

DAVID RUEKBERG

Delivery

Swimming away from the green horizon
I foresaw hot light and desiccation

sweetened by a swirl of apricot and apple
that would soon enough sour.

Birds stirred, fluttered my belly.
Scenting life, I gave in to gravity.

The quiet world heaved in a way
that was terrible and fun.

I was too new to understand paradox—
the seasick fish, the cascade of sand.

Some tremendous force of love
pressed down on my sun-shaped face.

I came to know what the amputee knows,
leaving behind my perfect self forever.

What I didn't expect was the havoc,
the calipers tipped with fire,

the rigid god who hung me in air,
an aborted sacrifice.

The new world closed
its rubber hand around me

like a tourniquet, dandling me,
inverted and wrangling,

before the crowd, its roar
rasping my brand new skin.