

A Child is Born Summary

A child is born in many societies woman still go forth from their mother's houses at marriage to live with a mother-in-law and the wives of their husband, brothers. It is a truism of anthropology that such woman do not become members of their family until they have borne a child. If a girl is lucky and her parents are alive, she goes to her mother's house for the last months of her pregnancy and about the first three months of the baby's life. When the baby is born it is an occasion of joy for the whole family.

The naming ceremony is lovely. It is held when the boy is seven days old. A new dress is brought for it and a new sari for the mother. There is feasting and singing until late at night. The women and girls gather and sing songs. Garlands of turmeric and garlic are worn to ward off evil spirits. That is when the name is chosen.... The ceremony is held for the birth of a boy or girl, of course it is considered better to have a boy, but the birth of a girl is celebrated with the same joy by the women in the family. We sit together eating and singing. Some of us might be young unmarried girls, others aged ladies of forty or fifty. There are so many jokes, so much laughter.