

# Michelle Shocked, Stillborn

Midnight and Yolanda has a long walk home  
Midwife in a hard labor, the baby was stillborn  
Still the mother asked to hold the child that never cried  
rocked it gently softly keening a plaintive lullaby

Yolanda walks along the river road  
Humming softly, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?"  
The sky has never shined so bright, the night so dry and clear  
Crickets and cicadas consolations in the air  
In the air

Yolanda's husband wakes the children  
He dresses them for school  
"Your mother was up late last night  
I've packed your lunch for you"  
And so the house lies silent and they all will be home soon  
By the time she rises in the early afternoon

And then once again Yolanda walks along the river road  
Where the live oak are dying, the pines are crying  
And she sits beneath a willow  
And prying from that tender trunk a dry cicada shell  
Crushes it in her fist as the sound begins to swell

Singing hush little baby, don't you say a word  
Mama's gonna buy you a mockingbird  
And if that mockingbird don't sing