

'My Own Child'

Judge John Steketee gives new adoptive parents a copy of the following poem—whose author he says is unknown to him—during the official adoption ceremony:

I
Did not plant you,
True.
But when
The season is done—
When the alternate
Prayers for sun
And for rain
Are counted—

When the pain
Of weeding
And the pride
Of watching
Are through—

Then
I will hold you
High.

A shining sheaf
Above the thousand
Seeds grown wild.

Not my planting,
But by heaven
My harvest—
My own child.