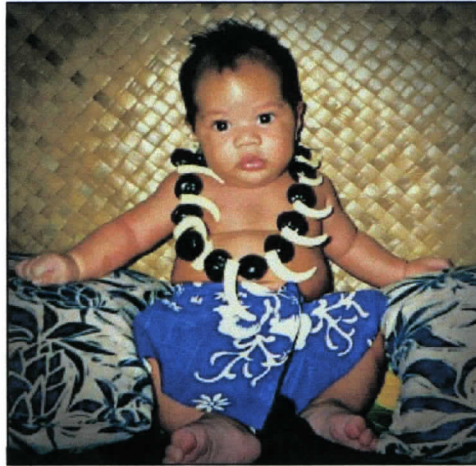


Southport Village Voices



Tavita

A Little Magazine
by and for the
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POETRY

Guardians of the Keep

by *Sandy Bernstein*

Here
no man travels
who does not belong,
for silent guardians keep watch
even as the night winds shift,
carrying the scent of a storm;
the knights grow restless
while the princess sleeps
as spectral forces gather strong.

With a vengeance ride the dark horsemen
thundering down the dusty sinuous path
wielding weapons of steel and wood;
invisible eyes see all
and would warn - if they could.
A forbidden love
caught in the crossfire
of ancient beliefs and sacred vows -
he, who leads the charge
has a plan of his own
as sudden screams swallow the night,
a wall of shadows emerge;
a ring of fire sets the battle field aglow.
How many lie wounded or dead?
Only the guardians know.

Day breaks
all is still
bathed in dirt and blood,
an eerie quiet descends upon the throne,
as the princess mourns her betrothed.
Nothing is as it seems
when man and sword clash
and flesh meets steel,
leaving behind crimson streams.

Merging shadows darken the sky
warrior guardians unite
for a prophecy has been met,
yet the princess seeks revenge,
with death by her own hand
it is she who casts the last stone.

Bound to the keep
by faithful warriors of long ago
whose battle cries
forever invoke an eternal battle song,
again, guardians welcome one of their own;
for here,
no man travels
who does not belong.



Original artwork by Sheila Foley