

**Nicole Cooley**

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## **Couplets Toward the Future**

September 2001

Now each day is a gasp. A helicopter stutters  
across the blank blue sky, then disappears

into the city's empty horizon, air clear  
of smoke that sometimes rises, sometimes disappears,

jaundiced yellow smell filling our bedroom with fear  
of the future. That day won't disappear –

it's always replayed as "America's New War,"  
this century's lesson: how bodies disappear –

war started in the city where our family began, here,  
where the best moment is waking, all dark disappeared,

where the baby lies between us and the two of us breathe her  
in, and I pray for the world outside our bed to disappear.

It won't. But then it shouldn't. And as we hold each other,  
pull our daughter closer, I think of The Disappeared.

I used to ask how my body made another. Last year's  
question. Now, I ask you, how can a body disappear?

Your hands hold me. In the unmapped future,  
I won't let the three of us disappear.