



Kage and Kate, March 3 © 2003, by Heather Kennedy

The Awe of Katherine Rose —

born on Tuesday to the daughter of my cousin

Today photos arrive, attached to emails —
“the last belly shot,” “the first cry,” “March 3” and
“Kage and Katherine Rose.”

Kage, a robust 3 year old, wide-eyed and laughing
at the miracle, smooches and snuggles his new sister.

My cousin’s daughter, Heather and her husband, Ed
are exhausted. They are earnest, hardworking
parents, full of love, beautiful and strong.

It was a hard pregnancy. Kage a high energy boy,
today is full of joy and awe.

It is right to be used up by love, laid out,
spread-eagled, exhausted, soft, completely present —
Ed holds a new baby in one arm, balances
a three-year-old in the other while —

The world stands, breath held, on the brink or war —
or not.

Mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers,
cousins and their husbands in Iraq carry on —
heads snapped back, eyes scouring the sky.

Shock and Awe is the name of a military strategy
for quick defeat of a defenseless people —

people with new babies,
people with laundry drying on
lines strung between one thing and another,
people falling deeply in love, people with no hope,
people wearing long black robes, baking bread,
people who climb into date palm trees
to collect sweet fruit.

Shock and Awe means —
drop thousands of huge bombs on Iraq for two days,
then loot.

But there is a better kind of awe —
the awe of Katherine Rose.

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