

***Rick Lott***

## **Lullaby for a Child of Water**

Today I am at home with the drowned.  
Under the oxygen tent,  
my infant son fights the IV needle.  
His lungs, come too far  
to reenter the water, struggle  
for purchase on air.  
I climb through the plastic veil  
and hold him  
until her settles into fretful sleep.

The hushed light of Intensive Care,  
the rain-streaked window, like looking  
through a porthole at the blurred sea,  
and down in the parking lot  
two cops rush a woman toward  
the Emergency Room entrance, her face  
a white O of alarm at this distance,  
one hand outstretched as though  
reaching for someone drifting away,

the way my father's hand grasped for mine  
and clung, though the current swept  
him beyond reach, his last breath  
like the croaking of drum  
I pulled from night waters  
onto the concrete inlet bridge.  
Once I watched two drunk fishermen  
struggle for an hour to land  
a jewfish big as a man. Bent double

under the gaff line,  
my father finally hauled the fish  
into the staggering glow of bridge lights,  
struck dumb by such a blessing.