



# Jewish Doula

Labour & Birth Services

**“Birth” by Esther Shumiatcher-Hirschbein (1899-1985)  
translated by Beata Kasiarz**

I

I drive against the sky, against the stars,  
my flesh anguished, bursting with tears.  
I clench my teeth,  
barely move my lips—  
ribs separate violently.  
My blood rejoices,  
my heart beats up to the stars:  
I must become a mother.

II

Sky chases after me,  
stars scatter above.  
Sharp spears pierce my limbs,  
a star breaks off,  
marks the sky fiery.  
Push after push, flames,  
my back searing.  
Life in my hands,  
I writhe in agony.  
My body becomes  
a thousand-eyed being,  
limbs look on feverishly.  
The earth shakes,  
body and soul shiver.  
My limbs thrash  
back and forth,  
earthquake  
October 3, 1934.

\* \* \*

V

The day is airy, sheer.  
My life glimmering, I sing.  
Fields rising, stones speak—  
I hear my newborn's shriek.  
Sun arrives with a pail of gold,  
repaying all my pain with joy.  
I kiss the child's tears,  
shut my eyes:  
I, in peace with eternity.

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The hospital is alive with song.  
Like a river in spring  
life rushes, roaring,  
blood of the just-born singing—  
brilliant news.  
My newborn bliss glows with shame.  
Oh, my young joy—  
new earth, new sky,  
dressed in blood and bone.  
Outside my window  
life blossomed.  
Autumn shouts its song,  
my young spring beside me.  
I became a mother  
to a blond son.  
Today I bore life,  
in dream, in reality.  
Golden October flames  
illuminate thinning fields,  
my son, my blond fire,  
miracle of my flesh!