrong in them having been to the party but he said that they were in no fit state to be on the wards. He told them that he had sent them for a coffee because they had needed one and he said that there had been nothing wrong with the baby to see anyway. The Doctor asked where the baby was because he wanted to see it and the Registrar told him that the baby had gone up to the Special Care Unit and that they were not to go up there. The Doctor ignored him and he said that he was going up there because the baby needed to be examined and he walked off out of the room and took his friends to go up to the Special Care Unit on the next floor of the Hospital. The Registrar obviously did not want to argue any further with him incase there was a fight as it was likely that there might be because the Doctor who was drunk was now aggressive, so

216c the Registrar let them go but he went out of the room to see where they went and when he had watched them go up the stairs to the Special Care Unit he came back and told the Houseman "They will soon get turned out of there". Then one of the nurses came into the delivery room and asked everyone if it was her who had got to clear up the mess of drink cans that the Doctors who had gone up to the Special Care Unit had left in the kitchen while they were supposed to have been 'having a coffee' in there, and after there was a general sound of everyone's disapproval a couple of the nurses went off with the nurse to clear up the mess.

Over in the corner of the room where my notes were, the Pupil midwife who had refused to let me have a hot water bottle and who had stood in front of me so that I could not see my baby, was filling in a questionnaire that included some questions about my reactions after the delivery. She was the Pupil midwife who was supposed to be looking after me and as she was filling out the form she was reading out what she was writing down to several of the other nurses and pupil midwives who were standing around her and listening to what she was doing. It seemed as if she could not be nasty enough in what she was writing about me and as all the nurses around her were in agreement with her there seemed to be some definite reason for it as if I had done something actually criminally wrong that deserved such treatment and I had absolutely no idea of what on earth I could have done because I had done nothing wrong at all. The pupil

217c midwife was saying that I had shown no real interest in the baby because I had not asked if the baby was normal nor had I asked to hold her or tried to touch her. She told the other nurses that when they had looked in my case for my things they had noticed the absence of any baby clothes and so the fact that I had brought nothing into the hospital for the baby showed that subconsciously I did not want to take the baby home with me which was to be understood because I was unmarried and the baby was neither planned or wanted. I did not know that anyone had looked in my suitcase as the Sister who had washed me had used a hospital tablet of soap, a towelling cloth and a hospital towel when she had washed me, and I could not believe what they were saying about the baby clothes because it had been the district midwife who had packed my suitcase and who had told me not to take any baby clothes. I had shown a lot of interest in my baby and apart from the fact that it was the labour ward staff who had rendered me unable to move, I had wanted my baby to have urgent medical treatment in preference to holding her because I wanted her to be given the best possible chance of health. I had not asked if the baby was alright because I could see that she was not alright and I did not want to give the Doctors the chance to tell me any more lies as even if what they had said to me in the Ante-Natal Clinic had been the truth it had been me who had been right about something being wrong and I preferred to stick to my own judgements and observations. I also did not ask if my baby was normal or not because I would not have rejected an abnormal one. My baby was loved and wanted whether it was normal or handicapped and so asking whether or not the baby was normal was not important to me. What the Doctors were doing to damage my baby was more

218c important to me and I did not dare to say anything about that because their attitude was already hostile towards me.

I tried to think of something to say that would sort things out but not upset everyone but before I could think of anything the Houseman turned to the Pupil midwife angrily and told her to "Leave it out!" He told her that he had seen me watch for every glimpse of my baby and he said that I had shown a lot of interest in my baby. One of the nurses said to him that I had not even asked if the baby was alive until five minutes after the baby was born but the Houseman argued that it was because I knew that it was not until five minutes after the baby was born that they had got a heartbeat from the baby. He told her that the baby was not alive until then and he said that I had been watching the baby all the time until then and that as soon as I had heard the same heartbeat that everyone else had heard I had asked if it meant that the baby was alive. He told them to mind what they were saying because I understood everything that was going on and he asked them how I could be expected to react normally after all the sedation that they had given me anyway. The Registrar joined in the argument but he took the nurses side against the Houseman and he told him that I was a good case for what could happen when a patient had no proper Ante Natal treatment. The Houseman said that I did have proper Ante Natal Care because he had seen me in the clinic himself and he said that they could hardly blame what had happened that night on my

219C. Ante Natal Care but the Pupil Midwife took no notice of what he said. She said that it was her place to fill in the forms and that she was entitled to write down whatever she wanted to. She said that in certain cases a confidential report could be added to what was sent from the hospital to the District and she said that she was going to do it. I had never seen that pupil midwife until I had come into hospital, she knew nothing about me or any of the circumstances of mine or my baby's life and she just seemed to have taken some kind of dislike to me. The Houseman was very concerned about it, partly because he could see that I was listening to every word that was being said and also because he seemed to think that things had gone too far that night. The Pupil Midwife asked the Houseman, "Do you want this covered up properly or not?" referring to me and presumably to what had happened to me. The Houseman told her furiously not to do it. He said that it was one thing to cover up what had happened in the hospital but it was quite another thing to spread it any further. He kept looking at me as if he was genuinely concerned that I did not deserve all that to happen to me and he told the Pupil Midwife to be fair to me because it was important that what went out to the District was accurate as it could seriously affect mine and the baby's lives. Even the Sister who had been more kind to me than the others was concerned about what the Pupil Midwife was writing down and she told her to be more careful about what she put down. The Sister was not actually in charge of the Pupil Midwife and the Pupil Midwife told her quite cheekily that if she did not write down exactly what she thought then it was not 'her' report and she said that what she was writing down was Exactly what had happened. She said that I had not brought any baby clothes into the hospital, I had not asked about the baby

