

First Water

Sitting midway down the basement steps,
I see soiled laundry in careful piles,
and hear the steady roil of tub water.

Pipes and furnace ducts snake across the ceiling,
exposed to the peering bulb that
clings to an umbilical cord
suspended from the cobwebbed ceiling.

My young eyes rake the creepy shadows,
I feel the murky dampness concealed there.
I see a centipede's splattered go-away walk.

Awareness shifts as she speaks.
She tells me of her growing years.
Hands travel down in steamy water to
lift the tangled fabric.

I sit attentively, amid the smell of Tide and Clorox.
She wrings the murky water from the cloth.
I watch it sink beneath clear water.

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