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Ana Sara Daniel, R.N. and Miguel Julião, M.D., M.S.C., PH.D. 💿

Woman Mother Son after

Equipa Comunitária de Suporte em Cuidados Paliativos de Sintra, Sintra, Portugal

Poetry

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Author for correspondence:

Miguel Julião, Equipa Comunitária de Suporte em Cuidados Paliativos de Sintra, Sintra, Portugal. E-mail: migueljuliao@gmail.com When I saw you, _after your son's last breath; standing beside his coffin like a Prince's Guardian, keeping away all the trouble, the arrows, the pain, the noise disturbing his eternal sleep ... keeping away everything from his castle, at the top of the altar stairs ...

I stop breathing again, I pause ... I am oblivion. [Yesterday was profound, _after is unbearable]

I cannot enter your soul anymore. Your dark-chocolate eyes closed forever, looking at your son, freezing his image ... an image far away from the cold coffin all around his body.

Far from the castle, *Woman Mother*, I can only see you in a rare glimpse. And my eyes hurt as your son's coffin transforms into a crib and you lull like tucking him into bed, in the most beautiful image offered to the world.

_after has tremendous beauty ... I can sense that now, *Woman Mother*. Pain transformed into something else ...

What do you do, *Mother*, to ease the pain? Your pain that seems like an incandescent light behind a mountain? A light that even God cannot see or eclipse - I dare to guess ...

You and your son are the same committed body. You and your son are the same flesh, like in birth.

"Just a last embrace" – a beautiful cuddle before someone nails the coffin.

... If only I could draw that moment ... with the speed of a hummingbird's wings ...

You are *Pièta* ... You, holding his body ... while holding back the torment and choking, for the sake of a love photogram.

In his death ceremony, In his *_after*, [while some ancient ebony women sing the most moving elegies, reminding me of a bare feet procession under the sun ...] You dance a traditional trance next to your Prince's coffin, challenging him with his little boy's stories ...

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"Do you remember, son?" "Do you remember us, son?" and you listen to his silent and pale answers because he speaks to you, only to you.

As I approach you to kiss his face before some stranger in a black-tie nail his coffin, You spell something so obvious, *"He won't feel your touch"* You spell me gently while composing the shroud and the veil, with the softest hands trying not to wake him up.

And I see you uprising and you are sacred, you are a shrine.