220c for at least five minutes after the baby was born and then only to ask if the baby was alive, and I had not wanted to hold the baby. The Houseman said that it wasn't that I didn't hold the baby it was that I couldn't. The Coloured Sister who had been on the ward when I had arrived was in the room and the Houseman asked her 'And I suppose you are just going to omit the fact that you gave her a drug five times the strength of what she should have had and caused it all to happen???' but the Sister took the Pupil Midwife's part and told the Houseman 'either you want this whole thing covered up or you don't?' as if she was determined to see things properly and then even though the Houseman was furious he gave up as if he was not going to get into yet another argument about it that night.

I felt worried about it all because I did not want any trouble later on with the District Health Visitors and as well as that I felt embarrassed that even my reactions to how I felt about my baby were not my own strictly private business and that the nurses were actually writing down what I was or was not feeling. I was such a very private person that even if I had been reacting to a normal birth I would still never have shown any kind of emotion in front of any other people and whatever joy I felt would have been carefully saved until my baby and I were alone. The fact that I knew that other people were watching my reactions would have made me hide them even more because my thoughts and my feelings were very much my own and because I often

221C. possessed little more than what I thought or felt as being entirely my own, I treasured even my feelings and kept them safely to myself. The pleasure I felt about having a newborn baby was so deep and sacred to me that even if my baby had been full term and I had been able to hold her I would still have been very reserved displaying any sign of emotion and I knew that I would even have waited until my baby and I were quite alone without so many prying eyes around us before I planted her first tender kiss lovingly on her forehead and as that was the way that I wanted to be I felt that the nurses had no right to be trying to work out what my reactions were. It made me feel uncomfortable and that I could not feel free to react normally if they were all watching me because such very private feelings were too precious to be written down on paper by a nurse.

Even if the nurses had managed to guess what my reactions were they could never have understood my feelings because trying to break into my thoughts was like trying to break into one of the safest bank vaults that existed, and it was that great depth of my personality that I reserved for myself that seemed to annoy people so much that they wanted to break into it and rob me of what was there. It was the quietness of that depth that seemed to enrage people and it did so even more because I was just a nobody who owned nothing. If I had been somebody important they could have respected my feelings and have allowed me some respect but as I was not they seemed to become enraged by my quietness and the pupil midwife was no exception to that. There was just something about me that she saw and hated and

222c. had to try to break down and hurt as much as possible. The depth of that quiet sureness that my whole personality was built on was my trust in God and it belonged to him. I had my own church built inside my own body and it was there that I went to for everything so that I needed nothing from other people, and without knowing what it was that they saw in me, people often saw that and hated it. Nothing people ever did to me could ever destroy what it was that they saw in me and in fact by trying to they only made it grow stronger and that made them hate me even more and once people realized that they could not break into it they just had to hurt me as much as possible. The Pupil midwife was the sort of person who would have liked to see me cry when my baby was taken from me and for me to ask her advice and her opinion so that she could have given me some simple answer that she thought was just 'enough' for me to know, but I had not asked anything because I did not trust what lies I might be told again, and I did not show any display of emotion because I was too sensible. The only person I ever turned to for help was God and the self assured quietness that it gave me made it seem as if I was still in control of the situation even after everything that had been done to take that self control away from me, and that seemed to be more than that nurse could bear. Although other things were going on as well, and the fact that so much had gone wrong on the labour ward that evening had a lot to do with everyone's attitude as well, that Pupil midwife seemed to

223c. want to hurt me as much as possible while she had the chance to and as it was her duty to fill those forms in, she was going to do it as spitefully as she could and as so much had already gone wrong there was no one who could stop her.

After a while the telephone rang out in the corridor and one of the sisters went to answer it. When she came back after a few minutes the Sister told me that it had been my mother on the telephone. and she said that she had told my mother that the baby had been born and that it was a girl. The Sister told me that she had told my mother to come in as soon as possible to see me and that she was not to wait for visiting time. I thought "Oh, no!" to myself because I really needed longer before my mother came in to see me. My baby and I had only been near each other for a matter of minutes and I thought to myself miserably that that had been all the time that we had had together before my mother had got in on it all. I certainly did not want my mother to come rushing in to see me as I needed a long rest away from her and it did not seem fair that she should have been told so soon. It was only a few minutes after midnight and since it was the middle of the night I felt that I could reasonably have had until the morning until I let anyone know about the baby as I wanted to keep her to myself for as long as possible. I would also have liked to have told everybody myself what sex the baby was and that had been snatched away from me by that Sister who had not even bothered to ask me if I minded first. In the Ante-Natal Clinic all the mothers had been told that it was a strict hospital rule that it was the baby's father who was always told first before anyone else that the baby was born and what sex it

224c. was and so I had taken it for granted that as my baby had no father then no one would be informed so that my baby and I would have longer together before my family came crowding in on us but the Sister had told my Mother first without even asking me to find out if there was any father to be told or not and I felt that was very unfair to me. Somehow at that moment I knew that if I had given birth to a healthy baby boy then I might have telephoned the babys father at that moment and have asked him to come and see his baby. The awful dream that he had had about me having a deformed baby girl and that I would die in labour, would have been behind us and we might have been able to patch things up between us. At least we would have had the chance of a few precious moments on our own with our baby but now that my Mother knew that the baby had arrived I knew that we would never have that chance. Not only did I have a sick baby just as Normans dream had prophesied but my mother had also been told about the baby first before him which was something that he had warned me that his pride would not stand for. I knew that we would have no chance to get back together now any way as my mother had got involved so quickly because she would see to it that we didn't and I felt terribly sad that as well as my baby having been taken away from me so quickly it was really at that moment that they had taken my last chance of having a husband away from me too. I knew that Norman and I were better off apart for the childs sake but it

225c. was really only at that moment that I finally knew that I had just lost all hope of us ever sorting things out and that I really was quite alone.

