

The knot

by [Devon Miller-Duggan](#) in the [June 21, 2017](#) issue

He never rested underneath my heart.

There beside the keening jet
on the tarmac where
nothing truly touches down,
where they all come
when they come home
already at forever rest,
a fist, a knot, a burl
of what had been and was
another woman's son
left where it was contained
beneath a flag
and lodged itself, fist-hard,
unmerciful red beneath my breastbone.
There it hid
until I found it,
called it out again,
my spirit-son.

When he was a knot of flesh
beneath his mother's breast
he properly unfurled.

This time I speak the one hard word I've carried
since they took him from the belly of the plane,
aloud, although I cannot make a sound of it
turn either into prayer or reason:
Gone.