



1999

Breech

Jared Pearce

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Jared Pearce

At home after the last doctor's visit we eat
dinner in small leaps; careful with everything
as if we were stacking china after an earthquake.

Toes down, it scratches
on folds and ruffles without a hold,
without friction; the arms faithless
to swim in the black vertigo—no somersaults
for aerodynamics but birth as the foot
slips—the innocent child
pulled down into light.

After dinner, I look through my biology
textbook. There's a picture of an autumnal tree
in transparent earth, and I can't make out the branches
from the roots. It makes me think of how a tree grows
through black earth with water—the seed always
knows the way to light; is always conscious
of its correct ways. The trunk groans
against clods and stones, and stands huge—its green arms
tangle in the wind—always strong, poking
at the sun. And the roots, woven into soil, are only ripped
by machines and the contraction of plate tectonics.