The ward sister was still standing beside me and she was waiting for me to thank her for telling my mother that she could come in to see me before visiting hours, as if she had done me some very big favour but I could not bring myself to speak to her. I fought to pull myself out of the depths of despair that I found myself in to find the words to ask that Sister why she had not kept to the hospital rule that they always told fathers first and why I did not count as someone to be shown any respect because I was an unmarried mother, but I only stared at her because I could not bring myself to say anything to her and then I just found myself staring into space again when she moved away. The Houseman and the other sister looked at me and then at each other as if they were disgusted with me that I had not replied to thank the Sister. They seemed to think that I was being rude and sulky and after that they did not make any attempt to speak to me unless they had to. No one spoke to me at all and they seemed to be treating me like that because they thought that I was being so ungrateful but I could not help the depths of despair that I felt and I do not think anyone at all realized how difficult I was finding it to talk about it all. For a long time people were busy in the delivery room clearing things away, tidying up and filling in forms but not one of those people came near me, looked at me, or said one word to me. I was just left lying exposed on the delivery table with my legs up in the stirrups in exactly the same position that I had been in to give birth. It is generally expected that the stirrups are removed after the delivery and that the Mother is given a bed bath just the same as a baby

226c. is bathed but I had no baby and no one made any attempt to do anything for me. They left me exactly as I was and I had the strangest feeling that it was exactly as if I was being treated with contempt or sent to Coventry or something and I had no idea what I could have done to deserve it.

One of the Sisters who was tidying up the delivery room moved the Placenta which was in a white dish and she asked the Houseman if it was to be saved and he told her that it was because there was an abnormality in it. The Pupil Midwife who had tried to stop me seeing my baby, who had refused me a hot water bottle and who had probably let me fall off that theatre trolley, said to the Houseman "Then she didn't damage the baby?" and the Houseman said "No" as if he was getting fed up with her. She argued back to the Houseman that I was unmarried and was showing all the signs of an unwanted pregnancy because I had not taken proper care of myself. The Houseman said that my case was not the same thing at all and that there was no question that I did really want my baby. The Houseman told her that my trouble was that there had been a family row with my G.P. and that was why my Ante-Natal care had been messed up. He said that my baby was wanted and that if I had wanted to refuse an abortion then it was up to me. The Pupil Midwife looked disbelievingly at the Houseman and she said that was not what my notes had said. The Houseman agreed with her and said that they had gone over my notes and apart from my Ante-Natal card and what corresponded with that on my notes

227c. he was not convinced that the rest of it had anything to do with me at all because he remembered me from the Clinic and he had written my notes himself. Everyone seemed to start to give the Houseman the benefit of the doubt that he might be right and realizing that they might be more helpful towards me now, I plucked up enough courage to ask them when I would be able to feel my arms and legs again. The Houseman looked aghast and said "Can't you feel your arms and legs?" I said "no" and he urgently called the Registrar and told him. I saw the Registrars face change as he listened to the Houseman and then looked at me. The nurse and sister who had struggled to sit me up for the delivery both looked shocked and the nurse said "Thats why she couldn't sit up and hold on!" The Registrar seemed to be in a panic as if he was in a furious temper with me personally over what I had just said and it was only then that I realized that no one knew that my whole body was numb.

The Registrar came over to the left side of the Delivery table and told the Houseman "My God! Thats all we need now!" Then he sternly told me to shut my eyes and tell him when I could feel him pinch me. I closed my eyes and although my flesh was numb my mind was very sensitive and I knew instinctively when I was being touched and I told him every time as he quickly pinched my arms and legs. As I opened my eyes the Houseman was looking embarrassed and the Registrar told him sternly "Theres nothing wrong with HER!" as if the Houseman had given him a fright for nothing and the Registrar was both relieved about it and annoyed as well. Then the Registrar turned to me and said sarcastically,

228c. "You can go home first thing in the morning, we don't want to keep you in here a moment longer than necessary!" I thought he was joking for a moment and then I realized to my sudden horror that he was quite serious. The Registrar was glaring at me and I felt myself begin to panic in disbelief that I had only just had my baby less than an hour before and they had taken her away after only allowing me a grudging look at her and now they were telling me that I was literally being thrown out of the hospital without her. I looked at the Registrar and then at the other people in the room and the older sister who had been kinder to me than the others looked away from me as if she could not face me about it. I had the most terrible feeling that there was something quite official about their attitude towards me and that everyone including the paediatricians were determined not to let me anywhere near my baby. No one was joking at all and I felt as if I was in some awful nightmare that I could not believe was really happening to us.

