

# In All Our Trials

by [Susan Shea](#) (December 2023)



Christmas Dinner– Robert Braithwaite Martineau, 19th Century

A **little survey** revealed that most people choose the word dread over the word joy to describe the holidays

making me feel better about myself  
making me want to get a hold of those  
joy recipes as soon as I can, to rustle up

those ingredients I should keep in my house

but who can assure me that all of us  
involved would be willing to fit into those  
pre-ordained spaces in those cupcake pans

and how many different kinds of sugar  
and sugar coated substitutes will I need  
to spread into icing over all the  
baggage-shaped cookies sitting in the room

aiming to make the sad eyes smile  
through all the wrappings

I want to *fall on my knees and hear  
the angel voices*  
I'll keep trying if you keep joining me

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**Susan Shea** is a retired school psychologist who was raised in New York City, and is now living in a forest in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Since she has returned to writing poetry this year, her poetry has been accepted in a few dozen publications, including *Feminine Collective*, *Ekstasis*, *Persimmon Tree Literary Magazine*, and *The Avalon Literary Review*.

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