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Duty

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Duty

By Daniel Carlson

Crushing rain throws itself at him Whirling gales rise over his head Covering old eyes with a cupped hand He searches the shadows, straining, Struggling to locate a child's shape He shines his torch to tree roots Trudging over mud and newborn rivers Light reflects off red cotton cloth And he bends down over her form Soaking and slick and sickly white skin Hair pasted flat against her head He heaves her over his shoulder And turns back, out of the basin Pale lights bounce further along A frantic father rushes forward Rips his child from the man who Politely ignores his tears Overridden with the rain