



A Doctor's Eulogy for Teodora

Words, thoughts and gestures cannot serve my need to tell you both how much sorrow I feel tonight. Yet in the midst of this sorrow, emerges an energy to write thoughts which flow freely at this time, thoughts building in my soul from the moment we first met, when I saw in your eyes a sustaining and eternal love for Teodora, no matter what her fate was to be. And now that we know that she lived each day within you, saving her last heart beat for you to see and hear and feel today.

As physicians, it is the greatest professional privilege to participate in the care of a pregnancy and the birth of a child. Yet, the bar is raised when that child dies. As elation turns to grief, and joy to sorrow; when in a brief moment the expected becomes the unexpected, this privilege becomes *sacred*. For we are first to see and touch her, we inscribe her image indelibly in our minds, and her death, in paradox, does not sear our bonds of caring but rather seals them.

Memorial services such as this, ceremonies and tangible items of remembrance are vital for healing after Dora's death. They give us permission to remember and cry publicly as well as privately. Memories are what will remain of Dora, invisible bonds between mother, father and child, everlasting. Remembering and praising her today will help to make our darkness, visible.

Teodora was born on the eve of a Lunar Eclipse and I wrote this accompanying poem, as the moon's light for some brief moments haloed the earth in its eclipse, perhaps a symbolic garland of light which forever-after will shine on Teodora and our memory of her.

礼物 *Teodora*

“Out of my window the strings of the harp are struck, Oh, my heart! How is it so deeply entangled in the echoes! There is the limitless sound of the trees, there is the limitless brightness of the moon.”

Xie Bingxin ; Fanxing (Crowded stars);verse 21; 1921

Today the sun cast hues of hope.
Open eyes and grimaces,
Heart beat flutters,
Angel cries.
And then serenity.
A life lived long enough
To taste the sweetness of
A mother's kiss,
A fathers kiss;
Caresses and caresses
And whispers,
And kisses again and again.
Blessings, prayers, tears;
Moans of weeping.
Silent moments.
Raging thoughts.
Peaceful thoughts
Which memory's keeping.
No shadows.
Pure light.
Eternal light.
From sun and stars and moon glow.
Save the *night of today*
When the moon eclipsed, turns umber.
And Teodora be our gift, forever.

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