



Birth

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(Fam Med. 2019;51(8):693.)

doi: 10.22454/FamMed.2019.652739

The room is a crypt and our faces, like stones,
watch one line for toco, but no line for tones—
no flutter of heartbeat to chase over skin—
no rush for delivering him

The water is murky—a path after rain—
the wake of a torrent he couldn't sustain—
erasing the plans of a life left undone—
the mud between mother and son

So what kills a baby? A knot? Or a clot?
“Sins in my past?” she asks—
“Pills I forgot?”
The anguish of guilt in the lull between crests,
then surges the swell and she rests

Sinks into her body, while we in the room
watch rising and falling of Schrodinger's womb—
for up 'til the crown clears—at least in her mind—
her child might still be alive

We pit and she pushes her way through the dread—
my hands and a shudder deliver the head—
the shoulders and torso in sequence appear—
her belly collapses—he's here

I catch him—his skin is a friable lace—
I wrap him and gaze at the peace of his face
where cherry red lips rest as still as his eyes—
I hold him and fill in his cries

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