

1991

Untitled

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Her husband come home
dripping wet from muddy water
telling her how it was too swift
too much to swim against
their son lost
in the cleaving torrent of the spillway
the fire crew found him blue
forty-five minutes underwater

she must not have remembered when
she first heard it
his infant lips
wet and trembling
the doctor holding him up
the cord attached still
slowly going limp
and the nurse rubbing away
the blue mucous of birth
swabbing fluid from his mouth and throat
and him tumbling fetally underwater
like he must have looked in her womb

Michael Payne