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The Mother Waits at the Curb

The mother waits at the curb
for the child she gave away
that morning, her mainstreamed boy.

He walks through the unfolding doors
into her waiting arms, his arms
broken wings, primitive spasms.

Chin all jerks and his face twitches,
his body pulls back to the bus
as if he left something behind.

Not like other boys a book,
a jacket, a lovely drawing,
but something abstract like purpose.

The stop sign blinks, outspread, halting
traffic in all directions. Nothing
can pass. It is safe for the boy

to climb back on the bus and find
what he needs, but the mother
takes him by the shoulders and turns

him toward their home, up the walk,
inside toward their curtained lives,
her lips fluttering in his ear.

Chris Haven
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Chris Haven's poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in a number of journals including *Fourteen Hills*, *New York Quarterly*, *Smartish Pace*, *The Normal School*, and *Memorious*. He teaches creative writing at Grand Valley State University in Michigan and edits the journal *Wake: Great Lakes Thought & Culture*.