

— Laboring

I remember the rapid sucking
sound of our two-year-old bitch
panting at dawn in
the mud foggy yard on
the Patuxent

and the sight of
my stiffened mother
clasping the cold sponge, leaning
over the sweaty infant burning
in Peter Pan pajamas;
she rocked it
still and lifeless
until noon.

At noon
the bitch pawed
the screen door to
brag of her
seven wet puppies.