I knew that my baby needed to be taken to the Intensive Care Unit for treatment but it seemed as if she had been taken away for more than just that reason and I could not work out why. What the Registrar said about sending me home shocked me because the last thing I wanted was to be sent away from where my baby was as I needed to be near her. It had been awful enough for her to be taken to another ward where I could not see her but at least we were in the

229c. same building and I would soon be able to see her. I thought that even though there were corridors, walls and a staircase between us, we were still in the same building together, but if I was sent home there would be so many streets separating us that the long distance there would be between us made a strange kind of new fear come over me. I did not want to go home as I wanted to stay in the same building as my baby and even being in different rooms from each other felt as if we were too far apart because I could not actually see my baby. Then I had an odd kind of feeling that I could see through the walls of the room that I was in towards my baby and where she was. It had begun when I had craned my neck to catch every last glimpse of my baby as the paediatricians had pushed her out of sight beyond the doorway in her incubator. I had known that for some moments she was only the other side of the wall because I could hear the Paediatricians waiting for the lift and I had known that if only the wall had not been there or if I had been able to see straight through it, which I so desperately wanted to be able to, then I would still have been able to see my baby out there for some extra minutes I could not see through the wall to where my baby was however much I had wanted to but some minutes later when the Registrar had gone to watch the Doctors go up to the Special Care unit I had virtually been able to 'see' where those Doctors were on the other side of the wall in a way that was much more than just knowing where they were because I could hear them. I felt very, very aware of too many things that I would not normally have been able to know and I realized that I could both see the walls

230c. in the room normally and see 'through' them in an eerie hazy sort of way that was something like seeing a ghost. I felt afraid because I was so alone with it all and my baby and I seemed to be getting further and further away from each other which made a horrible feeling of foreboding about being separated from each other come over me, but also because strange things were happening to me and there was nobody that I could dare to tell. All I had asked the Doctors was when I would be able to feel my arms and legs and through asking that I had been told to go home. I still did not know when I would start to get any feeling back into my body and I felt too afraid to ask anything more because it seemed that if I did I would only be sent further away from my baby and I could not bear that.

The Houseman went off out of the delivery room, possibly to see another patient and when he came back he pulled up a stool to the delivery table and sat on it and told me that he was just going to put a stitch in me. I wanted to be washed first before I was stitched because I felt hot, tired and very dirty after having been in labour, and because my head was so full of all the housework that I had done for my mother I distractedly thought that I should be washed before I was stitched because the washing and ironing came before the mending which was only another kind of 'stitching' from what the Houseman was doing but there was no sign of anyone going to wash me. A lot of pupil midwives came to stand

231C. around the Houseman to watch him stitch me and an awful pain of a memory of nurses standing with a doctor around my bed to do something to me flooded painfully across my mind but I could not remember where it had come from except that I had only been about five years old and too small to save myself and that what they had done to me had made my mother hate me even more. Without asking me, the Houseman gave me an injection which he injected into the area which he was going to stitch up and he gave me that injection quite unnecessarily because I could see the injection go in but not I could not feel it and as he was injecting into numb flesh there was no point in giving me more painkiller which could only make the situation that I was in dangerously worse. The Houseman told me "You can go to sleep now" as if he did not want me to watch what he was going to do which made me feel a kind of panic because I wanted to see what was happening to me and I felt as if I would spend the rest of my life trying to peer into yet another blank memory in my mind to know what they had done to me that I would never know. I realized that I was being told to have the hours sleep after the delivery book that the childbirth books spoke of and although I wanted to stay awake and be washed first I found that I was so exhausted that when the Houseman told me to go to sleep my mind cut out and I went out to sleep like a light that had just been switched off.

The last thing I saw as I went to sleep was the clock in the room because I always looked to see what the time was before I went to sleep. The time was just after ten past one and when I woke up the first thing I saw was the

232c. clock because my head was still turned in that direction exactly as it had been when I had fallen asleep. The time was just after ten past two and it was exactly one hour later to the very minute that I had fallen asleep and only a few seconds later than where the second hand had been when I had fallen asleep, probably as long as it had taken me to open and close my eyelids. I had always been able to decide what time I would wake up at if I thought of it before I went to sleep but this time I had no control over it and I felt sure that my mind had woken me up exactly one hour after I had fallen asleep because it was in my mind that that was exactly what the baby books had said about how long the sleep was to be. My body seemed to be doing things automatically as if it was carrying on by itself beyond tiredness and I could not seem to stop it happening. I was still desperately tired and I felt that I was the drugs that I had been given which were making such horrible things happen to me.

There was just one pupil midwife in the room who came to the side of the delivery table when she saw me awake and said to me "You didn't sleep for very long!" I agreed with her and said "Exactly an hour" and she looked at the clock and agreed with me that it was strange that it was exactly the hour and no more. She spoke to me as if she had expected me to sleep for a lot longer and said that I could not be given any more drugs to make me sleep as they had obviously not worked. I had not

233c. realized that I had been given anything and I wanted to tell her that I thought my body was just carrying on automatically beyond tiredness but I was so tired and ill that I had not got the energy to do it.

I was still lying on the delivery table in exactly the same mess that I had been in after the delivery with the only exception to that being that someone had taken my legs out of the stirrups and had laid them down flat. The lights were off and the electric heating had been taken away because there was no baby to keep warm. The room was in darkness apart from the light coming from the lights that were on in the corridor and the pupil midwife turned on a dull lamp behind the delivery table in order to light the room a bit. I realized that I was no longer afraid of the dark and I wondered why I had ever been afraid of it at all. I felt that it seemed quite comforting to be out of the bright lights and to be hidden by the darkness and that feeling had come from just having faced what people could do to me in the bright lights of the delivery room which had caused me the suffering that I had endured when trapped in the darkness of my own body.

