

Swims

Mount Erie

I can't get the image out of my head
Of when I held you right there and watched you die
Upstairs in the back bedroom of our house
Where we have lived for many years
Your last gasping breaths, I see it again and again, as the breeze blew in

The room I still don't go in at night, because I see you
Your transformed, dying face will recede with time, is what our counselor said
Who we walked to every Monday holding hands
Slower every week with your breathing until we had to drive

But then only two months after you died our counselor died
All at once, her empty office with no light on, as if her work was done

We are all always so close to not existing at all
Except in the confusion of our survived-
bys grasping at the echoes

Today our daughter asked me if mama swims
I told her, "Yes, she does, and that's probably all she does now."

What was you is now borne across waves, evaporating