

The Rocks, the Whirlpool

I like stories about babies
born in airplanes, taxi cabs, baseball
stadiums and subway stations.

About toddlers shooting rapids
in canoes----the melodrama
slipping into bathos

when their frail little boat
doomily approaches
a raging waterfall.

But before its fragile prow
edges over the fall's
white-water lip

a ranger or a mountain man
it doesn't matter which
appears as if out of nowhere

in a speeding motorboat
and saves the hapless infants
from crashing on the rocks below

or drowning in the whirlpool.
I like stories about babies
but not the one they tell

next door about Sally's
stillborn son or daughter,
she won't know which

until tomorrow. This morning
when her obstetrician
listened with his stethoscope

all he could hear was a doll's
heartbeat, the rocks,
the whirlpool.