Verse and Vision

Transitions

Touched by the poignancy of profound changes in a mother and daughter's relationship, Judy O'Connor wrote this free-form poem in honor of her unwed, teenaged daughter who chose to keep her baby despite the odds. Judy says she selected the title "Transitions" because it represents the situation's many transformations "from child to mother, from mother to grandmother, and from parent of a child to parent of an adult."

Our daughter is unmarried and pregnant.
Plans to give the baby for adoption change in her seventh month.

Now we must help her decide where she will live
as she starts a new life as a mother.
How can she afford housing? A car?
Get a good job now that she's dropped out of college?
What will we tell our families? Our neighbors?

She comes to me for private Lamaze classes.
Who will be her labor support persons?
Me? The answer is yes!
Of course I'll be with her during labor.
She's my daughter!

Labor is induced due to severe PIH.
Mag Sulfate and Pit—hard work!
She doesn't want an epidural or episiotomy.
She works well with her contractions.
Breathe and relax. Breathe and relax.
Labor support techniques sustain her through
eleven hours of labor.
She pushes out her first child in twenty minutes!
Apgars 8 and 9.
I cut the cord.
The beginning of the bond between grandmother
and grandson.
And a new relationship with my child-become-
mother.

—Judy O'Connor, RN, LCCE, FACCE