

NEWBORN

My baby is a chubby fire, flaring  
all night into the eye of  
the video monitor. Birds love her,  
call back when she cries them awake  
at five a.m. A father  
now, I understand birds,  
how unbearably thin  
their voices are. I will write  
in the book of her life  
that I swung her up, thumped  
with love her plump back,  
cleaned and kissed her feet,  
played the heavy banjo  
of her sobs, stormed through  
the upstairs rooms with box fans  
all June to cool her down.  
I'll never tell her I cried into my eggs  
for my old life, or the dream  
where she's my thumb grown enormous,  
heavy at the end of my arm,  
and I have to shred with my one good hand  
my endless hair to feed her.