The Pupil midwife was not one of the nurses who had been present at my babies birth and I had not seen her before. She was a very sweet, well educated and well mannered coloured girl. Her uniform looked new and she wore very modern silver rimmed glasses. She was very friendly but quiet and gentle in her ways and I felt that I could not have stood it if she had been noisy or had moved things noisily. As she went to get things ready to wash me she looked at me as if she did not know

234c. where to start to clean me up because I was in such a state and there was dried in blood and mess from the delivery all over me and the delivery table. She looked sorry for me and to try to make the best of things I told her that my labour had not been all that bad, as if in saying it I was trying to convince myself that I would get over it all in time. I was feeling thankful that I had only been in labour for two days and not four days as my Great Grandmother had been and I felt that I had been through a terrible ordeal that could have been more than I could bear if it had lasted any longer, but it came as a shock when the Pupil Midwife just laughed and said to me very meaningfully "I shouldn't think it was 'that bad' after all You had!" as if it was a bit of a joke about it on the labour ward. She spoke as if I had been given so many drugs that I should not have known anything after the first injection and I realized that none of the labour ward staff had any idea whatsoever of what I had been through in labour. I had struggled and struggled to fight my way out of the darkness that I had been in to be conscious and nobody realized it or that I had listened to all the staff in the room and had just not been able to speak to them or show any sign of life by moving my body. The Pupil Midwife seemed to think that I had felt no pain at all and I just could not find the words to even be able to express in my own mind what the pain and darkness had been like and just how terrible it had been. It had been awful and it was even more horrible

235c. to realize that I was totally alone with it because nobody else knew what I had been through. I was being treated as if I was perfectly alright and I was not alright at all. The worst thing of all was that instead of being able to remember what had happened to me as if it was over, I was seeing it in my mind as if it was still happening to me. I had been like that for so long that the vivid ugly memory of what had happened to me was scarred right across my mind as deeply as if nothing would remove it. I tried to think of different things instead to take my mind off it and make what I could remember go away but I could not do it. It was as if there was a screen in my mind that my thoughts got 'shown on' and the horrible and frightening memories of what I had just been through were showing themselves in my mind like a continuous horror film that I could not turn off. I could think of other things if I used the corners of the screen in my mind but only at the same time as the horror of what I had been through was continuously showing itself over the whole of the rest of the screen. All the time that film was showing itself it was as if everything was still happening to me and I was still in pain because it is actually in your brain that you feel pain and if you have a memory of a pain in your head that is behaving as if it is still actually happening then you can still feel the pain in your body because it keeps sending that message out. What had happened to me was so horrific that it had scarred my mind so deeply that my memories were staying as actual thoughts and they were not turning into past memories that could be forgotten. I kept expecting it to pass and I kept

236c. trying to think of other things in order to move those horrific memories on in my mind so that they would go in the same way that it can help to stop your eyes watering if you start blinking for a little while, but nothing at all worked. Even then I still expected it to pass in minutes or hours as time went by and other things happened and I had absolutely no idea whatsoever that it would never ever go. I did not realize that I had suffered so much that my mind would always keep on and on showing that horror film and that years and years later, to the end of my life, my body would still be bearing my labour pains as if there was no end to its pain for me, simply because my mind was too deeply scarred ever to stop sending messages of pain out to my body. More than the pain it was the feeling of terror and suffocation that was worse and if I had known then that it would never go I think I would have gone completely mental. The Pupil Midwife seemed to think that the amount of drugs that I had been given was a huge joke and I was shocked to realize that nobody realized the extent of the horror that I could still see that had been caused by what they had done to me. I wanted to tell her what was wrong but I did not seem to be able to put the extent of what I could see into words and at that moment it was the most difficult thing in the world to try to explain what was going on in my mind to anyone, mostly because I had never seen or heard of anything like it before at

237c. all.

I was very worried about my baby and I desperately wanted to know how she was. I loved her so much and my heart ached to be near her. All I had left to cling to was the one precious glimpse that I had had of her and when I thought of the Paediatricians putting her into the incubator I wished that I had been in their position and had been able to handle my own baby and look after her. As my baby and I were too ill to be together I just had to concentrate on the fact that the Paediatricians were only doing the things for my baby that I could not do until I could take over and look after her myself. I trusted my baby to the Doctors care and I trusted them to look after her. I felt an immense feeling of love for my little girl and yet because I loved her and wanted her so much I was too terrified to ask how she was in case she had died. I just could not speak about it and I felt as if mine and my babys lives were on a tight rope and that if she fell and died then I would have fallen and died too. Wanting to know how my baby was, was like having a huge wall between us in my mind and of being too terrified to ask to look on the other side to see if my baby was alright because I was too horrifically terrified that she might not be alright.

