

Coracle

*Guten Abend, gute Nacht, mit Roslein bedacht,
Mit Nâglein besteckt, schlupf unter die Deck . . .**

Her mother placed her in a basket, hidden under patchwork,
and pushed her, wide-eyed and trusting, upstream.

For one whole day she floated, till sedge reeds
caught her, and a pale white moon found her.

Years passed. The child grew familiar with streams,
undercurrents, she played hide and seek

among the reeds, caught fish, then let them go,
envied that they could slip away. At night

she floated back, downstream, beneath trees
that wept, remembering patchwork. Far away,

the mother's basketry became legend:
her coracles crafted to lull, braided with longing -

cradles she would not rock, lullabies she would not hum,
songs for a child forever drifting.

** Good evening, good night, go to sleep covered
with tiny roses, under a blanket of lilies . . .*

From *Brahms Lullaby* or *Cradle Song* - translated from the German.