

*Mary's Lament*  
*A Blue Christmas reflection*  
*by Ana Gobledale*

Life often overwhelms me.  
My boy is dead.  
Killed.  
Things were going along fairly smoothly until I was fourteen.  
I got pregnant, and I did not even know who the father was.  
Luckily Joseph, good kind Joseph,  
he did not have me cast out or stoned,  
but took me as his wife.  
But then the pregnancy was hard,  
as I had to travel for the census.  
My poor child was born on the straw being fed to a cow,  
filling the beast's manger.  
Not even a bed for us.  
Life has been hard.  
Then King Herod went crazy!  
He had all the little boys killed.  
I was so afraid for my baby.  
Joseph wisely had us flee to Egypt.  
But I didn't know the language,  
or the customs of the people.  
I was always a foreigner there.  
Everything was so strange.  
Things seemed to return to normal  
when we returned to Nazareth.  
But life was always precarious under the Romans.  
Now my boy is dead.  
Killed.  
The darkness seems to want to wrap itself around me.  
God, I know you are with me.  
But today you feel so far away.

*(Mary freezes, eyes down. Narrator continues.)*

The story of the first Christmas is not really a happy story,  
but a story about life in the real world.  
Unwed, pregnant and only fourteen years old.  
Not a happy start to the story, or a relationship.  
A country under occupation, a cruel ruler.  
No security. No peace.  
Not a happy setting for a story, or a new family.  
The slaughter of innocent children.  
For the people in Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus would always remind them of the army that  
massacred their children.  
Then Joseph's frightened little family, flees for their lives to a strange land.  
Not a happy story.  
Mary, mother of Jesus, may her faith through her darkness shine light into our lives.