

KATHERINE COTTLE

Warnings to New Mothers

First comes the dizziness,
the world tilted
and perspiring
before you try to move forward
through the slow motion
static.

Then your hearing
heightens a thousand fold,
and you will flinch every time
a squirrel taps its feet
along the deck.

The bleeding will continue
and continue
and continue.

Sex will never be the same.
You will prefer a moment alone
on the toilet
to any night of unbridled passion.

Even your breathing
will change.

It will become the spotty gasps
of a chain smoker,
paused before the next emergency.

For awhile,
your partner will fade
into the background.
He will be made
of cardboard.

Crying will be as constant
as doing the dishes.

You will love
like you have never loved
before.