laughter

grows in the belly
barrel pried open
pushes up
     as a mother bears down
the child
bubbling born
shaking out
     the first cry
rises
ringing rafters
splashing air with sound
to drift away
a balloon let go
    a mother suckles the child
quiet

_Dian Beck_

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Growing Pains

In the sharp yellow sun
A boy lies on the uneven planks
Of a peeling white pier.
He looks through a gap in the boards,
Into the calm water,
Touching the far away world below
With a thin silver thread.
Algae-fuzzed columns, small smooth
Boulders, miniature tree trunks
Askew from some long-ago storm.
Gentle ripples of sand fade quietly
Into the haze.
A solid shaft of gold from above
Holds two small fish, hovering
Over a clean circle in the sand . . .

The small boy sways slowly on the swing.
His feet scuff two lines
In the thin mid-summer grass.
His eyes are fixed
On a small splash of light
At the end of the pier.

_David Stokely_