

wonder

stories of  
**hope**  
for...

becoming like  
**little**  
children

**Victoria Hutchinson** finds signs  
of hope in childlike wonder

**A**s I pace the wards, hemmed in by the 'Walls of Work' and the shabby bay that needs more than a lick of paint, out of the corner of my eye I see a frustrated, tired patient scowling. I find myself asking the question: can hope be found along the busy, dusty corridors of daily life? In the demands on my time and the drain on my emotions?

My glance can only reach so far. There are curtains drawn to slice up the room and windows of frosted glass to blind my sight.

And so, I look down and see my sensible shoes. ECCOs, just like the ones my grandma used to wear. She'd have been so proud of who I'd become. We never saw it coming – midwife me with my tired but comfortable, ugly feet.

My thoughts drift inwards. Is hope within? Can she be found hiding there inside? But right now it's all empty. Hope and her friends have not

settled there. No joy, no gladness, no wonder. Just a list of things to do.

I catch sight of a young child as he bounces onto his mother's bed. A sharp intake of my breath as I see a painful wince flashing over her face, and then it's gone. Courageous woman. The three-year-old is a big brother now and he's proud. Uncertain, I can see, but proud of his newly acquired status.

He's clutching something tightly in his hand. I watch as he unscrews the lid and dips in the red, plastic wand. He draws it out glistening and shiny and brings it eagerly but carefully to his mouth. He pushes out his lips into a whistling shape, then sucks in his breath and gently blows. Slowly. Slowly. Slowly. The bubbles, like transparent glass, form and float and rise. He is smiling excitedly, delighted to show his baby sister. Look! Look! Look! The pockets of captured air, like illusions, are rising. Magical round rainbows. Up. Up. Up. He is shaking his mother's arm and pointing. He wants her to look. She does. And so do I. We look together. We look up.

And there, in my looking up, I find hope. 🍁

**Victoria Hutchinson** is a recently retired midwife