

Vicki Feaver

Baby with Dog

Fat Buddha baby with big shining eyes
and gold hair brushed into a quiff,

I'm propped against Rags, great shaggy rug
of an Old English Sheepdog—

my cushion, my nurse, my finger-
and-face-licker, my comforter

when my mother was teaching
and my grandmother weeping.



'It's unhygienic,' Grandma claimed
'to keep a dog with a baby.'

'She'll pick up hairs;
eat from the dog's dish.'

What Grandma said was law
and Rags vanished.

I shut my lips to food-filled spoons
and crawled from room to room.

I hauled myself up on my cot's bars,
reaching into a cupboard of furs.