

“Written on the Due Date of a Son Never Born”

Echinacea, bee balm, aster. Trumpet vine
I watch your mother bend to prune, water

sluicing silver from the hose—

another morning
you will never see. Summer solstice: dragonflies flare

the unpetalled rose. 6 a.m.

& already
she's breaking down, hose flung to the sidewalk

where it snakes & pulses in a steady
keening glitter, both hands to her face. That much

I can give you of these hours.

That much only.
Fist & blossom forged by salt, trellising

your wounded helixes against our days,
tell us how to live

for we are shades, facing

caged the chastening sun. Our eyes
are scorched & lidless. We cannot bear your light.