



THE MOTHER'S LAMENT AT THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS

An Irish Poem

Edited by Noel Joshua Hadley

Then, as she plucked her son from her
breast for the executioner, one of the
women said:

‘Why do you tear from me my darling son,
The fruit of my womb?
It was I who bore him, he drank my breast.
My womb carried him about, he sucked my vitals.
He filled my heart:
He was my life, ’tis death to have him taken from me.
My strength has ebbed,
My voice is stopped,
My eyes are blinded.’

Then another woman said:

'It is my son you take from me.
I did not do the evil,
But kill me — me: don't kill my son!
My breasts are sapless, my eyes are wet,
My hands shake,
My poor body totters.
My husband has no son,
And I no strength;
My life is worth — death.
Oh, my one son, my Alahayam!
His foster-father has lost his hire.
My birthless sicknesses with no requital until Doom.
My breasts are silent,
My heart is wrung.'

Then said another woman:

'Ye are seeking to kill one; ye are killing many.
Infants ye slay, fathers ye wound; you kill the mothers.
Hell with your deed is full, heaven shut.
Ye have spilt the blood of guiltless innocents.'

And yet another woman said:

'O Christ, come to me!
With my son take my soul quickly:
O Great Maryam, Mother of the Son of Alahayam,
What shall I do without my son?
For Thy Son, my spirit and my sense are killed.
I am become a crazy woman for my son.
After the piteous slaughter
My heart's a clot of blood
From this day
Till Doom comes.'

