

ICEBERG

MICHAEL FREE JR.

Crushed like a broken glass
on a kitchen floor. That is the feeling
he has as he holds the body
of his son, cold and blue
like shaved ice.

He holds his son up like a cradle would.
“Why? Why must
you take him from me?” he shouts.

The car races through traffic as his mind races through memories.
The crack of the bat at his son’s tee-ball game.
The sizzling aroma of hamburgers on the grill.
The dust swirling up in the wake of his son’s first bike ride.

One glance in the rearview mirror at his son’s motionless body
freezes those memories away.

The receptionist rushes his son’s frigid body away from him.
His hands still clutch the emptiness left behind.

The blizzard of the waiting room’s sounds blow quietly,
except for the screeching hand of the clock.
Seconds stretch into minutes, minutes drag on like a child dragging
their feet across the floor at the dentist’s office. Time moves at a
glacial pace.
The silence shatters with the swing of the door and his ears
pick up his name being called from the doorway.

He turns down what seem to be endless hallways,
which twist like an ancient labyrinth.
Then he sees him.

His son’s skin, pink like cotton candy at a state fair.
His chest rises evenly like waves breaking on the beach.

The ice has melted away.