

Joy Comes in the Morning

*Celestial beings, messengers of light,
the neighbor next door,
even a passing stranger—angels come to us
in many forms.
Be open to receive them.*

(Angels, Heavenly Blessings, 1998)

At 96 years of age, she lay on a soft bed, covered with a comfy quilt, blissfully resting in a cozy room, surrounded by familiar mementoes, among them a requested cross that had been placed on the wall at the foot of her bed.

There was no antiseptic odor of sterile cleanliness; no machines clicked or beeped; no array of tubes hung across her chest or dangled from her arms. Through the open window one heard sparrows and robins chirp. From the living room down the hall came the muffled sound of a television, and drifting in from the kitchen was the aroma of baking bread.

As one sat in the room keeping quiet vigil with the elderly woman, one felt a presence of peace, even while waiting for death, waiting for the angels who would take her home...home to her children.

In her younger years this elderly woman had borne four children. However, as the years passed, time after time, numb and in a trance she stood at the grave of yet another child. This woman had endured the incomprehensible agony of a parent who had outlived every single one of her children. It