

Welcome to Holland

By Emily Perl Kingsley



When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip- to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide-books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David, the gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bag and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The steward says, "Welcome to Holland." "Holland?" you say, "what do you mean Holland? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan... they've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease.

It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met. It's just a different place. It's slower paced than Italy. But after you've been there for awhile and you catch your breath, you look around... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills... and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say,

"Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very significant loss.

But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things... about Holland.

