

ON A PHOTOGRAPH OF A CHILD, TWO DAYS OLD

Lying there in a smock
like a flour sack with the words
St. Luke's Hospital, Kansas City, MO
you look as if you had already stolen something.
Your parents get in deeper every day
you live, accomplices after the fact.

Jeremy Clayton Thomas, your heart is a bird
that will not fly. Soon, they tell me, you
will be as blue as the satin sheet on which
they laid you to make this photograph.
Room will have to be found somewhere
for the small amount of earth
you will have displaced.

But now, for you, these sworls of sound, these
swatches and shards of light are unused tickets
at a carnival we are powerless to explain
even to ourselves. So clutch
your father's finger as though
it could save you, yell for all
you're worth. When you stop
to catch your breath, you will have changed
the world forever: in the space
where nothing was will be an empty place.