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The Baby and the Bird

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Online Winter Seminar

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Albuquerque, New Mexico; July 29 - August 1, 2022

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The Baby and the Bird

by
Diana L. Paxson

*Old Rome had many taverns
Devoted to the vine,
Where Ovid pledged each new love
In red Falernian wine;
Catullus, shamed by Lesbia,
Poured out his grief in verse;
Apuleus noted follies,
And pondered which was worse.*

*But the place that draws me ever
When my fancy's running wild,
Is a little pub in Oxford
Called **The Eagle and the Child.**
The Eagle and the Child, oh,
Or else, as I have heard
Its regulars all called it —
The Baby and the Bird!*

*The company was lively
In Soutwark's **Tabard Inn,**
When Cuahcer and the Pilgrims
Were telling tales within,
And on the Canterbury road
They took that April day,
And at the other hostels
Where they stayed upon their way.*

But the place that draws me ever, [etc.]

*When Villon, gutter-poet,
Reeled through the Paris night,
Drunk on verse and hypocras
And looking for a fight,
The Pomme de Pin, the Cheval Blanc
All welcomed him, and more,
With wine at every table
And doxies at each door.*

But the place that draws me ever, [etc.]

*Of all the City's taverns,
When Bess was England's Queen,
The Mermaid, undisputed, ruled
The literary scene.
Each **Global** play was played again
And christened in brown ale,
While Shakespeare, or Ben Jonson,
Stood up to tell the tale.*

But the place that draws me ever, [etc.]

*Augustan wits made merry
At London's **Cheshire Cheese** —
The topic was no matter,
So that the manner please —
Be it Love or Politicks,
'Twas scandalous, I've heard,
And Johnson had his Boswell
To write down every word.*

But the place that draws me ever, [etc.]

*They sing of famous taverns,
But considering them all,
The one where I had rather
Been a fly upon the wall,
Would be the Inn where Tolkien,
Lewis, Williams too,
Met with the other Inklings
Asking, "Who has something new?"*

*For the place that draws me ever
When my fancy's running wild,
Is a little pub in Oxford
Called **The Eagle and the Child.**
The Eagle and the Child, oh,
Or else, as I have heard
Its regulars all called it —
The Baby and the Bird!*

Music:

(verses)



(refrain)

