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Claiming a Cord

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Claiming a Cord

Rage fills my veins for you.
And you don't know it as your muscles pulse,
as the pressure builds.
You didn't create this life all by yourself,
but there's no man in sight.

Birth lays everyone bare,
in a room of anticipation,
with no space left for modesty,
just pulses.
Fetal heart rhythms, contractions,
and your own heart,
driving a positive feedback loop to its conclusion.

I used to hate the emergency contact line on medical forms.
Who do you put there if you have no one?
Can you be excused from the question?
And I knew after your beautiful daughter was born
that a question would come,
a question you might want to be excused from.
"Is there anyone who wants to cut the cord?"

You're exposed to the world,
unclaimed at a moment when people want someone
–anyone–to claim them.
And then I watched you cut the cord yourself,
claiming yourself and your daughter,
in a healing moment that soothed the fury in me,
the fury you didn't even know I held.

I still hold that fire for you.
But you don't need it,
carrying your own light as you do.

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