

Merryl Hammond

Little Life, Lost Life

I'm 14 weeks pregnant
bleeding heavily
strong contractions every 2-3 minutes.
"We call them cramps" he said.
Call them what you like, doc—
I am a mother
We know contractions when we feel them.

A full, warm gush.
I look down and see you among the clots:
You are beautiful.
A glistening bean-shape
of unknown, unknowable potential
on your rich placental bed.
Mother-of-pearl.
Pearl-of-mother
... and father.
Little, little life.
Lost life.

Back home
I wash away the last traces of
your life-blood
death-blood.
Tears and blood flow down the drain together
Gone.
Gone.

Where from, all this pain, all these tears?
I hardly had time to acknowledge
your precious presence in me.