

NANCE VAN WINCKEL

Almost Impervious

From across the river a last dream
disappears into the fresh cress
along the bank, where a woman
kneels, holding a baby over
and then in the water. There
he begins to sense again the silence
he'd thought he'd exited forever.

How sudden
the sun. Hoisted
toward it, he warmed;
he breathed.

Only much later, in the battles' endless
repetitions of the spear, would he
feel once more the rapids' icy pull
and recall how swiftly a man slips
out from a god—a split second
before the white light surrounds
what shivers, what gleams.