

Not by Choice but Circumstance

by Gary Hardaway

I haven't overcome the anger yet
at having lost the amniotic comfort
and constraint of not yet being thrust
into the glaring world

with its burdens of instinct-
all that chemical desire-
and consciousness- all that
placement of the self

within the overwhelming awe
and terror that is this space and time-
and the not quite unbearable beauties,
sensible and imagined.

With small and fleshy hands
I scratch at enigmatic stones,
shred the soft pulp of fingertips,
and split the more incisive nails

striving to impose or discern
a pattern that includes me.
The body is a fragile dwelling place
and ill equipped to understand.

