

MEG DAY

At the Museum

entrance, her body
rotates to reveal the pale cotton
hammock eight months has made
of her shirt

& the skin beneath it,
& she shimmies through the turnstile
in slow motion, cradling her girth
& swaying,

more like a dinghy
listing in its dock than any ragtime
dance. We pause for what seems
an appropriate

length of time—one
Mississippi, two Mississippi—before
each spectral reproduction and nod
in the direction

of every art student
proudly standing post beside finished
Rothkos & da Vincis made distinct
with personality

& permission. How,
I wonder, can I be so different: I stand
beside her as if I did more to render
her expectant

than follow directions.
Thirty-three weeks & a fortune ago,
Luck slipped on suspenders & heels
& appeared

at last as a blue plus
on a pee stick from the corner store.
She is everything every book promises
a woman

with child will be & I have
little to do with it. You I can't yet
know are not offspring nor descendent
& your composition,

while original, will be
of an inheritance I'm unable to give. I cannot
dream the Mona Lisa in a wheelchair
or call my water

lilies Monet's any more



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than I can make believe that you are of
me. If it's true that addiction is prayer
gone awry, then what

is this ghost
of myself I have cast into the double
helix so swiftly refining your lines? Your
mother is van Gogh

& I am merely waiting
to see what she will deliver into my frame.