While I was thinking about how I felt and of how my baby was, the midwife was chatting away to me cheerfully as she got my things ready to wash me. I answered her questions politely and I tried to concentrate on what she was saying to me because I thought it could ease the memory of the awful experience that I had just been through, in the same way as it can help to listen to what a Dentist is saying to you in order to block out the sound of the drill he his drilling your teeth with. Even though I was too weak to answer the Pupil Midwife in very

238c full sentences she still seemed surprised at some of the mature and capable answers that I gave to her questions and she said to me "You are very mature for your age" and then she took a long look at my face and asked me how old I was. I told her that I was eighteen and she said that I looked younger than that. She seemed to think that I was trying to say that I was 'eighteen' in order to say that I was 'adult' because I had just had a baby but I really was actually eighteen years old. The Pupil Midwife said that my notes said that I was younger but she checked my arm-band that said I was eighteen and asked me who had put that name band on me. I seemed to think that I had been given it in casualty by the Student nurse just before she had brought me to the labour ward but I had no proper recollection of it. It was on my right wrist and I could not remember it being there at any time while I was in labour and I did not really know where it had come from. It said that I was "Anne Maple, aged 18, Roman Catholic" and it had "C3 ward" on it. I did not know anything about the ward but the rest was correct. The Pupil Midwife looked puzzled and when she realized that I was actually eighteen years old she began to talk to me as a friend and she no longer talked down to me or very simply as she had been doing.

She took out the drip from my left arm even though it was not finished running through and as soon as it was out of my arm I began to feel better and my head cleared and stopped aching possibly because the pressure that the needle had put on the vein in my arm had been taken

239c. away when the needle was removed. The Pupil Midwife got my things out of my case to wash me and although I did not really mind I somehow expected her to ask me first before she opened my case but she did not. I did not say anything and I did not mind but I felt very humble that I was just a nobody and a nothing who no one owed any respect to. The Pupil Midwife helped herself to the washing things that the District Midwife had packed for me and when she saw that the soapdish had ducks on it she asked me if it was mine or the babys. I told her that I had bought it for my baby but that I did not have my own soapdish and so the midwife who had sent me into hospital had said that she would put the one that I had bought for the baby in just so that I did have some soap to use in hospital. I felt ashamed that I did not even have my own soap because at home everyone used the same bar of soap to wash with at the kitchen sink. I was ashamed about that and even more ashamed of having to use the babys soap and soapdish because I knew how important it was to keep a babys things separate from what the rest of the family used. I told the pupil midwife that I would wash the soapdish properly before I put some new soap in it for the baby and she laughed ever so sweetly and put me at my ease. She could see that I was poor and she knew that I had come into hospital rather quickly and she told me that it was alright about me borrowing my babys soapdish because I had not got one of my own. She said that if I had come into hospital with a bag full of expensive make-up and expensive nightdresses for myself, and then I was using all the babys things for myself as well then it would be different because she had seen some women come into the hospital who did not really care to be bothered with their babies do that sort

240C. of thing but she said that she could see
that I had nothing else for myself
and so that was alright. She asked
me if I had any baby clothes at all for
the baby as if she expected me to say
no but I told her so enthusiastically
that I had done loads of knitting and
sewing for the baby until I had created
a beautiful layette all in white, with
just pale blue for the cot sheets. The
Pupil Midwife grinned and said that
there was no doubt that I wanted the
baby. She told me that she could see
no reason why I should not be allowed
to have care of the baby and I wondered
why she should say that because of
course there was no reason why I
should not have care of my baby and
no one had ever mentioned that before.
It was my baby, loved, wanted, prepared
for and waited in eager expectation
for and although there had been
arguments over me wanting to have
the baby and not have an abortion
which everyone seemed to want me to
have, no one had ever suggested that
there would be any doubt about me
having the care of the baby when
the child was born, in fact if any-
thing I had been severely warned that
the baby would be 'my problem' when
it was born, which I was not afraid
of anyway. I said nothing to the Pupil
midwife but what she had said
puzzled me and it seemed as if she
must be missing me up with somebody
else.

The Pupil Midwife talked to me as she
washed me and I was as glad of her
company and of having someone to
talk to as I was of having the good
wash that I had waited so long for.
When she washed my face she said
that she wondered what ever the
awful stuff was that was stuck

241c. all around the left side of my mouth. She moved the lamp to look at it properly and said that whatever it was she had never seen anything like it. It was black and not unlike dried in blood that had gone like a sort of rubberish solid but it was not blood and whatever it was I had vomited it during labour and it had dried in all around the left side of my face where nobody had wiped my face for me. The Pupil midwife scrubbed and scrubbed at it to get it off my face and then it finally peeled right off in one thick piece of solid rubberish black and green jelly. The Pupil midwife held it up and asked me in alarm if I knew what it was and when I said that I did not she quickly dropped it into the black plastic bag near her in horror because as she held it a horrible cold sort of shudder came over her. It was quite large, about six inches in diameter but it pulled into long shapes like a piece of very sticky dough. I did not realize at the time that it was anything unusual because so much more than what happened in a normal labour had already happened to me but as the Pupil midwife pulled it off me a horrible feeling came over me of being in mental torment. Neither the Pupil midwife nor I were anything but normal calm people but we both felt a horrible chill when she held it up as if it was something really evil and we both felt relieved when she dropped it into the black plastic rubbish bag which was the best place for it.

Two years later when Psychiatrists knew the whole story and had taken into account the psychic abilities of our family and my insights into the future as a child they decided that even though I had never touched spiritualism like my Grandmother had done I had still been born a genuine

242c. Psychic Medium with genuine Gypsy gifts that I had inherited from my family. I was told by the Psychiatrists that such mediums have what is called 'Psychic Emanations.' Few people believe they are genuine and fewer still are and the Psychiatrists came to the conclusion that under such extreme mental pressure I emanated mine and actually lost it. I can only write exactly what happened and what I was told but if that was true then it could have its place in accounting for some of the things that happened in the years that followed. I do not believe I hold anything unusual because what was in me was the same as what is in everyone else but I must admit that once I lost it I felt different as a person from other people. I felt as if I had lost something evil from inside me that perhaps might have stopped me from going to heaven. I felt as if I had actually got rid of some kind of evil that might have collected inside me from having lived in the same house as my parents who had been involved in spiritualism even though I had never ever had anything to do with it and when I lost it I felt terribly 'clean' inside my soul.

