

Unexpected

Humdrum green carpeting muffled
the bathroom tucked under the eaves
of our second floor flat. A maid's room

in a former time, its low window granted
a Lake Champlain view once you were seated.
New maternity tops hung in the roomy closet.

Like a Martha Stewart protégé,
I crafted a rolling shade in there—
the fabric sea of violets gave me joy.

Twelve weeks sprouted, your father
trumpeted you—to the mailman, the boss,
the butcher at Longe Brothers Market.

the midwife said stay home
rest—maybe the bleeding will stop
when the waves started
I curled on the mossy rug
like a yearling doe in the forest
my cheek pressed against the cool
tub, praying to freeze frame your
sonogram self

We read all the books, dreamed
you floating into a warm bath
like a Hawaiian newborn.

You had a different story to write.
I birthed what little there was
of you into the porcelain bowl.