

Possession

I

I felt it not as pain but possession.

For five minutes, nurses in Labor and Delivery
placed an ice cube in my palm so I could grasp the shock
of pain that endures.

In a few months' time, it would crawl up
my lower back like a stunning, deadly flower,
wide-eyed red in the midst of a desert.

A fuschia in full bloom, my pain would sing
of something other than itself. It would hiss
and splay open, pirouette across the delivery room,

swell into a maelstrom, spill into the pulsating dark
until I took the epidural and it left
soundlessly,
leaving no trace like a guest in a dream.

II

I felt it not as pain but possession.

After the pain, there was a crowning head,
two strong legs and arms, a torso. A being
born into light out of a dark milky cave.

