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At the Birth of My First Child

Larry Rubin

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Recommended Citation

Rubin, Larry (2017) "At the Birth of My First Child," *Ontario Review*: Vol. 9 , Article 12.

Available at: <http://repository.usfca.edu/ontarioreview/vol9/iss1/12>

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At the Birth of My First Child

LARRY RUBIN

Your birthday gift — this flesh, this heart,
This squall of lungs, this mat of hair and blood —
Delivered now beyond the wrappings of
Your mother's womb — will not be enough.
Even the virgin brain, folded like
A pink percale, within the sponge of skull,
Will not suffice to hold the lessons you
Will need, to know the ends of form.
Body I can give you, even mind,
To ram your way into the world, hurl
The balls and make the goals and blaze your gifts
In classes where the teachers stare. Love too
Will come, in eyes of need, in beds
Where bodies swell and meld. Children bud
Again, like you; you link the chain. Still
Not enough. One day you'll walk by waters
When something drowning in the sky — a seagull's
Cry — an unwrapped gift upon the shore —
Will make you see what I couldn't give.
When that day comes, remember, please,
I gave the essence of my self,
I gave what I could give. I tried.
Still not enough. My son, you'll die.