

A Time for Everything

Sunlight streamed through her window, and Annie wheeled her chair into its warmth. Bright yellow daffodils bouncing in the wind outside made her remember an Easter dream sixty years before.

She had only two weeks to wait until the birth of her first child. She was sitting at a window admiring the flowers near her porch steps when she must have fallen asleep. She began to dream, and in her dream she spoke with the child in her womb....Hello, Johnny.

What? Who are you?

I'm your mother.

Mother? What's a mother?

Johnny, I'm the one, along with your father, who brought you into this world.

Oh? Then where are you? Why can't I see you? You can't see me because you're living inside me. But soon you'll be born, and then we'll see each other.

Born? What does that mean?

Well, Johnny, you've been growing, and there's not enough room for you there.

The life-support system that's keeping you alive won't work much longer.

You mean I'm going to die?

No, you won't die, you'll just begin to live in a new way.

Why should I believe that? I can't see you. Maybe you're not even there. Maybe I'm all alone and just imagining this.

Johnny, you don't think you just came from nothing, do you? Where you're living is real, but the world is much bigger than you think. When you're out here you'll grow tall and strong; you'll run and play; you'll make friends; you'll go hiking in the woods; you'll have a puppy. You'll...

Wait a minute. What are friends? What are woods? What's a puppy?

Friends and woods and puppies are... Johnny, I can't explain them because there's nothing like them where you are. The more I try to explain, the more impossible they'll seem to you. You'll just have to wait and see.

Now I know I'm imagining this. I'm going to die, and I'm afraid.

Johnny, don't be afraid. I know this sounds hard to believe, and I can't really explain it to you, but it's real. Maybe this will help... Do you know what your feet are?

Yes, and I have ten toes too!

That's right, Johnny. But what good are they to you in there? What can you use them for? Nothing.

Right, Johnny, but you have them because there is an earth here for you to walk and run on. Your feet wouldn't make any sense if there weren't a world out here. Can you believe that?

I'd like to, really I would. But I'm afraid.

I know, and what you're afraid of, your birth, will have to come. There will be some pain and darkness. But then there will be light and life, more life than you can imagine. All I can say is that I've been through what you'll go through, and I'll be waiting here for you with open arms and a big smile. What you think of as death you'll find is really birth.

"That dream seemed so real," Annie thought.

Two weeks later her son was born. And now he had grown into a man she'd always been proud of. He'd soon be coming at Easter to visit her at the nursing home...

"Annie". A voice startled her out of her thoughts. An aide perhaps?
She turned, but saw no one. Just a crucifix on the wall above her dresser.

"Annie". She heard the voice again, but this time it seemed to come from within. She understood. She closed her eyes and prayed, "Yes, Lord?"

"Annie, it's almost time for you to come home".

You mean I'm going to die?

No. Annie, you'll soon be born. You'll soon begin to live in a new way.

Lord, I'm afraid. Sometimes I doubt and wonder if you are really there. I wish I could see you face to face.

That's not possible now, Annie, because I'm on the other side of death.

But you don't think you came from nowhere, do you?

No, but sometimes heaven seems like a fairy tale.

Well, I can't describe heaven any more than you could explain your world to Johnny before he was born.

I suppose so, Lord, but I'm still afraid.

I know, Annie, but think of your heart. Has it ever really been satisfied? Have you ever been completely happy? No, because your heart is made for God and for eternity. Johnny's feet were made for walking on earth, and your heart was made for heaven.

I'm still afraid, Lord.

Yes, Annie, and what you fear will have to come. There will be some pain and darkness. But then there will be light and life, more life than you can imagine. All I can say is that I've been through what you'll go through, and I'll be waiting here for you with open arms and a big smile. And what you think of as death you'll find is really birth!

"Amen, Lord." Annie whispered. And she knew her dream was real.

(from "We Believe..." By Oscar Lukefahr, C.M.)