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## Before the Term

Conor Burke

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*Conor Burke*

## Before the Term

And then she leaned, perhaps against the dark  
Familiar counter by the kitchen sink,  
Perhaps against my father, who saw her hand  
Swing suddenly to cup the quickened shape  
My brother made inside, but could not see,  
Lightless, how their son, still caught between  
This world and not, had thrashed, deprived of breath,  
The little stone that would become his skull  
Against the flesh in which he grew. She knows,  
Has told me more than once, that here the palsy  
Has its source, the moment isolated  
In her mind of where it all went wrong. I know  
I can't know that darker dark she  
Still carries there inside, yet here I try.