The whole experience of my breathing having stopped had made me realize that there is what spiritualists call 'The Other Side', a life beyond death but it could be really dangerous to try to walk along it or reach certain people already there if you were still alive on earth. I saw the dangers of voices that could be cruel enough to even sound like your own dead relatives and together with tapping into the ability to know anything you wanted to it was possible to

243c. destroy yourself and other people while you were still alive in a way that could make your soul so ugly that it could never enter heaven. I found that there was a whole life beyond our human life that we can live if we are not good enough to go straight to heaven. It is a path that leads to heaven that starts when we die either physically in our bodies at the end of our lives or spiritually during our lives if we choose to or if something drastic happens to us. When you die you can not take anything with you and there is nothing from this world that you need when you go beyond this life to the next but it is possible to begin that second life on earth if you can enter the same state as dying in that you have absolutely nothing to call your own in the same way that you can not take anything with you when you die. You have to literally forsake everything you have exactly as Jesus said and that state of being destitute can also happen to people quite involuntarily which is why people like Gypsies have spiritual gifts because they do not own much. They live close to the land, have no proper home to call their own, very few possessions and they often know what it is to be hungry and unwanted. Every human being has a soul and a second 'chance' after they die except the very good who go straight to heaven when they die and the very wicked who go straight to hell. You don't have to be a Christian at all although you will become one as soon as you die because no one at all could have access to all the vast wealth of knowledge, literally knowing anything you need to, and not have the understanding that the whole vast realms of space and the most beautiful place in it which is heaven, all belong to God and his family.

244c. In fact the 'second chance' that you find yourself having belongs to his son and even if you did not believe in him before or any kind of life after death, when you find yourself having a second chance after you die you find yourself very thankful to the person who gave it to you and you can't do that without believing in him which automatically makes you very Christian. Before Jesus died there was a final decision at death of heaven or hell for a soul but when he realized that his own friends who he loved so much, even with all their faults, would never become good enough in their own life times to go to heaven and be with him when they died he knew that what they needed was a second chance so when he died he made a bridge between heaven and hell that had never been there before and that path, the second chance you get, is his gift of eternal life, and as that Pupil Midwife was chatting away to me I was not even aware that I was taking my first faltering steps along its path. I was only aware of the terrible suffering that I was going through and of the fact that things were not the way that I wanted them to be nor had I asked for all this to happen to me.

As I talked to the pupil midwife I was horribly aware that my voice was different because I was lispings or something and I stumbled over different words in my sentences. I was talking as if my speech was becoming clearer but as if something had happened to my mind. It almost could have appeared to other people that my mind was blank but I could see the horrific memories that were scarred right across my mind

245c. that other people could not see. I had a kind of 'blankness' about my awareness of things around me as if I was staring at some vacant sorrow which I could see but that nobody else could, and even when I tried to keep up a polite conversation with the midwife, the state that my mind was in was still apparent in the struggle that I was having to speak. Apart from the difficulties I was having in trying to speak, I seemed to miss out mentioning anything to do with the horror that I could still see happening in my mind and if I said anything about it at all as I spoke to the midwife, it was only to say that it had not been as bad as all that as if I was trying to convince myself that it had not been so bad when I really knew that what I had been through had been more than I had been able to bear.

As the Midwife spoke to me she paused in what she was saying as if she was concerned and puzzled because I spoke so lovingly about the soapdish belonging to the baby but I had not mentioned the baby or asked about her at all and she suddenly realized that I was too afraid to ask. She spoke to me very gently and softly but her voice was firm and full of determination to help me and she said "Your baby is in the Premature Baby Unit" as if she suddenly wondered if anybody had told me or if I knew that I had actually had the baby properly. She seemed to be trying to invite me to talk about something that she knew I was too afraid to mention and when she said that I felt the feeling of dread that I had been feeling inside me subside a bit because I knew that if the Pupil Midwife said that the baby was in the Premature Baby Unit then she was still alive. I knew that my Baby was so ill that she could die and I had been so terrified that she might have died while I was asleep for that hour. Somehow all the time I did not ask if my baby had died then she was still alive to me and I could not accept anything else. My

246c baby was all I had and if she died then I knew that I would die as well because I had come too far and there was nothing to go on for without her. After a long pause in which I could not make myself speak however hard I tried, I finally asked the nurse "Is she alright?". The Pupil Midwife seemed relieved and she spoke to me very brightly and said "yes, she's perfect, just very tiny." I had meant was she alright in terms of wondering what had happened to her but I felt so much safer when I heard the Pupil midwives reply that I braced myself to ask the question that held everything in its balance and I said to the Pupil Midwife she will be able to go home with me when I go home won't she?. I phrased the question as if the answer had to be yes because my tortured mind could not bear anything else and I could not bear the thought of my baby and I being separated from each other. The Pupil Midwife looked at me as if she understood how much love and loneliness I was feeling and as if she guessed that there was a great weight of problems behind my question. She thought carefully and then she said to me "The baby will have to weigh five and a half pounds at least before she leaves hospital, she will lose some weight in the first few days, If she makes it up in ten days then she might." The Pupil Midwife did not lie to me, she stuck to the truth and just ignored the fact that the odds were stacked high against my baby going home with me, and told me that if the baby could, then she might. She was so careful to be positive and not put my hopes down because she knew that I was too ill to loose hope just then and so did I, and in that moment of having someone quiet and sensible to talk to so soon after having such a long and nerve shattering experience that girl saved

247c. my sanity. Out of all the fully qualified professional people who later found themselves faced with the problem of how to help me, that pupil midwife with her kindness and gentle understanding was the first to help me just with her own common sense, and despite everything else I went through after that she had still laid down a concrete foundation for my recovery because she was the first person to try to stabilize the worry that I had inside me and she did it very quickly after the ordeal that I had been through which was terribly important.

