

Sleepless Sylvia

by Alicia Caldanaro Wildfang

Today I sewed a quilt block of a little girl, but the block only shows her profile, Partly covered by
 something one can twirl—
 That twirling object that covers her face is a beautiful umbrella with hearts. I picked out the hearts
 fabric because
 It was the kind of hearts Sylvia drew or painted
 When she had time for her various arts.
 One of her letters mentions how she liked to try to sew Some smocks for her daughter
 And her description caused me to feel a glow
 She noted that smocks were easier to wash Which carved out some extra time
 For her to write something
 That made her feel fine
 Perhaps she wrote a poem that day
 And put it away
 Because as a homemaker and mother, her time to herself went astray
 Later...she woke up very early to create Something in writing that made her feel great
 In the hours before dawn, she could dare to suggest Whatever she wanted
 In her secret time nest
 Thoughts for so many to relate to and know they are not alone... Were left behind in writing
 While she enjoyed her sleepless time alone.

"I am enjoying my handwind Singer sewing machine very much. It is just my speed, and I am making
 Frieda a series of gay cotton smocks to go over her woolens---I can wash the smocks much more
 easily." on page 657 from Sylvia
 in a letter to her mother, Aurelia Schober Plath, dated October 6, 1961.
 Sylvia Plath, *The Letters of Sylvia Plath* Volume II, 1956-1963, Edited by Peter K. Steinberg and Karen
 V. Kukil (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2018), 657.