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Monday's Child

by Barbara Eknoian

He arrived five days before my first
birthday.
I learned to share early. Mama said I was
Friday's child loving and giving.
As toddlers we slept in a double bed.
He drew an imaginary line and warned,
"Don't cross it."
At camp, I spent my allowance carefully
so on the bus ride home I'd have a treat.
The lady at the snack window said,
"Sony, your brother used up your money."
I was a spelling bee whiz,
sadly he was dyslexic.
Every lunch hour. Mama played
a record and we'd hear,
"A-Apple, B-Banana,"
but phonics escaped him.
Most teachers called me into his class
to take home notes to my mother.
He dropped out of school,
related to the Hippie movement,
experimented with drugs, tried LSD,
and stayed with marijuana.
He was Monday's child, fair of face.
When he walked into a crowded room
someone said, he's beautiful
with that beard, he looks like Jesus.
He surpassed me reading Philosophy,
hated to hear about the imbalance
of power and wealth in the world.
Football players and Johnny Carson
making millions made him go into a tirade.
He could have out-talked the radio hosts.
Now he lives at a shelter, and called me to
say
he contracted HIV from a lady
he'd been with. I'm horrified thinking
she probably tricked him, but he says, "No,
we were just two lonely people, out
drinking,
who needed a warm body to feel close."