I told the Pupil Midwife that the Registrar had told me that I had got to go home in the morning and that I wanted to stay with my baby. The Pupil Midwife told me that I should stay in hospital and have ten days rest so that I could go up to the unit and see my baby, and she said "You are going to Breast feed her aren't you?". I said yes and I felt overjoyed at the prospect of being able to see my baby and look after her but at the same time a strange horribly sad sort of feeling came over me as if it was not going to be like that for us and I did not know why. I could have felt a lot better if I could have cried but I did not dare to as I knew that if I showed any sign of not being able to cope with what I was going through I would be given another injection and I had to stay conscious and capable so that I could see my baby as soon as possible. Tears were impossible and not being able to cry when I needed to made the suffering that I was going through stay inside me and that did far more damage than I understood at the time. I knew that I had to be brave for my babys sake and I suffered what was happening to us without showing any sign of what I was going through because I thought that when it was all over and my baby and I were safely home together then I could have a good cry and

248c get it all out of my system then when nobody could see me crying and think the worst of me for it. The Pupil Midwife knew that it was doubtful that the baby would gain that much weight in that time but she knew that she could not say so. I knew it too and she knew I did but both of us seemed to know that I needed some kind of pact to tide me over the state that I was in and keep my hopes up. I made myself believe that I could wait for ten days until I could have my baby completely to myself and in my mind I set a mental time clock in my head to give myself more time and I gave myself that amount of time in which I had to brace myself to face the humiliation of having to let other people look after my baby and I knew that when that time was up that my baby and I could be together for good.

The Pupil Midwife said that she would like a baby of her own and she asked me if I had thought of a name for the baby. I told her that I had chosen David Christian for a boy and Rebecca Christiana for a girl which had been the loveliest names that I could find and I was surprised when the Pupil Midwife laughed and really sweetly told me what an old fashioned little old woman I was. She said that Rebecca was alright for an older girl but that it was too much for a baby unless I called her "Becky" for short, she told me that there were nice modern names like Emma or Jemma that might be more suitable and I was shocked when she told me that I must think of the kind of life that my little girl was going to have. She said that long names like I was suggesting were alright for a little girl with two parents who were going to spoil her and send her to a public school with other children with long

249c sounding names but I must think of how my child would feel turning up at the local day school with a name like that if all the other children had ordinary modern names that were short and sweet. The Pupil Midwife told me very nicely that I was an unmarried mother and that I must not have any illusions about what kind of life that was going to bring me. She said that the Ante-natal and Labour ward staff were of the opinion that I had very impractical ideas over things like thinking that I did not need a social worker to advise me because I could handle my own life and that I could cope with my own labour pains without any pain relief when older more mature mothers could not do it. She said that if I called my baby some long high falutin name like Rebecca then everyone would think that what they were thinking was true and that everyone was wondering what I would do when I found that I had a dirty nappy to wash or a screaming baby to see to. She said that it would not do me any harm at all to come down to earth a bit and that perhaps I could start thinking of what my baby was going to be like as a person rather than what I would like my child to be like. She told me that people 'like me' were usually very practical and realistic people and I could hardly believe my ears at what she said. I told her ever so nicely that I was very practical and that I worked very hard. I said that I had practically brought my brother and sister up and that if I had not done so much housework then I would not have had a premature baby. I said my parents kept me on and on doing house work and the Pupil Midwife asked me if that was what the dirt on my feet had been. I said yes and the Pupil Midwife told me that I should really see a social worker because they could help me to find somewhere of my own to live away

250c. from my parents because that was what she thought I needed and I said yes.

The Pupil Midwife finished washing me and after she had put another clean hospital nightdress on me, she put my things back in my case and started to clear away the bowl of water and things. I felt very much better after I had been washed and the Pupil Midwife then offered me a cup of tea but she said to me very doubtfully that she did not really want to leave me long enough to go and make it as there was no one else to ask to come in to stay with me or to go and make the tea while she stayed with me. She said that there were only two other nurses on the labour ward and they could not leave the patient in the next room because she had not had her baby yet, and everyone else from the labour ward was off the ward on their break. I said that it was alright and she offered me a glass of water which I accepted. When the Pupil Midwife spoke about a cup of tea I felt a strange feeling of danger come over me that I must not accept a cup of tea but that it was not her tea that I must not accept. When the Pupil Midwife gave me the tumbler of water I found that I could move my right hand to take the glass from her but I had to stop and think how to do it first because moving my body no longer seemed to come naturally. My arm was very clumsy and I grasped at the air before I took a second aim and caught the glass. The pupil midwife helped me to get my head and shoulders up off the delivery table to have the drink and I realized that my body could move even though I could not feel it properly. My fingers were also a lot less rigid and no longer felt like a puppet with all its