REFLECTIONS

Answered Prayer

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Delivered to us
without a sound,
my breath held
yours long gone
his never present.
Too soon, too raw,
no wail or suckle
to be heard
just the color blue
on every fingertip I counted—
rubbing as I went—
to impart some life,
mine to yours
take it all.
Finally the breathing tube
inserted to force in
the world you hesitated
to accept,

lungs prematurely sticky
like unopened buds
in a frigid March,
cut and vased
while we waited
for them to inspire the sun.
Your chest heaved faster
than I could count
or cry your name
Eli,
answered prayer,
your future written
on chromosomes finer than
crossed hairs
more fragile than the autumn leaf
rocking on the window ledge.
One mistake in there
by our ancestors
or those doctors
could have ended your beginning,
except that I will never
let go of the hand
you've already closed
around my heart.

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