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LOUISE GLÜCK

PIETÀ

Under the strained
fabric of her skin, his heart
stirred. She listened,
because he had no father.
So she knew
he wanted to stay
in her body, apart
from the world
with its cries, its
roughhousing,
but already the men
gather to see him
born: they crowd in
or kneel at worshipful
distance, like
figures in a painting
whom the star lights, shining
steadily in its dark context.