

After baptism

by [Jane Zwart](#) in the [September 20, 2011](#) issue

Some things he will see again and again. From car windows, rows of corn, their strobe a flipbook in which nothing much ever happens, and stands of white birches, fistfuls of lightning dropped, then turned wooden.

And other things, not again and again, but at least again. An adolescent rolling a barbell home from a garage sale. A dead snake the color of toothpaste and mermaids. A sassafras that laps sun, and, under it, dozens of gray mittens fuddling applause.

Not, though, the sky from the kitchen sink, where we bathe him. And not the parishioner who patted his ribs, birdcage that breathes, and she all wonderment despite the century that shows in her rouge. And in her eyes, blue and weeping as sores weep.