Catherine Bateson

ULTRASOUND SCAN, EIGHTEEN WEEKS

The head I was expecting, the rest was blurred
as you flipped and tumbled buoyant acrobatics
in those echoing waters.
Then the tune stopped
you were suddenly still
and, as though acknowledging applause,
you raised one hand.

It was the hand that did me in.
So picture book perfect.
So clenchingly real.

I had carried you jauntily —
like a comfortable fact that didn’t need thought.
Now I move awkwardly.
I am slow, already feeling the weight
of this lifetime’s love.