**Twin Primes**

Nicole Cosme

My brother was born

one minute

before I was born,

First to drink

that peculiar gas

First to find

equilibrium

Lungs expand,

diaphragm contracts

For sixty seconds, as I,

Puny sack of pure

potential

Stretched my limbs and slept

As he wept for his lost world

Beneath shiny tools,

Cool against his skin, blur probes,

spectral shapes and shades

Washed his universe away.

I remember the first grade.

I was by myself,

having been torn from my twin

They told us,

*It’s for your own good,*

*let go now*

but I wailed by the doorway

Refusing to stretch,

Hiding all my nakedness

behind a wall of cubbies

Mrs. K moved on,

She wrote “I” on the chalkboard

*This is you*, she said,

But I didn’t understand.

That shape was too small

for two sounds,

that gliding diphthong

held so much

But not everything,

When *I* am separate from *me*—

A mirror motion

in some other class,

holding form outside myself;

*Indivisible*

It amounts to the same thing—

*Individual*

*I* am shocked by the severance

The cold air of a new world

Whips against the skin,

Blurred vision, unfamiliar

shapes and symbols

again,

we go alone.