

NOEL CROOK

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*War Photo*

On the tiled floor of a hospital  
the girl is turned and bathed, arms raised  
as if to Allah, only a small wad of cloth  
pulled between her legs to cover her nakedness;  
waist not yet narrowed, tiny nipples dark  
punctuation marks of unwritten sentences,  
the strong wishbone of mandible exposed  
that ten years down the road a lover might have kissed.

In the morning she will be wrapped in white cloth,  
but now her body glistens  
with the wet of sponges, careful as cats' tongues.  
Above her, the black-robed mother stares  
into the camera's lens, her own eyes  
dark as holes, saying to thousands,  
millions of eyes, every eye on earth,  
"Look! Look! This is what it is."

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NOEL CROOK is an MFA student in Creative Writing at North Carolina State University.  
Her work has appeared in *Tar River Poetry* and *Poetry East*.