

## ICU Nursery

The potatoes in the ground  
must be dug before it freezes,  
so her husband is halfway to Idaho  
in the pickup.  
Doctors had said earlier  
it looked like the baby could be weaned  
from machines and make it.  
His crop in the field  
is food on the table.

She stands by the isolette  
while the doctors work on her baby.  
Sometimes she cries out, "No!"  
You always think words like that  
can stop something.

When there is no more they can do,  
they pull up a chair,  
hand her that baby still hooked  
up to life and let her rock.  
She tells about the baby's sisters, her Daddy,  
about potatoes in the ground.  
No one breathed till the baby  
couldn't.

Farming is risky business.  
Mostly it's hard work  
and luck in judgment calls.  
You never know when a frost  
will come over a crop and, like that,  
it's gone.

—Marilyn Darley Williams