

## **Welcome to Holland**

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When you are going to have a baby it's like a fabulous trip to Italy. You buy a bunch of guidebooks and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum, The Michelangelo David, The Gondolas of Venice. You may learn some handy Italian phrases. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands, the stewardess comes and says: "Welcome to...Holland."

"Holland!" you say, "What do you mean, Holland? I signed up for Italy. All my life I've dreamed about going to Italy."

But there's been a change in 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 and buy new guidebooks, you must learn a whole new language. You will meet a whole new group of people whom you would never have met.

It's just a different place, it's slower than Italy. But after you've been there a while you catch your breath, you look around and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills. Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy and they are 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.