

## Till Morning

by Vickie Cimprich

*Sister Jane Hyson believed, Shaker Village  
of Pleasant Hill, 1807; East Family kitchen  
deaconess, 1844-49.*

A starting-up storm wind through corn stalks  
was how we heard Jane breathe.  
All through that day she sucked in her air  
irregular. By midnight, poultice, nightgown,  
and our hopes were scratched away  
under the brown and now blue flats  
of our sister's fingertips. By turns  
Patsy and I took the bedside chair,  
but the pallet bed nearby was no use to us,  
so destined Jane's struggle was.  
Every sister and brother listened  
for a buggy in the road. None came.

Late morning Doctor Tomlinson'd finished  
at The Springs. *Is the darkey still alive*, he said,  
*or did I miss a lucky deal for naught?*