



But Momma why?

There, in the dim intensive care nursery,
One nurse was left alone, her attention cursory.
Eight little angels were put to sleep,
But one of them stayed up to weep.

In a small crib, she was lying down,
Holding a gaze that was about to drown.
Her fragile face caught my attention
So I held her in attempt to relieve her tension.

The disturbance in her eyes didn't emerge from hunger
Nor was it caused by provocation or anger.
The nurse looked in my direction to say,
"She is the one for whom I pray.
She's seen the light for less than a week
And sedating her pain is all we seek.
Annie is addicted to heroin, you know
That is why her cries are difficult to slow."

These phrases struck me like lightning
I wondered about the monster of addiction,
Which murmurs bleak tales as frightening
As the shrieks in Annie's cries of affliction.

Newborn addiction is a curse that haunts
Innocent souls that should be dreaming.
They are left with pain that daunts,
And leaves everyone around tearing.

Most babies rest with their moms,
Calmed by a sweet, soft lullaby,
But here is Annie in my arms,
Sobbing, asking, "But Momma why?"

Lama R. Nouredine

Lama R. Nouredine is a third year medical student at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. The author's address is: 464 Hobson Avenue, 1st floor, Saddle Brook, New Jersey, 07663. E-mail: lama.nouredine1@gmail.com.